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Gandhi Was Right: How Christians Make a Mess of Christianity

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Being anti-science and anti-anything-but-people-like-you, is starting to wear thin. I can't imagine God is happy. Do you really think the earth is 4600 years old? Or do you believe that because someone made you feel guilty for doubting God's power to construct the universe and all life in six 24-hour periods? Do you really think that Christ's blood is pretty potent but not quite able to cover the sins of certain classes of people? Modern Christianity in the West is becoming a somewhat exclusive club, aimed at making individual Christians more affluent and healthy. The abundant life is viewed materially first and spiritually a distant second. And if you aren't a pastor of a mega-church, you must not have any spiritual credentials. Is this where Christ was taking us in his brief ministry on earth? How much time did he spend debating human origins or the salvation potential of particular classes such as homosexuals? Okay, that's modern Christians. How about you? Go read the Sermon on the Mount and tell me how meek you are, how many times you've turned the other cheek or gone the extra mile with someone. Tell me how many times you have forgiven people for anything other than minor or distant wrongs. Who among you has given out of his or her poverty instead of out of your abundance? Does the Sermon on the Mount feel like a speech given to a herd of people who were poor and wretched with nothing to lose anyway, so they might just as well be a bunch of sweethearts? It's not really for captains of industry and people in positions of political or social power who deal with more complex issues. It's not aimed at suburbia, where everyone has plenty, so need to love thy neighbor or help them in hard times. Besides, they probably have good insurance. Do you repay evil for evil, despite what Christ said? Perhaps you change the name of vengeance to justice and now you're more upright than ever. Christ told us to help those in prison, knowing it is a terrible place and that many of the people in prison are there unjustly or serving terms that go far beyond punishment for the crimes committed. Yet who is at the forefront of demanding longer and longer prison sentences, three-strikes-you're-out laws, harsh prison environments, and death sentences? We'll straighten out society, won't we? We're a punitive nation, with 5% of the world's population and 25% of the world's prisoners. Christians have been at the forefront of demanding censorship in a free-speech country and forbidding many personal behaviors, while compelling others. Now we're being censored, barred, and compelled to do things we not only don't like but which go against the very teachings of our faith in a country supposedly protected by the 1st Amendment. There should be none of that in a free country. But who started it? I suggest that rather than relive the first days of our republic, we go back to living the way Christians lived in the first century. The republic will take care of itself if we're true to the way of Christ. Gandhi believed that there was a large gulf between the teaching of Christ and the behavior of Christians. When you accepted Christ and became a child of God, did you do so conditionally, with a plan to hang on to what you liked about the old you in terms of handy ways to deal with the world the same way non-Christians do? If you did, then Gandhi was right. A lot of new science will come forth to explain how the world works and where we came from. For those Christians who view the Bible as the ultimate history book, a science book, or the definitive book on certain topics such as human sexuality, this will all be very disturbing. We will see the same responses that happen nowadays: That's bad data. They are misinterpreting the data. They are leaving out data. Let's wait until new data comes along that undoes the conclusions of these data. There is another set of responses: Relax. Show a little faith. God's in control. This is fascinating stuff.

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