

Jesus and the Gospel: Not of This (Politically Correct) World

Jack Kerwick

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During this Christmas season, when the image of the Christ-*Child* is more visible than it is at any other time during the year, Christians would be well-served to come to terms, perhaps for the first time, with their Lord as He is actually revealed in the Bible—as opposed to the 21st century liberal, Politically Correct sentimentalist fiction preached from most church pulpits.

It is at once tragic and scandalous that the contemporary Christian church, in both its Catholic and Protestant varieties, regularly forgets its obligation to reject worldliness. Far too many of its leaders are “of the world.”

To be of the world is to affirm the *Zeitgeist*, the Spirit of the Times. Those who are “with the times” may or may not be filled with conviction, but they can be counted upon to accept unquestionably the PC dogmas of the present generation.

First, in its fear of incurring the wrath of its self-appointed guardians, the church leadership has twisted the Gospel in order to accommodate PC’s elevation of Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion over all other values. After all, to defy this Creed, or to be merely suspected of defying it, is to convict oneself of bigotry—“racism,” “sexism,” “classism,” “ethnocentrism,” “homophobia,” “transphobia,” “Islamophobia,” and any and every other “ism” and “phobia” in PC’s catalogue of unpardonable transgressions.

The Gospel’s is now peddled as a message of *Inclusion*.

Now, it’s true, of course, that Christ extends His offer of Salvation to *everyone* who will but avail themselves of it. In this sense, the Good News most certainly and literally is inclusive. However, it is no less true, no less Biblical, that there is another respect in which the Gospel is certainly, literally *exclusive*:

Anyone who refuses to accept Christ’s saving grace will be excluded from His gift of eternal life.

Jesus declared Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the Gate through which all who wish to enter Heaven must pass.

This means that all non-Christians must, at some juncture (whether in this world or a Purgatory-style

state), embrace Christ as Lord and Savior if they aspire to live forever with Him. They must become Christians if they want eternity.

God's *invitation* to Heaven is inclusive. *Heaven* itself will be exclusive.

Second, if the exclusionary character of the Gospel's promise is to be marginalized, ignored, or denied, then so too must the nature of Christ be marginalized, ignored, or denied.

Jesus is the Incarnation of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity made flesh. Since God is Love, so too is Christ. This much the Church continues to affirm. But it equates God with a one-dimensional, a worldly, feel-good, mushy-minded sentimentalist conception of what it calls "love."

From this perspective, Christ is never angry. He is unconditionally forgiving, forgiving the worst of the worst even when they don't ask for it. He is non-judgmental. The Jesus that is preached from many a pulpit spent His ministry talking about nothing other than tolerance, inclusion, and, of course, equality. To judge from the average sermon, Jesus was (and remains) fundamentally no different than the 21st liberal cleric delivering it.

The Jesus spun from the imaginations of today's left-leaning ministers is as worldly as are the ministers themselves. This Jesus is of the world, and the world from which he derives his identity is the present world, the world of PC that liberal theologians, scholars, and clerics are committed to reinforcing.

Implicitly, the current church promotes a version of *Marcionism*, the old Christian heresy that the Old and New Testaments affirm different Gods: the God of the Jews, of the Old Testament, is a God of wrath, an inferior being to Christ, the all-merciful God of the New Testament.

In reality, however, Jesus of Nazareth is one and the same God that flooded the Earth, destroying every man, woman, and child other than Noah and his family.

The Lamb of God, Jesus, is the same God who, repeatedly, either directly or indirectly brought about the deaths of scores of human beings (as well as their animals).

Jesus is the same God who proclaims His utter *hatred* for, not just some abstraction called *evil*, but *evil doers*. Yes, God *hates* those with "haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood [.]" He *hates* the person with "a heart that devises wicked plans" and "feet that make haste to run to evil [.]" God *hates* "a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers" (Proverbs 6:17-19).

Jesus is the same God who, in the New Testament, frequently promises to unleash horrific, agonizing violence upon the unbelieving—non-Christians—when He returns on the clouds of glory.

In summary, the Christ-God of the Bible is not *only* a "nice guy," let alone a guy with whom the PC clerics who preach in His name would care to be associated. In being linked in any way to Jesus, such clerics know that their fellow travelers, the guardians of the secular, respectable world, would brand them as "hate mongers"—and worse.

The Christ of the Bible, the Christ of faith, is most definitely not a person of our (Politically Correct) world.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

"Outside the Church there is no salvation"

846 How are we to understand this affirmation, often repeated by the Church Fathers?

³³⁵ Re-formulated positively, it means that all salvation comes from Christ the Head through the Church which is his Body:

Basing itself on Scripture and Tradition, the Council teaches that the Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation: the one Christ is the mediator and the way of salvation; he is present to us in his body which is the Church. He himself explicitly asserted the necessity of faith and Baptism, and thereby affirmed at the same time the necessity of the Church which men enter through Baptism as through a door. Hence they could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would refuse either to enter it or to remain in it.³³⁶

847 This affirmation is not aimed at those who, through no fault of their own, do not know Christ and his Church:

Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience - those too may achieve eternal salvation.³³⁷

848 "Although in ways known to himself God can lead those who, through no fault of their own, are ignorant of the Gospel, to that faith without which it is impossible to please him, the Church still has the obligation and also the sacred right to evangelize all men."

Mission - a requirement of the Church's catholicity

849 *The missionary mandate.* "Having been divinely sent to the nations that she might be 'the universal sacrament of salvation,' the Church, in obedience to the command of her founder and because it is demanded by her own essential universality, strives to preach the Gospel to all men":³³⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and Lo, I am with you always, until the close of the age."³⁴⁰

850 *The origin and purpose of mission.* The Lord's missionary mandate is ultimately grounded in the eternal love of the Most Holy Trinity: "The Church on earth is by her nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, she has as her origin the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit."³⁴¹ The ultimate purpose of mission is none other than to make men share in the communion between the Father and the Son in their Spirit of love.³⁴²

851 *Missionary motivation.* It is from God's love for all men that the Church in every age receives both the obligation and the vigor of her missionary dynamism, "for

the love of Christ urges us on."³⁴³ Indeed, God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth";³⁴⁴ that is, God wills the salvation of everyone through the knowledge of the truth. Salvation is found in the truth. Those who obey the prompting of the Spirit of truth are already on the way of salvation. But the Church, to whom this truth has been entrusted, must go out to meet their desire, so as to bring them the truth. Because she believes in God's universal plan of salvation, the Church must be missionary.

852 Missionary paths. The Holy Spirit is the protagonist, "the principal agent of the whole of the Church's mission."³⁴⁵ It is he who leads the Church on her missionary paths. "This mission continues and, in the course of history, unfolds the mission of Christ, who was sent to evangelize the poor; so the Church, urged on by the Spirit of Christ, must walk the road Christ himself walked, a way of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice even to death, a death from which he emerged victorious by his resurrection."³⁴⁶ So it is that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians."³⁴⁷

853 On her pilgrimage, the Church has also experienced the "discrepancy existing between the message she proclaims and the human weakness of those to whom the Gospel has been entrusted."³⁴⁸ Only by taking the "way of penance and renewal," the "narrow way of the cross," can the People of God extend Christ's reign.³⁴⁹ For "just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same path if she is to communicate the fruits of salvation to men."³⁵⁰

854 By her very mission, "the Church . . . travels the same journey as all humanity and shares the same earthly lot with the world: she is to be a leaven and, as it were, the soul of human society in its renewal by Christ and transformation into the family of God."³⁵¹ Missionary endeavor requires patience. It begins with the proclamation of the Gospel to peoples and groups who do not yet believe in Christ,³⁵² continues with the establishment of Christian communities that are "a sign of God's presence in the world,"³⁵³ and leads to the foundation of local churches.³⁵⁴ It must involve a process of inculturation if the Gospel is to take flesh in each people's culture.³⁵⁵ There will be times of defeat. "With regard to individuals, groups, and peoples it is only by degrees that [the Church] touches and penetrates them and so receives them into a fullness which is Catholic."³⁵⁶

855 The Church's mission stimulates efforts *towards Christian unity*.³⁵⁷ Indeed, "divisions among Christians prevent the Church from realizing in practice the fullness of catholicity proper to her in those of her sons who, though joined to her by Baptism, are yet separated from full communion with her. Furthermore, the Church herself finds it more difficult to express in actual life her full catholicity in all its aspects."³⁵⁸

856 The missionary task implies a *respectful dialogue* with those who do not yet accept the Gospel.³⁵⁹ Believers can profit from this dialogue by learning to appreciate better "those elements of truth and grace which are found among peoples, and which are, as it were, a secret presence of God."³⁶⁰ They proclaim the Good News to those who do not know it, in order to consolidate, complete, and raise up the truth and the goodness that God has distributed among men and nations, and to purify them from

error and evil "for the glory of God, the confusion of the demon, and the happiness of man."³⁶¹