

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

Nov. 11, 2023 • 1:00 p.m. • Sunset 5:22

### Bible studies

Interactive study—1:00 p.m. . . . . Dave Havir  
Presentation study—2:00 . . . . . Dave Havir  
(Also transmitted live)

### Order of service—3:00 p.m.

Song leader . . . . . Reg Killingley  
Pianist . . . . . Dixon Cartwright  
Scripture reading . . . . . Deuteronomy 30:15–20  
Sermon . . . . . Jim Bald

### Quick takes

1. Wednesday-night Bible study—Nov. 15 at 7:00 p.m.
2. Big Sandy communitywide celebration of Thanksgiving—You are invited to the annual communitywide celebration of Thanksgiving.
  - Sunday, Nov. 19
  - Civic Center in Big Sandy
  - 5:00 p.m.
  - Shirley West will be speaking
  - Amy Case will be singing
  - A reception in the foyer will follow
3. Edifying the Body—This week's article is "Thomas Sowell's New Book, *Social Justice Fallacies*" by David Weinberger.
4. Among Friends—This week's article is "God's Deliverance Through Leaving" by Dave Havir.
5. Eye on the World—41 pages with 353 headlines and two articles.

## "Thomas Sowell's New Book, *Social Justice Fallacies*"

This article is from the "Edifying the Body" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website ([churchofgodbigandy.com](http://churchofgodbigandy.com)). It was posted for the weekend of Nov. 11, 2023. (A version of the article was posted at [thefederalist.com](http://thefederalist.com) on Nov. 7.)

**By David Weinberger**

**B**ROOKLINE, Mass.—More than 100 years ago, Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes observed that popular catchwords can stunt critical thinking for 50 years or more.

In his latest book, *Social Justice Fallacies*, revered economist and scholar Thomas Sowell confirms Holmes' observation by examining the buzzwords that self-described "social justice" proponents commonly use today.

He shows that, despite many years—and in some cases even centuries or more—of evidence revealing these words to be nonsense, our media and cultural elites continue touting them in utter defiance of facts.

### **Social justice's false premise**

Consider, for example, the very term "social justice." It is predicated on the assumption that institutional discrimination is the primary reason for differences among groups of people, whether among races, economic classes or even between the sexes. It assumes that were it not for such discrimination, all races, groups, and classes would be equally represented in all human endeavors.

In other words, human beings are equal not only in their nature and capacities but in their ability to develop those capacities.

As Sowell documents, however, this assumption is rarely tested empirically. In fact, both the historical record and everyday experience regularly contradict it.

For example, not only have homogenous societies had unequal representation among groups of people in various endeavors, but even twin siblings who are raised under the same roof and by the same set of parents show vast differences in aptitude, performance and cognitive ability. This is because factors beyond both our knowledge and our control—including factors that begin long before birth—heavily influence the development of human capabilities, including intelligence.

### **Culture and Competence**

Some cultural traditions, for example, go back centuries or even millennia and thus continue to orient the developmental capacities of the people living in these cultures today.

For instance, Sowell notes that the Germans have been brewing beer for thousands of years, far longer than most other cultures. It is, therefore, no surprise that they tend to be superior at making beer nowadays.

Likewise, for reasons that need not concern us here, Jewish people have historically been significantly involved in matters of finance, where they continue to excel to this day.

It is simply folly, however, to believe that government decree could circumvent these longstanding cultural traditions without major catastrophe. Moreover, these "reciprocal inequalities," as Sowell calls them, rarely amount to one group dominating all fields of human achievement.

"Even highly successful groups," he writes, "have seldom been highly successful in all endeavors. Asian Americans and Jewish Americans are seldom found among the leading athletic stars or German Americans among charismatic politicians."

### **Cultural inequalities aren't fair**

Of course, Sowell quickly adds that this does not mean that life is fair for all groups of people, much less to all individuals, or that there is nothing that can be done about injustices in the world. It does mean, however, that we ought to be humble about the limits of both our knowledge and our power to improve things rather than make them worse.

As he points out, "We might agree that 'equal chances for all' would be desirable. But that in no way guarantees that we have either the knowledge or the power required to make that goal attainable, without ruinous sacrifices of other desirable goals, rang-

ing from freedom to survival.”

Sowell spends several chapters documenting the negative consequences that have followed from decades of government policymakers ignoring the limits of their knowledge. He describes the unintended consequences of minimum-wage policies, tax legislation, rent-control laws and policies related to race and sex as well as to welfare, housing and education.

### **Affirmative action and welfare backfire**

Take, for instance, the issue of affirmative action in education. Sowell exposes the harm these policies have done first and foremost to the recipients themselves. Minority students who gain acceptance to elite schools for which they are not academically prepared often struggle to keep up with the rigorous pace and demanding workload. As a result, they end up either failing or dropping out.

On the other hand, Sowell highlights the positive results that followed from the abolition of affirmative-action policies in California (as decided by voters).

“The number of black and Hispanic students graduating from the University of California system as a whole rose by more than a thousand students over a four-year span,” he observes. “There was also an increase of 63 percent in the number graduating in four years with a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.”

A similar trend followed the growth of the welfare state in the 1960s when both crime rates and out-of-wedlock birth rates exploded in minority communities. The two decades prior to the ’60s, however, saw declining crimes. Out-of-wedlock birth rates were lower among minority groups than among the majority white population.

Nevertheless, laments Sowell, “intellectual elites, politicians, activists and ‘leaders’—who took credit for the black progress that supposedly all began in the early 1960s—took no responsibility for the painful retrogressions that demonstrably did begin in the 1960s.”

### **Beware man’s ignorance**

All this history and much more is packed into this short but critical book, whose single most important insight may be how little we know about the lives of others. We must, therefore, be careful when making policy decisions that have the potential to affect many people—and possibly even whole societies.

As Sowell warns, “Stupid people can create problems, but it often takes brilliant people to create a real catastrophe. They have already done that enough times—and in enough different ways—for us to reconsider, before joining their latest stampedes, led by self-congratulatory elites, deaf to argument and immune to evidence.”

## **“God’s Deliverance Through Leaving”**

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website ([churchofgodbigsandy.com](http://churchofgodbigsandy.com)). It was posted for the weekend of Nov. 11, 2023.

### **By Dave Havir**

**B**IG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with a five-part series about God’s deliverance. I love talking about this subject.

In 2009, I gave a similar series in consecutive Bible studies.

In 2020, I gave a similar series in consecutive sermons. Although the five main con-

cepts remained the same, those presentations used a variety of different verses from the Bible.

### **Foundational verse**

This series is based upon 1 Corinthians 10:13—stressing how God is faithful.

■ God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.

- God will make a way of escape.
- God will make you able to bear it.

## Lesson of 1 Corinthians 7:21

Part 4 of this series discusses “Escape Through Leaving.”

When the apostle Paul talked about slavery in 1 Corinthians 7:21, we can learn a valuable lesson about leaving a bad situation.

Allow me to quote it from the Amplified New Testament.

1 Corinthians 7:21—“Were you a slave when you were called? Do not let that trouble you. But if you are able to gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.”

While the concept of leaving a bad situation applies to all areas of life, I will mention four situations in this article. In the Bible study, I started with the most important situation of the four—because I wanted to make sure that I covered it before running out of time.) The four are listed in order from hardest to easiest.

### Leaving a marriage

Before I mention the concept of leaving a marriage, maybe I should be sure you know that I support the biblical view of marriage. Notice the following scriptures.

- Genesis 2:24
- Ephesians 5:22-33
- Matthew 5:31-32
- Matthew 19:3-9
- 1 Corinthians 7:6-15

It is my view that believers should not be quick to leave a marriage.

But it is also my view that believers should not be quick to condemn someone who has left a marriage.

■ Do you remember who gave a certificate of divorce in Jeremiah 3:8?

■ Malachi 2:16—It is true that God hates divorce—I assume that He hated the circumstances involving His own certificate of divorce.

■ 1 Corinthians 7:11—Leaving a marriage is one thing—whether a person is eligible for remarriage is a bigger issue.

### Leaving a country

While leaving a country would generate tremendous stress, this decision does not gen-

erally have the same moral importance of a person leaving a marriage.

There are some biblical examples of the urgency to leave a country.

■ Genesis 12:1-5—God instructed Abram to leave his country.

■ Exodus 12:33-39—The children of Israel left the slavery of Egypt in haste.

■ Matthew 2:12-15—Joseph took his wife and Child to Egypt for a while.

While those examples involved God giving instruction to leave, other people make a choice themselves to leave a country—rather than continuously grumbling about their situation.

### Leaving a job

For most people, leaving a job is easier than leaving a country.

■ For the record, my personal worldview is living 70 years in a prosperous constitutional republic (the U.S.).

■ It is wise to continue developing various practical skills and personal relationships for a potential change of jobs.

■ It is wise to avoid rushing out of a job until you have a new job lined up.

There are many people who have chosen to leave a job—rather than continuously grumbling about their situation.

### Leaving a church organization

For most people, leaving a church organization is easier than leaving a job.

For the record, there are some individuals who have psychological hang-ups about switching church organizations—so let’s understand why that is.

■ Such people believe the following: “If you leave our church [physical organization], you are leaving the spiritual Body of Christ.”

That idea is not true.

■ Such people believe the following: “If you leave our church [physical organization], you are leaving the Living God.”

That idea is not true.

Church congregations should be a place of worship, fellowship and learning.

■ 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12—Withdraw (leave) if that is best for you and your family.

■ 1 Timothy 6:3-5—Withdraw (leave) if that is best for you and your family.