



PASTORAL GUIDE ON RACE &
EQUALITY – THE CHURCH’S
RESPONSE

A Pastor’s Guide to Bible-based
conversations and messages on
race and equality

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FORWARD

As you read this guide consider that we are all created in the image of God. We are members of one family regardless of skin color. We are one race – the human race. We are the body of Christ. We are the church. As such, we must begin a new conversation and confront the spirit of racism and its consequences. Racism, systemic, legal or otherwise is sin and cannot be tolerated. Silence for any reason on the part of a Christian will translate into complicit acceptance of racism, which is sin. Moreover, it constitutes a failure to protect our most fundamental belief – that we are all created in the image of God.

In this guide, you will discover that Christians have historically *led* the protests to confront racism in America. For the past 400 years great men and women of God have felt compelled by God to confront and advocate for changes to political ideologies that are a moral affront to what Christians believe. I offer you history, message points, scriptural references, and definitions with the hope that you will be informed and inspired to be part of the healing and change we sorely need, beginning with conversations with your members.

There is no possible way to define the Black experience in America because it is remarkably diverse depending on geography, environment, education, and history. At times throughout our history in this nation, laws were enacted to define, control, and suppress African Americans. By God's grace we have emerged victorious and meaningfully contributed to the building of this nation in spite of many obstacles. There were many White Christians who helped and supported African Americans every step of the way. But there are remnants of the racially motivated laws, beliefs, and their adverse impact that are still embedded that must be eradicated, most especially from the body of Christ.

Perceptions of minorities and immigrants generally are a direct reaction to that same evil spirit of racism. All Americans regardless of race are adversely impacted by racism. The poor are the forgotten in all that is occurring in our country now. Amid so much obvious discrimination, inequality, and oppression today, the Church must be part of the solution, part of the national conversation, and lead the actions to reverse course once again.

I am exceedingly proud that today's national outcry for change is being led by so many young people of all races. They are demanding to be heard and they are demanding change. As believers we must once again lead the charge for national change.

Our call to action is to first have the conversation among our congregations, review and address disparities in our ranks, and take a stand toward transformation of our churches and ultimately our nation. It is my prayer that this guide will help facilitate those discussions and future actions.

In His Service,

Rev. LaJuana D. Caldwell, Th.M.



A MESSAGE FROM DR. AARON JONES

We are living in pivotal times for the Church and our nation. The social unrest in our nation has caused the Church to look at its systems and structures. If we want to grow an Intercultural Church, we must be willing to have conversations about race and equality. The Church should be the safest place to have such conversations. The Church must be the catalyst to bridge the gaps and division in our nation. The Church has an obligation to see the importance of setting the example as we engage in these conversations. The goal of the conversations is awareness, acknowledgment, adjustment, but more importantly alignment in the Body of Christ.

Race, racism, and racial inequality must be approached with the utmost sensitivity and with compassionate ears. The Apostle Paul says, we should rejoice with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep (Romans 12:15). The Church must lead the way to impact change in our nation.

One of the critical assignments of this season is not only to have intentional conversations on race and equality, but to remove obstacles that cause us not to be an Intercultural Church. Jesus' work on the cross opened the door for the Church to be intercultural. The Intercultural Church is at the heart of God, and it is not an option for the 21st Century Church. Leadership that doesn't seek to include the dynamics of an Intercultural Church can encumber the Kingdom of God.

The Church is in a daily battle against Satan, John 10:10 says, "*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...*" We are living in an era where the Church must step up and release racial tensions. If we are going to destroy Satan, it must be done with a united front of believers from all backgrounds. Our region and denomination must have tough conversations to aid in the strength of the Church. The Church of God Delmarva-DC Region is moving forward in this matter.



THE CHURCH OF GOD – DELMARVA-DC RESOLUTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION OF CULTURAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS

WHEREAS, the DELMARVA-DC Region acknowledges that scripture teaches against discrimination in any form (1 Timothy 5:21) as it relates to cultural and ethnic groups of any kind, and is a sin against God and humankind; and

WHEREAS, the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-2), we see that walls were broken down between nations, languages, sexes, and social classes and that, additionally, Pentecost is an intercultural agent throwing a bridge across troubled waters between cultures that otherwise may never meet, we seek to reclaim our interracial and multicultural roots and not display any discrimination; and

WHEREAS, God has made from one blood every nation of humanity to dwell on all the face of the Earth and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings (Acts 17:26); and

WHEREAS, discrimination against cultural and ethnic groups is a divisive tool that maligns individuals and nations, (Romans 10:12); and WHEREAS, discrimination against cultural and ethnic groups has a demoralizing effect, encumbering spiritual development and ministry advancement, and creating alienation (Galatians 3:26-27); and

WHEREAS, every individual is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) and has their origin in Adam, who is the Father of all humankind; and

WHEREAS, we celebrate the unity of Heaven and diversity of Earth (Colossians 3:11); and

WHEREAS, all people need a saving transformative relationship with God through Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:9);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we, the DELMARVA-DC Region, repent of past and present discriminatory practices towards any ethnicity, nationality, and culture and do affirm the worth of every individual (Psalms 139:14) and pray for those who have not surrendered to the Word of God in like manner; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we uphold publicly and privately biblical human value, dignity, and equality of the individual (Jeremiah 1:5) and we oppose any form of discrimination against cultural and ethnic groups and we commit to connecting, appreciating, representing, and understanding all cultures and ethnic groups;

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the DELMARVA-DC Region meticulously seeks a proportional ethnic representation of our regional demographics within our appointed boards, committees, programs, and services (Galatians 3:28).



WHY PASTORS NEED TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE AND EQUALITY NOW

In the wake of National unrest in our country following the deaths of Breonna Taylor, Botham Jean, and George Floyd, a movement across the nation is occurring. The message: Black Lives Matter. A complicated mix of issues surrounding racial and ethnic disparities in policing and other institutions has angered many. Diverse racial and ethnic groups are joining together in a powerful movement to address the discriminatory systemic changes needed in America.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:28

The Church as an institution and movement has always been a leader in matters of social justice. Nearly, 400 years ago, the Church was the leading voice engaged in peaceful protests demanding an end to slavery and advocating for civil rights. Our time has come again to be a voice among many decrying racial injustice and systemic racism in our society.

As pastors, we must acknowledge that our congregants have been deeply troubled about the civil unrest occurring in our land and around the world. America's long and sordid history concerning race has returned to the forefront.

As Christians we are commanded to love. We cannot be complicit through silence. We must guide our congregations toward the biblical and godly perspectives and principles on race, equality and justice found in the Bible. We must further stand ready to listen, to learn, to speak words that heal rather than divide, and together we must demonstrate what we believe: *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."* Galatians 3:28

Open, honest conversations about racial inequality, discrimination and social injustices are an important part of our growth as we evangelize the world through Bible-based beliefs. Change will come when the Church stands once again against discrimination. The Church is a global, diverse, supernatural community. We are ambassadors of the Kingdom of God and as such we transcend even national institutions and laws created by mankind. We are commanded in God's word to walk and serve in a transcendent way:

⁸We serve God whether people honor us or despise us, whether they slander us or praise us. We are honest, but they call us impostors. ⁹We are ignored, even though we are well known. We live close to death, but we are still alive. We have been beaten, but we have not been killed. ¹⁰Our hearts ache, but we always have joy. We are poor, but we give spiritual riches to others. We own nothing, and yet



we have everything. ¹¹Oh, dear Corinthian friends! We have spoken honestly with you, and our hearts are open to you. ¹²There is no lack of love on our part, but you have withheld your love from us. ¹³I am asking you to respond as if you were my own children. Open your hearts to us!

¹⁴Don't team up with those who are unbelievers.

How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness?

¹⁵What harmony can there be between Christ and the devil? How can a believer be a partner with an unbeliever? ¹⁶And what union can there be between God's temple and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God said: "I will live in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people." ¹⁷Therefore, come out

from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them, says the Lord.

Therefore, come out from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them says the Lord.

II Corinthians 6:11-17



THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN SOCIAL JUSTICE – OUR HISTORICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

In order to provide context for where we are today as a Nation, we must recall the history of this great land. Our conversation must begin with a knowledge of the history and an understanding of the root of the problem. For Americans the root of the problem begins with slavery. Slavery is an ancient practice. More importantly it is a brutal and dehumanizing practice. Slavery is sin and a blight on our nation's founding. Racism manifested first through slavery is the root that we must address for a better present and future for all Americans regardless of their racial or ethnic background and culture.

Our nation's people are made up of the descendants of Native Americans, immigrants, indentured servants, and slaves. European nations including the Spanish, Portuguese, and eventually the British arrived on American shores and settled here among its native people. It was a land of promise for Europeans looking to increase their wealth and influence. In the 1600's England established colonies in Virginia and Massachusetts. These Europeans flourished with help from the Native Americans.

In the wake of war, economic depression, and unemployment in Europe, many Europeans left for the promise of a new life in the "new" world. It is estimated that one-half to two-thirds of the immigrants who came to the American colonies arrived as indentured servants. Typically, indentured servitude lasted 4 to 7 years in exchange for passage, room, board, lodging and freedom dues.

The Europeans originally offered termed contracts of indentured servitude to Africans to come assist with the settlement of the colonies. Indentured servant contracts typically included the promise of land, corn, arms, cattle, and clothing once their term of service ended. This allowed these servants to begin a modest life as freemen in the colonies. In 1619, Africans joined the European immigrants coming to the colonies as indentured servants. Initially they were given the same opportunities for freedom as Whites. However, beginning in 1641, slave laws passed in the colonies and freedom for the African indentured servants was taken away. Free Africans' privileges were also severely limited, their movement was restricted, and they risked enslavement if found without papers, outside territorial borders, or other infractions.

By the 1650's the British dominated America and established more colonies. Threatened by newly freed indentured servants and increasing labor costs, the colonial land owners opted for cheaper and more profitable African slave labor. The shift from the promise of freedom to perpetual slavery of Africans had begun. With this shift, came a shift in the very definition of the African slave. The African slaves would now be defined as property and no longer



considered any better or valuable than animals or other tangible property. By 1770 more than 2 million people were living in the colonies; a growing number of them were slaves.

“The more you improve the condition of these people, the more you cultivate their minds, the more miserable you make them, in their present state. You give them a higher relish for those privileges which they can never attain and turn what we intend for a blessing [slavery] into a curse. No, if they must remain in their present situation, keep them in the lowest state of degradation and ignorance. The nearer you bring them to the condition of brutes, the better chance do you give them of possessing their apathy.”

Elias B. Caldwell, Lawyer

Slavery is an evil practice that demands that the enslaved be de-humanized and treated as property to be bought and sold. Virginia law enacted in 1641 stated that children born to slave mothers are also slaves. Thus, children could be taken from parents and sold. Poor nutrition, abuse, and poor living conditions were normal. The average life expectancy of a slave was 21.4 years of age. Education was also forbidden. Education of slaves was eventually made illegal in most southern states. After 1831 the prohibition was extended in some states to free Blacks as well. As the



slave trade began to grow, Christians began to emerge and speak out against it. These believers were at the forefront of the abolition movements in England and America. By the Mid-1600s, George Fox, founder of the Quakers in England, began to speak out against slavery on his visits to believers in North America. In 1688, the Quakers and Mennonites of Pennsylvania also protested slavery.

In England, William Wilberforce in Parliament, and preachers Charles Spurgeon, and John Wesley were leading voices denouncing slavery across England. Charles Finney, Lyman Beecher and his daughter Harriet Beecher Stowe were leading voices in America. Sojourner Truth, born into slavery in New York, was an African American leader of the abolitionist movement and preacher in America. While slavery persisted in Europe and the America, Christian abolitionists fought valiantly to end it. After a long civil war, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves in 1863. In 1865, the 13th Amendment abolished slavery in the United States. Other prominent

“In my prayers and preaching, I so often alluded to slavery, and denounced it. Repentance from slavery was required of souls, once enlightened of the subject, while continued support of the system incurred ‘the greatest guilt’ upon them.”

Charles Finney, 1852

abolitionists involved in this historic freedom, included Frederick Douglass an activist and leader in the abolitionist movement before and during the Civil War.



Harriet Tubman was a Christian abolitionist and political activist who escaped slavery and led 13 missions to rescue enslaved people with help from a network of antislavery activists, such as Quaker abolitionist Isaac T. Hopper, Thomas Garrett, and Martha Coffin Wright, and safe houses along the route, collectively known as the Underground Railroad.

The backdrop of slavery and the beliefs that the slaves were second class led to a new set of laws in the United States after the enactment of the 13th Amendment. The Reconstruction era began and involved work to reintegrate the Southern states from the Confederacy and millions of newly-freed slaves into the United States.

The Black Codes were enacted to control the labor and behavior of former slaves and other African Americans. The Black codes did not gain support in the North and eventually gave way to the Radical Reconstruction Act of 1867.

Newly enfranchised blacks gained a voice in government for the first time in American history, winning elections to southern state legislatures and even to the U.S. Congress. In less than a decade, however, reactionary forces—including the Ku Klux Klan—would reverse the changes wrought by Radical Reconstruction in a violent backlash that restored White supremacy in the South.

The Klan used racial terrorism in the form of lynching to reinforce White supremacy and address infractions to the Jim Crow laws without the benefit of judicial due process. More than 73 percent of lynchings in the post-Civil War period occurred in the Southern states. The Tuskegee Institute reports that 4,743 people were lynched between 1882 and 1968 in the United States, including 3,446 African Americans and 1,297 Whites. Lynching's were announced in local papers and the public was invited to watch. Souvenirs of the victims' bones were sold at these gatherings. Native Americans, Asian Americans, Italian Americans, Greek Americans, Jewish Americans, Finnish Americans and German Americans were also victims of lynching throughout the United States. The last recorded victim of a lynching was in 1981. The victim was Michael Donald, a 19-year old in Mobile Alabama.

Evangelicals in the north engaged in radical efforts to combat social problems. The 2nd Great Awakening and revivalism resulted in a number of benevolent programs or societies to address such issues as literacy, education, temperance, prison reform, poverty, and slavery. These Christians believed that "benevolence required corresponding commitments to improve people's temporal welfare and to redress social problems." Charles Finney was an important voice and felt, that the great business of the church was to reform the world. He believed and preached that Christians should work to reform individuals, communities and government. His preaching influenced the nation.

Social problems grew with increasing urbanization, industrialization, and immigration. Evangelicals remained an important voice. Phoebe Palmer – the most prominent leader of the holiness movement inspired hundreds of individual churches and interdenominational societies to develop urban ministries that offered food, clothing, housing, employment



assistance and medical aid. The Salvation Army and the Missionary Alliance are notable outcomes of this era.

The Evangelical movement also influenced the political realm. William Jennings Bryan and Aimee Semple McPherson were very influential and emphasized the practical and progressive dimensions of Christianity. Bryan promoted a wide range of policies and reforms to help the poor and disenfranchised. Bryan believed that a Christian America required redemption of souls and reformation of society. Aimee Semple McPherson addressed poverty and hunger and supported interracial services throughout her ministry.

In the Mid-20th century, a group of fundamentalist leaders emerged to build a more conservative theology and largely forgot how their predecessors promoted evangelism combined with social reforms. One of the leading organizations the National Association of Evangelicals was formed to build a broad coalition of conservative Protestants under the banner of evangelicalism. The movement distanced themselves from politics and were only moderately engaged in social issues. Their main focus was evangelism throughout this period. They promoted the idea that transformed lives would lead to a transformed society. Their work dominates Christian doctrine to this day. Contemporary leaders from the Church of God include Ray H. Hughes (1986–88) and Lamar Vest (1998- 2000).

By the mid 1950's the Civil Rights movement was on the rise. Through a series of nonviolent protests and civil disobedience campaigns intended to dismantle Jim Crow laws and segregation, the movement achieved its largest legislative gains in the mid-1960s after years of direct actions and grassroots protests. Notable gains included the dismantling of Jim Crow segregation in the South, the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, the Voting Rights Act and other federal legislation outlawing racial discrimination.

The late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference emerged as a leader in the 1960's Civil Rights era. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization of Black ministers was the most impactful and influential civil rights movement in modern American history.

Amidst the violence and notable murders of Emmett Till, Medgar Evers, and civil rights workers James Earl Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Henry Schwerner, and others, the movement made great progress. The Black Church was the focal point for promoting and organizing the nonviolent protests such as the boycotts of buses in Montgomery Alabama, the founding of Citizenship Schools, Albany Movement, Birmingham campaign, March on Washington, St. Augustine protests, Selma Voting Rights Movement, the march to Montgomery, the Grenada Freedom Movement, and Jackson conference, and Chicago Freedom Movement. These Civil rights leaders experienced horrific brutality from the government, law enforcement, and a public opposed to civil rights for all Americans, but they pressed on with a vision of liberty in sight. Many Americans of all races were killed as well.



Evangelicals largely maintained their distance from social and political activism including the Civil Rights Movement. They believed that the social and political issues of the day were a distraction from the church's evangelistic mission. But, a remnant within the movement began to revisit the former attitudes about political and social reforms. Billy Graham who, despite continued affiliation with segregationists, engaged Dr. King in his New York crusades and privately advised the SCLC. Baptist Missionary Fred Alexander and his wife Anne took notice of the Civil Rights Movement. They believed that if Whites really knew the truth about racism, things would change. The Alexanders published *Freedom Now* to bring attention to civil rights. They put a focus on educational disparities and poverty using their publications, *Freedom Now* and later *The Other Side*. These leaders raised their voices in support of civil rights other social reforms. Espousing many of the conservative values and recognizing the moral and biblical imperative to support civil rights and social justice, they were a minority group among the larger organized evangelical movement. Like their predecessors of the early 1900's they believed the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the answer to America's social ills and that racism is sin. Their successors, as well as their magazine "Sojourners," are still active today. Sojourners is a community of believers from various different Christian denominations. Sojourners continues to work and to "inspire hope and build a movement to transform individuals, communities, the church, and the world."

In 1976, Jerry Fallwell, in response to what he described as the nation's moral decay, founded the Moral Majority. Fallwell had a strong and well-established network of ministries and ministers that enabled him to launch the Moral Majority quickly. This organization enfolded a number of conservative Christian advocacy groups, diverse religious groups and together they formed a Political Action Committee to influence American policy and laws in favor of conservative Christian values. The moral majority was instrumental in the election of President Ronald Reagan in 1980. At its peak there were over 2 million followers. The Moral Majority endeavored to place national attention on the abortion, gay rights, pornography, the exclusion of prayer from public schools, and the Equal Rights Amendment. While, the Moral Majority organization was dissolved, the Christian Right and the conservative values of the Moral Majority remain a formidable force in American politics.

As we review history, we can see that the Christian Church has always been our Nation's moral compass. Christianity and slavery are the "wheat and the tares" of our society. Too many were complicit in the moral failure of the slave trade and our culture has been tainted with the remnants of the dehumanization of African Americans. By creating laws in support of slavery and later the Jim Crows law, we know that the strategy was intentional, explicitly racist, and biased against people of color. Perceptions that African Americans are inferior, violent, and a threat to society persist to this day.

While the majority of African Americans are successful members of society, there remains a cycle of poverty, health and educational disparity in rural and inner-city communities. Engaging the police within public school systems has led to increased incarceration of



children of color. Criminal justice reforms are needed to address persistent institutional bias reflected in sentencing and incarceration data. Black youths are 18 times more likely to be sentenced as adults than Whites for the same crime; African-American adults are 5.9 times as likely to be incarcerated than Whites and Hispanics are 3.1 times as likely.

So once again, the Church must rise up and speak up. The time for action is now. We must be part of the solution to address the disparities in rural and urban communities. Evangelism must impact the whole person and requires time and attention on basic conditions such as food, health care, and education. When the church ties these needs together, evangelism can impact cities and nations, one person at a time.

When we understand the root of the problem and the many factors stacked against communities of color, we have a moral obligation to address the problem. Our Christian values must continue to influence our national moral and ethical values and address the changes sorely needed.

Moreover, we must pray. As believers we have the power to change our nation by casting down even vein imaginations. We have the power to cast down injustice. We are the light in this dark world. We have the provision. We must pray.

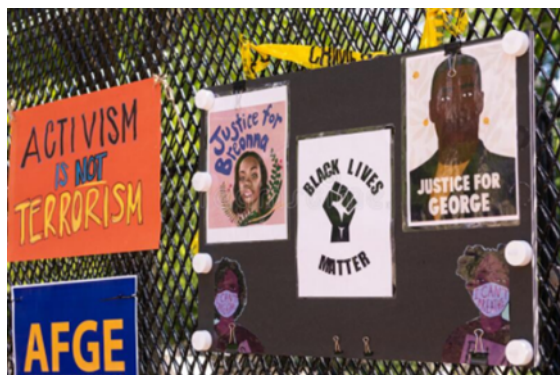


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MESSAGE POINTS & GUIDANCE ON CONVERSATIONS ON RACE AND EQUALITY

In an effort to pursue healing and restoration, Pastors should consider giving messages about race and equality. As members of the body, we have an obligation to our members to deliver messages about race and equality from a Biblical perspective. Moreover, we all have the ministry of reconciliation. Your congregations will look to you as leaders to help them navigate not only the narrative of the day, but how and what we believe.



As a global organization and movement, the body of Christ has a powerful heritage and biblically based system of beliefs that promote equality among all people regardless of color, ethnicity, or culture. In the previous section we have shown how Christians have protested the evils of slavery and racism and changed our country for the better. The time has come again to stand up and speak up for racial equality in our churches,

<https://www.dreamstime.com/washington-d-c-usa-june-th-black-lives-matter-protesters-protesting-new-plaza-outside-white-house-sign-image186819435>

in our leadership, and our nation.

As a start, consider hosting conversations. You can facilitate those discussions beginning with key topics such as current news, discrimination, equality, and racism. As you open these discussions, be prepared to listen with your head and with your heart. In listening you can gauge what your participants are feeling and whether or not it aligns with the Bible or not.

Be sure to set clear goals for your conversations with members. The goal is to create an informal, safe environment for your members to speak freely and share their feelings about a difficult subject, be informed, and walk away with a Biblical perspective. Second, as a congregation identify things that may need to change related to race and ethnicity.

Other recommendations to consider are as follows:

- It will take courage for some to speak up and they may be fearful of being judged. Reassure them that they are in a safe, no judgement zone and that everyone can learn from one another's comments.
- Thank those who share their thoughts and experiences and acknowledge their courage.



- Don't look to the African American members to explain or define how members should react. Seek to be informed about their experiences and let the Bible drive beliefs and actions.
- Give space and time for everyone who wants to share to have that opportunity and respect those who wish to remain silent.
- Give your congregation permission to not have the right answers.
- Be vulnerable and share that as a pastor you are also learning.

As you begin these the following are suggested questions to pose to your members:

- How should Christians respond to the national unrest and the events of the past few months?
- How are these events affecting your family, friends, and church family?
- What kinds of conversations have you had with your children?
- What role can the Church play with respect to race and equality?
- What opportunities for evangelism do these events present for us as a church?

The current events are also a great opportunity to teach your members biblical truths about race and equality. The Bible has guided so many and has formed the basis of all of the movements toward racial equality for over 400 years. The following are suggested message points with scriptural references:

Equality—

- We must affirm the fact the all people are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27)
- We do not recognize any distinction or hierarchy based on race, gender, ethnicity or economic status. (Galatians 3:28)

Diversity—

- We celebrate the diversity manifested in God's creation of mankind and the global unity and strength in the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12-31)

Unity—

- Unity is God's will for the body and critical to fulfilling God's desire for God's people, according to the Bible. (Acts 2, Revelation 7:9).

Healing and Restoration—

- We must repent individually and corporately for the sin of prejudice and systemic racism and acknowledge the damage and disparity created by these evil practices (James 2:1-9; Isaiah 10:1-2)
- We must work to restore and heal victims of racial inequality by being ministers of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:16-19)



Social Justice

- We must recognize that no one race of people are responsible for the ills of the past or the current unrest. We are all responsible for the future. Accordingly we must first act in love, seek peace with all men, and extend mercy. (Hebrews 12:14; Micah 6:8; Amos 5:24)

“The ministry of socioeconomic reconciliation will require a church empowered with tongues of fire and the gift of interpretation. These tongues must speak with a prophetic voice. But we must also have the heart and capacity to translate the words of marginalized communities into the language of policy, power, and program.”

Starsky Wilson



SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES ON RACE AND EQUALITY

Galatians 3:28

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Romans 2:11

¹¹ For God shows no partiality.

Genesis 1:27

²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Galatians 3:26-29

²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Mark 12:31

³¹ And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Leviticus 19:33-34

³³ And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. ³⁴ The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Colossians 1:16-17

¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

James 2:21-26

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. ² For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, ³ and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," ⁴ have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵ Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God



not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? ⁷ Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?

Hebrews 12:14

¹⁴ Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.

Acts 10:34-35

³⁴ Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.

³⁵ But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

Ephesians 2:14-15

¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace.

Deuteronomy 10:17

¹⁷ For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.

John 13:34

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

Acts 17:26

²⁶And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.

Revelation 7:9

⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

1 Peter 1:17

¹⁷ And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile.

Revelation 5:9-10

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."



1 Timothy 4:4-5

⁴ For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵ for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

Isaiah 10:1-4

¹ Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees, who write misfortune, which they have prescribed. ² To rob the needy of justice, And to take what is right from the poor of My people, That widows may be their prey, And that they may rob the fatherless. ³ What will you do in the day of punishment, and in the desolation which will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help? And where will you leave your glory? ⁴ Without Me they shall bow down among the prisoners, and they shall fall among the slain. For all this His anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still.

John 11:52

⁵² and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

Luke 24:47

⁴⁷ and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Proverbs 28:5

Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand all.

1 Timothy 2:1-5

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ² for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. ³ This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ...

[Lamentations 3:35-36](#) ESV / 32 helpful votes

To deny a man justice in the presence of the Most High, to subvert a man in his lawsuit, the Lord does not approve.

[Ecclesiastes 5:8](#) ESV / 32 helpful votes

If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and righteousness, do not be amazed at the matter, for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them.

[Matthew 28:18-20](#) ESV / 30 helpful votes



And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

[Acts 10:26-11:29](#) ESV / 28 helpful votes

But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man." And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered. And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me." And Cornelius said, "Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing ...

[Matthew 5:45-48](#) ESV / 25 helpful votes

So that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

[Mark 12:31](#) NIV

31 The second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these."

[John 13:34](#) NIV

34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

From the beginning of creation, the Bible is very clear in God's intentions that all people are equally deserving of His love and mercy. God created all man and woman equal and Scripture tells us that all life is valuable and worthy. Both Old Testament and New Testament Bible verses reaffirm the truth that no partiality or prejudice belongs among us. God never intended for his people to treat others differently because of their race or gender. We are commanded to love each other and to be a light in a dark world that is filled with anger and hate.



DEFINITIONS

Racism

1: a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race

2a: a doctrine or political program based on the assumption of racism and designed to execute its principles

b: a political or social system founded on racism

3: racial prejudice or discrimination

Source: www.merriamwebster.com

4: The marginalization and/or oppression of people of color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges White people.

Source: <https://www.adl.org/racism>

Prejudice

(1): preconceived judgment or opinion

(2): an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge

b: an instance of such judgment or opinion

c: an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics

Source: www.merriamwebster.com

Segregation

The practice of requiring separate housing, education and other services for people of color. Segregation was made law several times in 18th and 19th-century America as some believed that black and White people were incapable of coexisting.

Source: <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/segregation-united-states>

Jim Crow laws

A collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation. Named after a Black minstrel show character, the laws—which existed for about 100 years, from the post-Civil War era until 1968—were meant to marginalize African Americans by denying them the right to vote, hold jobs, get an education or other opportunities. Those who attempted to defy Jim Crow laws often faced arrest, fines, jail sentences, violence and death.

Source: History.com Editors; <https://www.history.com/topics/early-20th-century-us/jim-crow-laws>

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Jim Crow Laws. National Park Service.

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Black Codes

Strict local and state laws that detailed when, where and how formerly enslaved people could work, and for how much compensation. The codes appeared throughout the South as a legal way to put Black citizens into indentured servitude, to take voting rights away, to control where they lived and how they traveled and to seize children for labor purposes. The legal system was stacked against Black citizens, with former Confederate soldiers working as police and judges, making it difficult for African Americans to win court cases and ensuring they were subject to Black codes. These codes worked in conjunction with labor camps for the incarcerated, where prisoners were treated as enslaved people. Black offenders typically received longer sentences than their White equals, and because of the grueling work, often did not live out their entire sentence.

Source: <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-codes>



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I DREAM A WORLD

I dream a world where man
No other man will scorn,
Where love will bless the earth
And peace its paths adorn
I dream a world where all
Will know sweet freedom's way,
Where greed no longer saps the soul
Nor avarice blights our day.
A world I dream where black or white,
Whatever race you be,
Will share the bounties of the earth
And every man is free,
Where wretchedness will hang its head
And joy, like a pearl,
Attends the needs of all mankind-
Of such I dream, my world!

Langston Hughes

