

Sermon Notes
Probing Questions: Whose Life Matters?

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Amos 2:6-8; Genesis 1:26; John 3:16, Acts 6:1-6

I. Last Sunday: “Is Self-Defense Christian?”

1. Jesus:
 - a. teaching: “*Do not resist an evildoer*” (Matthew 5:38)
 - b. example: suffering death unjustly with no self-defense “*leaving us an example to follow*” (1 Peter 2:21)
2. Complicated: moving from ourselves to caring for the lives of others
3. Antoinette Tuff: talked down an armed school intruder, Decatur, GA, 2013: “*God doesn’t say ‘love your neighbor because you’re purple, green or orange . . . I saw someone who was hurting . . .*”

II. Issue of Racial and Division

1. In the United States: slavery and race
2. In the World: not just black and white
 - a. Boutros Gali, 1993: In 46 years (since WWII): 127 wars, most ethnic or racial . . .
 - b. Over the past 100 years (or more) think . . .
*Nazis and Jews; Turks and Kurds, Croats and Serbs
Hutu and Tutsi; Yoruba and Ibo
Scots and Irish and English! . . . as a start . . .*
3. As if we will almost always return to some form of
 - a. Racial division
 - b. Primitive tribalism
 - c. “My life matters, our lives matter, but “their” lives? Well, maybe not so much”

III. Other Types of Division

1. Rich and Poor, Powerful and Powerless (Prophet Amos: 7th C. BC)
2. School cliques . . . jocks, preps, cool, gangsters, ghetto, goths . . .
3. . . .

IV. Church and Society Divisions

1. Today: Segregated Worship: Role of Culture and Music
2. Early Church: racial/Ethnic division between Greek/Hellenist Christians and Hebrew Christians (Acts 6)
 - a. Resolution 1 - Changed structure (the new Board of Deacons!)
 - b. Resolution 2 - Representative leadership (all non-Hebrew names!)
3. Not easy in church – not easy in Society either
 - a. Demographic 20-yr changes in Ferguson: White decrease 40%; Black increase 250%
 - b. Government/Enforcement changes: Minimal

IV. Why Change? . . . Why Should All Lives Matter?

Biblical Principles

1. The Message of Jesus:
 - a. *Love one another, Love your neighbor and Love your enemy* (Matt. 5:44)
2. The Message of Creation:
 - a. *Made in the Image of God* (Gen.1:26-27)
3. The Message of Redemption:
 - a. *The Image Restored by Christ* (Romans 8:29, 1 Corinthians 15:49, Colossians 3:10)

Christian Thinkers

1. John Kilner, 2015
Dignity and Destiny: Humanity in the Image of God
Humanity’s creation in the image of God says a lot about why God has gone to such lengths to reach and restore people in Christ . . . if the church’s inspiration and rallying cry is the creation of all humanity in God’s image . . . the church can become widely known as the champion of all human beings . . . even the down and dejected, the needy and neglected, the ruined and rejected. p. 330
2. C. S. Lewis, The Weight of Glory
It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory (*DR: that is, made in the image of God, and destined to have that image fully restored*)
BUT it is hardly possible to think too often or too deeply about that of one’s neighbor. In fact, the load, or weight, or burden of my neighbor’s glory should be laid daily on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it, and the backs of the proud will be broken.
It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship. . . .
And our love must be a real and costly love —no mere tolerance or indulgence. . . . There are no ordinary people. . . . Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses.