Twitter Thread by Chris Traffanstedt

Chris Traffanstedt
@CTraffanstedt

Let me say a few word's about the Trueman article.

It presents itself as dealing with Critical Race Theology (CRT) but it really is trying to deal with evangelicals and race. Which is a need, but the way the article is structured it is not helpful, it misconstrues CRT and misunderstands the present call to address the race issue.

Trueman asserts "the issue of race has played Banquo's ghost...an unsettling, unwelcome, somewhat passive guest." If Trueman truly sees race as the unwanted "guest" at our evangelical feast, why not address the topic of race rather than jumping on the bandwagon to attack CRT?

Does he think that CRT is the issue causing the race problem? Is he really turning a deaf ear to the Black Christian Community who have said all along this is not about CRT? But he must think that CRT is the problem. Yet he shows a misconstrued version of this academic discipline

Even before addressing CRT, he misrepresents the power of CRT with the dramatic statement, it "has become the shibboleth: Are you for it? Or are you against it?" This is a misinterpreting of the issue. Those on the side of racial justice are not seeking to make CRT a shibboleth.

Quite the opposite. Those calling for racial equity are actually seeking to call people to see that CRT is not the issue; it is not even on our radar. The only reason any of us have to address CRT (like now) is when it is presented wrongly and stressed to be our shibboleth.

Trueman misrepresents CRT speaking of Pastor John Onwuchekwa. He points out how it has become a major issue in the SBC & says "Onwuchekwa took his Atlanta congregation out of the Convention because of what he regarded as...failure to treat racial issues with sufficient urgency."

Trueman speaks as if it were CRT as to why Pastor Onwuchekwa and his church left the SBC, but it had nothing to do with CRT. Rather, it was the lack of concern for race issues and white nationalism that led to this departure.

Trueman also mentions the SBC seminary president's controversy and, once again, he misconstrues the opposition as being concerned for CRT. Again, the opposing side was not concerned over CRT but actually over how CRT was being misconstrued and missing the real issue of racism.

Trueman gets to a bit of CRT and makes the following statement: “Its basic claims…that racism is systemic or that being non-racist is impossible, are not conclusions drawn from arguments. They are axioms.." This is just a lack of understanding CRT; it is academic laziness.

Trueman constructs CRT in the same manner as many others of late misunderstanding what CRT is & what it actually says. CRT is not the all-inclusive worldview that he presents, it is a broad academic subject flowing from the legal system that has many different positions & voices.

Indeed, CRT is not biblical in all that it says nor is it consistent, but neither is it merely based upon mere axioms. CRT flows out of historic facts that have led to some of their axioms. For example, systemic racism is not argued to be merely an axiom but, rather...

...it is seen as a proven historical fact (in criminal justice, housing, the wealth gap, voting, etc.) and, because of this, it becomes an axiom, not the other way around.

Trueman then banters along with, “Critical race theory is the Marxist horse, ridden by the jockey of...

identity politics rather than the jockey of class warfare.” Much can be said here but I will say, maybe it could just be a horse ridden in a way that he does not like and he calls it Marxist. Just calling something Marxist does not make it so. Not all of CRT is Marxist in nature!

Trueman shifts away from CRT & turns to Jamar Tisby. We must note that there is no talk about CRT here; I guess he could not find it in Tisby’s writing. But he does question Tisby’s statement one cannot hold “onto white Christianity and Jesus, it cannot be both.”

What is Trueman doing here? Is Trueman trying to relate Tisby to CRT or just disagreeing with Tisby’s accusation of white supremacy saturating American churches? But, note, all Trueman is doing here is putting forth a dramatic challenge and there is no refutation of Tisby at all.

If this was not bad enough he accuses Tisby “Tisby is not merely claiming that the outward aesthetics and doctrinal emphases of white Christianity pose problems for black Christians; he is effectively claiming that Christians who are white cannot be Christians in any true sense.”

All I can say is, WOW! How can Trueman have such a misunderstanding of what Tisby is saying? It is obvious what Tisby is saying here: that if we do not see the sinful taint of white supremacy on our Christianity in America, then we must hear the warning to ponder what type of...

...Christianity we have embraced. He is not saying, if you are white you cannot be a Christian. Again, this using dramatic language!

Two final points to sum up this analysis of Trueman’s article. First, he caricatures the issue by saying “The two sides of the race debate are now

well-established in American Christianity..." This is one of the most dangerous & untrue points in the article. Really, just two sides? So is that Black vs. white? Or is that CRT vs. white? This is just unconstructive and truly helps produce greater division.

Finally, Truman states: “This brings me to the most serious problem with the way today’s conversation about race is happening: It is not happening.” Here, I cannot agree more. The conversation about race really is not happening.

However, his belief is that this conversation is not happening because no one is allowing critical CRT articles to be published. This is strange and far from the table that needs to be encircled for race talks. The majority of things being written right now are attacking CRT.

We do not need more attacks, we need more discussion about racism. It also shows the problem with Trueman’s mindset that race issues will be solved if CRT is destroyed. Honestly, if we are going to deal with race in our society, it is not going to come through talking about CRT.

It is going to come through talking about race. This is exactly what we have been asking for and it is needed. So let us toss aside our misconstrued ideas of CRT and let us turn to truth and allow God to bring us to the table and truly address the race problem that is America.