

Parenting Through Activism

Just when we thought our world couldn't become any less predictable, we now have a curfew in addition to our quarantine. This post is not going to be about freedom. This post seeks to address the question, What do I tell my children about racism, riots, activism, and the Christian's responsibility to be a light in this world?

I have referred often to the "Sunday School" answers. I do that, because keeping things simple is often the most profound answer! Just the other day, I was explaining something to my boys, when my three year old, eager to be a part of the conversation said, "dad, dad, dad, and Jesus!" He knows that Jesus is the answer- and when we are discussing the current issues in our world, he is right!

There is a lot of feelings when it comes to social justice issues. Having a clear and open mind is very difficult. So, I suggest rather than arguing from a position we are familiar with (conforming to this world), we surrender our will to Jesus and be transformed into looking more like Him!

Our children need to know that racism exists- both for many people personally, but also culturally and systemically. They need to be aware that it is not only a sin, but an iniquity- a bent towards evil that doesn't seem so adverse as the act of rebelling against God's law and heart. Teaching our children about systemic racism is acknowledging that even if you don't see yourself as an active participant in oppressing those different than you, their oppression is still real and silence is often consent. Our children need to know that an "eye for an eye" does not lead to the kind of change that will bring life to our communities and world. They need to know that being personally responsible can't look like not yelling racial slurs or telling racial jokes, but must include active participation in loving our neighbors! How do we bring light to this darkness? I don't know if we can, but Jesus can! We need to prioritize His words, and His example! Jesus was the most effective activist the world has ever seen! He changed an entire self-absorbed culture into a kingdom with every tribe, nation, and language! His activism still shapes our world today! And He did it by being kind, meeting people where they were at. Like the Samaritan women at the well, he drank from her cup, told her the truth, and changed the entire town, while the disciples indignantly watched.

Rather than keeping our children from the riots, let's encourage them to actively love! Let's show them through our friendships, time, and resources that there is no Jew, no Greek, no male or female, no slave or free, in the Kingdom of God! This is perhaps one of the most difficult lessons to teach, but I think shows our Lord's heart in reconciling ALL men to himself. This was His promise to Abraham at the beginning of Scripture in Genesis 12!



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