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Some of us are “late bloomers” when it comes to social justice. For me, it wasn’t until my graduate studies in theology that I came to understand a gospel emphasis on justice and liberation. I always had been more oriented toward what I called a “gospel of love,” and I entered theology school expecting to develop a biblical foundation of God’s truth and love. What I encountered instead was the transformational experience of coming to know a relational God who invites us to love one another by attending to the marginalized and oppressed victims of unjust socio-political realities. While my professors unpacked the theological nuances of such an orientation, it was mainly my peers who helped me process and understand my own socio-political location and privilege vis-à-vis the disenfranchised experiences of marginalized populations.

For a time, I experienced a distinction between this theological emphasis on justice versus my own inclinations towards love. What I realize now, however, is that it was by virtue of my orientation toward truth and love that I came to embrace the paradigm of social justice. For the truth of the matter is that different groups do experience unequal access

to resources and opportunities based on their demographic or socio-cultural identities. It is a difficult truth to grasp, and the ensuing challenges to my worldview and self-understanding are not always easy to maintain. Still, I recognize that this reality exists and that it is unjust. And what has naturally ensued from that recognition is a new direction for my love. Informed by that reality, my love for humankind now centers on attending to and promoting justice for the oppressed, and raising awareness thereof in other, more privileged individuals.

Although I came to these realizations later in life, my foundational, spiritual orientation towards truth and love has informed the way in which I “live justice.” Socio-political injustices comprise the truth of our realities and call for a loving response oriented toward changing those unjust structures. My other particular proclivities toward science and psychology give more concrete form to this orientation as I strive to promote a recognition of and response to these injustices within the fields of counseling and counselor training. And, naturally, I attend to those matters via my personal avenues of truth and love – raising others’ awareness of this socio-political reality and calling for a loving response of justice, *agape*, and solidarity.