



CRITICAL RACE THEORY: True or Revisionist History?

"...race may not be a reality, but racial thinking is, and, as such, warrants closer examination."

--James Shapiro, [Shakespeare and the Jew](#)

Do you dare to open a Pandora's Box? Just mention CRT—*Critical Race Theory*, and people go nuts. CRT was the defining issue in the 2021 Virginia gubernatorial elections. And it will be a wedge issue in the 2022 mid-term elections.

Those three letters C—R—T can destroy a dinner party or blow up a school board meeting.

So, what is Critical Race Theory? Inquiring minds really *ought* to know. Especially Jesus followers.

The New Race Wars

Inquiring minds ought to read the June 1, 2021 *US News & World Report* article by Lauren Camera entitled [What Is Critical Race Theory and Why Are People So Upset About It%3F](#). The staff writer leads off with this line:

"Most Americans are not familiar with the term critical race theory, but that hasn't stopped some from getting upset about reckoning with the sprawling repercussions of slavery."

US News & World Report isn't a bastion of conservatism. There are things in this article you may not like. But Ms. Camera has succinctly captured the issues in this national debate. She also gives some easy-to-grasp definitions.

In that opening line she captures the core issue: “...reckoning with the sprawling repercussions of slavery.” CRT was first advanced by ivory tower scholars in the 1980s. Because their theories are cloaked in the language of academia, regular folks often miss the meaning of CRT. That’s why Ms. Camera’s brief article is so helpful. Allow me to distill months of studying CRT.

CRT For Dummies

Critical Race Theory says that, although slavery and segregation are in our rearview mirror, racism has been hard-wired into everything: from language to education to law enforcement to our justice system to city planning to corporations to our most sacred institutions. As Ms. Camera puts it, we are still reckoning with the “sprawling repercussions” of 400 years of racism in America. This can be wrapped up in two words: **systemic racism**.

And here are CRT’s boogiemens: though there is no longer overt apartheid in the USA, the scales are still weighted in favor of white Americans. Thus, the oft-used term: “**White privilege**.”

CRT’s Solution? Identify and root out what remains of systemic racism. But the solution is no longer what civil rights pioneers like Dr. King proposed: **equality**, in which everyone, regardless of color, had equal *opportunity*. CRT says that equality is impossible because whites already have generations of head start and the system is rigged in their favor.

Allow me to illustrate: You could say that LeBron James and I have an equal opportunity to dunk a basketball. We each have the same regulation ball, the same court and rim, and an equal opportunity to go for the dunk. Yet, we all know that a slow, older white guy doesn’t have the same chance as the 6’9” NBA superstar.

You could say that a poor urban kid from a fatherless home and substandard public school has an equal opportunity to score as well on the SATs as a white kid from a prep school, whose parents hired a tutor to help him prepare for that test. But, we all know that “white privilege” trumps equal opportunity.

So now, instead of *equality*, the new mantra is **equity**. Not equal opportunity, but **equal privilege**. So here’s the solution: **level the playing field**. Whites must surrender their privileges for a season, and take a back seat to minorities until they catch up. Thus, academic institutions, corporations and even Hollywood film studios have instituted quota systems where previously-disadvantaged people of color, gender and sexual orientation get preferential access to schools and jobs over more qualified white heterosexuals.

The Unintended Consequences. White parents, who want the best for their children, now experience what black parents used to endure. Understandably, the former aren’t willing for their kids to take a back seat in education or future career opportunities. Nor are they willing, any more than minorities, to see their kids come home with feelings of guilt or self-loathing about their racial identity.

Radical progressives dismiss this angst as “white fragility.” In response to white writers, producers, directors, and actors who are being replaced by

LGBTQ folks and people of color, an African-American Hollywood producer said, “F— them! They better get ready to experience what my people endured for hundreds of years.” Many teachers unions, textbook writers, and school boards are more circumspect, but they feel the same way.

And that’s why white, Asian, Hispanic, and even some parents of color, are storming school board meetings. That’s also why suburban soccer moms are pivoting to the right, and angry parents across America may produce a red wave in the midterm elections. Yet, this radical CRT strategy has unintended consequences beyond politics. When unqualified people are put in key positions because of their racial, gender, or sexual identity, everything, from academia to business to government will suffer, and our next generations will inherit a third-rate America.

Even more frightening, is **the immutable law of physics**: for every action there is an opposite reaction. I would add: for all extreme actions there are opposite overreactions. Americans have not been this polarized since the Civil War. An online article in the *Business Insider* is worth reading: [US is 'closer to civil war than any of us would like to believe,' a leading expert on civil wars says in a new book](#). If this happens again, we may lose our democracy.

A Christian Response

1. **Racism is clearly unbiblical.** [1 Samuel 16:7; Galatians 3:28; James 2:1; John 3:16; Revelation 7:9; Amos 5:24]
2. **Systemic Racism is caused by Systemic Sin.** [Romans 3:23]
[Prof offers course on how 'racism is endemic to American life'](#)
3. **We should embrace, not abhor, our privileges.**
[The First Privilege Walk](#)
['Privilege Bingo' in Fairfax Co. Class Meets Controversy for Including Being a Military Kid](#)
 - We should embrace our privileges. [1John 1:15; 2 Peter 1:2; Psalm 16:6]
 - Our privileges shouldn't cause us to be arrogant.
 - We shouldn't hoard our privileges.
 - The greatest danger of CRT is the self-loathing and resentment we are creating in our children.
4. **Christians should avoid overreactions to CRT actions.** [John 8:32]
[Texas school district reviewing over 400 books, pulls them from library shelves.](#)
[In Central York, kids rose up to save books on MLK, Rosa Parks from their parents | Will Bunch Newsletter](#)

5. The biblical solution to restoring health is three-fold. [Philippians 3:7-10]

- 1) Unhealthy Ways of Dealing with Painful Childhoods.
 - Focusing on Past Hurts.

 - Pretending the Past Doesn't Matter.

 - Focusing Only on the Future.

- 2) Healthy Ways to Deal with Painful Pasts—individuals or nations. [Philippians 3:7-10]
 - Remember the Past. [vs. 7]

 - Rejoice in the Progress. [vs. 7]

 - Look to a better future. [vs. 10]

IN CONCLUSION

CRT is good in that it forces us to come face to face with our worst instincts. It helps us look into the ugliness of our hearts and remember what we are capable of as sinners.

But CRT revises history to indoctrinate our children, produces shame and resentment, divides instead of unites, recreates a new kind of racism, and envisions a dystopian future where excellence is replaced by the equity of the unqualified. Finally, it attacks the very heart of our gospel of grace. We must stand against both racism and solutions that re-enforce our worst instincts as sinners.