

The Word's Eye View

The Word's Eye View is a newspaper column written by
Dr. James Modlish

Am I a Racist? (Article 64)

I suppose that I am, after all, a racist; I just didn't know it. When such a distinguished personality as Jimmy Carter declares it to be so, it must be true regardless of my personal history which has always indicated the contrary. Jimmy, along with some other leading Democratic dignitaries, has asserted that disagreement with the president's policies is tantamount to racial bias. No matter that I was opposed to the majority of Mr. Carter's policies as well, and he is whiter than I am.

I have over the past forty plus years pastored people of every race including a number of black folks and have had black preachers occupy our pulpit. In all cases these were remarkable relationships that I shall long cherish. To be sure, the churches that I led were predominately white in communities that reflect that demographic, but when any minority visited our congregation, we bent over backwards to make them feel welcome. Now that I have been alerted to my true feelings, my past behavior was probably some form of passive aggressive sentiment that actually masked a deeper resentment toward anyone who didn't look like me. It may be that past overtures of hospitality were in reality suppressed emotions of guilt over the slavery issue. Setting aside the fact that neither I nor any of my ancestors have ever owned slaves, not do I know anyone who has ever been a slave, extended cordiality was undoubtedly a covert psychological effort of reparations to assuage some form of liability. Most certainly, Carter and company could dig up some sicko shrink to verify this diagnosis. The truth is the Democrats are reaching to the bottom of the supposition well in a desperate attempt to alleviate some of the opposition that has risen toward their spending proposals.

The Jews in Jesus' day possessed some serious prejudice against any ethnic group that did not echo their religious and political views. The Samaritans who had manufactured a hybrid Jewish religion and culture were some of the most hated by the orthodox. (John 4:9) Jesus, at first glance, seemed to authenticate this conviction. In Matthew 10 He commissioned His disciples to go and preach, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils. This charge was preceded by these unusual words—"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Jesus must have been a racist! Before we arrive at hasty Carter conclusions, it should be noted that five chapters later (Matthew 15) the Lord violated His own commandment and ventured up the Phoenician coast which was considered pagan territory. While there, He encountered a woman who begged for mercy on behalf of her daughter who was experiencing some grave devil trouble. Jesus' initial response is staggering: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The lady would not be discouraged and proceeded to worship the Lord, going so far as to identify herself as a spiritual dog. The Master marveled at her faith and rewarded it with fulfillment of her request.

A short time later the Lord once again abdicated from His original position by traveling into Samaria (John 4) only to encounter an outcast woman at a well. After a discussion about the differences and disagreements of their religions, the Lord revealed His true identity to her. She was so impressed that she convinced the local villagers to investigate Christ's claims, and He in turn spent two more days

with people who had historically taken issue with His instruction.

The fog lifts as one journeys through the New Testament. The “for God so loved the world” of John 3:16 should settle the issue. Clearly what is before us is not racial on the part of Jesus but rather a matter of timing. Israel, as keeper of the law and covenants, were given first opportunity to receive their Messiah. John sums it up with, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” (John 1:11) In like manner the growing grievance of the American public has nothing to do with racism but everything to do with the developments of the past nine months. Mr. Obama could not have been elected if it were not for a majority of white voters. Are we to believe that this electoral block has mysteriously been influenced by Klan doctrine during this short span?

Jimmy Carter’s expressions of sympathy are nothing more than a desire to remain relevant in any national dialogue. The former Sunday School teacher should know the history of international animosity against Israel. During the 70’s Carter labored at forging a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt which was admirable, but from that time forward he has consistently been in lock step with the Palestinian vision. Mr. Obama avowed that America should approach foreign diplomacy “by listening, because all too often the United States starts by dictating.” That olive branch has been passed to all nations except Israel. That tiny nation has been ordered by our president to freeze all settlement activity. What’s the issue? Charles Krauthammer sums it up well: “No natural growth means strangling to death the thriving towns close to the 1949 armistice line, many of them suburbs of Jerusalem, that every negotiation over the past decade has envisioned Israel retaining. It means no increase in population which means no babies. Or if you have babies, no housing for them---not even within the existing town boundaries. Which means for every child born, someone has to move out. No community can survive like that. The obvious objective is to undermine and destroy those towns -even before negotiations.” Can you imagine such an edict targeting New Orleans or Atlanta?

When Jimmy ignores this kind of blatant racism, it is impossible to take seriously anything he has to say on the subject!