

Understanding Social Justice Through A Biblical Perspective

Sharon Elander, week 2 notes

Understanding Social Justice

1. Social justice and Biblical justice overlap in some areas. It is the methods and end desires which are radically different.
 - Seek to clarify terms and definitions in conversations
2. Ideological Social Justice (ISJ): liberation from all forms of oppression.
 - The extent and extremes of ISJ may be misunderstood by many well-intentioned people who support a social justice issue
 - ISJ is built on Critical Theory
3. Critical Theory: divides the world into oppressed groups and their oppressors along lines of race, class, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical ability, age, weight, and a host of other identity makers.” Robin DiAngelo.
 1. Oppressor groups vs. Oppressed groups
 2. Hegemonic power causes oppression
 3. Liberation of oppressed, regardless of ethical methods
 4. Feelings trump facts, oppressed do not need to justify with facts
 5. Facts can lie, math is racist
 6. Intersectionality, layering of identity marker groups for oppression/oppressor level
4. Methods and goals of critical theory to achieving social justice
 1. Segregation not unification
 2. Takedown of all power structures: nuclear family, police, organized religion, etc.
 3. Liberation of oppressed
 4. Global commission oversees all humanity
 5. Equal distribution of power and resources (money)
5. Comparing Biblical justice and social justice:

	Biblical Justice	Social Justice
Impartial	Yes	No: group identity
Proportional	Yes	No: # of oppressed or oppressor groups
Each his Due	Yes	No: no accountability for individual actions
Follows God’s Morals	Yes	No: based on who holds power at time

6. (Ideological) social justice is far more encompassing than helping the down trodden and a desire for equality to all people. (Ideological) social justice is a worldview which is in direct contradiction to Biblical justice.

WEEK 2 Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe social justice?
2. What information was different about social justice then you have previously heard? (You do not have to agree with the differences.)
3. Do you find differences in the beliefs of friends who say they are social justice advocates compared to the ideological social justice?
4. What are some words that have changed over time, which if not clarified can lead to problems?
5. Hegemonic Power is the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominant group in establishing what is considered normal. How can hegemonic power be helpful and harmful in a society?
6. Explain what social justice means to “liberate the oppressed.”
7. Explain what Biblical justice means to liberate the oppressed.
8. How did the events surrounding George Floyd’s death affect you, your awareness of racial problems, and your beliefs on social justice?
9. Have you ever experienced a time when you were not treated equally based on an identity marker? Do you believe it occurred out of malice, ignorance, or another reason?