Twitter Thread by The Fudgelist



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@thefudgelist

Certain Christians on the right are correct to recognize that the moral discourse surrounding our politics is largely a cynical point-scoring exercise, an attempt to secure the moral high ground through discrediting opponents, rather than a serious, honest, and humble endeavour.

As such, the discourse is generally more concerned with power than with truth. Extracting admissions of guilt from your political opponents enables you to demand that they act in a chastened and deferential subjection to you as moral arbiter. Almost everyone is playing this game.

Many evangelical Christians are excessively nice people, whose form of faith is itself profoundly oriented around their scrupulosity and overactive consciences. They are also very naïve, and don't understand that they are perfect marks for this game. They can easily be gaslit.

Tell them that they are complicit in the worst atrocities and it is highly likely that they will accept your claims. Accusations of racism are especially powerful here, as given our nations' histories, they can bear genuine measures of guilt.

Their instinctive response, as nice, conformist, conflict averse, and obliging people, when faced with accusations by a person of colour is deference, affirmation, and contrition. Critical assessment of the very often largely unfounded accusations being made is suspended.

On the other hand, there are those who keenly feel the injustice and the power dynamics of the discourse, the way that others demand their deference through imputing guilt to them, often through the most tenuous associations, while acting with little regard for morals themselves.

To such people, the shamelessness, willful offensiveness, and unchastened pride of Donald Trump were appealing antibodies to the deep dysfunctionality and untruth of the prevailing discourse of the original guilt of whiteness, for instance.

Such persons will often refuse to confess or address any of the faults of their own side, lest they cede an inch of the moral high ground to the opposing political side. To them admitting guilt is weakness, the weakness they see in nice evangelicals who defer to any accuser.

Yet a healthy Christian moral discourse has truthful wrestling with our own guilt and the guilt of our 'sides' at its very heart. It recognizes that one of the titles of the devil is the Accuser and the way false guilt leads to bondage.

However, it also recognizes that Christ frees us from the tyranny and the fear of guilt in a way that honestly enables us to deal with its reality. Inherent in forgiveness is a truthful recounting of and reckoning with past sin that liberates us from the bondage of guilt.

Where guilt is reckoned by our accusers, it leads to bondage. Where guilt is denied, truth is not told and sin festers and grows. When our guilt is dealt with by God, we can approach the words of accusers very differently. We will also practice bringing our sins into the light.

Donald Trump offered an illusory form of deliverance from the accusers that tyrannize the uneasy Western conscience. The Christian response to Trump's vision is telling the truth about our sins and bringing our society and our movements into the light.

Yet this Christian approach also stands in opposition to the politics of power through guilt and deference that presents itself as his true alternative.