

The Postmodern Vocabulary

I. The Definition of Postmodernism

The force of the Postmodern Worldview first began to be felt at the street level during the turbulent 60's. It was a reaction against the worldview of the Enlightenment which believed that through logic and science a universal explanation could be achieved which would explain all of existence. Modernism, another name for the Enlightenment, made great advances in science and technology for which we all benefit, but was doomed to failure in its quest for a metanarrative (a worldview that would explain all of life) because you can never arrive at an infinite by starting with the finite (in contrast, the Christian worldview starts with the Infinite God). The essence of postmodernism is that there is no true truth! Truth is a construct which arises out of a group. What is true for one group is not true for another. Hence, what is true for you may not be true for me. The question then arises: *How do you settle disputes if there is no truth or logic? It happens by political power. That's why, in a postmodern world everything becomes, and is political.* And, this political power comes by one group oppressing another: victims vs. oppressed.

II. The Importance of Words in the Postmodern World.

- A. It is difficult to over emphasize the importance of words for a PM. Words, weaponized words, are the primary way one group oppresses another group. PM seeks to abandon free speech and replace it with speech codes. Have you noticed how people can lose lucrative jobs by using certain words? Have you noticed the increase in censorship ,i.e., *word police* on campus? In literary criticism PM seeks to discover how the author uses words to oppress certain groups.
- B. Perhaps the hardest thing to deal with in the contemporary scene for a modern, or a traditional Christian, is to deal with is the infinite hypocrisy. PMs also use words to suppress what they don't like! Since words are weapons it's important for Christians to understand the game. There is a whole new vocabulary out there that we need to grapple with.

III. The Vocabulary of Postmodernism

- A. *Identity Politics*: Each group has its own cultural identity, race, religion, sexual orientation ethnic origin, its own truth, etc. PM is obsessed with groups. All individuals are appraised as to their group identity, sometimes to a hyper-identity, for example: liberal black women lesbians . To engage in identity politics involves discerning what injustices a certain group has suffered and what group is the source of the oppression. Much of this class consciousness is textbook Marxism. *The result of IP is the fracturing of the common ground on which a liberal democracy is based.*
- B. *Symbolism over Substance*: There are many examples: a person wearing a cross but with zero understanding of its meaning. It is common for PMs to telegraph the causes or victim groups they support with symbols. Several years ago prominent Hollywood celebrities wore a certain color ribbon to signal their support for gay-lesbian groups. It was awareness perhaps, but did nothing to literally help their cause, *but it was an important virtue signal, as you are judged according to right feelings.*
- C. *Virtue Signaling*: This one is closely related to the previous. It was like at the time of Christ when the wealthy would make a public display of throwing a lot of coins in the bin in the Temple in Jerusalem (Mk. 12:41). It made a loud noise of course. And they did it so their great charity would be noticed. Hollywood celebrities (I frequently pick on them for a reason) often feel guilty for their vast wealth and are known for virtue signaling. So many examples of this each day.
- D. *Dog Whistle*: A real dog whistle is only heard by dogs. Since PM are obsessed with groups, and they see groups as constantly trying to oppress other groups, a DW is when one group uses a code word to target

another group that only his group understands. White southerners are regularly charged with using words that are *dog whistles*, words that are meant to demean African Americans.

- E. *Politically Correct*: This has become a popular word in our PM world. You are *politically correct* when you hold the right political positions of the group in power or wants to be in power. If you are not PC you may not get the job you desire even if you have superior qualifications. Example: It would be very difficult to get an acting job in Hollywood if you were a conservative. PC is designed to silence an opposition group.
- F. *Cultural Appropriation*: The adoption or co-opting, usually without acknowledgment, of cultural identity markers such as a form of music, food, or attire, associated with, or originating in minority communities by people or communities with a relatively privileged status. It happened recently when white Democrat leaders in Washington donned a distinctly article of African apparel.
- G. *Deconstruction*: If there is no truth PMs can totally change what actually happened in history. For years the main history textbook used in high schools and colleges was written by Howard Zinn, a communist. In this widely used textbook he interprets all events from a Marxist perspective. It is the undoing of previous interpretations. It also applies to literary criticism. Ultimately, nothing in the past can be known objectively. The left's war on history is the same as deconstructing history.
- H. *Egalitarianism*: You really have to understand this concept to grasp PM culture! PMs view all world problems as a problem of inequality. If only everyone were equal, utopia would ensue, hence the efforts of progressives to see that everyone is equal. Women should be equal to men, fairness for all, etc., and sometimes radicals even include nature (animals).
- I. *White Privilege*: is a group stereotype. It states that white privilege, people with white skin, naturally have societal privilege and benefits over non-white people. PMs would say this goes all the way back to European colonialism and the slave trade. *Because of white privilege all light-skinned people are inherently racist.*
- J. *Progressive*: A progressive is another term for someone who is politically liberal and seen as being politically correct, that is, they want to eliminate oppression (usually by any means) of minority groups. They see strong central government (a statist) as Messianic and the ultimate authority. They see themselves as being on the morally high ground.
- K. *Sustainable Development*: must be seen in the light of globalism (see below). It is the initiative of the United Nations, a Marxist idea of equitable development, management, and dispensing of natural resources by a central government. Example: all bodies of water including the ponds, cattle tanks, on a farm or ranch would come under the management of the government, i.e, world government. *A PM does not believe that a market economy is sustainable.*
- L. *Triggered*: The use of certain words, written or spoken, that can offend someone and cause anxiety or insecurity. Again, this relates to the PM idea that words are weapons of oppression, hence, we have *word police* and *speech codes*.
- M. *Safe Place*: Many liberal, progressive, postmodern campuses seek to provide safe places for ultra sensitive students who might be *triggered* by conservative ideas or hear words that will cause anxiety.
- N. *Antifa*: They first came to our attention in the riots in Charlottesville, VA in 2017, but it has its origin in the communist party of Germany. It is a group that claims to be anti-fascist, but is in actuality clearly resembles the Brownshirt fascists in Hitler's Germany. The only major difference is that they would be globalists, and the BS's were nationalists. This violent group is large, is growing, and seeks to overthrow the U.S government. It is highly organized and funded. *The great mystery is who is doing the funding?* These

rioters and anarchists are professional. They wear masks and dress in black attire. Many who have been arrested have proven to be professors and school teachers. Their goals from their own literature are identical to the communist literature of the 1930's. *If you oppose them you are automatically a fascist!*

- O. *Black Lives Matter (BLM)*: The statement: *Black Lives Matter* is certainly true as *all live matter* regardless of skin color. However, the organization, BLM seems to be only a useful title. Like Antifa, BLM is an antichristian Marxist organization given to violence. Interestingly enough, most of the members appear to be white! Many American corporations and universities endorse this group and single out for punishment those who do not.
- P. *Lookism*: If your facial expression indicates in a negative way a contrary reaction to something that is politically correct, or, if your facial expression indicates a positive assent to a joke that is demeaning to an oppressed group, you are guilty of *lookism*. The classic example is the young man, Nick Sandmann who appeared to have a smirk on his face standing next to a native American that was beating on a drum. The news media defamed the young student and he sued the network (CNN) for millions and won his case.
- Q. *Specieism*: One of the main tenets of PM and progressive politics is radical egalitarianism (see above). If you express a view that man is somehow more special than others species you are guilty of specieism.
- R. *Group Think*: It is extreme consent and conformity to a group's values, or politically correct ideas. There is probably no better example of GT than Hollywood, or the faculty of a liberal university. In GT you go overboard to show your political correctness by virtue signaling. Even in the 80's when I attended a university every faculty member was zealous for some politically correct cause.
- S. *Critical Race Theory (CRT)*: is a race theory with origins in Marxism. It presupposes that everything in American society, i.e., every institution is inherently racist and that race itself, instead of being biologically grounded and natural, is a socially constructed concept that is used by white people to further their economic and political interests at the expense of people of color. CRT theorists often accuse Christianity as being a *white man's religion*, and Christians ought pursue a more progressive theology. CRT became a hot issue last year when the Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution to promote CRT as an analytical tool. Some see it as the proverbial camel's head in the tent door!
- T. *Micro-aggression*: a micro-aggression can be words or behavior that show hostility to a person or a group, and may trigger someone. Using a banned word; not wearing a mask, not being environmentally conscious, shows that you are selfish and not concerned for the group (i.e., the collective), or by flying a Confederate flag, or a white person wearing black face..
- U. *Multiculturalism*: being tolerant of other cultures whereby you demonstrate your sensitivity in such a way that you denigrate your own. The underlying assumption is that one culture is as good as another. A PM sets out to be tolerant until their own moral code is crossed.
- V. *Cancel culture*: Cancel everything in the culture that is oppressive. Tons of examples of this in 2020. Getting rid of statues of white men who are perceived as racists. Banning movies and books, etc. Some are almost comical and extreme.
- W. *Woke*: What does it mean to be *woke*. It means you *get it*. You understand that all light-pigmented people are inherently racist and need to repent. You are open to progressive Christianity, a government that will force egalitarianism. You use the right vocabulary and vote for leftist causes: open borders, extreme environmental regulations, promote globalism, etc. *Woke Theology* originally was a movement pretty much confined to Black churches from which the term arose. It is a movement away from what they would characterize as *White Evangelicalism*. It emphasizes political activism toward social justice, and again bears a strong resemblance to the Marxist-leaning Liberation Theology. **Wokeness is the religion that Evangelical and Bible churches are converting En Masse!** (For a more complete explanation find this article online:

Wokeness: Old Religion in a New Bottle.)

- X. *Speech codes*: Most government controlled universities have speech codes. Break the code and there is seldom a second chance; you are booted!
- Y. *White Fragility*: The term is the title of a currently best-selling book by Robin DiAngelo. A major premise of the book is that individual rights, humanism, and the democratic process are ideas that lead to white supremacy. The author believes that the more white people deny racism the more guilty they are.
- Z. *The 1619 Project*: The project was conceived by a writer of the *NY Times*. It's major thesis is that the founding of the American Colonies was for the purpose of some White English getting rich by holding slaves and that the purpose of the Revolution was to maintain and defend the institution of slavery. This is what we referred to above as deconstructing history. It's fake; and it was concocted to advance progressive theories. Now billionaire Oprah Winfrey plans to make this made-up history into a series of videos. It has already been introduced into school textbooks. Mind you, this fake history won a Pulitzer Prize! The title *1619*, is allegedly the year slaves were first deposited on American soil in what is now Virginia.
- AA. *Intersectionality*: it describes how different types of oppression overlap or intersect. A person may experience discrimination as a woman, a black, and a transgender. Her social position and level of oppression is then understood by these areas of discrimination, hence, the more victim statuses a person has the more insight and authority they have to speak on issues of social justice, oppression, and discrimination..
- BB. *Cultural Marxism*: The quick definition is: Marxism applied to culture. There are many forms of Marxism. The original form (classical) was an advocate of violent revolution by the proletariat. CM believes the change can only come about through the capture of the main institutions that decide the agenda of the culture. This branch of Marxism is also known as the Frankfurt School, was founded by Antonio Gramsci. As would be expected, this form of postmodern Marxism is committed to linguistic imperialism, i.e., the weaponization of words. Their aim, and it has been largely successful, has been to capture the main avenues of the culture: educational institutions, government, media, entertainment, and the arts (and sadly, now churches). The ultimate goal is social transformation. *We plan to fundamentally change America.*
- CC. *Globalism*: PM deplore borders and long for global government. Millions, probably billions, are being spent to promote this idea. It is an age-old concept, the desire to unite all peoples and promote one-world government. The United Nations was set up to eventually assume this status.
- DD. *Gender Fluidity*: With PM you can reinvent yourself to be whatever. Recently some woman announced that she now identified as a cat! Now with more than 70 genders identified one can glide from one to other! After all *gender is now not a thing of biology (DNA)but a social construct.*
- EE. *Fake News*: **Since PMs do not believe in truth there can be no such a thing as a lie.** PMs see no problem in enhancing or making up stories to enhance their group. Many news outlets are now nothing more than propaganda organs. As a result a whole new industry has developed known as *fact-checkers*. But a word of caution: if they are PM the fact checking will be to correct what they perceive as wrong thinking.
- FF. *Social Justice*: Another term that is loaded with Marxism. SJ seeks to eliminate undeserved disadvantages for the mere chance of birth. These would be skin color, economic status, country of origin, ethnicity, etc. Economist, Thomas Sowell, calls this *cosmic justice*. Social Justice warriors strive for equality of outcomes (egalitarianism); everyone being equal. *In a free society, the goal is equality of opportunity.* This term, as you would expect, is used among progressives to mean a forced re-distribution of wealth. Justice, biblical justice, is not an option for Christians. *Charity* is a good synonym for biblical

justice. For the Christian, his wealth is not his own. God owns everything; we are just stewards.

- GG. *Gaslighting*: The term comes from a 1938 play: *Gaslight*. The play is about psychological manipulation. What you see is not what you really see! The U.S. accepts more immigrants than any other country in the world and most of these are people of color. The news media and PM educators, however, proclaim that we are the most racist country in the world. If you agree you are being gaslighted! Socialist and communist countries historically are guilty of mass oppression and are responsible for the murder of 100 to 200 million people. But you are informed that communism is the fairest and most equitable of all forms of government. You are being gaslighted! Gaslighting has become pervasive in our modern politics and media propaganda. (Are we being gaslighted by co-vid 19?)
- HH. *Gaffe*: A gaffe is a micro-aggression committed with words that are not intended; they are words you somehow let slip!. It is a clumsy social error where a politically incorrect word or phrase results in harm to an oppressed group. A gaffe somehow reveals your true inner feelings; it's akin to a Freudian slip. Committing a gaffe could ruin a political campaign in some cases.
- II. *Hash Tags*: If you utilize social media such as Facebook or Instagram, you are bombarded by dozens of hashtags on a daily basis. They can also be the signs of protestors. The purpose of hashtags is to give your group a one up.
- JJ. *Shaming*: Shaming occurs where some behavior, some politically incorrect behavior, is noted that is deleterious to a group. Not wearing a mask is considered selfish; you are not thinking of the collective! Perhaps you've heard of *fat-shaming*! If a person is obese, he or she is not thinking correctly about the group. An obese person can be a drain on the government health system because they tend to have more medical problems. There are an abundance of examples: driving a gas-guzzler, polluting the environment, holding to Christian or archaic values, etc.