



Part 5: Racial Reconciliation

Ephesians 2:1-22

The purpose, pathway and power of racial reconciliation is the Gospel.

I. Our Nation's Fever of Race Relations

Our best hope of genuine racial reconciliation between blacks and whites in America is the Church. Why? Because we have something no one else has: The Gospel.

There are books and articles that can be helpful (see recommended resources). But there is One Book every Christian must read and study on this issue more than any other: The Bible. This Book must be our ultimate authority and guide on this issue (Ephesians 2:19-20).

II. God's Purpose and Vision - The Biblical Arc of Race and Diversity

A. All people, regardless of their ethnicity, language, color or customs, are one race from one man (Genesis 1-2, Acts 17:26, Romans 5).

"Why did God create only one human being? So that no one can say to a fellow human being: My Father was better than yours." Quoted from the Mishnah (Generous Justice).

B. Pride and Lust for Power Caused Man's Racial Hatred and Division (Genesis 11:1-9).

"Racism is a hatred toward, devaluing of, and discriminating against certain people because of their ethnicity or the color of their skin." Jeremy McKeen, "Overcoming Racism and Prejudice," Preachingtoday.com

C. God Called Abraham (and Israel) to Start His Project to Heal Divisions (Genesis 12:1-3).

D. Israel Failed - Showing We Need God's Grace to Heal Divisions.

E. Pentecost Reveals the Holy Spirit's Power to Bring Unity to Our Divisions (Acts 2).

F. God's Vision is a Diverse Community of Love Unified in Jesus (Revelation 7:9).

"After this I looked and there was a great multitude that no one could count from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb...." Revelation 7:9

G. The Fruit of the Gospel is a New, Diverse Community of Love Unified in Jesus (Ephesians 2:11-22, Galatians 2:11-21, 1 Peter 2:9-12).

"For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility His purpose was to create one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility." Ephesians 2:14-16

III. God's Pathway and Power for Racial Reconciliation

A. God's Pathway for Racial Reconciliation is the Cross.

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. ...His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility." Ephesians 2:13, 15-16.

The Cross demonstrates two crucial realities:

1. Every person has equal dignity before God, because they are made in His image (Genesis 1:27).

"Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased by enormous proportions following the acceptance of evolutionary theory." Stephen Jay Gould, leading evolutionist commenting on the publication of Charles Darwin's "On Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life"

2. Every person is a sinner needing God's forgiveness through the death of Jesus Christ. We are all bent with an inner virus and disability the Bible calls sin (Romans 3:21-26, Ephesians 2:1-10).

Sin is like a carnival mirror that distorts the way we see ourselves, each other and God.

Note: (see videos) Contrary to "Critical Theory," there are not classes of people more sinful than others or more inherently racist than others. Prejudice is a human problem, because sin is universal (Romans 3:21-26, Ephesians 2:1-3).

"Racial prejudice is wrong because it is a denial of the very principle that all human beings are equally sinful and saved by only the grace of God. A deep grasp of the gospel of grace, Paul says, should erode our racial biases." Tim Keller, "Generous Justice"

Left to ourselves, humanity will get a lot wrong due to our sin nature and Satan's deception (Ephesians 1:1-3).

B. God's Power for Racial Reconciliation is the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:18, 21-22).

"For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. ... In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."
Ephesians 2:18, 21-22

Recommended Resources:

1. *"Generous Justice"* by Tim Keller
2. *"Be the Bridge- Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation"* by Latisha Morrison
3. *"The Color of Compromise – The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism"* by Jemar Tisby
4. *"Divided by Faith- Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America"* by Michael Emerson and Christian Smith
5. Article: *"Not White Fragility – Mutual Responsibility"* by George Yancey (thegospelcoalition.org)
6. Article: *"Structural Racism – The Child of Structural Pride"* by John Piper (desiringgod.org)
7. Article: *"Systemic Racism, God's Grace, and the Human Heart: What the Bible Teaches About Structural Sin"* by Albert Mohler (thepublicdiscourse.com)
8. Article: *"A Biblical Critique of Secular Justice and Critical Theory"* by Tim Keller (gospelinlife.com)
9. Colson Center Video: *"Critical Theory is Biblical: What Would You Say?"* (5:48) (YouTube)
10. Colson Center Video: *"Critical Theory is Practical: What Would You Say?"* (7:37) (YouTube)