

# **The Dangers of Critical Race Theory?**

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Imagine that you are a middle school student participating in a course called “Courageous Conversations About Race.” Through several weeks of instruction, you are exposed to a variety of new concepts. For example, as a white American, you are part of an institutionally racist society. This means you are automatically a racist, that you have “White Privilege,” and that people of color are perpetual victims of this racist society. These concepts may seem difficult to accept. But who are you to question them? Your teachers seem to know what they are talking about. So you choose to agree.

Unfortunately, this scenario is based on an actual program presented in a Virginia middle school in 2021. Similar stories are happening across our country. There is a growing movement under many guises—cultural sensitivity, diversity training, equity training, inclusiveness programs—all promoting a belief system called Critical Race Theory. You have probably heard educators, journalists, and politicians consistently deny that Critical Race Theory (CRT) is prevalent in our society. It is often said that no schools are teaching CRT. Yet, in reality, its concepts are commonly taught in school classes, corporate conferences, and government seminars. These concepts may not be presented as such, but they are truly CRT theory repackaged for mass consumption in our educational institutions. And because of its unrecognized pervasiveness, it has been subtly transforming our culture for decades.

## **What is CRT, and Where Did it Come From?**

CRT proponents say, “The critical race theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power.” It is a belief system that asserts that race determines all issues of life. In particular, racism exists to perpetuate the power structures of the dominant White race by repressing Blacks and people of color.

CRT is rooted in Marxism. For Karl Marx, history consists of a perpetual conflict between economic classes, basically between the labor force and the owners/managers of businesses. Marx believed that the world’s workers would overthrow the oppression of their capitalist oppressors and develop a classless society. While Marxism rejects God and divine providence, still this goal was believed to be inevitable. But after many years without the appearance of a classless society, some 20<sup>th</sup> century Italian and German Marxists developed a new theory. They defined the ongoing conflict as between society’s powerful, dominant oppressors and the oppressed masses. German academics brought this idea to America as Critical Theory—called “critical” because the theory questions and critiques society’s “oppressive” institutions. In the 1970s, another development occurred under the influence of law professor Derrick Bell. Bell maintained that the oppressive, dominant group in America is the White race, with Blacks and other people of color being the oppressed victims. Thus was born Critical Race Theory.

## The Dangers of CRT

In addition to Marxism, CRT was influenced by postmodernists and adopted their idea of language deconstruction. In this approach, standard terms and concepts are questioned, critiqued, and deconstructed—resulting in the complete redefinition of basic ideas. For example, racism is generally viewed as individual personal bias, prejudice, or discrimination based on ethnicity. However, in CRT, racism is systemic, structural, and institutional. Racism occurs in the institutions of society itself. For example, our American government and social systems are expressions of the racist White hegemony. Thus, any White person is, by definition, automatically racist. Your personal views and intentions do not matter. If you think you are not racist, then you are self-deceived. As CRT advocate Ibram X. Kendi says, “The very heartbeat of racism is denial. When people say they’re not racist, they’re sharing the words that white supremacists use.” At the same time, only Whites can be racist. Blacks and other people of color may have biases and prejudices. Yet, these do not rise to the level of being “racist” because they are not part of the dominant racist power structure.

CRT views everything through the lens of race—economics, history, education, religion, and moral values. For example, all American history is viewed as the struggle of the oppressed Black race against the oppressive Whites in power. They say our history did not begin in 1607 or even 1776. Instead, it began in 1619, when the first Africans arrived at Jamestown—initiating the entire history of systemic White domination. Since then, American society has existed to perpetuate the oppression of minorities. As Dr. Bell wrote, “Racism is an integral, permanent, and indestructible component of this society.” This means that our Constitution, government, and societal institutions are all inherently flawed, unjust, and immoral. It is noteworthy that this concept is often presented in the training of our educators. As a video from the Virginia Department of Education states, “This country was founded on racism and white supremacy.” And Virginia is not alone in promoting this viewpoint. This is why many in the “anti-racist” movement dishonor the U.S. flag, reject American heroes, and revolt against traditional American values. CRT is anti-American at its core.

Ironically, while CRT promises racial equality, it actually promotes genuine racism. What other conclusion is there when you claim that *all* Whites are racist oppressors, and *all* Blacks are powerless, oppressed victims? And for people of color, there is nothing they can do about it since the system is rigged. If they rise above their oppression, it is only because they are allowed to do so by the White majority, serving the dominant White agenda. Derrick Bell called this “interest convergence.” One example will illustrate the concept. Numerous studies indicate that people of color generally score lower on academic tests. The exception to this is Asian-Americans. Why does this demographic group consistently do well in school, especially in science and math? CRT proponents assert that it is because Whites *expect* Asians to do well academically, and their success serves the White agenda. Such a perspective is itself racially prejudiced and demeaning to successful Asian-Americans. Yet, this is what CRT proposes. Thus, it is evident that CRT is racist regarding both Whites (unredeemable racists) and Blacks (victims incapable of advancement based on merit).

As noted, CRT is heavily influenced by postmodernism. This includes the rejection of absolutes. Consequently, CRT rejects objective truth, logical thinking, and scientific reasoning. Indeed,

they think that math, science, and objective analysis are expressions of the prevailing White culture. Delgado and Stefanic state, “critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and neutral principles of constitutional law.” Or according to another writer, “An approach based on critical theory calls into question the idea that objectivity is possible or even desirable.” The entire scope of Judeo-Christian civilization, which asserts that reason is a gift from God and truth is absolute, is viewed as suspect and flawed.

## **CRT and the Church**

In its rejection of absolutes, CRT asserts that morals are individually determined and relative to the situation. This is how CRT advocates justify the more extreme actions perpetrated by some in the movement. What traditionally is viewed as immoral violence is considered necessary to overthrow an oppressive, unjust society. Riots, vandalism, arson, and even murder become acceptable in this worldview.

Religious absolutes are also viewed with suspicion. To declare that Christianity is the true religion is spiritually despotic. Further, since Christianity is the U.S.’s majority religion, it is also part of the oppressive, dominant culture. One teacher’s resource states, “The manifestations of Christian privilege as cultural imperialism are numerous” and “Doesn’t Christianity really, for most white Christians, imply *white*?” The absurdity of this assertion in light of the global nature of Christianity does not seem to matter to CRT adherents.

How then does the church respond to Critical Race Theory? There are several recommended courses of action. One, become knowledgeable about CRT. This article barely scratches the surface regarding this subject. You may want to start with two books with a Christian perspective: *Faultlines* by Voddie Baucham and *Black Eye for America* by Carol Swain and Christopher Schorr. Second, be proactive in promoting biblical views of race and racism. Defining and judging people by skin color is immoral and unbiblical. Affirm this. Three, become vocal in exposing CRT’s infiltration into many institutions in our country, most notably in schools. Speak up. Your voice can make a difference. Four, the church must address legitimate injustices in society. CRT does raise valid issues. However, it does not offer valid solutions. Christian love and the pursuit of godly justice does. Five, pray! We must recognize that this is a spiritual battle, requiring divine help.

Critical Race Theory has infiltrated our schools, universities, social institutions and even the church. It has subtly influenced the thinking of an entire generation of American. And it threatens to divide us—as a society, and as the church. Christians who are committed to a biblical view of life must become informed, and must take a stand against this insidious false worldview. Now is the time to stand up, and to act.

