

INTRO

- At what age did you first become aware of the reality of racism?

READ, REFLECT & RESPOND

As Christians we believe Scripture speaks to every issue of life including race and justice. It's vital we have a common understanding about a word such as **race**. Race as we think of it today is really a social construct. In other words, it was an invention due to social, cultural and economic factors used to separate people and, in so doing, unnaturally marginalized certain groups of people. So, it's important to understand how culture talks about and interprets race. But it is critically important for us to know how the Bible talks about it.

THE BIBLE AND RACE

Scripture uses the word race, but in 2 different ways than we are perhaps used to hearing:

1. The Human Race

Read Acts 17:26. The Bible talks about one human race. We have a common ancestry. We have more in common than we have different.

Qu: What characteristics or experiences do we share as humans that transcend our differences?

2. A Chosen Race

Read 1 Pet 2:9. The Bible speaks about a chosen race, calling a certain people a chosen people, not marked by a physical distinction, but rather a spiritual one—those redeemed by Jesus.

Scripture does make distinctions between different people groups but uses the term **ethnicity** instead of race. Ethnicity in scripture is an elastic term meaning it can encompass a lot of things, but predominantly, it relates to geography (where you're from) and ancestry

(who you're from). So we frequently read about the Canaanites, Cushites, Egyptians, Jews, Greeks and lots of other people groups. The world of the Bible is thoroughly multiethnic.

To understand how we are to value one another biblically is to understand the *imago Dei* (image of God).

IMAGO DEI

Read Gen 1:26-27. From these verses and many others in Scripture comes the biblical idea that all people have inherent and equal value and worth in the sight of God. No matter your ethnicity, distinctions or differences, you are made in the image and likeness of God, and that alone means you are worthy of respect and dignity.

Qu: How does the imago Dei challenge the tendency to idolize your own ethnic and cultural identity?

GOD'S PLAN

As we walk through the story of Scripture, it becomes clear that God has always had a plan to have an ethnically diverse people. God's plan of redemption isn't complete until he has gathered to himself a diverse people from all ethnicities. *Read Rev 5:9, 7:9-10.*

This is the future God has for his creation, his people, and this is the future we are working towards: diverse in ethnicity, language, culture, skin tone, and hair type, yet united by the salvific work and sacrifice of Jesus. A beautifully diverse people united in their worship of Jesus. This is not just a future reality. This is a reality we are to live in right now as we pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Qu: How does knowing God celebrates our multiethnic diversity cause you to see dignity and goodness in those of different ethnicities?

PRAY

A Prayer for Justice from the Book of Common Prayer:

Almighty God, who created us in your image:
Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil
and to make no peace with oppression;
and, that we may reverently use our freedom,
help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice
in our communities and among the nations,
to the glory of your holy Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with
you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Below are some helpful resources we have curated for you to grow in your understanding of these issues some more (click on the individual resource links).

Articles:

[The Joyful Pursuit of Multiethnic Churches](#)—
Jemar Tisby

Justice & Race Series by Tim Keller:

[The Bible & Race](#)

[The Sin of Racism](#)

[A Biblical Critique of Secular Justice and Critical Theory](#)

Study Guide:

[Race, Injustice and Discipleship](#) — EN Resource
by Justin Gray & William Murrell

Books:

[The Color of Compromise](#) — Jemar Tisby &
Lecrae

[United: Captured By God's Vision for Diversity](#) —
Trillia Newbell

[Divided By Faith](#) — Michael Emerson & Christian
Smith

[Reconciling All Things](#) — Emmanuel Katongole
& Chris Rice

Videos:

[Biblical Justice](#) — The Bible Project

[A Theology of Race](#) — Jemar Tisby