

Should We Be Offended by Our Society?

This sounds like an irrelevant question because most Christians are offended by what they see in their society. I believe the main reason for them being offended by what they see happening around them is that they are offended for God's sake. Why do I say that? I used to do it myself.

There is something in Christians which says, "God hates sin and evil so as his representative I must hate it too. God is offended by what he sees, so I should also". This attitude is most likely a subconscious one because of the mindset and worldview of believers. Our attitude determines how we react to our surroundings. One causes the other: just like vegans are offended by people eating meat.

Recently there has been a flurry of objections to the release of the movie 'A Primeira Tentação de Cristo' or 'The First Temptation of Christ' on Netflix which portrays Jesus as gay. See these articles as examples:

- "Netflix: Turning Blasphemy Of Christianity Into Entertainment"
www.prophecynewswatch.com/article.cfm?recent_news_id=3701
- "Millions Signs Petition Against Netflix's Blasphemous Film "The First Temptation Of Christ"
godtv.com/the-first-temptation-of-christ-netflix

There were online petitions¹ to force Netflix to remove the video. Christian voice organisations wrote to their members² asking that they write to Netflix and demand that they remove the video. The reason for this was that they were offended, calling it blasphemy.

The tone of these objections showed that the writers were very offended. Here's an example:³

"As members of Netflix, we are writing to complain about the inclusion of the above in your movie selection, commencing 3rd December.

As by our recent phone call to you, we are instructing you to remove this film within seven days or we will call on all our networks to bombard you with complaints and requests before removing their memberships.

They may choose to do so anyway and here is the Netflix number for their convenient information:

Netflix telephone :1800 071 578

This sacrilegious film is believed to have upset scores of Christians and even people who don't profess a faith; and already has done so to date.

The timing of this film also shows the highest disrespect and disregard for those who hold Jesus as Lord and acknowledge Him as the Son of God; this movie reduces Jesus Christ to just a mere human being struggling with his own issues. This is not factual at all in representing or following the Biblical account of who Jesus Christ is.

We believe it would be more expedient for Netflix, in this competitive environment should you survive the next two years, to refrain from threatening and alienating a large proportion of your subscribers with the controversial "Gay Jesus Movie". It could very well be the last nail in your corporate coffin.

52% of Australians identify as Christian, many of those who would also hold strong fundamental, traditional beliefs viewing Jesus as Almighty God. Do you realize how offensive this is to air a film, particularly at this time of year, that ridicules and mocks who we, and others, believe is Creator God creating man in His own image. This is the time of year when most of us, Christian or not, look forward to celebrating the birth of Christ and find it degrading and an intrusion into what would otherwise be a sacred, joyous occasion.

We challenge you! Would you consider using your platform to promote a similar sexualized comedy about Mohamad and Islām? We would think NOT! Because of the deadly backlash and even acts of Terrorism around the world. They would consider such a film blasphemous and highly insulting. Remember the French cartoonist newspaper 'Charlie Hebdo' offices bombed (where people died). It's blatantly obvious that Islām scares you more than Christianity.

Perhaps a mass exodus of your subscribers might change your mind."

1 – "Take down the movie The First Temptation of Christ"

www.change.org/p/netflix-take-down-the-movie-the-first-temptation-of-christ

2 – Rise Up Australia (riseupaustalia.com.au/unplanned-movie)

3 – The Rise Up Australia letter on their website

As Kingdom citizens, we need to have the right perspective on how we respond to society. What should be our attitude to the evils of society?

To begin with, we have been advised by our King that the major reason for Australia's downhill trajectory is because we haven't aligned with Heaven.⁴ We're also not speaking up about topics that need Heaven's perspective.

“At the moment, the destiny of Australia is being manipulated by Left-wing elite – small minorities – because my people are not speaking up. They're not living as though they are not part of the world system. They have absorbed the world's system and align with it, and Australia is paying the penalty.”⁵

This means that our lives must align with Heaven, and that includes our mind and our attitudes. These two are manipulated by the enemy and highly influenced by the religious spirit. They are not the source we should rely on when reacting to what's happening around us instead of responding to it as Heaven would like us to. Without a fully renewed mind and a heart that's been completely changed so our attitudes are righteous, we cannot make righteous decisions.

Everything needs to originate from our spirit, but this is not the source of decisions that believer's usually make because of their spiritual immaturity. When we are continuously connected to Holy Spirit through our spirit and we are conscious of that connection because we are monitoring the communication from Heaven, we should be able to make better decisions about anything and everything. Before we react to society (such as with the same-sex marriage laws) we must hear from Heaven as to what our response should be. If nothing comes, our responsibility is to ask, “How do you want me to respond to this?”

Remember, sin is “missing the mark”⁶ – i.e. being out of alignment with Heaven on anything. Also, whatever is not done from faith is sin.⁷

So, knowing that we have to speak up, we need to do it Heaven's way, not our own way. This also means that we can't do things the church's way. It has to be the response our King would have us make so that we “speak up” properly.

What if you can't hear clearly what Holy Spirit wants you to do?

The golden rule in this case is: ‘Do nothing until you hear clearly, or do what is righteous’. By righteous it is inferred that it is done in a way that Heaven would approve. This means that the action or speech must be right AND it must come from the right heart attitude. Remember, it's all about the heart when it comes to our lives.⁸

When we react or respond to the evil in society, it must be from a pure heart. In other words, our heart attitude must be right. If we have taken on the religious mindset of righteous anger, we are no different to the environmentalists who rage against the government at protests because they believe it isn't doing enough to reduce anthropogenic climate change. Righteous anger is usually anger (or rage) that is masked by the religious spirit so that it appears ‘kosher’ to the person.

What examples do we have to help us answer this question?

Jesus – He is our prototype, being the first spirit-filled human being. Also being perfect (not born from the line of Adam) he is the one we should emulate. He did not rail against the evil society of his day or against the Roman oppressors. He didn't oppose such things as slavery, child exploitation, male

4 – “MESSAGE – Why Do You Say ‘Haven't You’? 29-6-2019”

canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/MESSAGE-Why-Do-You-Say-Havent-You-29-6-2019.pdf

5 – “MESSAGE-An Encouraging Message for Australia 18-11-2019”

canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/MESSAGE-An-Encouraging-Message-for-Australia-18-11-2019.pdf

6 – Strong's #266 (www.studylight.org/lexicons/greek/266.html)

or www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G266/hamartia.htm

7 – Romans 14:23

8 – 1 Samuel 16:7; Matthew 5:28; 12:34

dominance, animal exploitation, meat-eating or embezzling. He didn't even oppose adultery, but told adulterers not to do it when he spoke to them. His only outright opposition was of the Jewish religious leaders because they were leading God's people astray. He really gave them a 'full blast', but not out of anger as we would have imagined it.

Apostles – Likewise, Paul did not oppose the society he lived in, but he did warn believers against returning to their old sinful ways (That's according to the small record we have of his writings in the NT). Peter taught the same message:

1 Peter 4:15-16 (NKJV) – *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody⁹ in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.*

Like Jesus, Paul got heated with those who were trying to lead believers astray. These were Christians who wanted to take those freed from religion, back into religion again.

Galatians 5:11-12 (NIV) – *Brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate¹⁰ themselves!*

So really, we don't have any biblical precedent to be offended by the world system, only by religion which doesn't align with the Kingdom of Heaven.

Peter actually taught not to try to oppose secular society, wanting it to operate in godly ways. You won't find this in your usual English Bibles because translators avoid translating Peter's use of the word *allogotriepiskopos* as it was actually understood by 1st century believers. The Darby translation goes a little way to translating it properly:

1 Peter 4:15 (DARBY¹¹) – *Let none of you suffer indeed as murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or as overseer of other people's matters;*

Allogotriepiskopos doesn't mean 'meddler' in the way we think of the word. It means 'one who takes the supervision of affairs pertaining to others'¹² – i.e. makes themselves an overseer of others without their permission, telling them what to do and controlling their lives. In relation to the topic of this teaching, *allogotriepiskopos* was "a legal term for a charge brought against Christians as being hostile to civilized society, their purpose being to make Gentiles conform to Christian standards."¹³ So, Peter said "Don't be an *allogotriepiskopos*" wanting to force your society to operate in Christian ways.

Remember, sinners sin. That's what they do because they've chosen that life-path. There's no law forcing them not to sin. We're the ones who are to 'die' to sin because our sin-nature has been removed.

There you have it. We are to be salt and light¹⁴ making changes to the world around us through the co-operation of the Kingdom from within us. Our job is to co-operate with heaven as it expands the Kingdom so that it fills the whole Earth.¹⁵ So, yes, we should speak up about things that we see are wrong, but it should be done in the right way. And yes, we should write about things we see are wrong, but it must also be done in the right way. Preferably, we should keep our peace and only do what the Spirit shows us.

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9 – 'meddler'

10 – 'castrate'

11 – Darby Translation (First published in 1890 by John Nelson Darby) [Public Domain]

12 – Thayer's definition (www.studylight.org/lexicons/greek/244.html)

13 – Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words (www.studylight.org/dictionaries/ved/b/busybody.html)

14 – Matthew 5:13-16

15 – Daniel 2:34-35