

**Weary of the Activism**  
**Matt 13:24-30, Gal 6:7-10**

Brothers and sisters, this past week I went through the McDonalds drive thru and got an order of fries, I would have ordered a milk-shake as well, but what do you know – the ice cream machine was down for maintenance... Anyways, I ordered my fries and was then asked if *“would I like a bag with that? for 15cents?”* I was taken aback...

But then I remembered... as of January 16 Calgary implemented a Single-Use Items Bylaw that requires all businesses to provide cutlery, condiments and shopping bags ONLY upon request, and to charge a minimum fee for paper and reusable bags. Ah yes... God bless our activist mayor and God bless all her supporting city councilors.

Now technically By-laws are not the same as activism, because they are gov't policies and regulations – but its not incorrect to say that we have certain by-laws or gov't policies in place because of activism.

Last year, as a result of activism, the Federal Gov't classified single-use plastic items as “toxic” and under this misleading classification they were able to ban the use of certain toxic plastic items such as grocery bags. However, the activist origin of this plastic ban was so obvious that the Federal Court overturned this legislation last November.

And activism doesn't only result in bad governance, it also results in really foolish decisions. This past summer climate activists glued their hands to the runway at an airport in Hamburg Germany, and in Oct 2022 activists from “Just Stop Oil” threw tomato soup on a Van Gough painting in the London Gallery, and then glued themselves to the wall...

And the Extinction Rebellion Activists who tried to shut down the rush hour subway in London, by climbing on top of it back in 2019 were hauled off the train and manhandled by fed-up rush hour commuters who wanted to get on with their day.

So, foolish activist decisions easily turn into dangerous situations for the people and the public involved. In 2018

Greenpeace activists suspended themselves from a Vancouver bridge to stop oil tanker traffic. Eventually the RCMP rescue team had to help them get down safely.

And remember how the Wet-su-weten pipeline dispute in 2020 caused activist supporters to block and damage rail lines across Canada, shutting down trains for two weeks.

And did you know that since the false and irresponsible claims made in May of 2021, that 215 graves were discovered at the former residential school site in Kamloops BC, activist anger has resulted in 96 churches across Canada being burned or vandalized...

Activist anger also drives today's cancel culture. Mount Royal University here in Calgary, fired tenured Prof. Frances Widdowson because her research and study doesn't support indigenous activism. And when she was invited to speak at the University of Lethbridge last year, she was not able to participate in the debate because she was mobbed by a group

of angry activists who shut her down by screaming, and yelling and spitting on her.

And activism pushes people into morally questionable or repugnant positions.

We see well intentioned people protesting the civilian deaths in Gaza, ignorantly chanting slogans that call for the destruction of Israel, and unwittingly casting Hamas as victim and Israel as oppressor.

And we see not so well-intentioned people, like the director of the sexual assault center at the U of A, denying the testimony of Israeli women who were raped and tortured by Hamas.

Or the Swim Canada event in Barrie ON, where organizers allowed a 50-year-old man to compete with and share the locker room with young girls because he thinks he's a teen-age girl.

Or the Halton District School Board in ON, whose trustees determined it that it was ok for a male teacher to dress as a woman and flaunt a set of ridiculously oversized prosthetic breasts.

So last but not least, activism, pushed to its limits, leads to absurdity. So, we're back to the latest potential and absurd target of the Fed gov't activist inspired policies as they move on from banning plastic grocery bags to setting their sights on pizza ovens.

And its all so wearisome isn't it brothers and sisters? At least it is for me. If I'm being honest, out of all the topics we've looked at in this series, this is the one that wearies me the most.

I get tired of our watching our leaders make very foolish decisions, that bring terrible results for us. It's exhausting to hear well-polished lies continuously be put forward as truths. It's a burden to watch the public and the media willingly allow themselves be misled. It's tiresome to always be labeled as

homophobic, racist, or a denier when you stand up and speak out.

Part of this is just an occupational hazard for me, especially where I have to expose and confront and call people back from the foolishness and immorally that their activism has led to. As my particular calling has a vested interest in promoting God's truth and exposing lies.

So for myself, and maybe this true for you as well, when I become weary and tired of seeing all the results of activism piling up in our society - I feel compelled to push back against it! For me activism results in re-activism.

But maybe its different for you. Maybe you're the kind of person who is sympathetic to the issues and causes which activism co-opts; conservation and environmental protection, helping the poor and homeless and others on the margins of society, protecting the weak, showing tolerance, fighting for equality, justice, fairness and civil rights.

And perhaps you have become weary of the activism because it's overwhelming, every time you turn around a new cause has popped up, and you have to show your support, adjust your views, change your language and behaviors, and show that you're a good person supporting all these good noble causes and being on the right side of history.

You put solar panels on your home, you can't afford a Tesla but you were able to get a hybrid, you've been recycling, composting, helping refugees, you support a minimum wage increase, are glad to see apologies taking place for historical wrongs, you don't mind an occasional land acknowledgement, and so on...

But perhaps you're also growing weary because in spite of all you've already done, now you're being asked to decolonialize mathematics, whilst stating your pronouns, and being careful not to commit any micro-aggressions or misgender someone. Plus, you should advocate for people's right to medical suicide, and support harm reduction by decriminalizing hard drugs and so on...

And it has you wondering where is this all going? How did we get here? Going from fighting racism to now having hiring policies at the U of C that specifically hire on the basis of race?

Well brothers and sisters, whether you're weary of the activism because it makes you reactive, or you are weary because there's too much of it and it's just getting more and more absurd... Jesus' words from Matthew 11:28 are for you *"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest!"*

Brothers and sisters, bring your weariness with activism to Jesus this morning and give it all to Him, let us confess to our Lord in prayer all that makes us weary and burdened.

So, just as we learned last week, we respond to Jesus' offer of rest by coming to Him in prayer. Specific, intentional, confessional prayer where we articulate what we are burdened with and what is making us weary and we tell that to Jesus.

Praying about activism in this way takes it off our shoulders and places it in Jesus' hands and thus we can have rest because we know Jesus is more than capable of dealing with all the foolish, immoral and absurd results of activism, and also more than capable of addressing all the important issues that push people to activism.

And when we have spoken to Jesus about all that's on our hearts in regards to these matters brothers and sisters, then we must listen to what Jesus has to say about these matters.

And so, Jesus speaks a word of caution to those of us who are easily provoked to stand up and push back and fight against activism. 2 Timothy 2:4 *"No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer."*

Brothers and sisters, as followers of Jesus we are commanded by our Lord to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Trinity and teaching them to obey everything our Lord commanded. We must take care that we do not get

pulled into the civilian affairs of activism and as such get distracted and sidetracked from our discipling duties.

I have to remind myself of this often, to keep the main focus my main focus.

And Jesus also speaks a word of reassurance to those of us who are easily alarmed by the existential challenges and issues of our world faces. Gen 8:21-22 *"Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done. "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."*

Brothers and sisters, Jesus reminds us that God had an original plan for this world. And He also wants to remind us that regardless of the existential consequences of our sin, such as divine floods, or nuclear weapons, climate change, economic and social injustice, slavery and oppression, and so on... God has an agenda to restore His original plan for this world.

This is His promise that He will sustain the earth and the creational patterns which sustain life until He has fulfilled His agenda and completed His plan to bring in the New Creation, where the world is made new and all sickness, disease and suffering and death has been eradicated.

Jesus reminds us that activism is a prideful attempt to create our own new creation, to build our own utopia here on earth. We must be reminded to seek the Kingdom of God, to bear witness to the Kingdom of God, to enter into the Kingdom of God, proclaim the Kingdom of God... Brothers and sisters, we can't do this through activism.

So, let us be cautioned and reassured by our Lord's words to us, and learn how we must stay focused on the Kingdom as Jesus teaches in His parable of the wheat and the weeds that we read in Matt 13.

In this parable Jesus' compares the Kingdom of God to good seed that had been sown in good soil and was expected to sprout and grown into what the farmer had wanted to plant.

This is, as I mentioned earlier, God's original plans for His Creation; this world and its people.

But then something terrible happens. An enemy comes at night and scatters other seed, seed that will take root and grow into weeds, plants that are at odds with the purpose and goal of what was originally planted, plants that will compete for the water and sun and nutrients that the wheat needs.

Plants that will look very much like the wheat when it begins to grow. It wasn't until the field began to ripen that it became evident that an enemy had sown weeds in the wheat, and you could see the differences between the two.

So there are two way this speaks to us this morning brothers and sisters. The first that we have to be very discerning when jump on board with some sort of activist movement because it might not turn out to be what we thought it was, and the second is that we ought not to be surprised when the world we thought to be such a wonderful and beautiful place, reveals it's dark and ugly and evil aspects to us.

So firstly, be cautious when you are attracted to join a movement that looks to be promoting something that seems biblical, that wants to change the world to be the kind of place God intended it to be. Give it some time, it eventually ripens into something else – it's a weed, its not the wheat.

For example, many Christians found Karl Marx's description of communism very attractive; *"From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."* It sounds very much like Jesus' words in Luke 12:48 *"to whom much is given, much will be required."* And Paul's description of the Church in 1 Cor 12:7 *"Now to each one the [gifts] of the Spirit [are] given for the common good."*

But if you give time for such fine sounding statements to fully mature, it becomes very obvious that Communism does not produce the fruit of the Christian faith, but in fact whenever Communism takes root, it has set about to try and destroy the Christian faith.

And many Christians are very attracted to the ideal of "social justice" as it looks like a good way to express biblical teachings. Ps 82:3-4 *"Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."* and Mark 12:31 *"Love your neighbor as yourself."*

But give the ideal of social justice enough time to ripen and bear fruit and impact society and now we see that it has produced something very different from a Christian society. Social justice declares restricting marriage to only a man and a woman is unjust, that biological and social gender roles are oppressive – people should be free from the tyranny of biology.

And many Christians also find conservatism very attractive. Preserving and upholding fiscal prudence, and our Judeo-Christian heritage, especially in the face of the absurd immorality of activism, feels like we are being faithful to Jesus and obedient to God. Hebrews 13:8 *"Jesus Christ is the same*

*yesterday, today, and forever.” And Acts 5:29 “It is better to obey God rather than men.”*

But give any Conservative gov’t and politician enough time in power, and conservatism soon ripens into conserving their grip on power, abusing their office and compromising principles and promises, but all behind closed doors... in order to maintain the appearance of still being Christian.

Brothers and sisters, we must learn to discern in this way so that as Colossians 2:4 says *“no one may deceive us by fine-sounding arguments.”*

And when we see how things ripen differently than what we expected brothers and sisters, what do we do? Well in Jesus’ parable when the servants see the weeds flowering amongst the wheat, they offer to go and pull out the weeds.

And that is our instinct as well – whether it be through pushing back against activism, or joining up to do something about climate change or homelessness. We’re ready to go

and pull out those weeds and rid the world of them so that things will be like God originally wanted it to be.

If we can just educate, motivate and legislate... people will realize the truth from lies, we can address the roots problems of poverty, we can eliminate inequality and discrimination.

But, brothers and sisters – the master’s reply to the servants and Jesus’ reply to us is wait... wait, don’t go pulling up the weeds because if you do you, there is a chance you will pull up the wheat as well, and that’s not a chance I want to take. We can easily sort out the weeds and the wheat at the harvest time.

And since this is a parable that teaches us about the nature of the Kingdom of God, we should understand this command to wait, not as a restriction on living out our faith, but as instruction to anticipate and look forward to the return of Jesus Christ when He will establish the Kingdom of God and weed out all our sin, and wickedness and evil, and sickness and disease and death will be no more.



We may be weary of activism trying create utopia brothers and sisters and Jesus gives us rest from that, but Jesus also gives us the encouragement of Gal 6:9 *“do not become weary in doing good!”* Why? Aren't we supposed to wait with pulling up weeds? Aren't we supposed to wait for the Kingdom? Yes, but Gal 6:9 ties this all together for us. The encouragement continues on saying *“for at the proper time we will reap a harvest, if we do not give up!”*

You see biblical waiting is not sitting around twiddling our thumbs, being passive, not doing anything, not living out faith. Biblical waiting is anticipating, preparing, and pointing ahead to what is coming. It is living and acting in expectation, just as you would when you are waiting for the birth of a child.

We are not to go pulling up the weeds before the harvest, but there's still good that we can do in the meantime. We can water the wheat, fertilize it, mend the fences around the field, put up scarecrows to scare the birds away, prepare the equipment for harvest time, sharpen the sickle, get the threshing floor ready...

Now I may be pushing the metaphor in the parable here, but you get the point. There's lots of activity for us to be active, while waiting for the Lord's return, without being activists. As Gal 6:10 says *“as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”*

So let me give you three ways to do good and actively steward God's creation in expectation of the Harvest.

First, is the way of Wisdom. You can discern if you are doing good versus falling for activism by evaluating if what you are doing conforms with God's creational designs. If it follows God's designs keep doing it – do not give up. You are preparing for the Harvest with the Holy Spirit.

Second, is the way of the Word. Is your activity and life in obedience to the revealed Word of God in scripture?

Wherever you notice it is not informed by, or conformed to the Word, you must work to re-form it according to scripture.

Thus, we are actively re-formed and always reforming, in expectation of being ready for the Harvest with our Lord Jesus.

Third, is the way of Worship. Activism centers on and worships humanity, it is idolatry. But stewardship formed by Wisdom and the Word elevates God the Father in true worship.

Does your activity acknowledge His sovereignty, place Him at the center, focus on the glory, honor and praise that He is rightfully due? This is preparing for the Harvest, for an eternity in the New Creation worshipping Almighty God.

And if you find that you've been deceived and become complicit in some part of activism, remember brothers and sisters – the Lord offers us forgiveness as well in order that we may have rest. Confess your activism to Him, ask His forgiveness for it and you will be forgiven and made right.

So brothers and sisters, if you are weary of activism – come to Jesus, not only will you find rest, but you will receive your true

purpose and calling as a steward of God's creation in this world.

As you go about your life – waiting for our Lord's return, follow the ways of wisdom, word, and worship, this will prevent you from straying into activism and keep you focused on stewardship, doing good and persevering until the appointed time when we will receive a harvest for what we have done.

Brothers and sisters, may your yoke be easy and your burden light as you seek the Kingdom, enter into the Kingdom, and proclaim the Kingdom - pointing ahead to what is coming next... The New Heavens and the New Earth with the undisputed reign of God. Amen.