

Critical Sin Theory – Malachi 2:17

I. Introduction:

- A. If you listen to certain segments of the news these days, you have heard the words *“Critical Race Theory.”*
1. The Liberals love this idea, the conservatives hate it, & most of us are stuck somewhere in the middle.
 2. One of my first problems with the Critical Race Theory is that it is hard to find a distinct definition.
 3. It takes an article, rather than a sentence, to define it, and its very name is misleading.
- B. The Critical Race Theory, began with the idea that **racial prejudice** is **built into** the American **legal system**.
1. Proponents cite statistics which say that more Black Americans are likely to go to jail for specific crimes than any other race.
 2. For example, the **1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act** stipulates harsher penalties for possession of **crack cocaine** than for regular cocaine.
 - a. But Black Americans are more likely to use crack than the more expensive purer forms of cocaine.
 - b. So more Blacks go to prison than Whites for this kind of drug; for most kinds of drugs.
 - c. According to the ACLU, in the first four years of that act, sentences against Black offenders were 49% higher than those handed out to White offenders.
 3. Over the years, this legal question has evolved into more general social policy and action, involving other misdefined catch phrases like *“social justice,” “equity,” “diversity and inclusion,”* and *“Black lives matter.”*
 4. And it has lead to the **redacting** of history, the **hatred** of important early White Americans, the **tearing down** of historical **statues** and **monuments**, and even to **rioting**.
 5. According to an article in *Imprimis*, which I put in the bulletin back in May, the proponents of the CRT would like to see the **replacement of individual rights** with the **rights of abused races**, the **end of private property** and the **silencing of free speech**.
 6. In other words, the Critical Race Theory redefines and pushes the problems of *“race”* in directions which are not just or logical.
 7. Some say that it is driven forward by neo-Marxism.
- C. You may have noticed that the title to my message this morning is: *“The Critical SIN Theory.”*
1. There is parallel between this racial question and the modern question of sin.
 2. Just as the CRT is redefining race in this country, sinners have been trying to redefine sin for centuries.
 3. Like it or not, racism has been a part of this country from the beginning, and many important early Americans owned slaves.
 4. That reprehensible fact does not negate the good and important things which some of those men did in making this country the best place in the world for all races of men.
 5. And similarly, trying to remove sin from American vocabulary, doesn’t make our society any better.
 6. That removal makes our society a far, far more dangerous place to be.
 7. Taking the danger symbol off a bottle of rat poison doesn’t remove the danger.

II. In one sense, sin is the foundation of the gospel message.

- A. Paul said in *1 Corinthians 15*, *“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand...”*
1. *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”*
 2. Paul’s definition of the gospel includes: **“Christ died for our SINS.”**
 3. The gospel sits on the foundation that we are sinners in need of a Saviour.
 4. When people remove the element of sin, they remove the need of a Saviour.
 5. That is a soul-damning doctrine and philosophy.

- B. I shouldn't have to emphasize the fact, but the Bible is replete with declarations & illustrations of our sinfulness.
1. **Romans 3:** *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*
 - a. *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*
 - b. *They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one...*
 - c. *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*
 - d. *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*
 2. We can't afford to tear down the **statue of King David**, just because he was a sinner.
 - a. We need to embrace the fact that God can save adulterers and murderers like David the son of Jesse.
 - b. And if He can do that, the Saviour can redeem, sanctify and use sinners like me to glorify Himself.
 3. Both **Moses** and **Abraham** brought shame upon themselves in their transgressions of God's will.
 4. Let's not remove their **statues** – or their **statutes** – because of their sins.
- C. *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners..."*
1. It was **ONLY** for sinners that Christ came into the world.
 2. *"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost"* – souls lost and dead because of sin.
 3. *"Jesus saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."*
 4. *"When we were without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly."*
 5. *"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation (the satisfaction) for our sins."*
- D. The **love of God** is **not seen** simply in taking people to **Heaven**.
1. It is not seen in **blessing us** with health, or riches, or happiness.
 2. The love of God is seen in the crucifixion of Christ, through which He satisfied the law and wrath of God against us because we are sinners.
 3. *"God commendeth his love toward us, that that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*
 4. Until we know ourselves to be sinners, we shall never know anything of the love of God.

III. Here in **Malachi 2:17** we catch an early glimpse of the Critical Sin Theory.

- A. *"Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?"*
- B. Malachi, as the spokesman for God, told the people of Israel that Jehovah was getting **weary** of their **words**.
1. At this point he **didn't speak** of their **lawlessness** and **disobedience** toward the Lord.
 - a. He had already condemned their **worthless sacrifices** and religious **ceremonies**.
 - b. He wasn't any longer telling them that the Lord despised the wickedness of their **home-lives**.
 2. Here he points to their **words**.
 - a. Their wicked words included: *"Wherein have we despised thy name?"*
 - b. *"Wherein have we polluted thee?"*
 - c. In **chapter 3** He will accuse them of theft, and we hear them reply: *"Wherein have we robbed thee?"*
 - d. We are going to hear the Lord say, *"Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?"*

- C. It is a bad habit many of us have, but no one likes it when others finish their sentences for them.
1. We start to make a statement and then pause to find the best word to complete the thought, and the person to whom we are speaking blurts out what he thinks we are trying to say.
 2. But often times, he is wrong.
 3. No one becomes more weary of that sort of thing than the Lord.
 4. Malachi says, on Jehovah's behalf, *"Don't put words in God's mouth."*
 5. Don't say, *"Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them,"* because it appears to be the case. It is not true.
 6. Why does God get weary? Because He has told us over and over again that sin is sin.
 7. We read in **Isaiah 5:20**: *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; a. that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter... b. Therefore as the fire devourth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust; c. because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel."*

IV. Why do people say "Evil is good?"

- A. In the case of the Jews in Malachi's day, one excuse might have been their **lack of patience**.
1. There are two thoughts linked together here: *"Where is the God of judgment?"* and *"Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD..."*
 2. Unthinking people may see wicked people getting fat and rich in congress or in other places of power, without a hint of God's judgment, and conclude *"he that doeth evil must be good"* in God's sight.
 3. Again, I say, *"Don't put your words into God's mouth."*
 4. And I point back to our last lesson: be patient; the God of Judgment, with a sword in His hand, is standing over the next hill.
- B. Why do people say, *"Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them?"*
1. Obviously, because those wearisome people haven't had any **proper theological training**; they know nothing about Jehovah.
 2. This is one of the truly serious deficits in American religion.
 3. America has lots of church attendees who are not taught the attributes of the one true and living God.
 4. They have low thoughts of the Lord, because they are trained to think of Him as their friend and buddy.
 5. They say that **God delights in evil**, because **they delight** in their evil, and they have no concept of sin, righteousness and judgment.
 6. They are never told to **take off their shoes** in God's presence, but they **do take off their church clothes**, wearing their beach attire to the house of God.
 7. They sing the songs of Zion to the beat of the Beatles, because they don't know the rhythm or poetry of God.
 8. And they practice baptismal regeneration, works salvation, ritual for redemption, and CRT atonement for the same reason.
 9. Oh, how these people need to hear **II Thessalonians 1:7-10**: *"To you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, a. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: b. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power..."*

- C. Why do people say, *“Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them?”*
1. Part of the answer to that question lays in the fact that we are all **sinners**, & we have a **propensity** for **sin**.
 2. We have a **proclivity** to sin; we are bent by our sin natures in that direction – toward wickedness.
 3. Again, this is what Paul teaches in the scripture from **Romans 3**.
 - a. *“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*
 - b. *Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood:*
 - c. *Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known:*
 - d. *There is no fear of God before their eyes.”*
 4. Because there is no fear of God before their eyes, people weary Him with their wicked words.
 5. And once again, according to the scriptures, who are those guilty people?
 6. *“There is **none** that understandeth, there is **none** that seeketh after God. They are **ALL** gone out of the way, they are **together** become unprofitable; there is **none** that doeth good, **no, not one.**”*
 7. What a contrast to the wicked man’s statement: *“**Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD.**”*

V. Why do people say, “Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, & he delighteth in them?”

- A. Because they (we) are all sinners, and as such we **seek to justify ourselves** in what we do.
1. Reversing evil and good is just one of many ways in which we try **soothe our wicked consciences**.
 2. *“My great, great grandparents, whose names I don’t know, and of whom I have no pictures, were enslaved, so I have a right to hate the great, great grandchildren of those slave-traders.*
 - a. *I think I have reason to loot the store owned by that man who is of a different color than I am.*
 - b. *That he is Oriental doesn’t really make any difference to me.”*
 3. *“My mother was a drunk so I have a propensity to drink.*
 - a. *Don’t blame me for acting like a fool on Friday and Saturday nights.”*
 4. *“My father deserted his family, so I didn’t have a positive father figure in my life.*
 - a. *I am not responsible for being a selfish, inconsiderate parent.”*
- B. But let’s be honest and consistent.
1. If we are going to go blame to our parents and grandparents to explain our evil behavior, we should go back to our original parent.
 2. **Romans 5:** *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned...”*
 - a. *death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression...*
 - b. *the judgment was by one to condemnation... For... by one man’s offence death reigned by one...*
 - c. *by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation...*
 - d. *by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners...”*
 3. Paul doesn’t mention his name, but he was speaking about Adam and his sin against God in the Garden of Eden.
 4. And please notice that Paul doesn’t use Adam to **excuse** anyone’s sinful behavior, but rather to **explain** it.
 5. We are all sinners, no matter from which of Noah’s children we have descended.

VI. Evil people may say, “Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, & he delighteth in them.”

- A. But that is simply not true.
1. It doesn’t matter how **many people** say those words, it is not true.
 2. It doesn’t matter if the **federal government** says this, it is not true.
 3. It doesn’t matter if **society** and **modern education** says it, it is not true.
 4. It makes no difference if the **Supreme Court agrees or disagrees**, it is not true.
 5. It doesn’t matter how many **college professors** profess to believe it, it is not true.

6. And it doesn't matter whether **you agree or not**.
 - a. God says, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*
 - b. *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*
7. Where is the God of judgment? He is at this moment drawing His sword out of its scabbard.
8. The United States of America is wearying the Lord with these words and this kind of thinking.

B. Again, I point out that Malachi says Israel was saying, ***"EVERY ONE that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD."***

1. We (you and I) would never say **"everyone"** would we?
2. We are more honest than that, thinking that only **most** people are guilty.

C. And of course, we might say, while **most evil** is **NEVER good**, and some sins are just too reprehensible to ever be called good, on the other hand, **a few sins**, usually our own personal sins, **are essentially good** or at least **good enough** that the God of judgment doesn't need to visit our house.

1. My **greed** isn't really a sin; it is only a desire to provide my family with the best possible enjoyments of life.
 - a. My **pornography** isn't sinful, because God put within me certain needs.
 - b. This isn't **gossip**; it is the sharing of necessary and useful information.
 - c. I am **not stealing** God's **tithe**, because I need that money, and my salary isn't sufficient.
2. It is not just the serial rapist who tries to justify his sins; we all do it to some degree.

VII. Conclusion:

A. I said earlier: sin is at the foundation of the gospel.

1. If we are not willing to acknowledge we are sinners in need of the Saviour, then we will never be forgiven.
2. If we repeat, or think, Malachi's statement, we become like **ships without rudders**, tossed about in every direction eventually ending up on the rocks.
3. If we think like this, it proves we have no sense of **who we are** while standing before a **God** of whom we have **no understanding**.

B. It is also true that until Christians admit that we live in sinful flesh and we continue to be sinners, we will not have the ministry of the Holy Spirit we need to have.

1. The Apostle John wrote to Christians, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*
2. *If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."*
3. But *"if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

C. What is **YOUR** need and condition this morning?

1. Do you need a Saviour, because you are a helpless sinner under God's wrath?
2. Then simply turn around and kneel before him in faith and humble repentance.
3. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."*

D. But then again, you might be a Christian who has been in denial of those little remnants of rebellion in your life.

1. You, too, need to repent in order that the blessing of the Holy Spirit might be on you.
2. Don't go another moment saying, *"My evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in me."*
3. He does not delight in sin in anyone.