

The Concurrently Companion



Episode 40: Affirmative action and human flourishing

Topic introduction

In today's episode, we discuss listener-requested topic: Affirmative Action.

Key terms and figures: *affirmative action, SCOTUS, policy, reconstruction in the U.S. south, General William Tecumseh Sherman, "40 acres and a mule," President Andrew Johnson, President Kennedy's executive order, President Lyndon Johnson, stereotyping, positive laws (those which promote action), negative laws (those which restrict action), Ruby Bridges, systemic racism, Students for Fair Admissions, (positive) discrimination, equity, equal opportunity, bias, quotas, human flourishing, Thomas Sowell, Jim Crow, segregation, paranoia vs. metanoia*

Tools we used

Wikipedia (for definitions and footnotes)

The Big 5 - <https://newscoach.gwnews.com/articles/the-big-5-a-tool-for-conversational-learning>

Questions for discussion

What are the roots of affirmative action? What were its designed limits (the original intention for its usage) in college admissions? What were its objectives and the hoped-for (or sought after) outcomes?

Who was affected by affirmative action? Who was it intended to serve? What are the *real* problems it was intended to solve? How extensive were these problems?

What can you *affirm* regarding what it was seeking to curb in our nation? What needs to be challenged and why?

What is the difference between positive and negative laws? In biblical terms, we think of "sin" as anything that breaks God's law: both *failing to do* what we should (sins of omission) and *doing what we should not do* (sins of commission). How does this help us understand how laws are made? What is the danger or risk in creating positive laws?

Why would conservative lawmakers and/or those entrusted to interpret the law want to limit such laws? What criteria was used in limiting the duration of affirmative action?

What other solutions might there be to the problems you identified above?

What key figures or change makers can you think of that helped shift the course of history and culture in the broken areas you identified above?

What emotional response do you have towards the idea of “systemic racism”? Why? Realizing that biblical truth needs to shape our political perspective along with our emotions, where do you go to instruct these areas of your thinking, feeling, and action?

Where do we need to practice *metanoia* and *shalom*? Where can you increase your practice of listening? How does listening inform gracious action?

How does our heavenly citizenship dictate an earthly response in this area? What do we need to *curb*, *cultivate*, *create*, or even *cure* in our culture?

Scriptural anchors/provision

The Lord passed before him and proclaimed of Himself, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.” — Exodus 34:6-7

After this I looked and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” — Revelation 7:9-10

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