

Sermon 6-30-19
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Red Pill, White Pill

There's some terminology being used in intellectual and political circles these days that needs explanation. It comes from the 1999 science fiction movie, *The Matrix*. Here's the basic plot premise taken from Wikipedia: "in the 21st century, intelligent machines (robots) waged war against their human creators. When humans blocked the machines' access to solar energy, the machines retaliated by enslaving humans in order to harvest their bioelectric power. Therefore, the bodies of human beings are contained in pods with their minds connected together by a computer matrix or master switchboard. This matrix simulates the world as it was at the end of the 20th century and people go about their daily lives thinking they're really alive. This is what's known as a virtual reality. In this way human minds are pacified while the energy of their bodies is being harvested.

However, there is a group of free humans living in Zion, the last refuge in the real world. A character in the film named Morpheus and his crew are a group of free humans who hack into the Matrix to "unplug" enslaved humans and recruit them.

In a critical scene of the movie an important free human offers the hero a choice – a red pill or a blue pill. If he takes the blue pill, he will comfortably remain enslaved in the virtual reality matrix and appear to live a normal late 20th century existence. If he takes the red pill, he will wake up and see things as they really are and have to make a choice. Either fight against the oppression or go back into the matrix.

Therefore, in popular culture, the term "red-pilled" is now being used to describe an intellectual awakening in which a person discovers that the official worldview story they have been fed through Western academia, media and politics is false – a bundle of lies – and that a choice is required. On Youtube and other places you can find the testimonies of people who have been red-pilled – usually politically.

Now, politics is the exercise of power. But the source and nature of that power as well as its proper exercise is a matter of philosophy, metaphysics and religion. Therefore, politics is not its own thing separated from the rest of reality. Indeed, the politics of a nation and people are an outgrowth of their fundamental beliefs. Consequently, the people who talk about being red-pilled politically ultimately are talking about a change in their entire worldview and belief system. And this is understandable. For as we have often said, we're in a continuous war of words.

Because this is July 4th week, therefore, let's briefly take note of the fundamental philosophy, metaphysics and religion behind the founding of the United States. This is Thomas Jefferson's ringing phrase from the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

What does this statement suppose and mean? First it plainly states that there is a Creator. So, this statement is definitely not the fruit of any kind of paganism. Therefore, the atheistic paganism that overtook American education in the latter part of the 20th century is the direct antithesis of the philosophy, metaphysic and Christian religion of the founders. We've been in trouble for quite a while.

In addition, it's clear that Jefferson and the founders believed there is such a thing as truth. This belief has been radically attacked in the last hundred years. Wicked people developed the mantra that there is no truth. I call them wicked because there is a cleverly hidden fallacy in the midst of their mantra. They must use truth in order to disprove truth. This is why the simple answer to anyone stating that "there is no truth" is simply: "Is that true?" So, Jefferson and the founders believed that because there is a Creator and He established truth, truth is therefore a thing self-evidently available to anyone who bothers to search for it.

Another great wicked mantra of the last hundred years is that truth is relative. You have your truth and I have mine. Again there is a cleverly hidden fallacy in the statement. An absolute is being used to disprove absolutes, as in there absolutely can be no absolutes.

The real truth is that in our Creator's world, some things are relative and subjective. Other things are absolutely and objectively true for all human beings everywhere at all times. The trick is to know the difference. Therefore, unlike many moderns, it's clear the founders believed in absolutes. Indeed, that's how they realized the truth that human beings have unalienable rights.

The term *unalienable* is important. In 1776 it meant a right that the state cannot create, cannot give and cannot take away. This is because the right comes from our Creator, not some human agency. For instance, life itself is an unalienable right. The state has no right to take away life. The only exception would be for a real crime like murder and then only after a real trial.

Now, one of the great political struggles of our time revolves around the words "all men are created equal," meaning all humans are created equal. As meant by the founders, all people have equal access to the rights our Creator has bestowed on us. It also means that all should have equal opportunity to make of this life what they will.

However, classical Marxism and its current cultural version have used the concept of "equal" as a great ruse to capture the unwary. Equality of opportunity is one thing. Equality of outcome is quite another. We're told in Proverbs 14:24, "The wealth of the wise is their crown, but the folly of fools yields folly." But in Marxism the wealth of the wise must support all fools in their folly in order for there to be equality – and we mustn't call them fools. In addition a new class of all-powerful state gatherers and distributors must be created to insure equality of outcome. In the process real unalienable rights are destroyed.

For instance, healthcare is now being spoken of as a right. No one is created a doctor or nurse. Hospitals are not naturally created features. Everything about healthcare must be earned – bought and paid for. So what happens when the state creates a right to healthcare? Someone must pay for it. And all must do according to the bidding of the state. For instance, where the state demands abortion up to birth and beyond as a right, the state will demand doctors perform those abortions as

part of their training and practice regardless of their moral scruples. Ultimately, this will mean that no Christian objecting to abortion would be able to enter the medical profession. In the process real rights would be destroyed. And speaking of abortion as a right – who pays for it? That’s right – the unborn child pays with its life.

Real human rights – like the right to conscience – are free. No one ever has to pay for them. It may be necessary to fight and lose one’s life in defense of real human rights, but no one ever has to earn or pay for a real human right.

On the other hand, someone must always pay for the rights that Marxists dream up for their utopias. The enemies of the state must pay up so that the coddled of the state may receive their daily crust of bread. This is how Marxism has bred universal poverty wherever it has taken hold. Only the all-powerful gatherers and distributors of wealth do ok in a Marxist system – that is until there’s nothing left to loot, like in today’s Venezuela or Zimbabwe.

As you can see, in my younger years I was red-pilled. My eyes were opened. I’ve never forgotten the sickening irony of George Orwell’s, Animal Farm. I was appalled at Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s, Gulag Archipelago. Even atheist Ayn Rand’s, Atlas Shrugged, had a profound effect on me. A bevy of contemporary Christian philosophers, especially Norman Geisler, red-pilled me from the seduction of the atheist philosophers. A squad of Christian young earth creationist philosophers and scientists were responsible for red-pilling and white-pilling me to the Creator God and the validity of the first eleven chapters of Genesis. The Apostle Paul’s discourses on righteousness are my red pill against the lying playboy philosophy of Hugh Hefner. Indeed, there is nothing more precious in this life than the righteousness Jesus Christ has gained for us.

And if the red pill is an intellectual and political awakening, what is the white pill I just mentioned? It’s the God pill. Take the white pill and the wisdom of the ages will be yours. The white pill reveals the eternal goodness of our eternal, righteous Creator – and Jesus Christ, the epitome of His righteousness.

The red pill and the white pill work in concert. The red pill awakens a person to the lies and absurdities of the present pagan utopia-craving age. It reveals the monstrosity of Marxism’s false gods and all the other false gods of this life. The white pill awakens a person to the real source of truth, justice and righteousness in this universe – the only true source of truth, justice and righteousness. His Name is Jesus.

Now, in his generation, Martin Luther was one of those whom the Lord Himself red-pilled. For, to his shock Luther discovered that the worldview and teaching he had received from the church of his time was false. Diligent study of the Scripture brought Luther to that conclusion. Several events of history propelled Luther and his conclusions to center stage and therefore the church attempted to pull Luther back into its fold. But Luther had discovered the real Jesus – the real righteousness of God. Therefore, he knew that the church had irretrievably mixed God’s gracious perfect righteousness in Jesus Christ with an equal reliance upon the flawed righteousness that comes from our human good works. There was no going back. Therefore, in the public arena Luther stood for the correct teaching of the gospel.

News of Luther’s red pill spread so that congregations priests, monks, nuns, city councils and even princes wound up taking it. But the result was not all good.

Indeed, at one point Luther and some others made a tour of local congregations and to their dismay discovered a miserable lack of knowledge, teaching and spirituality. Therefore, to correct the situation Luther sat down and wrote a white pill. It's known as his Small Catechism. It was designed for Christian fathers so that they could instruct their children in the basic knowledge of what it means to be a Christian.

The Small Catechism covers the Ten Commandments, The Apostles Creed, The Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, the Sacrament of Holy Communion, how to make confession of sins, how to pray on a daily basis, a table of duties in the Christian life and Christian questions with their answers. You can get Luther's Small Catechism as an app on your phone. It's available from Concordia Publishing House in Saint Louis.

For the remainder of the season after Pentecost we're going to take the white pill of Luther's Small Catechism. By the end we all hopefully will have a good grasp of the basics of Christianity. More than that, hopefully we will have all taken the red pill that awakens us to all the lies of our eternal enemy, Satan. Hopefully we will have taken the black pill so that we know where all the lies lead, both here on earth and for eternity. And hopefully we will have taken the white pill so that we will know and love our Creator and His Messiah, Jesus, who is our hope, our future and our life.

We will begin the catechism next week with the Ten Commandments. Therefore, in preparation I conclude this morning with a brief teaching on God's Law. God's Law is the expression of God's righteousness toward us and the righteousness He expects from us in the present age. However, because Adam and Eve fell from the Image of God to the Likeness of God, the Law cannot make us righteous. In the Likeness of God we absolutely believe we have the right to define good and evil for ourselves. Therefore, we easily reject God's Law of righteousness in favor of our own private laws. We easily reject God's goodness for some goodness of our own. This is the heart of sin that brings us condemnation in God's sight. Nevertheless, God's Law tells us what God's ways are and what He has intended for us.

Now the Law is not found just in the Old Testament. It's a mistake to think that way. Jesus spoke a great deal about God's Law. In fact, He made it stricter. The Apostles also spoke a great deal about the Law. So there is plenty of Law in the New Testament. Remember. Anything God commands is Law. Anything He promises is Gospel. Therefore, Law and Gospel are found throughout the bible.

Now on previous occasions we have spoken of the fact that God's Law has three basic functions. First, it's like the curb on a road that keeps the traffic in lane. This is its civil use. A Christian society uses God's Law to write civil laws that keep human behavior in the proper bounds set by our Creator.

Second, and most importantly, God's Law is like a mirror. When we look into it we see who we really are – rebels against God bound for the ultimate place of rebellion if we have rejected Jesus who is God's glorious righteousness for us.

Third the Law is like a guide, a roadmap for those saved by the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Christians need guidance in order to live righteously in Christ by the power of Lord Holy Spirit. The Law tells us what God's true good is. The Spirit will lead us in that true good.

So, God's Law is a curb, a mirror and a roadmap. Therefore, as we look into the Ten Commandments we're going to find these three aspects in each commandment. Therefore, fill us with Your Spirit, O Lord, so that we may see and believe your fundamentals, and so that we might be able to pass them on to others. Amen.

All Bible quotes are from the NIV.