

# Voices: Words of grace in times of rage, Part 2

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[In Part 1](#), I pointed out ways I believe “activism” via social media is largely pointless and even sometimes sinful. So far as I can tell, making and sharing posts on social media doesn’t do much good in actually addressing the pressing societal problems of our day.

But does that mean Christians, when grieved or outraged by current events, can only sit back in silence, saying and doing nothing?

Not at all. On the contrary, there are fruitful ways Christians can address the issues affecting our country and our world.

Not everything I am about to propose is biblically required. I do not want to bind others’ consciences wrongly. So, I will do my best to distinguish between what is scripturally mandated and what I personally think is beneficial. Nevertheless, I believe all the following options are better than venting our rage on the internet.

## Recognizing our limitations

First and foremost, we need to recognize and accept the limitations we live under as finite, fallible, sinful human beings (Psalm 103:13-16, 146:3; Isaiah 64:6; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; James 4:13-15).

We are not God. We are not all-knowing, all-powerful, or all-good. We cannot know everything about every major social issue or public crisis. We can only do so much to concretely address those issues and crises, and we will never provide an ultimate resolution. Even when we can intervene,

there is always a risk our interventions will make things worse.

This is not cynicism or defeatism. This is honesty in the face of reality. If we forget we are finite, fallible, and sinful, we will grossly overestimate our ability to understand and address the problems in our world, leading to pride, poor decisions, burnout, and despair.

It's perfectly normal to feel overwhelmed by everything going wrong around us. But if we assume, even unconsciously, we are somehow able and responsible to fix it all, we will drive ourselves over the edge. Before we do anything else, we must adopt the appropriate mindset about what we can and can't do to address the world's problems.

## **Take it to the Lord in prayer**

As Christians, we understand although we are not all-knowing, all-powerful, or all-good, we worship the God who is (Isaiah 40:12-31, 43:10-13). Furthermore, we understand God has already taken action to provide the ultimate resolution for all the world's problems.

Even though humanity has plunged the world under the curse of sin and death through our rebellion against God, the Lord has sent his eternal, divine Son into the world in human flesh as the man Jesus Christ. And after Jesus lived a perfectly righteous life, he died on the cross for our sins in our place before rising from the dead in glory, triumphing forever over sin and death (John 3:13-21; Romans 1:18-5:21; Ephesians 2:1-10; Philippians 2:5-11).

And because of what Christ has done, we are guaranteed one day Christ will return to judge sin and usher in the New Heavens and the New Earth, which will be eternally free from sin and death, where we will live forever with God, enjoying perfect peace and joy forevermore—if we simply turn from our sins and trust in Christ (2 Peter 3:8-13; Revelation 21:1-22:5).

In a world increasingly gripped by anxiety and despair, believers in Jesus Christ know there is a happy ending guaranteed. Even when we are utterly powerless to address the world's problems, we can always encourage ourselves and others by turning attention to the saving work of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:15).

But even now, we can turn to the Lord for help and receive at least partial relief and deliverance. We can and should appeal to our all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-good God through prayer.

Though the unbelieving world may scoff at "thoughts and prayers," we Christians know prayer really does work—and is in fact commanded in Scripture (Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; James 5:13-18).

## **Where the rubber meets the road**

The above responses—embracing an appropriate mindset, proclaiming the hope of the gospel, and prayer—are the most important and helpful steps Christians can take in responding to the major public crises and controversies of our day.

That said, there is plenty more Christians can do—but not necessarily must do—in response to serious social problems.

First, in the United States, we can vote. If you are eligible, you can register to vote, research the issues and candidates, and vote. Don't just vote in presidential elections. Vote in other federal, state, and local elections. Voting is one of the most concrete ways you can influence public policy.

Second, we can volunteer. While the opportunities available depend on where one lives, if there's a major social issue or ongoing crisis you care deeply about, there are usually local organizations and campaigns to which you can give your time and energy that will make a meaningful impact in

your community. Above all else, you can and should serve in your own local church.

Third, we can donate. Organizations and campaigns need money, and even a little bit can go a long way. If you want to make a real difference, even a small financial donation can do a surprising amount of good. It will certainly do more good than an angry spiel on Facebook.

One more point: Given our limitations described above, we need to recognize the importance of local action. Your highest moral obligation is to your own immediate community, not to a community on the other side of the country or the other side of the world. If you try to help somewhere else but ignore your neighbor in need right down the road, your priorities need to be reoriented.

## **Bringing it all together**

It's easy and tempting to spend hours "doomscrolling" on the internet, consuming massive amounts of (mis)information about public affairs, and screaming into the maelstrom of meaningless noise that is social media.

But you should save yourself the exhaustion, wasted time, and potential for sin. There are vastly healthier and more productive ways to "speak up" and take action.

However, even as we strive to make a meaningful difference in the world, we must always remember ultimate salvation only comes through Jesus Christ. Even our best efforts can't save the world. But Jesus can, and he will. He has already put his plan into motion and guaranteed its outcome. We can rest in the work of Jesus Christ and point others toward him.

There are good things we can do to address social problems and public crises, but trusting in Jesus and telling others about him is certainly the

best thing we can do.

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