

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

An Analogy to Critical Theory

A Critical Analysis of Resolution 9 – Part 2

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The Leaven of CRT and Intersectionality

Throughout Resolution Nine, likewise, assurances are given that CRT and intersectionality should not take precedence over Scripture. Doubtless these are sincere caveats, but too confident of the possibility of isolating the “tool” from the theoretical commitments and worldview of those who developed it.

Scripture Only

On the positive side, one of the “whereas” clauses repeats the *Baptist Faith and Message* on Scripture: “WHEREAS, The Baptist Faith and Message states, ‘[A]ll Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried.’” In fact, a series of such clauses strung together would seem to make any reference to CRT and intersectionality irrelevant:

WHEREAS, Scripture contains categories and principles by which to deal with racism, poverty, sexism, injustice, and abuse that are not rooted in secular ideologies; and

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WHEREAS, Humanity is primarily identified in Scripture as image bearers of God, even as biblical authors address various audiences according to characteristics such as male and female, Jew and Gentile, slave and free; and

WHEREAS, The New Covenant further unites image bearers by creating a new humanity that will one day inhabit the new creation, and that the people of this new humanity, though descended from every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, are all one through the gospel of Jesus Christ ([Ephesians 2:16](#); [Revelation 21:1–4, 9–14](#)); and

WHEREAS, Christian citizenship is not based on our differences but instead on our common salvation in Christ—the source of our truest and ultimate identity; and

WHEREAS, The Southern Baptist Convention is committed to racial reconciliation built upon biblical presuppositions and is committed to seeking biblical justice through biblical means; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Birmingham, Alabama, June 11–12, 2019, affirm Scripture as the first, last, and sufficient authority with regard to how the Church seeks to redress social ills, and we reject any conduct, creeds, and religious opinions which contradict Scripture;

And also this:

RESOLVED, That the gospel of Jesus Christ alone grants the power to change people and society because “he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” ([Philippians 1:6](#));

Add a Little CRT

The resolution also recognizes that “Concerns have been raised by some evangelicals over the use of frameworks such as critical race theory and intersectionality.” Nevertheless, in the face of these concerns and the statement of the sole sufficiency of Scripture in particular relation to identity, unity in Christ, social ills, racism and other points of ethical and doctrinal concern, the resolution insistently reiterates the usefulness of a rigorously developed, naturalistic sociological and political statement as a useful tool in getting to the bottom of these issues. Even on the face of it, such an insistence seems strange and even contradictory to the affirmations of biblical authority. A few of these assertions follow with a comment on them.

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WHEREAS, Critical race theory is a set of analytical tools that explain how race has and continues to function in society, and intersectionality is the study of how different personal characteristics overlap and inform one's experience;

[TJN: This assumes what is at question. In other words, it begs the question. Is CRT a “set of analytical tools” or is it a statement about race relations based upon a broader philosophical foundation of neo-Marxist analysis of society? Brad Levison, one of the most articulate spokespersons for Critical Theory today stated, “[critical theory] is not neutral in reference to values and has a definite ... conception of ‘progress’ and the social good, often a utopian vision or concept of ‘liberation.’” The statement also embraces uncritically a devastating assumption that it explains “how race has and continues to function in society.” Is this true? Is its explanation even close to the biblical view of humanity in Adam? CRT already assumes that male whiteness is the synthesis of oppression in western society and all groups outside that parameter have suffered injustice at their hands, sometimes in layers depending on their peculiar place in the intersectionality framework. Advocates tend to identify themselves as part of certain “tribes” and feel *exclusion* when their identity intersects with the oppressed; They sense *privilege* when it intersects with the dominant tribe. If their ethnicity is not white but they are male, then the sins against them by the dominant tribe are not as great as toward a non-white female. This would be even more severe with a non-white, lesbian. The pressure of intersectionality already is minimizing the importance of biblical views of sexuality as assumptions of the “Revoice” movement seep into SBC sensitivities. With that synthesis of evil comes also the synthesis of the good — societal equity. This will include equal distribution of power, position, prestige, and attempts at determining how material inequalities and inequalities of power are related to these past injustices. If any are prone to resist this racially compensatory redistribution as unbiblical, they are seen as antagonists to the good and must *ipso facto* be seen as racists, misogynists or homophobes. CRT assumes all that as fundamental to its entire viewpoint and thus already has explained how race functions and assumes the validity of the concept of intersectionality. This “tool” has its conclusions built in and fundamentally opposes the unity of all people in Adam as the father of the entire human race and as having the same corruption and condemnation in him and opposes as well the unity of all Christians in Christ. The “tool” already has isolated some sins, the most grievous sins, as characteristic of one “tribe” only and the very fact of gender and ethnicity, and soon sexual identity, creates a barrier virtually impossible to transcend.

WHEREAS, Critical race theory and intersectionality have been appropriated by individuals with worldviews that are contrary to the Christian faith, resulting in ideologies and methods that contradict Scripture; and

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[T]N – Not so much “appropriated by” as “developed by,” invented out of an atheistic, Marxist approach to social issues. We must not be led to think that the unchristian world views of some individuals have polluted the tools of critical race theory and intersectionality; no, those ideas constitute the unchristian world view of those individuals. In its American version, its Marxism is not so visible, and among Christians atheism holds no place. The creation of classes, however, and spheres of power, spheres of privilege, the subjection of ethical principles to existential situations rather than commonly shared truth all arise from the neo-marxist assumptions about society. Antonio Gramsci was interested in how he could organize the laborer against both the bourgeoisie and Fascists. He did it by identifying those two groups as common oppressors and couching the theory of resistance in language of virtue, justice, and religion. This method of thought and identification became fundamental to Liberation Theology. True Christianity became the liberation of the oppressed and had little to do with the doctrines of orthodoxy and evangelicalism. If it were only isolated to minor spheres of society and did not have any cultural momentum, then perhaps the apparent prominence of these discussions in the Southern Baptist Convention would be no indication of a broad consent to Critical Theory principles. We are concerned, however, that much of our discussion on these difficult issues indicates the power of the present dominance of critical race theory, social justice, and intersectionality in the culture. None of us should have to be convinced of that if we have watched one cycle of news during a day. This is not surprising for a society grasping for some way to interpret the cultural tensions and manifestations of pure hatred between one group, or class, or tribe, and another. In the gradual loss of a consensus of virtue built on transcendent principles as a common commitment of the culture, neo-marxism in the form of Social Justice and all its concomitants has swept in as the way to define, explain, and rectify the abiding differences that cannot be escaped in any large body of human society.

When we see these same solutions being promoted as ways to negotiate relations in the church or in a denomination, when we see the classifications engendered by intersectionality used to identify groups in order to challenge them for class sins, or to issue a form of demand for special treatment, then it is sadly clear that the “tool of analysis” really serves as a weapon of action.

Our purpose is not to create a good guy/bad guy dynamic or to demonize individuals. There is a large area of shared conviction in biblical, confessional, and ethical areas in which we see the grace of God. That does not mean, however, that the entrance of an ideological assumption could not erode basic gospel commitments and redefine the character of Christian fellowship, church ministry, and gospel commitment. We, in concert with others, want to issue a warning of how destructive the implementation of these principles can be.

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This article is Part 2 of a three-part series.

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