

Vespers #5 – 11/3/2022

End-time Events and the Conflicting Ethos

Prayer:

Dear Lord, thank you for the little tastes of heaven that we can have on this earth. Thank you that we can have glimpses of your character, of your love, of what you really wanted this earth and this community to be. I pray Lord that we will learn and understand better your government; the principles with which you operate. I put all things into your care and keeping. In Jesus name, Amen.

Review: Tess

So I won't repeat again the journey we've been on. It's behind me, and it was quite a journey. But what we're doing at the moment is covering this - the subject of our rightward to leftward swing. And when we had defined what exactly moved us leftward in 2018, stretching through 2019, we asked, "What do the left-wing and the right-wing stand for that gives our change of position meaning?" So we wanted to know what the left-wing stands for and what the right-wing stands for, and that's what we were doing last week. So everyone contributed. Lots of people contributed, which was wonderful. I don't think I agree with everything that's on the board, or everything that was said. But there was a lot of truth said. We took it all in and then we tried to distil what the fundamental ethos, or defining characteristic of left and right is, to try and get to the heart of this rightward, leftward swing? So I felt like we were a little bit in the wilderness period, until someone said:

- "big government – right-wing"
- "small government – left-wing"

And then we asked, "Why is that?" Why does one need (not just want, but need) a bigger government, and one doesn't just want a small government, but only needs a small government? It's not that one side just believes "we like big" and one side says "we just like small."

The underlying principles with which they operate either demand a big government, or demands a small government, and we asked why that was. Why this difference in size of government? And when we did that, and other people contributed to that thought, one side demands big government because they run off the principle of equality. One side demands small government because they run off the principle of freedom. So if we sift all of the muck, all of the noise, and just distil down to the central point, it is equality versus freedom.

So if you're going to have your government run on principles of equality, and we started to touch... to explain this, it demands a big government. And if you're going to have a country that only, that principally, runs off freedom, then you only need a small government. And we started to kind of flesh that out a little bit more. We started going to some scenarios, and I made up a hypothetical scenario about a man who has a business, and he only wants to employ men because it's in a traditionally male dominated industry, like construction. And we explained how... we tried to use this to explain the difference between freedom and equality. Often when equality comes up, people just put in "freedom" as if the words are interchangeable, and they're not. So to really explain that these two words are so different, we went to a court case that was from 2017. I'll make some room. And this was *Masterpiece Cake Shop versus the Colorado Civil Rights Commission*.

Now I put the full quote, and the reference, the full relevant part, onto the forum that we have, because I didn't read all of it, and I think I missed a couple of key points. But even just in the names, what I want us to see is that this business (the owner of this business) doesn't want to sell a cake (a wedding cake) to a homosexual couple. But it is his business, his time, his ingredients, his property. So this is his freedom - to do with everything that belongs to him, including his own time, and his own skill. His freedom versus (and you know if this is the Civil Rights Commission) versus equality. And to prove that point, because sometimes my word isn't quite satisfactory, but also to phrase it in a very precise way which I don't have the words for, we went to the website of the *American Bar Association*, where they say

No case before the U.S. Supreme Court in October Term 2017 received more attention or raised more important issues *{than this one.}* The underlying issue is profoundly significant: Does a business have a constitutional right to discriminate based on its owner's beliefs?

So does the owner's freedom give him the constitutional right to not enable someone else's equality.

All antidiscrimination statutes pose a tension between equality and liberty *{or freedom}*. Any law that prohibits discrimination—whether based on race or sex or religion or sexual orientation or any other grounds—denies the freedom to choose who to serve or to hire. Indeed, this was a key objection to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits places of public accommodation from discriminating based on race and forbids employers from discriminating based on race, sex, or religion: The law interferes with the freedom to choose one's customers or employees. Congress and the courts both deemed ending discrimination to be more important than protecting the right to discriminate.

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/the-ongoing-challenge-to-define-free-speech/not-a-masterpiece/

This was the issue at the heart of this supreme court case. Is a business's freedom to choose its customers more important than the government interest in stopping sexual orientation discrimination? It pretty much ended with a kind of draw, to be honest. They still haven't resolved this issue. So do we have... That's kind of a summary of where we got to, trying to illustrate this tension between equality and freedom. Because you know just on this court case, just down to the makeup of the Supreme Court itself you have this... It was the cake shop that won, but it was a hollow victory, because they refused to allow that victory to set any type of precedent, which is why I put up an article on the Media Broadcast this week saying "everyone involved in Vespers, please take note, because there's another court case coming up." And why these court cases continue to arise is really because it has never been finally decided. It has on race, but it hasn't on gender. And I think we're going to come back to that point. And you know where Ruth Bader Ginsburg stood with that Supreme Court case. The conservatives went with freedom. Ruth Bader Ginsburg went with equality, and other liberal justices *{as well.}*

So this is the Conservative versus Liberal fight. Does anyone have any thoughts or questions? Anything that has arisen during the week, that you wanted to ask or say? Because that's pretty much our review. So we're not saying that one side only believes in freedom, and one side only believes in equality. Both sides can value both principles. But when equality and freedom inevitably come into conflict, it's all about which one wins. And of course in our history, the one that we know is a test subject is Gender.

So I just want to ask one thing before we move on. We said what makes this Movement up to 2018 right-wing? And we could really just blame our heritage. We came from Adventism; Adventism is right-wing. It's a right-wing church. Why is Adventism right-wing? We've listed all of these, but I think we can put a major one. What is Adventism taught to fear?

Ray? Oh, Marie! Marie? Marie are you there?

Marie:

Yes, sorry. I'm sorry Ray...

Tess:

I got your hand.

Marie:

Our fear has always been Catholicism.

Tess:

Yes I agree. What are we afraid Catholicism would do? What can Catholicism do to us?

Marie:

Persecute. Make us keep Sunday.

Tess:

And how does Adventism frame that? What are they attacking?

Marie:

The Ten Commandments.

Tess:

All your answers are good. They're not the one I want though. They're attacking you. What are they taking away from you?

Marie:

Your freedom.

Tess:

Your freedom. They're taking away... You, Marie... they're taking away your freedom. And that is Adventism's greatest fear. We're taught from the time we're born into the church, or join the church, that we are coming up to this momentous climax where we say Catholicism, that this nebulous, secret societal, government entity, Catholicism, an amalgamated beast, is going to come for your freedom. And all of Adventism is paranoid, terrified, waiting to have to stand up and fight for their freedom. Does that make sense, Marie? Do you agree with that? Does that make sense?

Marie:

Yes, yes no I agree. That makes sense.

Tess:

Do you relate to that in your past?

Marie:

Yes. Oh I did. Yeah, I had a real fear of what was going to happen when the Sunday Law was passed.

Tess:

I relate to that. I remember growing up even with some friends of mine, mostly boys, who were just waiting for that day to pull out whatever weapon they could find and attack and kill whoever they needed to attack and kill, to protect their family's freedom. They were raised like warriors, just waiting for this day to go to war over freedom. So it's so easy, I think when you're Adventist to be right-wing; to see a threat everywhere. But they've misdiagnosed it.

Brenden:

I liked what Marie was saying, and what you were saying, because it's like that Catholicism... you went at... that manifests and looks like big government overreach. And so that feeds into the big government narrative, and that's why when we see all these restrictions, whether it's based on the pandemic, you see a threat of big government coming in and attacking everyone's freedoms, and that that is a precursor to the Sunday Law. And that's religious freedom deteriorating. It's like a big threat.

I just find it ties straight back into big government every time and that's why, I guess, it's always a big government fighting for equality, and then you've got the states who fight for freedom. And so that's why the republicans are always trying to bring down the big government and make it a small government; so the states can have the freedom to do what they want.

Tess:

Yes, because it's not just freedom for individuals. It's freedom for individuals, States, Businesses etc. - run by individuals. Was that all you had to say? I don't want to interrupt.

Brenden:

I think so. I had some questions written down, I guess I wanted to look at some more examples. Because I see this dialogue that we're having between freedom and equality being really helpful. I think it'll be really helpful moving forward. And I guess I had some questions. Like when A.T. Jones in 1888 would say, "I'm going to fight for your right to worship on Sunday," is he fighting for equality, or is he fighting for freedom? As an example. Or is that getting away? Feel free to stop and move on to where you want to go.

Tess:

No, no. I expected we would go backwards in history. It's hard not to.

I think that over the last, I guess 170, 200 years, it has become more defined. If you go back... let's go back from 1888. Why don't we go back to the history of slavery? Would you say that that civil war was over equality, or freedom, on the part of the north?

Brenden:

I'll have to say equality.

Tess:

Why?

Brenden:

They were trying to... so it's complicated because I know they weren't really... there was not many true abolitionists, so it's hard to say that they were after equality in a sense. But I feel like I'm going to get caught.

I'll still say equality, because they were trying to bring about human beings (albeit only males at that point generally) to... so it doesn't bring him up to equality with white people though, so I guess it was the beginning stages of equality. I'm not actually sure how to answer that.

Tess:

It's more defined now, this fight, than it has ever been. But I would suggest if we went back and actually dissected the arguments in history, it's always been this way. There are a few sources that I think are worth downloading, saving, re-reading, re-watching. One was posted yesterday on the Media Broadcast about Operation... can't get the word...

Brenden:

Infection

Tess:

Operation infection. But there's an article that is from August 29, 2019. And I read it at the German International Camp Meeting, and this is one I re-read today, and think that everyone should have downloaded. Go back and re-read them. So many people think I'm changing my position on things, because they're just forgetting what's been said in the past. But this is a brilliant article, and it's titled:

The Reasonable Rebels

Conservatives say we've abandoned reason and civility. The Old South used the same language to defend slavery

And what this person does, who is, has been, largely a conservative person, is they compare and contrast the language used by the “reasonable” right-wing today, with the language used by the South, and defenders of the South, pre-civil war. And it's really worth reading. I might share it again, but anticipating that we would go back into history, I went to the article and just took a few of the quotes talking about present day. She says the “reasonable” right present their concerns as principally ‘freedom of speech and diversity of thought.’ It's about freedom of speech, freedom to think, to say, to be prejudiced. So she says she felt frustrated when she listened to Shapiro, or Jordan Peterson, and others including some women who call themselves feminists but are critical of feminism. She was reminded of the pre-civil war South, and she goes back and explains the arguments that the South actually had. Why do people in the South today fly the Confederate Flag, and say it does not represent racism? What do they think that flag represents? Still with you, Brenden.

Brenden:

I think they look at it as freedom of expression. It's freedom.

Tess:

But even back in the Civil War, they thought the South was fighting for freedom. It's a revisionist history, but it's one that millions believe. So they say that America's, she's saying America's pro-slavery faction back then, styled itself the guardian of

freedom and minority rights. It sounds crazy to us today, because we're 170 years later. But for back then, that was the argument. They were the defenders of freedom and minority rights. They were the oppressed, not the oppressors. She talks about Stephen Douglas, who insisted he didn't necessarily support slavery. Instead, he said he was duty-bound to defend the South's rights on the basis of certain fundamental American principles, including the right to freely choose how you live. So what comes up... another point she makes: one reason slavery was not abolished in America through the political process as it was in Britain, is that those who truly believed in abolition were rhetorically straight jacketed by the proposition that they were the hard-liners who sought to curtail freedom. So why it didn't get resolved in the political process in the United States is because Abolitionists were branded as these radicals trying to curtail or take down freedoms, which was styled as the chief American principal. So it sounds crazy to us today, but if we went back then it was freedom versus equality.

I won't give the country because it might narrow down the issue too much for those involved, but there's a woman in Africa who has been going through the process of getting a divorce from her abusive husband. She separates from him physically. He stalks her, so she goes to the head of the local police, and the head of the local police says to her, 'I don't care what our country's constitution says about the rights of women, in day-to-day life we do not operate via our country's constitution. Because constitutions can kind of sound progressive. They'll put nice things into writing. But on the ground, they say no, we don't run by the constitution, we run by culture, and culture says you are the property of your husband. You belong to him. So if we're going to come back to this model: the owner - now he doesn't have a cake, he has a wife, and she is property. So if we assist a woman leaving her husband, whose freedoms are curtailed? According to the chief of police? Ray, you're next with your hand up. I'll pick on you. Whose freedoms are curtailed?

Ray:

The husband.

Tess:

The husband because she is part of his possession. So for her to leave is for him to lose {property} - to have stripped, taken from him. Because she obviously doesn't have her own mind, the Movement, other people, have influenced her. She, according to them, can't think for herself. So she's being separated from her husband, taken from him, and we are taking away his freedoms, because we're taking away his property.

So this is the lives of millions and millions of women. They are property.

So again, even today, it's Freedom versus Equality, and if we went back to pre-civil war America it's the same issue. It looks more obscure to us today because we are 170 years later, and things are in starker terms now. But even then, the South saw that as the North attacking their freedom, because it was attacking what to do on their land, with people who are no more than objects. And not just defending slavery itself, but also the freedom to live how they chose, but also their freedom of speech. Because it became quite... you were cancelled in the North in many places, if you defended slavery.

We asked last week... It came up, and someone said 'you know that this side is tolerant and this side kind of cancels. I don't actually agree with that. I think this side does a whole lot of cancelling. It's about whether or not we don't mind that Trump gets banned from Twitter.

Brenden does that make a little bit of sense? I know it's a little less clear when we go back.

Brenden:

Yes. So if I could say five seconds worth... Correct me if I'm misunderstanding but it's the equivalent of saying that the South have... they're saying they're fighting for their freedom to do with their property what they want, and they don't want the big north coming in and interfering with their freedoms. But their property is human beings. And so it's the same principle as the cake shop. It's the same principle. Or wives in that example as well. It's just exactly the same principle.

Tess:

Yes, and their way of life is not just slavery. Slavery is an integral part of it but it's also the entire culture that wraps around that. If you've ever seen *Gone with the Wind*. The glamorization, the glorification of southern culture, built on agriculture, built on "States Rights," built on this kind of image that they made look beautiful. A lot of people who defend the Antebellum period - they don't see themselves as racists. They are duped willingly or unwillingly, by a revision of history that believes that the Civil War was the south fighting against a big government North for freedom. It becomes more obscure to us today, because if you have enslaved human beings, then isn't that a fight for their freedom? And in a way it was. But I would suggest we should re-read this article so we can pull its bones apart a little bit more. And I think we would still see freedom versus equality, and how that has over the last 200 years only become more and more clear. Did you have any other {questions?}

Brenden:

Thank you. No, I really appreciate that. Thank you.

Tess:

Ray? Your hand was up?

Ray:

Oh, I only put my hand up in case Marie couldn't answer, and you'd asked me. So I couldn't add anything to what's been discussed.

Tess:

Josephine?

Josephine:

I had a question at the beginning, but I think little by little you're answering it, or you're, through Brenden's question, you're answering mine. But maybe I should just ask. Does the outcome, when there's a conflict between freedom and equality, does the outcome stay constant? In other words, one side always wins or is it likely to change as we progress in our time period?

Tess:

I think it's always messy. But if you look at the makeup of the Supreme Court now, which one do you think is likely to have the upper hand - freedom or equality?

Josephine:

Well the conservatives are more likely to win isn't it?

Tess:

We have a Supreme Court built on this. We're going to keep going over this point. I want to expand on this freedom a little more, so it might become clearer as we go. Moli?

Moli:

No, I was just hearing what you were saying, because the other day I was listening to the President of Ukraine talking to the United Nations and he was saying that Ukraine is fighting for their freedom, and they will defend their freedom to the death. And I thought to myself, maybe, I thought, it was the Formalization of the Message, but I was just asking.

Tess:

By Formalization of the Message, do you mean the way mark of Panium?

Moli:

Yeah, of the gender equality.

Tess:

Panium was 2021. We've taught that since 2018. I think what we need to do, is to be careful that we don't get pulled into Ukraine, just because it's a hot war. I've been saying since 2018 that the conflict is between Russia and the United States, and their respective allies, so:

- Russia - China etc
- United States - NATO etc

But it's this conflict that is heavily based on Information Warfare, and that's what we saw in the late months, particularly surrounding October, of 2019. And I do see people, I see the comments online. It is like, "hooray, look how our message is vindicated, now that we can pin it to a hot war." And I think that that is sad, frankly. Because if we have to wait to see a hot war to trust in the waymark of Panium, then we never believed 2018. It's centred on information. They're fighting for global opinion, and that's one of the reasons that I'd encourage you to go and watch the video that was posted from *the New York Times* yesterday, on the Media Broadcast. It is through information that the West is winning, in a form: Ukraine is a small part of a much bigger story; a bigger puzzle.

But just bringing it back to freedom versus equality:

I'm not demonizing freedom. Freedom is good. But when they come into conflict, one has to kind of slide underneath the other, and that issue, that seemingly simple issue of one just sliding underneath the other, is what has created a polarized world. And the issue that the whole world is clashing over is Gender: Women, LGBT. That is where the collision is happening. We see that in Australia. We see that in Australian schools, Australian religious schools. They're not fighting over whether or not they

will allow someone of a non-white race into their school, or allow, even in Florida, whether or not they will allow someone to admit that other races even exist. What they're fighting over is just to allow children to know that LGBT people even exist. Everyone is colliding on the subject of gender, and two sides are fighting for freedom versus equality. Of course freedom is valuable. But when it comes at a cost, then it will come into conflict.

I want us to look at some examples, so come with me to Australian politics. What is the right-leaning Australian political party? Ray?

Ray:

That's the Liberal National Party Coalition, hey.

Tess:

Go further right.

Ray:

Palmer United? Or One Nation? One Nation?

Tess:

I get criticized by some people not in the Movement, that I don't keep a close enough eye on Australia. They wonder why I'm so focused on other parts of the world. So I could get that wrong. I was thinking of the United Australia party. That's separate to One Nation?

Ray:

That's Clive Palmer's one – United...

Tess:

That's Palmers...

So it's very confusing:

- left-wing is Labour Party
- right-wing is Liberal Party

Which doesn't sound like it should be, but then there is United Australia, and if you drive down the highway, do you see their billboards? What's on all their billboards? What are they fighting for? We've gone left-wing, right-wing, but now we're going into the far right in Australia. I'll screen share. I did bring some up. Oh, I saw a hand. Rachel, were you going to answer that?

Rachel:

I can wait until after you show the pictures. It does say freedom.

Tess:

Freedom

Rachel:

Freedom for Australia. What are their billboards? Sorry my photos are terrible. Freedom, freedom, more of it... freedom, freedom. You can't trust the mainstream parties anymore. What do you think they're trying to sell? What are they screaming? What do they think is under threat? Rachel, I'll let you finish your thought.

Rachel:

Oh that was... yes, I was just thinking that I have seen quite a few. Their freedom, and "making Australia great again."

Tess:

You go into a little town, country town. Maybe not that little... Country town in Australia. You go to the centre of the main street, and there's a big billboard with Trump's face on it. Why? He stands for something kind of global. And they use his image. They use that, 'make a country great again,' but it's plastered with freedom, because that is what they are saying is under threat. That's what they see is under threat.

Canada, truckers... what's it called Moli? Did you follow the news with Canada and the truckers? do you know what that was called?

Moli:

Yeah, I thought it was freedom fight.

Tess:

What are they afraid of? What's under threat for them? You have Covid, all of a sudden what is going to come into conflict? Freedom versus equality.

It's so easy. We know with the floods up North, some of these towns, one of the or the worst hit town, is where I used to live. I know those streets. I know every business that they put up, when they talk about it, when they show the footage. I know those businesses. So I know what is lying lower, and what goes uphill. So when you have some the news crews come around on a helicopter, are they going to take their helicopter and show you all of the miles of land that's a bit underwater? Or they're going to take you to the very epicentre? Where do they take you, Moli?

Moli:

Yes, they take you to the epicentre of the disaster.

Tess:

So when you have news crews come and film the trucker protests, they're going to take you to the... if they see a neo-Nazi flag, they're filming that. That's what they're going to film. But surrounding that little minority, who are for sure neo-Nazis, you stretch that out and what you have is a lot of people who have seen freedom and equality collide and are terrified of losing freedom. If we lose sight of that kind of majority, who are not neo-Nazis, we lose sight of what the conflict is actually about. We lose sight of the people we need to actually try and reach, because a lot of us were right-wing before 2018, 2019, and I don't think that anyone still in the Movement for sure would have ever considered themselves a neo-Nazi or would have flown a Confederate flag. We need to not just see the epicentre, and this is something the media does, and we should be aware of it. I think I had just a couple more. And sure, you can pick some of the concerning elements in colours and go into that, but the issue is freedom - mandate freedom. This is what they're all shouting.

Sandy, I saw your hand up, but I missed you. I'll come to you in a moment. I'll just... I think there was one more. So I do want to... there was another photo.

"Peace, love, freedom for all. There's grandmothers out there. Their concern is freedom, and that freedom is being eroded on behalf of equality. And many people find that frightening. Conspiracy theories certainly play a large part in aggravating that. I think I had one more. This one. I just wanted us to consider when we see this type of thing go around on social media. What are they saying? What are they saying here is happening? What's happening to this woman, Sandy?

Sandy:

Just by the picture, wearing the mask is taking off her freedom, is taking away her freedom. She can't... when they're saying that she can't speak, she can't say what she wants to say. So I suppose I see that the mask mandate is taking away her freedom. Would that be right?

Tess:

That's what I see in that photo. That's the issue that people in the Movement are confronting, and they're seeing photos like that, and saying, 'I support that.' And my question is, if that's your response to masks, and your fear is erosion of freedom over mask mandates, where do you stand on the Midnight Cry? Because we're still fighting *Two Streams of Information*. One stream of information; another stream of information. And if what you're afraid of is the erosion of freedom because of a big government and equality, you never accepted 2018, and it's 2022. We are a bit away along.

Sandy, you had a thought or a question?

Sandy:

Oh no, It's okay. It was from way, way back. We sort of... it was just a comment I was just going to make, but it is sort of way back in the past.

Tess:

It's okay, we can go back. Repetition builds

Sandy:

I was just going to say how the word freedom, how I think the word today, the left (talking about America) use the word equality a lot. If you go back to the 1960's in the Civil Rights Movement, they used the word freedom for their cause, for race. Freedom for the races, which was probably really equality. So I think we were saying freedom means a different thing for the right and for the left.

Tess:

I think it would depend. I don't know what sources you've gone to see that. Freedom certainly gets pulled into it. But the ones I've read speak of equality.

Sandy:

From back then?

Tess:

I think it would depend a bit on the sources.

Sandy:

Okay

Tess:

Freedom certainly gets thrown around, but I think it would depend at least a bit on the sources. Some are more precise than others, but I want to go back to the Civil Rights Movement as well. So it's good to go back there, because I want us to just complicate our picture a little bit. So I'll make some space.

Ray, did you have another thought or question?

Ray:

I was just going to answer the Freedom Convoy questions.

Tess:

Okay, so just to complicate things a little, we've been through... we looked at Australia's far-right party, which I think is emblematic of a lot of them. We looked at the Freedom Convoy, just to give some examples. I just will have a quick look... ahh, just two other comments I wanted to make. One is from *the Washington Post* article from 2004. I don't agree with all of these articles. This one and the next one. They are, I think, coming from somewhat Conservative voices, even though it's *the Washington Post*. But covering the 2004 election they say:

Today, as for *{the last 200 years}*, the left-right divide is defined by different valuations of equality and freedom.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/2004/02/01/freedom-vs-equality/63bddf0b-6089-4bab-8663-f61571578e57/>

So they're seeing that in the 2004 election, that's the divide between the Democrats and the Republicans, the Left and the Right.

A 2019 article said the same thing. What is more important to you - freedom or equality? And then breaks that down via Democrats and Republicans. This one I might just refer to a little. It's from *the Renton Reporter*. Because they go back into history, they say if you're a Democrat today, equality is more important than

freedom. If you're a Republican, freedom is more important than equality. Then they go back 154 years from then, to the Civil War and they show how that system changed.

Current Democrats favor equality for women, immigrants, minorities and gays. Before the Civil War, though, Southern Democrats favored slavery and states' rights, while {the North} worked for a level of racial equality and the end of slavery.

<https://www.rentonreporter.com/opinion/equality-versus-freedom/>

So even this article, the point he is making is that today, Democrats – equality, Republicans – freedom.

They switched, because you go back to the Civil War, and what you would find is the Democrats, which was then the South, were for slavery and States rights. States freedoms. And the North was for racial equality and the end of slavery. So even going back then, it defines it in terms of

- south – freedom and rights
- north – equality

Southern Democrats felt that giving equality to former slaves only diminished whites' power and status and took away their freedom. They fought violently to reduce equality...

<https://www.rentonreporter.com/opinion/equality-versus-freedom/>

They are then going post-Civil War into this history of the Jim Crow era, so even after Jim Crow they're fighting racial equality, because they believe it takes away from their freedom. I just thought that was an interesting article that was just going to trace it right back to that history.

Brenden? And then we might move on, just to complicate our picture a little.

Brenden:

In danger of simplifying this way too much, are we looking at the beating heart of what the Sunday Law is going to look like? This clash between these two, where the left actually compromises on equality towards freedom?

Tess:

I don't know what the left-wing compromise looks like because they already are. If you had, today... if you had it this way:

A few white pop stars, who had a history of racist language and violent attacks on African Americans... would you take these white pop stars, put them in the centre of the ring at the Super Bowl and have millions of people cheer them? Would you see those white pop stars extensive history among some of them of varying degrees of race-based abuse, would you see them championed at the centre of the Super Bowl?

Brenden:

No

Tess:

You wouldn't. But when it becomes gender, and it is gender that is the core of the issue, where's the complaint? Where are the voices?

Brenden:

There isn't

Tess:

No one wants to complain, because like the article shared earlier this week on the Media Broadcast, a horrific case of abuse. As the lawyer said, domestic abuse is common and it's a relatively minor criminal conviction. So Democratic compromise. The vast majority of the world has been in compromise, if we just take it prophetically, from 1989. They're not going to correct that. Whether or not we take that and we pin it to the Sunday Law, sure a lot of them will compromise. But it's still going to be... just looking at the Supreme Court, it's not Democrats compromise that actually does that. I think that's the only point where I would perhaps be nervous about agreeing with what you said: that a democratic compromise isn't, I would suggest, at the centre of the Sunday Law. Not that we have full visibility of what that looks like. 1850 was a history of failure. That was clearly compromise. But being a history of failure I don't think we can take that exactly to today. Otherwise yes, I think that I agree with what you said. We're looking at the absolute heart of the Sunday Law issue.

Brenden:

Thank you. I knew I was going to be in danger of being too simplified.

Tess:

I don't think it was too simplified. I don't think it was too simplified. We have seen compromise at every step of the journey. Find me a Democrat in congress who's a radical feminist. It's just part of the story now.

So to complicate. We have the principle, right, on freedom... (So I'll go over this side.) ...should be my body, my property, my life, my choice. So I don't have to take, I don't have to eat, I don't have to... I don't have to sell to anyone, I don't have to employ anyone, that I don't want to. My own independence: and that's the centre of freedom. So let's come to gay marriage. Let's say that this person is gay, and this man wants to marry this man. I went to give him arms and it looked like a skirt. Now complicate the picture. Why would a party that believes in freedom disagree with this? Who does this hurt? Isn't this their bodies, their marriage, their choice? All of that is an introduction to try and get people to talk about the complication in this picture. So if anyone has thoughts or questions, now would be good, otherwise I'll just start monologuing. Josephine?

Josephine:

Because they believe in traditional values.

Tess:

Yes. So if we're going to talk about the Republican Party, you termed it "traditional values." They have a combination of freedom... but it's not pure freedom. The Republican Party does not operate on pure freedom, and that's the complication I want us to see. This is equality. Democrats operate on equality, with all their compromises. The Republican Party operates on freedom, but they also compromise because they combine freedom with traditional values.

And traditional values, I will just call (if you don't mind) state enforced morality. And that does become a compromise with freedom. So I want us then to consider a political party that doesn't do that. Has anyone, does anyone know the political party I am talking about? It's the third biggest political party in the United States. You have Democrats, Republicans, and then number three.

Brenden?

Brenden:

Is it the libertarians?

Tess:

Libertarian. So what libertarians believe in is freedom without state enforced morality. Pure freedom. I don't know if you've seen political charts drawn up this way, where you have left and right, but you have this other scale down the middle, and this stands for authoritarian (authority obviously control), and this stands for libertarian. And what they would teach was that this is

- Left Authoritarian
- Right Authoritarian

- Left Libertarian
- Right Libertarian

And before I ask you where to find a hole in that graph, I'm just going to explain a little more of what the libertarian party believes in. It's the third biggest political party in the United States. Libertarianism believes in freedom without any type of government restraint unless it becomes dangerous to other people. So:

Libertarians say you have the liberty to say, eat, smoke, buy, sell, learn and do whatever you want with whomever you want, so long as you don't hurt {another} individual or group or take their stuff along the way. "Live and let live" is the Libertarian's motto.

<https://genbiz.com/explaining-difference-between-libertarians-and-republicans>

I'm going to quote from their website:

Other political parties prioritize the rights of some, but not others.

They're talking about the Republican Party here. They're trying not to garget them, but they're saying the Republic party prioritizes the rights or freedoms of some, but not the freedoms of others.

Libertarians value the right of all to live in whatever manner they choose, so long as they do not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live in whatever manner {those others} choose.

{they} also believe that the government must treat all people fairly and equally before the law.

<https://www.lp.org/issues/civil-liberties/>

So, the government has to treat everyone with equality. If I can draw that. So government... the government treats everyone with equality, and then allows everyone all the freedom they want as long as they are not actively hurting someone else. So a libertarian position will support... What are some of the things that they will support? If you're in this position, you're a libertarian, how will you go with?

I might just shrink that some.

James?

James:

Marijuana, or certain drugs like marijuana

Tess:

So one of their mottos was that you can eat, smoke, buy, sell... so yes definitely marijuana. They want the decriminalization of drugs, so they would say no to the "war on drugs," for example. Or "tough on crime." They would say no to "tough on crime." You don't need government intervention, aka - a police force, unless someone is actively hurting another person. Absolute freedom... to smoke marijuana. Anything else, James?

James:

No, that one just popped in my head

Tess:

A key one.

Ray?

Ray:

Would they be in support of gun rights?

Tess:

Guns, yes. Anything else?

Ray:

Maybe abortion?

Tess:

Technically yes. Technically.

The reality of it isn't actually...

Ray:

I was actually thinking of asking this as one of your complicated scenarios before you started talking about libertarianism.

Tess:

You should have asked or I should have. Sorry if I didn't.

Ray:

No, I didn't speak up. We can come back to it.

Tess:

Josephine, do you have something for the list?

Josephine:

Sorry elder Tess, I was just thinking of the holes in that it sounds to me a little bit like the cultural feminism, you know, "do whatever you want." My mind was just running away. So what about marriage?

Tess:

Gay Marriage?

Josephine:

Yes

Tess:

Absolutely. They'll support gay marriage – freedom. You brought up... cultural feminism. My problem with cultural feminism and liberal feminism is not that "I'm a conservative and I have a problem with the way people want to dress." The problem is...

Marie? I think I've lost track of people's hands.

Marie:

Oh I'm just wondering about vaccines, how they'd go with the vaccine mandate.

Tess:

Oh not at all! No force. No one can put anything in. I eat what I want, I ingest what I want, I smoke what I want. Complete freedom.

I just wanted to pull up about cultural feminism. What fight are we having from 2018 to today? The fight we're having when I'm presenting on such things. When I'm doing presentations and titling them with names such as, "Don't I have the freedom" and the inferences is, 'no you don't,' what am I saying in that?

Brenden?

Brenden:

You're saying you don't have the freedom. You're saying... well you're saying you're a radical feminist I guess. Is that where you were heading? It's restraint.

Tess:

So I'm presenting in 2019, in Germany. I present the Eden to Eden model and teach equality. I am walking out of that room. I haven't even left the room, and a male board member of a ministry comes up to me and says:

'I love this message. love it. Now I understand this movement is going to have small government. Because everyone has the freedom.'

I know I'm not even ordained yet and I know the battle I'm about to go into and I know just how wrong he is. And I also see that he and I are going to fight, and we're still fighting today. So what's the issue? What has he heard? I present equality. He's heard? What did he hear?

Brenden:

Freedom. He heard unrestricted freedom.

Tess:

And the key to knowing that's what he heard is because the first thing he said was 'small Movement government.' We don't need a big government in this movement anymore. We don't need ministry boards and continental elders because we don't need control. Because this movement has finally learned to practice freedom.

And this was the issue that started in 2019. Lots of people heard me present equality and they loved it because they were conservative and what they heard was what they wanted to hear, was what they thought:

"I've believed in this for a really long time. I've believed for years that this movement was just controlling and was not giving members **freedom**."

And then they wonder why over the next months, and the next years, they're clashing with Movement leadership. It's because they did not understand what I was teaching.

Trousers: is that about equality or freedom? Brenden?

Brenden:

Equality

Tess:

(Yes) Equality.

Earrings - is that about equality or freedom?

Brenden:

Freedom. every fight that I've had since 2019 with people, has been about me presenting equality and saying, 'you don't have the freedom.' Not in this movement, because we are not a right-wing movement. You're not going to like the way we operate. You're not going to like vows. Why do people, all of a sudden, not like vows from 2019 forward?

Brenden:

Because it's taking their freedom, in their minds.

Tess:

Because to vow to something is to take away freedom. This is the clash that has been had. We have not stopped fighting over *Two Streams of Information*. It's the Midnight Cry over, and over, and over, and over again. It's right-wing versus left-wing. It's freedom versus equality. And what I've said since 2019, when I'm saying "Don't you have the freedom?" I'm saying why... why haven't you moved? Just shift already. Just give up the principles of freedom that are conflicting with gender-based equality.

The controversy in Africa about the dowry system, where they say, 'women have the choice. Women have the freedom to choose the dowry system.' And I'm saying they don't have the freedom. Because they claim to believe in this. They claim to believe in equality. And if you claim to believe in equality, you don't have the freedom. So when we look at liberal feminism, we're not fighting with it because we think they're immoral. We're fighting with it because they compromised. We're fighting with it because they're here in every way they want to be, that makes them feel good. Cultural feminism is here. That is the compromise. We're constantly confronting compromise, and the compromise is not people sliding into some type of immorality. The compromise is people saying, "okay, I'll take 80 of this, but I'm going to latch hold of all the 20 that appeals to me. I'm not going to move left-wing."

I don't know who... Josephine?

Josephine?

I'm here

Tess:

Did I ask you? Did I get to you?

Josephine:

Yes, I asked the question.

Tess:

Ahh, you're the one that gave us the road to this, because you brought up cultural feminism. Raymond?

Raymond:

I only put my hand up to answer the question.

Tess:

Marie?

Marie:

Is it simply that people don't understand the constitution? that's what just keeps popping up in my mind, that it seems that people just don't seem to understand the principle of the constitution. Or is it more just that it's a convenience for people. Freedom is a convenience.

Tess:

Freedom is a convenience?

Do you mean people inside or outside?

Marie:

I mean... I mean both. Like to me it seems that the principle behind it is the constitution, where you would choose equality over freedom if you were honest with yourself. But could it be that people, (and I might be wrong in the way I'm understanding it) but could it be that people are just... it's convenient to choose the freedom path?

Tess:

It has an appeal that equality doesn't have. If you were to think about a movie. I've watched a lot of movies in my life. I haven't always been in the Movement, and I think it's interesting to keep an eye on pop culture. You don't have to watch movies to do that, but maybe other people were better Adventists than I was. If you look at what movies celebrate, what sells? What sells movie tickets? What inspires people or rallies people? What makes them want to be... What's that antisemitic actor who does the Scottish movie? Mel Gibson! If you... (I said Scotland and saw your hand go down Ray.)

But if we think about movies, if you think about... there was a 2004 movie with Will Smith called *I-robot*. The most selling point of a movie, the ones especially if they're going to appeal to young men, (which I think we're going to tie in a little more as we go along) they're going to have that kind of appeal. I'll give you the kind of plot of I-

robot, and then see if you can pin it, if you've watched other movies, to what they kind of embody.

You have a humanity that treats itself badly: WW1, WW2, ongoing discrimination, Iraq, world wars, conflict. It's a mess. And then you have, in this movie, there's a robot. Sometimes it's a billionaire or an alien. But you have – robot, alien, billionaire – you have this entity that has a high degree of power. And this entity says, 'you know what? So humans stop hurting each other we need to take away human freedom.' There was a really cute, animated movie that I liked called Wall-E. Similar principle. Again it was like a robot, and because humanity had destroyed the planet, (it's not in a kid's movie but you would assume millions of people have died), what the robot knows it needs to do is take away humanity's freedom. Just put them all in these tight little bubbles where they just eat what they are told to eat, do what they are told to do, follow rules, follow orders by the letter, lose all their freedoms. And then what do you have? You have Will Smith, and always in Hollywood, of course, with a gun. And a lot of guns. And what he is going to do, whether it's 007, or Mel Gibson, or Will Smith, or some animated creature, what they are going to do is they are going to take down, often kill, the alien, robot, or billionaire, who is taking away people's freedoms to try and force through equality, to try and stop humanity from hurting itself.

That is the plot of movie after movie after movie. That is what Hollywood sells, particularly when they think that demographic is young men. And Rachel, who I had wanted to actually speak tonight because she has something she was going to do for us. But she's going to do it next week. I'm sorry Rachel, I wanted to hear you, but Rachel presented on "Gamergate." These young men are not radicalized just by their little communities, or just by their video game culture, which also runs off similar principles. They're watching these movies that are targeting the demographic - young men. That's what sells and inspires people. That's what sells music records: fighting for freedom, fighting for individual freedom. The music that gets you amped up and going. You don't sell movies off to young men about a slow, progressive struggle for equality. That's not glamorous enough.

Honestly, I think one of the problems with Adventism, is that the Adventist model of the end of the world based upon freedom allows for so much inherent selfishness. I don't think that even their ideas of martyrdom for the sabbath is selfless. Instead, I think for a lot of people, it's incredibly selfish. All they want to be is Will Smith, is Mel Gibson, is that hero – gun-toting or not. But if they're a member of the 144,000, no-one can touch them. How smug do we get to be? If we are martyred, we're heroes, and then we're raised up again and we can say "I told you so." It's us against the ugly masses who are trying to take away our freedoms. And it has become in-built, especially for young Adventists with a type of apocalypse, end of the world scenario, that puts them as that "superhero." And it is appealing in a way that is incredibly selfish.

What our message has done is strip that away. Every last shred of it. And the only thing left is a selfless position for equality. I can't remember exactly how I started

talking about movies, but it's going to tie into what I wanted Rachel to teach us tonight, but she's going to do that for us next week for sure. But this is what sells. This is what sells to people, and it sells through Hollywood. Even though many of those actors are left-wing. What sells movies is not equality principles, just like what sells video games. And if we go to Gamergate, they're watching, you know, the "Marvel Cinematic Universe." They're watching superhero movies. And a lot of these things that appeal to them, we should be aware of. And this is part of compromise. It's part of the problem.

Some people who now try and watch a movie, because sometimes their mind just gets so full and so sore, and they try and escape, they come to me and they complain "I can't escape anymore, because now I see it everywhere."

But I think Adventism has a similar problem, where even if they were good conservatives and never watched a movie, their end of the world scenario is movie-like, and it's freedom based. And they are the superhero, and it's more about getting proven right and defending their freedoms. And for the young men I grew up with, ready and willing to kill whoever they had to kill to protect their families at the end of the world, they're essentially looking forward to it. None of that is about saving people.

And what we need to do is also to be careful with the right-wing. That there are good people there, who aren't necessarily inherently believing in sexism or racism for that matter. Sexism is deeper and more complex today. They might believe in headship for a different reason, but we can't make it all ugly, we have to see that they have a problem with that underlying principle and know how to reach them.

So we are out of time, but we went to libertarianism. We discussed what libertarianism stands for, and I asked, 'what's the hole in this? Where does it fall apart?' I'll give you the answer, but not explain why, and then I'll ask someone next week to explain why. Left-wing libertarianism. Explain to me how that works or doesn't work.

But they stand for this support of freedom, without any state involvement. So they support gay marriage, they support women taking on any job women want to take on. Women - full freedom. If a woman wants to enter the workforce, if a woman wants to... run for president, run for president. If someone wants to smoke marijuana, smoke marijuana. If someone wants to own a gun, own a gun. Prostitution, Religious Freedom...

They have so many positions that we would agree with. Obviously not all the ones on the board. But supportive of gay marriage. Supportive of {women} - apply for a job or study a particular field. And they support all of that. But I want to make one point just to warn us. And this is a reference we are going to come to - going to go into detail with next week.

Libertarianism, this, has an alt-right problem. Many prominent leaders of the far-right have at some point identified as libertarian. What they recognize is that leaders

of the far-right today, they're more likely to come through libertarianism, which means they agree with gay marriage, some of them agree with abortion, they agree with women in the workforce. More leaders of the far-right come through libertarianism than any other avenue, including Republicanism. We want to see why. Because the greatest threat, if we're going to talk about the far-right today, isn't elderly male Republicans. And we'll go further into that next week. And Rachel is, I'm excited, going to help us.

So I might not be able to take any more questions or comments now, but if you have any, hold on to them. Don't let them drain away, even if you go and write them down, because I want to hear them.

Summary: Tess

So to review:

We reviewed and broke down the essential ethos of right-wing and left-wing freedom versus equality. We started a discussion that I'm sure for many might not have answered all their questions about history; why the North versus the South was still equality versus freedom, even though it has been more complicated at different points.

We explained the other complication when it comes to the idea of a person as property, and how women are viewed as property. Probably the vast majority of the world believe so, to varying degrees.

We explained... we went to a couple of quotes to kind of shell that out a little bit more, and then we started talking about libertarianism.

We did give a few examples – Australian politics and the Freedom Convoy – to just show how freedom is what the right is pushing, and the erosion of freedoms as what they see is the great threat from big government.

And we touched on Adventism's love of freedom. Love of freedom because the loss of freedom is what their biblical mindset has taught them to fear. And {we} tied that into Hollywood's mind as well.

So we've discussed a lot but we'll review next week.

We went to libertarianism; discussed just how beautiful that model is. I want us to see it as beautiful and then I want us to see why it's the most dangerous political model there is. That many of those in the far-right, many of those who we would see as the greatest threat today, are young, mostly male, but not old white men in Congress fighting gay marriage. And we'll go into that next week, with Rachel's help.

If you kneel with... oh one last thought before we close.

There's an article I would like everyone to read. I might send two articles. First of all, the one from 2019 on The Civil War, and if you read that with what we said tonight

in mind, I think it might help clarify things a little. It is on the Media Broadcast. I think I posted it there in the early days of the broadcast as one I just wanted people to have, but also to save and keep and re-read.

And there's one other article that was written in 2015. It's by Vox. It's quite long, but I'd really like everyone to read it, even if you read it soon, and then reread it if you could, just before Vespers next week. It's from 2015, and what this journalist does is he goes and speaks to some of the men who were involved in Gamergate. Some of you have heard Rachel talk, present, on Gamergate, and she's going to do that for TMW in... I think next month. So for some of you who have already seen her present on Gamergate, the context around it will make a little bit more sense. But it's still worth reading. And there's some key points in that article I want us to pick up, because a lot of this centres on libertarianism and a younger demographic of men.

So homework if you don't mind.

if you kneel with me, we'll close in prayer. Marie, would you close in prayer for us?

Prayer: Marie

Dear God in heaven,

Thank you that we could all meet here on Sabbath and discuss, and try to understand more about equality versus freedom, and the grip that freedom has on the world and on the church, and our role and what our role is in this whole messy thing. And I pray now that you will please bless all of us as we go our separate ways now, and protect us, and allow us to all come back to meet tomorrow morning.

In your name,

Amen