

Sheetrock and Social Injustice

My friend, Jeremy, and I were finishing sheetrock in a new room in his basement. After a little chit-chat I asked him, "How do you answer your generation concerning current social issues, the election, and clear misunderstandings of reality?" He asked for clarification.

Earlier that day I had gotten sidetracked on Facebook reading messages (rants) about politics, the environment, social concerns, etc.

I caught myself yelling in my mind, "Can you not see how you have contradicted yourself!" "Surely you are young; otherwise you would see things differently!"

I read posts by professed Christians on different issues, silently brooding: "Have you ever read your Bible! What kind of reasoning is that!?"

I had to back away and take a breath. Their unique vocabulary gave them away; they were '*Millennials*' or '*Gen X'ers*'.

(Ok. Step back from that thought too. That was really judgmental.)

I settled down and asked myself: "How can I, a preacher, effectively communicate to those who are from my parents' generation, my own *baby boomer* generation, and *Gen X*, *Gen Y*, and the *Millennials*...not to mention my 10th grader who sometimes speaks '*mumblage*'?" (She will grow out of it, I'm sure.)

It was a good question, but that was not really what was bothering me. I really wanted to know how I could convince 'them' of 'my' understanding of things. I was so sure 'I' was right!

My young friend snapped me back to reality. He actually reminded me of some recent comments I had made in Bible lessons and sermons.

"Why do you think you need to answer them?" he asked, "Isn't that what you have been teaching us?" (We both laughed heartily.)

WHAM! The teacher had not been listening.

Here's the lesson I had forgotten:

Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ²And Jesus said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? ³I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." —Luke 13:1-3 NASB

The people, were reacting to the 'front page headline news': "The Galileans!" "Pilate!" "What about all this, Jesus!?" (I was doing the same thing: reacting.)

Jesus was making the simple point that the people were losing themselves in the injustices of their society. As a result they were not focusing on their relationship with God. They could not do anything about the injustice against the Galileans...and what if they could!? More important than social justice and stewing over it and getting all bent out of shape...and being distracted; more important was whether they, individually, were *righteous* before God.

Whatever things are right [just]...

Dwell on these things. —Philippians 4:8 NASB

It sure is easy to get caught up in all the injustices in our world (nation, state, city, workplace). Nothing good comes from the tension and anger from dwelling on injustices. So we need to learn to let these things go. Then in the spare time it creates, think about what is *right/just*.