

# OpenTheo

## Theologian Krista Bontrager on Diversity

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### **Knight & Rose Show** - Wintery Knight and Desert Rose

Wintery Knight and Desert Rose interview Krista Bontrager about diversity, equity and inclusion. What is diversity? Are there any benefits to diversity? Are there any disadvantages to diversity? How does the concept of representation apply to diversity? Should Christians try to redeem DEI, or should we just avoid it? What is the future of DEI in companies and schools?

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## **Transcript**

Welcome to the Knight and Rose Show, where we discuss practical ways of living out an authentic Christian worldview. I'm Wintery Knight. And I'm Desert Rose.

Welcome, Rose. So today, we're delighted to welcome a special guest onto the show, Krista Bontrager, also known as Theology Mom. Krista holds a BA in Communications from Biola University.

She has two degrees from Talbot School of Theology, an MA in Theology and an MA in Bible Exposition. She's currently working on a demon in apologetics at Birmingham Theological Seminary. She is an author, podcaster, and former university professor.

She has worked professionally in theology and apologetics for 25 years and transitioned into full-time ministry with the Center for Biblical Unity in 2021. Krista is also a co-author of a new book entitled Walking in Unity, Biblical Answers to 10 Questions on Race and Racism. Krista, welcome to the Knight and Rose Show.

I'm so glad to be here. Thanks for asking me. Yeah.

Well, today, we'd love to talk to you about a topic that is important to us. We know it's important to you. And that is diversity.

And in addition to just diversity, this whole idea of diversity, equity, and inclusion. So if you don't mind, let's start with a few definitions. What does DEI even mean? Yeah.

And DEI, people might hear that in their workplace. It's an acronym that stands for, as you said, diversity, equity, and inclusion. And it's really a project that is the extension of the critical social theories.

Some people may have heard of one of the particular critical social theories called critical race theory. That's out in the media. It's in our general population conversations now.

Although I would venture that very few people actually understand what critical race theory actually means. And I would just give a very brief definition from Delgado and Stefantich's book. They were there at the inception of the critical race theory conversation.

And in their book, A Critical Race Theory and Introduction, they talk about how it is a transformative, it is an idea that is meant to transform cultures. And it is an interdisciplinary effort where you see racism and injustice, and this is a correction to that. And so from their standpoint, they're seeing the transformation of society according to trying to make a correction about racism.

That's what critical race theory is. Now, there's other critical social theories, queer theory, feminist theory, and they all just use different lenses from which they are going to try to correct the ills of society. DEI is what I call the praxis of that.

It is the practical outworking of how we are going to implement policies in our workplace, usually in our workplace. But when I say workplace, I'm not only referring to secular workplaces, I'm also referring to our churches and Christian ministries and Christian schools, that we are going to implement policies that help to correct what are seen as historically marginalized people to give them kind of a hand up in order to be full

participants in the workplace and society. So if we think about the definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusion in particular, I'm just going to give you some basic definitions.

These are from the University of Washington. Nearly every university has an office of DEI. You can go on your local university and look up their definitions, but they're going to be something like this.

The diversity is the presence of differences that enrich our workplace. Examples of diversity may include race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, disability, age, religious commitment, or political perspective. Equity is ensuring that access, resources, and opportunity are provided for all.

So think of it as equal distribution in order to succeed and grow, especially those, and this is a very important part of the definition, those who are underrepresented and have been historically disadvantaged. And we will come back to that in due course in our conversation. Inclusion is a workplace culture that is welcoming for all people, regardless of their social category, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, identity, age, abilities, religion, everyone is valued, respected, and able to reach their full potential.

These are kind of the classic textbook definitions of DEI. And don't they sound pretty? This is the what I call kind of the noble version of the DEI project when these definitions are put forth. But we will dig into these concepts a little deeper in this conversation, but those are just some basic orientation to what it is we are talking about.

So I've seen this definitely in the workplace. And I know that in the churches, many pastors are starting to get very concerned about having an optimal mix of like skin colors, and so on. So what would the proponents of DEI consider to be the goals that they're reaching for? If they got the diversity they wanted, what goods would come out of that? Yeah, and I think it is important to recognize that DEI is looked upon in most workplaces as a universal good.

We are often told at these diversity trainings in our workplace, diversity is the key to success. It is seen as almost a universal good. This is going to help us be a better company and be better people.

So if we want to be a good people, then we will want to get behind these DEI efforts. And I think that there could be a case for what I call a noble version of diversity. There could be a noble version of equity.

I'm a little more skeptical on the inclusion part, but I think that a good version of diversity is about a hiring process that's as free from biased hiring as possible. Now, I don't think it's possible to be completely free from all biases because we all have biases.

But I do think it's important to think about a hiring process where people are judged according to their merits, their qualifications, their experiences, and where we are expanding the talent pool to get as many qualified applicants as possible.

And that we might even be looking in a talent pool and expanding our talent pool in places where we don't normally look for talent. So, for example, one ministry that my ministry partner, Monique and I worked with, they came to us and they said, you know, how do we diversify our staff? Well, our first question is what do you mean by diversity? What are you trying to accomplish? Are you just trying to get people on your staff that have more or less melanin than you? Like, what are we talking about here? And why are we doing it? But if we're talking about, you know, how do we add more people with different cultural backgrounds or languages or something that maybe is going to actually help the company be marketed in new places and new to new groups? Well, then there could be good advantage to hiring people with a diverse array of cultural backgrounds. That could be a legitimate business goal that would help enhance a business.

But the problem is the recruiting. Sometimes people are only putting job notices in places where it's recruiting from one particular group. But if you want to recruit people from other cultural contexts, you might have to put your job notice other places.

So I think the noble version of diversity could be, when I think about my business's goals, I want to hire the best people. I want to hire people with the best experience. Where am I going to find those people? And could I have a blind spot? Could I be missing out on a talent pool of people? Because I'm not advertising the jobs in the right place.

To me, that is the best version of diversity. To some degree, though, it seems to me that in 21st century America, at least there are two different end goals that you've mentioned so far. One is to correct historic injustices, and another is to look in a larger or different area for talents or skills experiences that may enhance the company.

And a lot of times those would seem to me to be at odds with each other. Yeah. So now you're moving into the conversation from the noble vision, as I've outlined it, to the darker side of diversity hiring.

And that's where it starts getting focused almost exclusively around hiring people from these historically marginalized groups. And that is what it has evolved into. And that is what I call the darker side of diversity.

There was an interesting little informal survey that it was published. People can look it up. It's on the resume builder website.

They have a nice summary of it. But that one in six hiring managers have been told to stop hiring white men. Now, why would they be told that? It's because white men are not seen as a historically marginalized group.

And so for one in six hiring managers to have some perception that their company is telling them stop hiring white men, that's an interesting statistic because now it doesn't seem like we're hiring based on merit anymore. It doesn't seem like we're necessarily trying to find the best talent for our company. Rather, a different agenda is in play.

52% of hiring managers believe that their company practices reverse discrimination in hiring. That's a high number. And so this is what I think is what could have started out with good intentions in helping broaden our talent pool and finding qualified candidates that maybe were missing in our hiring process.

Now, we have devolved into we're going to actively not hire people because of their social category, white men. And we're going to look for people that are in historically marginalized categories. That's generally considered women, particularly, quote unquote, women of color, which is minorities.

I don't necessarily buy into that nomenclature, but that's what it's called in the workplace. Queer hiring is very popular now, particularly if you can hire a trans person, that's going to get you some bonus points with entities like the human rights campaign. And many of our big Fortune 500 companies belong to and want to get those points from the human rights campaign.

I've done a whole podcast about that in June of 2023, if people want to hear me do a deep dive on the human rights campaign and all of those points that they get. But yeah, that's important. Yeah, so we're this is this is where we are to the point that there's a, you know, people can Google it.

There's a memo from Disney that came out a couple of years ago where they were just, you know, outlining their their goals for diversity. And it really starts to look like quotas, if I'm honest, where we're going to have 50 percent of our shows are going to feature members of historically marginalized groups as main characters, or we're going to have 50 percent of our prominent filmmakers that are in managerial positions that they are going to belong to historically marginalized groups. And so this is where diversity has kind of devolved to.

All right, I got it. I kind of have a couple questions about this. So for the first thing, since you were mentioning the human rights campaign, I think most of our regular listeners are going to remember that I wasn't born in in the United States.

I had to get sponsored by a large company in order to get my green card. And the company that sponsored me, it has to be a large Fortune 100 company. And the particular one that sponsored me was a platinum partner of the human rights campaign.

And so I had to survive many, many years in this company kind of keeping my cards close to the vest because, as you mentioned, even though they stated that they were

very inclusive, it causes a lot of problems for Christians if we have to kind of be forced to affirm this in order to work for this company. And it can come up in your performance review. You know, how did you do at contributing to our goal of diversity? And the second question I had was, well, how does this affect the quality of the work that's provided if you say, well, historically, I'm not trying to be silly here, but historically, say, which doctors have been underrepresented in the in the healthcare community? So now we're going to start hiring people who have, you know, a background in, I don't know, voodoo and see if they can do surgery as well.

So there's just a couple of things that kind of occurred to me. I was wondering if you want to speak to either one of those. No, you're exactly right.

Because if we were to think about the matrix of oppression that is out there, people can go Google that matrix of oppression. And you can see a figure that is put forward in a lot of these diversity workplace trainees. You will notice that Christianity is seen as an oppressor or privileged group.

And others, we might say are in the oppressed group. Muslims, they're in a pressed group that is on the rise. They have a lot of social capital right now.

Hindus and Buddhists as well. Jews would also be in that category. But now we're in the oppressed group and the privileged group.

But I think that your witch doctor example is an important one to consider is the rise of paganism, the rise of spiritism and animism. I think that these kind of more local tribal kinds of religions are on the rise. And we would be remiss in not noticing that people in the black community, for example, in the African-American community, people who have grown up in church and deconstruct from the faith deconstruction is a big conversation right now that my friend, Elisa Childers, you know, has been kind of at the tip of the spear of that discussion.

But to my knowledge, she hasn't really explored yet what deconstruction looks like in the African-American community, because it tends to look like deconstructing into a black cult, such as the Black Hebrew Israelites or the Nation of Islam or for black women deconstructing into African spiritualism. Voodoo, witchcraft. Exactly.

That would be considered, I would say, under the matrix of oppression, historically marginalized group. And do we need to have a place at the table for those kind of people so that we can get their standpoint on things? And this is connected to a branch in philosophy or a movement in philosophy called standpoint theory. And the thought is that you need representation from all of these historically marginalized groups.

This could include Voodoo or witch doctors or African spiritualism. We need to have those voices in our boardrooms or at our executive team levels in order to make sure we

have a fully-orbed, diverse array of voices. And the bait and switch with that, of course, is that white people, men, quote unquote, heteronormative, which I don't even like that term because the term automatically borrows from gender theory.

But Christian, these are never looked upon as helping you reach your diversity goals. These are not part of the diversity count. And so what we're talking about diversity in the real world, not the noble version of it, but in the real world and how it shows up, it really just means we're going to hire the people who affirm the ideology.

And whether you're white or black or a Christian or whatever you are, as long as you affirm the ideology, this is what counts as diversity. Right. And now we've left the realm of actual diversity and said you have to have this specific ideology.

Right. We've now left the realm of inclusivity because now we're being exclusive. It calls into question for me to these definitions of oppressor and oppressed, of course, because one of my areas of expertise is Islam and Islam is as a matter of fact and oppressive religion by nature.

It calls for the oppression and the subjugation of everyone who is not a Muslim. And so and then you've got Christianity, which calls for the respect, the honoring of inherent worth and value and dignity of all human beings based on the doctrine of the imago dei that all people, all people are created in the image of God and thus are inherently valuable. And so it really seems like what may have begun as a noble idea has gone off the rails and is now doing the opposite of what it was intended to do.

Let me ask you this. So should should Christians try to redeem the EI or should we just avoid this or how would you recommend we approach this as Christians? This is such a good question because if we're talking about affirming the ideology behind DEI, I said, no, we cannot be redeemed. We need to just abandon it and cut ties with it.

If I am talking about expanding my talent pool and that maybe I'm missing out on hiring some qualified people because I inadvertently am just not advertising my jobs in the right place, or if something in our internal processes and policies is causing us to pass over certain groups of people because there's some bias that's baked into our system or something other than meritocracy or or experience and that kind of thing, then I would say, well, all right, let's let's talk about that. But I'm not a fan of calling it diversity. Maybe we can call it something else.

But I think that we have seen in our ministry experience on the road with my ministry partner, Monique and I, we have seen situations where there in Christian ministries, as we've done consulting over the years, that there are some times there are issues that are baked into the policy at a Christian ministry or church that has detrimental bias baked into it. There was one situation where we were hired by a major global Christian ministry. And if I told you the name of it, you would immediately know who I'm talking

about.

And we were hired to do a training for their top 75 leaders in their region. And 74 out of the 75 were white. But 85 percent of the people who were under them were African-American or some other minority.

Okay. And so Monique just asked the top four leaders, so the tippy top out of the 75, she says, so tell me about your process for how you promote people to this team of 75 people. Because it strikes me as a little odd that 85 percent of your employees under this 75 and that number under them is in the thousands, thousands of employees.

Yeah. My first thought when you said, you know, 74 of the top 75 are white. The first thought that comes to mind is, okay, well, are we talking about like Appalachia or some like region that is, you know, entirely white? Clearly not.

Yeah. And so in talking to them about their process, they had a process baked in that did seem to favor a certain group of people and just favor another group of people. That to me was an issue of a legitimate problem.

Now, I don't think that the cure for that problem is we need to bring in DEI. Like, I think that we need to get a better process in place. Maybe we don't have clear and objective merit-based criteria for how people are promoted.

They had a highly subjective system where they kind of promoted internally with people that they knew. And apparently, the white people only knew white people. It was really a problem.

And so I'm not saying that, you know, there's no that there's no problems out there in the workplace. I think it's a worthy conversation to look at internal policies, structures, to think about how we can have objective criteria for hiring and promotion and retention and all of that. But I'm not a fan of trying to redeem DEI.

I think we should call it something else. Yeah. What are some of the consequences that you've seen of DEI the way it is actually being practiced that are disadvantageous? Yeah.

I think that the statistics are starting to emerge now. I mean, there was another study because, you know, when you bring this up inevitably, people say, well, you're just being oversensitive. You're a sensitive white person.

You know, you're a sensitive Christian. But in the wake of George Floyd, for example, people can go on Bloomberg. There was a summary of a study that was done that since George Floyd, corporate America, you know, they promised to hire people of more people of color.

And they actually did that. And there was a survey of the S&P 100 companies that have



diversified their workplace. They hired 94 percent of their new hires were people of color and only six percent were white.

And so it is having this ideology is having a huge impact. What we see on the road is a general discouragement among young people about their prospects. You know, and we see this among Asian students.

We see this among, you know, white students in particular, sometimes with Indian students from Southern Asia, India. They tend to excel in school. They have a culture that teaches them to excel.

And they're concerned. They're concerned about their job prospects in a Fortune 500 company, especially if they're strong Christians. They're discouraged.

I think out of a college education, going to trade schools, we're hearing more about that. And I don't necessarily think that's a bad course for some people. But if you want to be an attorney, a doctor, you know, a school teacher, you have to go have special training.

Not everybody can go be a plumber or an electrician. And I bless all tradesmen. I think it's a noble profession.

I think I'm a vigorous advocate that all honest work is biblical and noble and ought to be extolled as such when good men go to support their families. I'm all for it. But some people, you know, want to go into highly specialized fields and they don't want to do that.

They don't want to become a plumber. They want to become a doctor. But DEI is also restructuring our entire medical system and, you know, how we are prioritizing even medical decisions.

I mean, we're a little off topic, but I'm going to give you an example here. One of the other critical social theories is called fat studies, where fat people are considered an oppressed group, much like, you know, black people or African-Americans have historically been an oppressed group or queer people, fat people are. And so there's thin privilege.

Instead of white privilege, there would be thin privilege. So, Rose, you're adding to your socially oppressive categories there. You know, you're pretty fit.

Yeah, I need to stop working out. Yeah. So, but now if you go to a nutritionist, and this happened to my best friend, is that she was visiting the nutritionist.

She was referred by her doctor to go to the nutritionist because she was having a lot of food allergy issues. And the nutritionist had been apparently gone to school where they were informed by fat studies. And she was making recommendations about nutrition

based on the principle of like, not shaming anyone.

And we're not going to talk about the obesity problem and making recommendations for food that really, like, don't make any sense at all for, you know, a healthy person. And so this conversation has gone far beyond now trainings in our workplaces about hiring and promotion and retention. Now it's shifting into becoming a worldview.

And it's, it's beginning to completely change how we engage in medical conversations. I've had multiple doctors tell me now that they're very hesitant about talking to their patients who are obese. And especially if they're black and obese, like, I can't bring this up, that, you know, your, your quality of life is suffering, your health is suffering because of your situation.

And so this is where it gets, it gets really tricky and it starts to show up in adverse ways. Yeah. Yeah.

So we're recording this with cameras on right now. So Krista can see that I'm clearly not white. I'm I'm actually, my family is West Indian black.

So think like the Caribbean at South South America. And can you imagine me going into a doctor's office and being told lies because they're afraid of offending me that end up hurting me in the long run. It's just so counter to what you're paying a professional to do.

And the funny thing is that you really do have to pay people money to do this work for you, but they can't actually solve your problem because they're so they've been taught to be so afraid of offending you. And I've actually, you know, seen this happening in families where the parents are dysfunctional and the children are diagnosed rather than question the bad parenting that's going on or whatever. They just prescribe the medication to deal with something that really should be a problem of you need to take care of yourself better.

You need to make better decisions. Well, in addition, we see that everybody is being put at risk when minority grouping is prioritized above merit for things like becoming a surgeon or becoming a pilot or an air traffic controller. It's sad because I think that many of the African-Americans that I've met through our ministry, they would never want to be hired because of some weird form of tokenism of, you know, you're a black person.

So yeah, come on over. They want to earn their way. They want to be qualified.

They want to show their diligence and their hard work ethic and that it is an extension of their Christian worldview. And many African-Americans that I know would fall in that category. They are not interested in being tokenized this way.

In fact, historically speaking, I would say prior to the rise of the welfare state, historically speaking, the African-American community is a very proud community of hardworking,

industrious, entrepreneurial people, God-fearing, church-centered culture. Now, that's not often what we see today anymore of in the African-American community. Tragically, I feel like their culture has been hijacked by some very bad ideas, but the African-American Christians that I know have no interest in being tokenized this way.

They are more connected to their roots in the true African-American culture of 50 and more years ago, and it bothers them when they hear these things. It bothers them deeply to hear about black people being treated with inequity in the workplace or not being fired when they ought to be. And so let us not think for a minute that those viewpoints actually represent many people within the African-American community, but yet that is the practice in how it is showing up in many of the workplaces.

And so I just want to make that careful differentiation. Yeah, that's an excellent point. To some degree, I can relate to that on a small level in that I was a student athlete and I was top of my class and I was offered a full scholarship to one of the best academic universities in the country, but the full scholarship was for athletics.

And so when I went to the university, having earned my way there, I frequently was told when people found out I played sports, they would make comments about how, oh, you're one of those quota invitations. Do you know how to read then? And it's insulting, it's shameful, and I would rather have not been there than have been there as a quota of we need a certain number of people who don't actually qualify, but who are able to play sports. It's a terrible feeling when everybody around you thinks you don't belong there.

And I think that situations like that have began to lead to pushback about DEI policies. Some schools are now shutting down their DEI offices. Now, some of them are doing, like in Florida, they had to do it because it became a state law that a federally funded or a state funded university was not going to get money if they had a DEI office.

But I think that some companies are starting to see the light. Another reaction, though, that I'm seeing is a doubling down, but they just changed the name of it. I think that it we're starting to see the emergence of what is called belonging.

Belonging is the new nomenclature for DEI. I think that I'm seeing in a few places, the rise of accessibility, office of belonging and accessibility is replacing diversity, equity, and inclusion. But it's usually the same ideology is just kind of repackaged because people recognize the term now of DEI and some of its problems.

But the other pushback that I think is happening that is actually very encouraging is that as people are waking up to this, new possibilities are emerging. And I'm just going to mention one. People can go look up Dr. Sheena Mason.

Now, she is a progressive Christian. She is a lesbian, but she has a very interesting project called the theory of racelessness. And I think that she is in a way, she might not

know this, but, you know, in a way, she is borrowing from the historic Christian worldview because she wants to say there is only one race and that, you know, these physical differences are so minimal that really what we should be advocating for is, you know, our common humanity first.

And she sees the solution to racism as being her project of racelessness. Now, I would love to see some secular companies take up her framework and her model, which I think has some in common with historic Christianity and to build a new project, a new workplace kind of framework on racelessness, you know, that we are going to focus the conversation on hiring through merit and, you know, going more toward this more noble vision of diversity as I've laid it out. Now, we could debate whether there's pros and cons of that and, you know, the, you know, the fact that she's not a Christian.

But I do think that it's good and positive that there is enough pushback now that that conversation is even possible in 2020. That conversation wasn't even possible. But there's enough cracks in the dam now that people are at least willing to start publicly asking some questions.

And I think that's a good thing. I think that, you know, we're far, far away from dismantling the whole structure. But my hope is that a competing model will rise and that will be because people will not abandon a faulty model until there's a competitor that seems viable.

They have to have something to swim to. You can't just tear down one system of thought without having a replacement system. And so I fear treatment in the workplace and respect and honor and dignity and that sort of a thing in the workplace, but based on, you know, more of a natural law approach.

I think that there's a need for that. But people will not abandon DEI. I don't think until there's an alternative.

Yeah, I really like the shirt that you guys have. I don't know if you still have it at Center for Biblical Unity that says one race, one people, one savior. I have that.

I got that shirt and I wear it all the time. I love that. It's absolutely true.

We are one race. The idea of different races, as I understand it, came along much, much later with malintent. It's one of the more unfortunate products of the enlightenment.

Yes. Yeah. And I like that terminology of racelessness, I think, better than colorblindness, for example, when people are going to say, what's wrong with you? You can't see that I'm black.

What's your problem? Are you trying to be deceitful? You're not colorblind. Do you see my color? Admit it. Okay, Krista, I have a question for you about churches.

So I mentioned previously that when I talk to people, pastors and leaders in the church, there seems to be some concern about having a good mix of skin colors and genders or sexes in the church. But I have to say, I've never gone into a church and had people get excited about my interest, say, in apologetics, and say, oh, that's wonderful. We have a lot of people who are deconstructing here or a lot of children that need to be, you know, built up.

So why is there this emphasis on kind of a diversity of externals rather than leveraging a diversity of strengths? Yeah, that's such a good question because when I train people on diversity issues, and we are available for doing trainings on diversity and for Christian ministries and churches and Christian schools and that sort of a thing, when I lead them through the biblical part of like how to think about it biblically, I go right to 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 of how God has given us a diversity of gifts. And thinking about in our churches and in our Christian institutions, our focus of diversity ought to be on the gifts. It ought to be on harnessing the things that God has given each and every one of us, like for you in apologetics, like how can we harness that in our local church? Yeah, like we have some people who are deconstructing and we have some people who are borderline deconstructing.

How can we provide some interventions? And we would love to get you in the high school youth group doing a Q&A once a month. And like, let's harness that gift. To me, that should be the primary type of biblical diversity that we should be talking about in our Christian institutions.

But I hear almost none of that. Exactly. Rather what people come to us and they want us to help them with is how do I get more black and brown faces on my website through hiring? And we usually tell them that's not the right path.

And sometimes that ends the conversation very quickly because that was not the advice they were looking for. But, you know, I think that if you want to diversify your staff with black and brown people, because you think that that's the noble thing to do, you're not asking the right questions. You're just not.

Now, where that might be relevant is let's say you have a church that was established 40 years ago and it's a Chinese speaking church. And 40 years ago, that was a predominantly Chinese speaking neighborhood. But in that 40 years now, the neighborhood has kind of changed.

And all your neighbors in the five mile radius, most of them are speaking Farsi. And your Chinese church, Chinese speaking church, maybe you even have a second generation service that you do for second generation American born Chinese people that's in English. But that's not really ministering to your Farsi speaking community that's right around the church.

And they're all looking at you and thinking like that's not relevant to my life. Where hiring a particular person from a particular group might matter is when it becomes a gospel mission. And those elders in that Chinese church get together and they realize, you know what, we need to start a Farsi church plant and we're going to give them our building for free.

And we're going to resource them for the first three years to get a paid pastor in here. And we're going to, we want to find a pastor who their primary spiritual gift is evangelism. And they are a cultural insider who speaks Farsi natively, understands the culture and, you know, that we're going to set up and support a gospel oriented ministry.

And we're going to be a light in a dark place. Okay. That's when quote unquote diversity, hiring really matters.

We are finding a cultural insider to have a gospel oriented ministry. I can see that case. And, but what we see in the book of acts, for example, is that God's quote unquote diversity program, if you're really preaching the gospel, people from different cultures and ethnicities will just kind of naturally appear.

When we see the book, the church in Antioch, send out Paul and Barnabas and it gives us this list of those sending elders. It's a fairly culturally diverse group. I think that that is the natural outworking of the Holy Spirit.

But if we've got to like gin up some fake structure and we just want to get more black and brown people on our website and engage in diversity hiring for the sake of diversity hiring. So we look like we're good people. I just, I don't get it.

I just, I think you're asking the wrong question. Yeah, exactly. Another probably second to a diversity of gifts that I could see being really valuable as a diversity of maybe stages of life.

Yes. Because of, because there's wisdom in older people, there's energy in younger people and people can, can speak into each other's lives from different seasons and encourage each other, challenge each other, pass on wisdom to each other. But what I see in so many churches is, oh, don't worry.

We're going to divide you all up based on your age and marital status, the number of children. So you won't have to interact with anybody. I'm not a fan of that.

I'm just not a fan. And even like marital status, I see that what happens to my friend Monique in being single and an older single person, she has a very hard time in local church contexts. She really struggles and she's trying to figure out like, how do I navigate a world where, you know, I'm kind of isolated from the married people and so much of the energy in the local church goes to the married people.

And she's, where does that leave me? And so those are some things that she wrestles through all the time. I think that if we're going to have a biblically informed local church, we have to be asking those kinds of intergenerational questions of treating the older men and women like mothers and fathers and one another as brothers and sisters. And what can the older women be speaking into the younger women and so on, but also in single and single and married people that, you know, we need that that mix too.

And so I think that those are, would start to approach a more biblical vision of quote unquote diversity, but we are, the world's version of that is so far removed from what God is informing us. And that's what breaks my heart was when we consult with churches and they've been so steeped in the world's version of diversity. They can't even see it.

So when we start talking to them about scripture that for them, it, it almost feels like it's not enough. It's not adequate because they, they really want to kind of look like the world. And this is what the world is doing.

And we're over here saying this is not the way, but the Bible has, it has a better plan, a better hope. Amen. Absolutely.

Yeah. Well, that's a great place for us to end those questions about that topic. So let me ask you though, before we completely finish, where can people find your work online? What can you tell us about your new book? Yeah, you can follow me at the center for biblical unity.

Just go to center for biblical unity, all one word.com. And there you can find about the work that my ministry partner Monique Dusan and I do related to justice. We're one of the only ministries trying to help inform and educate people consistently on all the critical social theories. We're not just about race.

We're also about informing people about queer theory and child studies and feminist theory and fat studies and all of it. We have four podcasts. The all the things podcast is kind of our flagship podcast where we talk about current events in light of the Christian worldview.

I have a podcast called theology mom, where I do more of theological teachings for regular people. I try to keep it interesting for people that do not have a theology background, but to help them understand and appreciate the importance of theology. Monique has a podcast with our friend, Kevin brigands on issues in the African American community through the lens of the Christian worldview.

It's called off code. And I find that podcast to be so educational. I've learned so much by listening to that podcast.

And then we have a more informal podcast on kind of breaking news types of things,

viral videos. And that is called the family meeting. And that's just kind of an occasional podcast as we have time.

But you can find out all of that about our podcast, our blog, where we're speaking, all of that. We have an app you can just send, look for the center for biblical unity. And finally, we have a book coming out in the fall through harvest house called walking in unity.

It's a little bit about the story of our very unlikely friendship, intergenerational friendship between an African American woman who grew up in South central Los Angeles, and me as an older middle age white woman, uh, growing up in the valley and Monique's journey out of critical race theory and the role that I played in that journey in helping to bring her out of that. And then we, along the way, we, we tell some frankly, embarrassing stories about ourselves. We tell on ourselves quite a lot of all the mistakes that we made and all the fights that we got in and how we yelled at each other sometimes, because we were so frustrated, but we stayed connected as sisters in the Lord.

And we answer 11 of the most common questions that we get at the ministry related to race and racism, but from a very solidly Christian standpoint. So that'll be coming out in the fall. And again, it's called walking in unity and it will be available everywhere.

Awesome. All right. Thank you so much for coming on the show.

So that's a good place for us to stop for today. So listeners, if you enjoyed this episode, please consider helping us out by sharing this podcast with your friends, writing us a five star review on Apple or Spotify, subscribing and commenting on YouTube and hitting the like button wherever you listen to this podcast. We appreciate you taking the time to listen and we'll see you again in the next one.