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THANK YOU

Thank You!

We want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who supports the work of Renewed Heart Ministries. Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue our mission of love, justice, and compassion, even in a time when ministries like ours are being called to do more with less.

Your support means the world to us. Whether we're speaking into the broader society, engaging within our faith communities, or working one on one alongside others endeavoring to follow Jesus' teachings of love and justice, we remain committed to advocating for a world that is inclusive, just, and safe for all. **Your partnership helps keep our work alive.**

From all of us at Renewed Heart Ministries, **thank you.** We are so deeply grateful for you, and **we couldn't do this work without you.**

If you'd like to join them in supporting our work, please go to renewedheartministries.com and click on "Donate."

Or you can mail your support to:

Renewed Heart Ministries
PO Box 1211
Lewisburg WV, 24901



A podcast where we talk about the intersection of faith and social justice, and what a first-century, Jewish, prophet of the poor from Galilee offers us today in our work of love, compassion and justice.

Find The *Social Jesus* Podcast at:

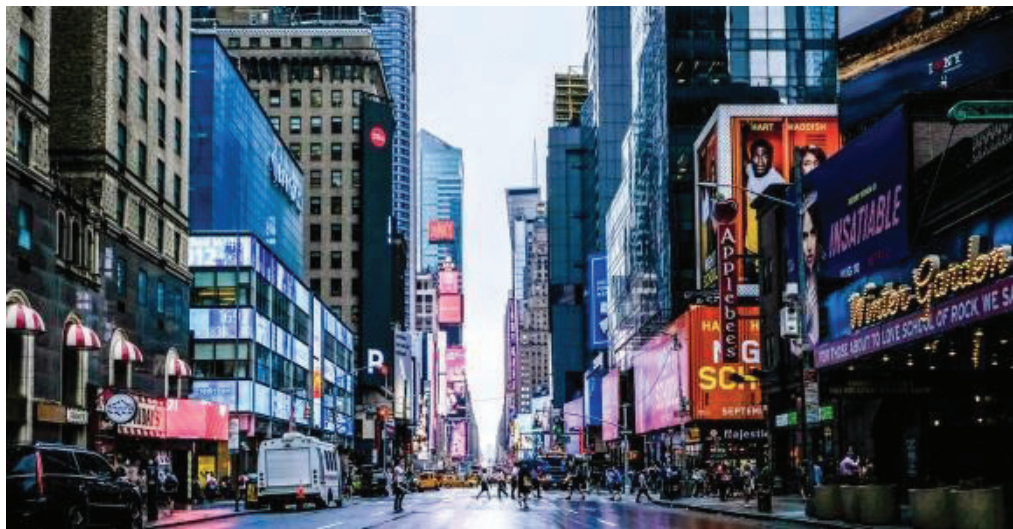
<https://the-social-jesus-podcast.simplecast.com/>



Listen & Subscribe

Every act of solidarity
that affirms the worth
of another person is
an act of resistance
that participates in
the inclusive work of
justice.





Society as Children in a Market and Societal Rest

by Herb Montgomery

Our reading this month is from the gospel of Matthew.

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

"To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

‘We played the pipe for you,
and you did not dance;
we sang a dirge,
and you did not mourn.’

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.”...

At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

(Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30)

Our reading this month offers a powerful critique of a society that resists voices calling for transformation. By comparing his generation to children in the marketplace who complain no matter what game is being played, Jesus exposes a pattern that’s still familiar today: people often reject challenges to the status quo regardless of how those challenges are presented.

John the Baptist had a message of repentance, simplicity, and prophetic warning. He lived an austere life, refusing many of the comforts and privileges of society. Yet instead of hearing his call to justice, many dismissed him as extreme and claimed he had a demon. Jesus, by contrast, “came eating and drinking,” sharing meals with ordinary people, celebrating community, and extending radical welcome to those pushed to the margins. Yet

continued on page 4



Weekly HeartGroup on Zoom Every Wednesday Night!

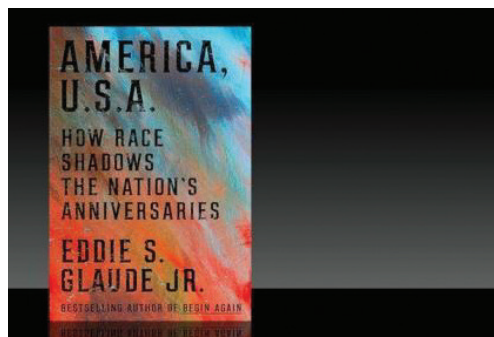
Each Wednesday evening, Renewed Heart Ministries hosts a Zoom-HeartGroup led by Herb Montgomery. Our discussion each week will focus on the content in RHM’s weekly eSight articles and the *Social Jesus* podcast. The time of each Zoom session will be on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. Pacific/10:00 p.m. Eastern.

To receive the link for the Zoom meeting, email us at: info@renewedheartministries.com



Find the latest show on
YouTube
[@herbandtoddjusttalking](https://www.youtube.com/@herbandtoddjusttalking).

*Thanks in advance for
watching!*



Recommended Reading for July

***America, U.S.A.:
How Race Shadows the
Nation's Anniversaries***
by Eddie S. Glaude Jr.

Celebrated public intellectual Eddie S. Glaude, Jr. presents a ground breaking analysis of the vicious cycles of American history and the country's enduring refusal to face its true nature—especially at the moments when national anniversaries steer us back toward the mythology meant to disguise the truth.

America, U.S.A., deliberately formulated and beautifully written, details a heart-wrenching exploration of America's legacy. It is a magnificently complex combination of lessons and voices—from W.E.B. DuBois and John Dos Passos to Herman Melville and Martin Luther King, Jr.—that, together, paint a sprawling and honest tableau of the United States, its complicated past, and ever more tenuous future. Glaude's is a powerful voice of conscience in our tumultuous world. He pulls no punches, calling on us to interrogate our conceptions of innocence and freedom and the stories we tell ourselves about our past and present.

Centered around the major celebrations of America's milestone birthdays across 250 years of history, the book offers a riveting look at the battles over who has a stake in writing the American story. Devastatingly candid, profoundly moving, and deeply reflective, *America, U.S.A.* is a shining meditation on how we must reckon with a grim past in order to strive for the better angels of our future.

...*Societal Rest* continued from page 3

he too was rejected and accused of being a glutton, a drunkard, and a friend of sinners. The problem was not John's approach or Jesus' approach. The problem was a society unwilling to hear the truth about itself that either one proclaimed.

This passage reveals how systems of privilege often respond to calls for change. When advocates challenge inequality, they are frequently criticized no matter what methods they use. If they protest publicly, they are labeled disruptive. If they work within existing institutions, they are accused of being ineffective or compromising. These objections often have less to do with the methods being used and more to do with people and systems refusing to confront the injustice being exposed.

Jesus' ministry consistently centered those who the religious, political, and economic systems of his day excluded. His friendship with tax collectors and sinners was not simply about personal morality; it was a public demonstration that every person possesses inherent dignity and worth. By sharing meals across social boundaries, Jesus challenged a culture that divided people into categories of worthy and unworthy, clean and unclean, accepted and rejected.

The final statement, "Wisdom is proved right by her deeds," shifts attention away from what people say and toward the outcomes of what they do. Justice is not ultimately measured by whether those in power approve of a movement or a messenger. It is measured instead by the fruit it produces. Does justice bring healing? Does it restore dignity? Does it create greater equity? Does it move society toward compassion and inclusion? These are the questions Jesus invites his listeners to ask.

Our reading also reminds us that social transformation requires discernment. It is easy to dismiss uncomfortable voices because they challenge our assumptions or disrupt our routines. Yet throughout history, prophets, reformers, and justice advocates have often been rejected before their wisdom was recognized. Jesus encourages us to look beyond labels and accusations and examine the actual impact of a message. We are called to resist the temptation to reject truth simply because it arrives in an unexpected form. Whether spoken through prophetic confrontation like John or compassionate solidarity like Jesus, the call to justice remains the same: to build a society where every person is valued, welcomed, and treated with dignity.

Next in our reading this month, we encounter Jesus' words about the "wise and learned" and the "little children." Far from being a rejection of education or knowledge, this passage challenges systems of privilege that assume truth belongs primarily to the powerful, the elite, or those with social status. Jesus celebrates a God who reveals truth in ways that often bypass established hierarchies and reaches those whom society tends to overlook.

In the first-century world, religious authority was concentrated among educated leaders who possessed social, political, and economic influence. Yet Jesus repeatedly found faith, insight, and openness among ordinary people such as the poor, laborers, women, children, and others pushed to the margins. His statement that God has revealed these things to "little children" points to the importance of humility and a willingness to listen to marginalized communities rather than status or power. It is a reminder that wisdom is not measured by credentials, wealth, or social standing.

This passage challenges the tendency of dominant groups to assume they alone possess truth. Throughout history, those in positions of privilege have often dismissed the experiences and voices of marginalized communities. Jesus turns this assumption upside-down. He suggests that those who suffer injustice may possess insights about God, compassion, and human dignity that those benefiting from unjust systems often fail to perceive or comprehend.

This teaching also encourages us to listen carefully to frequently ignored voices. Children, the

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Social Jesus

Recent Social Jesus Blog Posts on Patheos:



Sheep without a Shepherd and the Politics of Compassion

(Part 1 of *The Harvest Is Great, the Laborers Few*)

This compassion is deeply political, in the best sense of the word. This story identifies failed leadership as part of the problem.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/sheep-shepherd-politics-compassion/



When Compassion Leads to Action

(Part 2 of *The Harvest Is Great, the Laborers Few*)

Justice requires action, not mere sympathy. It involves confronting harm wherever it appears. Compassion without action is incomplete.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/when-compassion-leads-action/



Justice Work is Communal

(Part 3 of *The Harvest Is Great, the Laborers Few*)

Our reading this week emphasizes that justice work is communal. Societal change does not require isolated heroes but a collective.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/justice-work-communal/



When Advocates for Justice are Characterized as Dangerous

(Part 1 of *The Cost of Compassion*)

Advocates for justice are frequently portrayed as dangerous, disruptive, unpatriotic, or even evil. This should not be surprising.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/advocates-justice-characterized-dangerous/



Speaking Truth About Injustice

(Part 2 of *The Cost of Compassion*)

Our reading this week challenges communities today to speak truth about injustice even when doing so carries personal risk.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/speaking-truth-injustice/



Not Peace But a Sword

(Part 3 of *The Cost of Compassion*)

In this context, the “sword” is not physical violence but recognition that the pursuit of justice inevitably creates conflict.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/not-peace-but-sword/



A Welcoming Posture Toward Justice

(Part 1 of *Welcoming Prophets and the Justice Implications of a Cup of Cold Water*)

These words challenge us to consider our posture toward those who pursue justice, and advocate for the well-being of marginalized people.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/welcoming-posture-toward-justice/



Justice Implications of a Cup of Cold Water

(Part 2 of *Welcoming Prophets and the Justice Implications of a Cup of Cold Water*)

A cup of cold does not speak of grand, public displays of generosity, but of something small and accessible.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/justice-implications-cup-cold-water/



Society as Children in a Market

(Part 1 of *Societal Rest*)

Our metaphor this week of children in a market offers a powerful critique of a society that resists voices calling for transformation.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/06/society-children-market/



Societal Rest (Part 2 of *Societal Rest*)

The rest mentioned here is not a lift simply from individual anxiety but the weight of living under structures that diminish human dignity.

patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2026/07/societal-rest/

Testimony

“I can’t believe how hard it was to summarize how valuable RHM has been to me over the years! We have traveled quite a road together in that time. But, I think I’m satisfied that the following statements capture much of the essence of RHM’s worth to me:

RHM has taught me it is more than okay to question everything I “knew” about God and that truth can not only hold up under scrutiny but even be more richly revealed by the process.

RHM has introduced me to many great teachers and fellow Jesus followers and made me realize that although I’ve been shedding my old religious skin, I’m not alone in who I am becoming by following the teachings of Jesus.

RHM simultaneously distills such depth and breadth of information from contemporary and first-century Christians and challenges me to dig deep into that material to come to my own conclusions that I feel as if I’ve been enrolled in Seminary!

RHM showed me God’s love for ALL as I had never understood it, which allowed me to finally forgive a family member for a 30-year hurt, bringing peace, healing, reconciliation and a witness to the true power of love to my entire extended family.

RHM in general, and Herb Montgomery specifically, has been a sounding board, confidante, mentor, cheerleader, role model, ally, and friend to me for six years. I’m so thankful! Or, to boil it down; What has RHM meant to me? EVERYTHING” – CW

...Societal Rest continued from page 4

poor, immigrants, women, racial minorities, LGBTQ people, and others who have experienced exclusion often perceive realities that those with greater social power may overlook. Their experiences can reveal both the wounds of injustice and the way toward healing and personal and social transformation.

The author of Matthew believed that knowledge of God comes through engaging the Jesus story rather than through social position. Access to God is not restricted to an elite class. Divine revelation is not reserved for the powerful but is a gift available to all. In this way, the Jesus story presents a radically democratic vision of spiritual truth and one that levels hierarchies and affirms the dignity and worth of every person.

For Jesus followers committed to justice, this passage is an invitation to seek wisdom among the overlooked, to question systems that concentrate power, and to recognize that God’s voice is often heard most clearly from the margins.

Lastly this month, let’s consider the words, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” In their social context, these words have certain implications for us. These words are often understood as a promise of personal spiritual comfort, but they also speak to the crushing burdens unjust social, political, and religious systems impose on ordinary people.

The people who first heard Jesus’ words lived under the weight of Roman occupation, economic exploitation, and religious obligations that often benefited the powerful while placing heavy demands on the poor. Many struggled under taxation, debt, land loss, and social exclusion. In this context, Jesus’ invitation was not merely an offer of private consolation; it was a call to a different way of organizing life and relationships.

When Jesus says, “Come to me,” he is inviting people away from systems that exhaust and oppress. The burden he seeks to lift is not simply individual anxiety but also the weight of living under structures that diminish human dignity through the constant drive of production whether for the empire in Jesus’ day or for capitalists in ours. Jesus’ ministry offered the poor, the sick, women, children, and social outcasts the rest that comes through belonging in a community shaped by compassion rather than domination.

The image of the yoke is especially significant, too. In Jesus’ day, a yoke was a common symbol for submission to authority or a way of life. Jesus offers his own “yoke,” a way of living grounded in gentleness, humility, and mutual care. Unlike the burdens imposed by oppressive rulers or exclusionary religious practices, Jesus’ yoke is “easy” because it is rooted in justice rather than coercion. His burden is “light” because it seeks human flourishing and thriving rather than exploitation.

For Jesus followers today, this passage reminds us that Jesus’ vision was not one of endless exhaustion, competition, and hierarchy. Jesus challenged systems that place unbearable burdens on vulnerable people while privileging the powerful. His call invites communities to create conditions where people can experience rest, security, and dignity.

The rest Jesus offers is more than personal. It is social. It is the healing that comes when people are liberated from exploitation, exclusion, and oppression. It is the peace that emerges when justice and compassion replaces them. In this way, Jesus’ words continue to call Jesus followers toward the work of building a more humane and equitable world where the burdens of life are shared and no one is left to carry them alone, a world that is a safe, compassionate, just home for everyone. ■

The work of helping people find life-giving ways to live out their faith through love, compassion, and justice are needed now more than ever. At Renewed Heart Ministries, we provide resources of faith and healing with the aim of renewing hope and inspiring action as we allow the Jesus story to inform each of us as we work together to shape our world into a compassionate, just and safe home for everyone.

RENEWED
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MINISTRIES



Renewed Heart Ministries is a 501(c)3, grassroots ministry on the margins that prioritizes the needs of marginalized communities, especially those who have been the recipients of misinformed, faith-based harm. Your support enables us to be a life-giving, healing light in our faith communities and continue to be a voice for desperately needed change.

You get to decide what shape our faith communities take and what voices get to be heard.

You can support Renewed Heart Ministries with a one-time gift or by becoming one of our monthly contributors. Your donation can be made online at: **renewedheartministries.com** or by mail at:

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PO Box 1211, Lewisburg, WV 24901

**Whether you give \$5 or \$5,000,
every amount helps us to continue our work.**

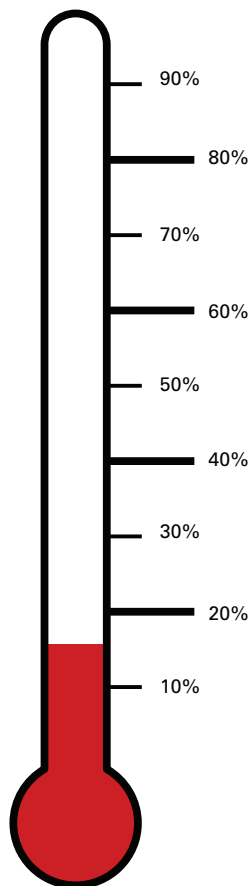
Please make sure you are receiving all of RHM's free resources by going to our website and clicking "sign up."

And **THANK YOU** for reading, listening to, sharing and supporting RHM's work. Thank you for the decisions you make every day to make our world a safer, compassionate, just home for everyone. Thank you for your dedication to engaging our world and the care you demonstrate, and for being such an important part of our community.

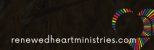
2026 Projected Budget Goal:
\$150,000.00

2026 Donations Received:
\$26,229.94

Thank You!



**Compassion
without
action is
incomplete.**



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-  [herbandtoddjusttalking](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-herbandtoddjusttalking)
-  renewedheartministries.com

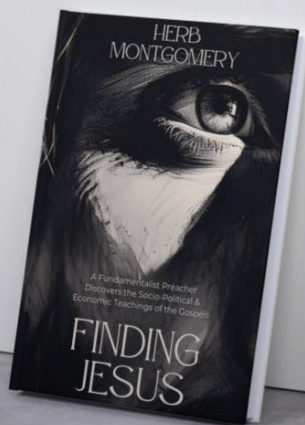


Upcoming Events

JULY 18, 2026

Good News Fellowship
Toronto, Ontario Canada

For info or Zoom link, email:
info@renewedheartministries.com



Finding Jesus: A Fundamentalist Preacher Discovers the Socio-Political & Economic Teachings of the Gospels

by Herb Montgomery

In *Finding Jesus*, author Herb Montgomery delves into the profound and often overlooked political dimensions of the gospels. Through meticulous analysis of biblical texts, historical context, and social discourse, this thought-provoking book unveils the gospels' socio-political, economic teachings as rooted in a profound concern for justice, compassion, and the well-being of the marginalized. The book navigates the intersections between faith and societal justice, presenting a compelling argument for a more socially engaged and transformative Christianity.

Finding Jesus is not just a scholarly exploration; it is a call to action. It challenges readers to reevaluate their understanding of Christianity's role in public life and to consider how the radical teachings of the gospels can inspire a renewed commitment to justice, equality, and compassion. This book is a must-read for those seeking a deeper understanding of the social implications of Christian faith and a blueprint for building a more just and inclusive society.

Available Now On Amazon!

**Peace is often
perceived as
divisive when it
disrupts
established social
norms.**



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