

# America's Jews and Christians Are Failing the Test of Their Lives

If you are a Jew or Christian in America, the seriousness of your Judaism or Christianity is now being tested.

People look back in time and wonder how religious people, especially religious leaders – specifically, the clergy – could have failed in times of moral crisis. The failure of most rabbis, priests and pastors to speak out today – when the risk to personal safety is so much less than it was in communist and fascist countries – should provide the answer: Religion doesn't have all that much impact on most religious people. During comfortable times, it provides two essentials to a happy and fulfilled life – community and meaning – but when tested, it often fails like an umbrella that fails to expand just as it starts to rain.

America is being taken over by violent mobs; a vast amount of destruction and stealing has taken place (with little police intervention and the apathy of our political leaders). Why aren't all clergy delivering thundering sermons about the Seventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal"? Does it now come with an asterisk?

A central part of a major American city has been seized and occupied by people who hate America and its values, including its Judeo-Christian values. Heard any clergy (aside from some evangelical Christians) speaking out against it?

And most ominous by far, for the first time in American history, free speech – the mother of all freedoms – is being widely suppressed, not by the government but by the press, the universities, the high schools, the elementary schools, all the giant internet media, Hollywood and virtually every major

business in America. Christians and Jews place repentance at the center of their theologies, yet there is no place for repentance if you did or said one insensitive thing – real or alleged – even if it was 20 or more years ago. Yet all we get from American religious leaders on this matter is ... silence.

The freest, least racist, most opportunity-providing country in history – “the last best hope of earth,” in Abraham Lincoln’s words – is smeared as “systemically racist”; all white people are declared “racist”; and the statues of the greatest Americans, including George Washington and even Abraham Lincoln, are toppled and/or defaced. And all we get from most American religious leaders is either agreement or silence.

It leads this religious American to ask the question the anti-religious ask: Of what use is religion?

Take the claim that being “colorblind” is racist.

If you are a religious Jew or Christian – let alone a rabbi, priest or minister – do you believe that? Do you believe that the human ideal is *not* to be colorblind? Do you believe that the ideal is to see every person, first and foremost, as a member of a race? Is that what you learned at seminary? Is that what you have taught from your pulpit all of your life?

I doubt it. I assume that, until as recently as a year or even six months ago, you have always believed and preached that we are, in Martin Luther King Jr.’s words, to measure people not by “the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Isn’t it fundamental to all Bible-based religions that we are all created in God’s image, that God has no race and that Adam and Eve, from whom we all descend, had no race? If you are a Christian, do you see Christians of other races first as fellow Christians or first as members of their race? If you are a Jew, do you see Jews of other races as anything other

than fellow Jews? Does God?

So, why the silence? Why aren't all rabbis, priests and pastors telling their congregations and telling America – in tweets, on Facebook, in letters to the editor, on television and radio, in opinion pieces – that there is one race, the human race, and that the only antidote to racism is to deny that race determines our worth, not to affirm its significance?

Does an ideology that affirms the significance of race have an honorable pedigree? Has it ever led to anything good? Isn't that exactly what Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan advocated?

So, how are we to explain this tragic failure of religious Jews and Christians – and their clergy – to speak up against looting (aka stealing) and for freedom, for America, for Western civilization and for being colorblind?

The answer to this question also goes to the core of what it means to be religious. At the center of our two religions is the notion of fear of God: "Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). But what is now apparent is that most Jews and Christians fear the left, fear The New York Times, fear being shunned by "friends" on Facebook and mobbed on Twitter more than they fear God.

That's what this moment comes down to. Jews and Christians who fail this test will not only lose their freedom, lose the great American hope for mankind and lose the West; they will have also lost their souls.

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