

FEBRUARY 6TH & 13TH 2021

RACIAL JUSTICE IN THE CHURCH

Principles & Practices for Everyday Disciples

WORKBOOK



Sponsored by the ICOC Teachers Race Relations committee

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Preface

Sir Isaac Newton, who, among other things, was famous as a mathematician, astronomer, and author, said, *“If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.”* This fitting metaphor describes the place we are at with this workbook and its accompanying courses. To discuss or teach on racial justice in the church will always remain an unfinished task and one unworthy of any one person or group deserving of credit.

The Race Relations Task Force, made up of evangelists, women’s ministry leaders, and teachers with specific expertise and life experience, was commissioned by the ICOC Teachers Service Team to develop a charter focusing on providing resources for those who want to grow in knowledge and impact. In this project, the task force has set out to offer the everyday Christian an immersive opportunity to interact with a complex and multifaceted topic. We hope that your choice to take part in this course means you welcome dialogue. We hope it means you will not turn your back on the pivotal events of 2020, but instead you will give these subjects the time they deserve.

It would be easy to shy away from difficult topics like racial justice or racialized trauma. We could only read our Bible and pray daily in hopes that bias is not something fair-minded Christians have to contend with in the church. Our reality says something different is needed; the time for not engaging with each other in these challenging conversations is no longer an option. This group of courses appropriately begins with instructors advocating for the biblical mandate for racial reconciliation and brings you on a culminating journey of curiosity, vulnerability, scholarship, and faith. This collection of courses aims to empower you as a servant of Christ to use your voice to build bridges and tear down walls.

Thank you in advance for embracing this workbook and its courses as a giant. You are a giant for being curious when it is easy to be critical. We the presenters of this material ask you to be reflective, patient, and prayerful. As we make our way through these often nuanced topics, some of the researched excerpts or suggested readings might reflect your life story. A passing comment may inadvertently touch a sensitive note from your life in one of our conversations following each presentation. We humbly ask that you bear with us and engage with your cohort as we share in vignettes of pain or triumph and offer exhortations filled with joy or lament. After walking this journey, we hope you will come to appreciate that some controversial subjects must be invoked with intention so we can all see better and therefore do better. We thank you, the reader and participant, for opening your heart. As Christians who represent humanity’s best hope on contentious issues, we hope you can step into this moment in which followers of Christ are needed the most.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” (John 13:34 NIV)

- Race Relations Task Force

Racial Justice in the Church

Principles and Practices for Everyday Disciples

Schedule and Session Descriptions

February 6 (All sessions are in MST)

8:00am–9:30am **The Biblical Mandate for Racial Reconciliation**
Presenter: Joey Harris

10am–11:30am **Racial Justice Part I**
Presenter: Steve Kinnard

1:00pm–2:30pm **The True Nature of Bias**
How to optimize the hidden and unseen
Presenter: Suzette Lewis

3pm–4:30pm **A Survey of Black History in the United States and Racialized Trauma**
Part I
Presenters: James Becknell & Kyle Spears

February 13 (All sessions are in MST)

8am–9:30am **A Survey of Black History in the United States and Racialized Trauma**
Part II
Presenters: James Becknell & Kyle Spears

10am–11:30am **Racial Justice Part II**
Biblical action in light of racism
Presenter: Robert Carrillo

1:00pm–2:30pm **Practically Speaking**
What does racial reconciliation look like within a church?
Presenters: Steve & Tricia Staten

3pm–4:30pm **Making Your Voice Matter**
Knowing when to 'speak up' or 'listen up' on the subject of race
Presenters: Andrew Lewis & Kevin Robbins

The Biblical Mandate for Racial Reconciliation

Presenter: Joey Harris

Course Description: This course will give the participant a thorough introduction to what the Bible says about race and racial reconciliation. Learners will be exposed to God's heart while listening to and interacting personally with various texts in both the Old and New Testaments. Students can expect to receive basic instruction on how to do exegesis/hermeneutics and how to avoid two-dimensional interpretation of Scripture.

Lecture One: 45 mins. **Becoming the People of God (Old Testament)**

This lecture will give an overview of how the Torah shows the creation of God's chosen people from a variety of cultures and peoples as well as how the Old Testament includes clear instruction and provision for assimilating people from other cultures into the people of God. The multiethnic lineage of Jesus will also be described along with the theological implications literally embodied in the very person of the Messiah.

1. Introduction
2. From Abraham to Moses
3. From Moses to David
4. From David to Jesus

Lecture Two: 45 mins. **Becoming the People of God (New Testament)**

This lecture shows how the church is a living example of the universal people of God and body of Christ composed not only of Jews but of people out of all the nations.

1. Jew + Gentile = One Body: Ephesians 2
2. One Body, Many Parts: 1 Corinthians 12
3. 7 Unifying Convictions: Ephesians 4
4. Many Convictions, One Faith: Romans 14

Suggested Reading:

McCaulley, Esau. *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020.

Racial Justice Part I

Presenter: Steve Kinnard

I do not pretend to understand the moral universe. The arc is a long one. My eye reaches but little ways. I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by experience of sight. I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see, I am sure it bends toward justice.

– Theodore Parker, 1853, abolitionist minister

Course Description: This course gives the student a good primer in understanding the insidious nature of structural racism and how it can infiltrate the church. Students gain biblical context and background for the historical patterns of sin that have led to people perceiving themselves superior to others dating back thousands of years. Participants will get the opportunity to explore variants of evil that parade openly in society and sometimes masquerade in the church.

Lecture One: 45 mins. **God’s Measure of Justice: The Battle against Systemic Evil**

This lecture will give an overview of the existence of systemic (corporate) evil in the Old and New Testaments and in the church, and it will demonstrate how Jesus and the prophets of God (both ancient and modern) have fought against systemic evil (which includes systemic racism).

1. Introduction
2. Exploring Corporate Sin and Injustice in the OT
3. Exploring Corporate Repentance in the OT
4. Jesus and Justice

Lecture Two: 45 mins. **From Then to Now/From Them to Us**

This lecture moves the discussion forward 2,000 years from the early church to today’s church. We will explore systemic injustice within today’s church. We will explore ways to battle against systemic racism today.

1. Historical Overview
2. Jesus and the Temple
3. Contemplation and Activism
4. Other Practical Considerations

Suggested Reading:

Gorman, James L., Jeff W. Childers, and Mark W. Hamilton, editors. *Slavery’s Long Shadow: Race and Reconciliation in American Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019.

The True Nature of Bias

How to optimize the hidden and unseen

Presenter: Suzette Lewis

A false light, a defective chart, an imperfect compass, may cause one to drift in endless bewilderment, or to be landed at last amid sharp, destructive rocks.

– Frederick Douglas, “The Claims of the Negro Ethnologically Considered”

Course Description: Unconscious bias is a reality that we all contend with as we look for ways to organize the world around us. But without the Bible's insights about God and human nature, how can we understand the more elusive matters of the heart? In this course, we will get an opportunity to consider the spiritual implications of “preference” as it affects us in the church. Students will get a chance to discuss their observations with their cohort and learn from each other. We will discover how Christians can profoundly shape the church and society with even slight modifications to our attitudes. Finally, we look at the importance of changing the future from a history of exclusion to having more inclusion and allyship interactions.

Duration: 90 mins.

1. Introduction
2. A History of Resistance, Sacrifice, and Triumphs
3. Identifying Attitudes and Preferences Concerning Race
4. Bias Disguised as Beliefs
5. Jesus on Inclusion and Allyship

Suggested Readings:

Morrison, Toni, and Ta-Nehisi Coates. *The Origin of Others*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.

Banaji, Mahzarin R., and Anthony G. Greenwald. *Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People*, New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 2016.

A Survey of Black History in the United States and Racialized Trauma I

Presenters: James Becknell & Kyle Spears

Course Description: In the first part of this session, learners will look at history through the black experience, primarily in the United States of America. We will unpack the overarching metanarrative of black life in America and explore some of the key eras, events, and personalities involved in this story.

The purpose of this two-part session is to draw before the consciousness of the students the realities, both wonderful and terrible, of the history of black life in the United States as well as to supply much-needed tools for understanding and dealing with the world of trauma in general and racialized trauma in specific.

Outline for Part One

1. African Origins and Chattel Slavery in North America
2. The Role of Christianity
3. The Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation
4. The Radical Reconstruction
5. Jim Crow and Lynching
6. Race Riots and Tulsa's Greenwood District
7. The Great Migration
8. The Harlem Renaissance
9. Redlining: Understanding Segregation
10. The Civil Rights Movement 1955–1968
11. 80s Afrocentrism and the Conscious Hip-Hop Movement
12. Treyvon Martin and the Emergence of the Black Lives Matter Movement (BLM)

Assignments for Part One

Suggested Videos

- *I Am Not Your Negro* – James Baldwin
- *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross* – Henry Louis Gates Jr.
- *The Central Park Five* – Ken Burns
- *13th* – Director, Ava DuVernay

Suggested Readings

Bennett, Lerone. *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America*. Chicago: Johnson Pub. Co., 2003.

Jones, Robert P. *White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2020.

Kendi, Ibrahim X. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. New York, NY: Bold Type Books, 2017.

Suggested Sites to Visit

- [Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture](#)
- [The Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration](#)
- [The National Civil Rights Museum](#)
- [Freedom Rides Museum](#)
- [Civil Rights Tour – Atlanta](#)
- [US Civil Rights Trail](#)

A Survey of Black History in the United States and Racialized Trauma II

Presenters: James Becknell & Kyle Spears

Course Description: In the second part of this session, students will be given a basic understanding of psychological trauma and the effects on the brain from a mental health professional. Students will be exposed to applied theories of trauma such as post traumatic slave syndrome and segregation stress syndrome. Class discussion will facilitate the integration of spirituality within the framework of racialized trauma.

The purpose of this two-part session is to draw before the consciousness of the students the realities, both wonderful and terrible, of the history of black life in the United States as well as to supply much-needed tools for understanding and dealing with the world of trauma in general and racialized trauma in specific.

Outline for Part Two

1. Definitions of Trauma
2. Trauma and the Brain
3. *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*: Dr. Joy DeGruy
4. *Segregation Stress Syndrome*: Dr. Ruth Thompson-Miller
5. Decolonizing Mental Health
6. Comparing Treatment Modalities

Assignments for Part Two

Watch (Select One)

- *Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary: Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*
- *Revisiting Joy DeGruy: Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*
- *Unpacking Bias in Seeking Mental Health Care for Women of Color*, Chandra Carey TEDx SMUWomen
- *Segregation Stress Syndrome: From Emmett Till to Trayvon Martin*, Dr. Ruth Thompson-Miller

Suggested Readings:

- Broussard, Patricia. "Black Women's Post-Slavery Silence Syndrome: A Twenty-First Century Remnant of Slavery, Jim Crow, and Systemic Racism—Who Will Tell Her Stories?" *Gender Race & Justice* 373 (Spring 2013).
- Halloran, Michael. "African American Health and Posttraumatic Slave Syndrome: A Terror Management Theory Account." *Journal of Black Studies*, October 12, 2018.
- Thompson-Miller, Ruth. "The Trial of Ruby McCollum the Consequences of Trauma: Segregation Stress Syndrome." *Journal of Community Medicine & Health Education* 7:538.
- Yehuda, Rachel, and Amy Lehrner. "Intergenerational transmission of trauma effects: putative role of epigenetic mechanisms." *World Psychiatry*. 2018 Oct; 17(3): 243–257.

Racial Justice Part II

Biblical action in light of racism

Presenter: Robert Carrillo

I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.

– Martin Luther King Jr.

Course Description: In this course, students are exposed to a biblical study that demonstrates the essentiality of racial harmony in the kingdom of God. The counterarguments and critiques of the topic of racial justice will be addressed from a theological perspective. Students will be exposed to some of the prevailing narratives that harm unity and peace efforts. Through their reading assignment and cohort project, they will learn how to use biblical language and concepts to understand harmony and healthily lament pain rather than dismiss it. Students will understand and be empowered to demonstrate the triumph of authentic Christianity, the religion of Jesus, over the racism and apathetic version of Christianity in this world.

Duration: 90 mins.

1. Intro: The challenge of righting the wrong
2. Lesson: The God of Justice – God’s heart about race and justice
3. Group Activity: Hacking the religious right – Testing conservative arguments
4. Break
5. Lesson: Jesus and Justice – What Jesus actually did about justice
6. Group Activity: Biblical Christian activism – Who and how disciples of Jesus might practice justice
7. Closing thoughts: God and the kingdom of his Son

Suggested Video Lecture for Preparation:

A Biblical Practical Theology of Justice: <https://youtu.be/LGMhB3UgCI8>

Suggested Readings:

King, Martin Luther. *A Gift of Love: Sermons from Strength to Love and Other Preaching*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2012.

Hart, Drew. *Trouble I've Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism*. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2016

Practically Speaking

What does racial reconciliation look like within a church?

Presenters: Steve & Tricia Staten

Whoever cannot tell himself the truth about his past is trapped in it, ... unable to assess either his weaknesses or his strengths, and how frequently indeed he mistakes the one for the other.

– James Baldwin, “The Creative Process”

Course Description: This session helps the learner grasp how harmony can be achieved when there are significant racial components and power dynamics. The participants will be introduced to a case study that illustrates practical steps that can help contribute to peace when a variety of differences and unresolved conflicts are at play. We will discuss engaging with the uncomfortable realities that come with differing lived experiences related to race alongside leader versus non-leader power dynamics, and learn pragmatic ways to develop understanding, find hope, and begin to heal. Steve will walk the participants through a complex story within a congregation that involved a power differential, inequity, racial issues, subgroups at odds, and multiple unresolved conflicts. The outcome reached *shalom*. Both Steve and Tricia will share what they learned. We will look at how the matter was resolved and concluded with order and peace using Scripture: Joshua 22, 2 Chronicles 19:1–11, Matthew 5:23–24, 18:15–18, Acts 6:1–7, 15:1–35, 1 Corinthians 10:1–13, James 2:12–13 and 1 Peter 4:8.

Presentation and Reflection (90 mins)

1. Formal Investigations and Organic Inquiries
2. Integrating Narratives
3. Gap Analysis
4. Disclosure
5. Speaking about Racial Inequities
6. Conducting a Reset
7. Covenant
8. Merciful Practices
9. Conciliation Teams
10. Outcomes – six months later and fourteen years later

Suggested Readings:

For leading change: Steinke, Peter. *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

Jennings, Willie James. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.

Rothstein, Richard. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W.W. Norton & Company, 2018.

Making Your Voice Matter

Knowing when to 'speak up' or 'listen up' on the subject of race

Presenters: Andrew Lewis & Kevin Robbins

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.

– Winston Churchill

Course Description: Think about these common phrases you might hear spoken in the fellowship of the church: “I don't see race, I see people”; “Jesus doesn't see color, so why all the emphasis?” Well-meaning individuals sometimes speak these utterances and sentiments like them. But is there a better way to convey what you mean without potentially offending at best or being dismissed at worst? It has never been more challenging to find language that builds bridges instead of erecting walls. This session gives the learners a chance to practice scripts and test interactions with people of different backgrounds. The desired aim is for the student to come away with a renewed confidence to speak rather than remaining silent on issues of race. As well, by utilizing role-plays and safely guided discussions, participants will gain insights and develop the spiritual awareness to know how and when best to use their listening skills to move the needle on conversations toward being more constructive rather than destructive.

Part I – Out of The Overflow: Thinking, Saying & Doing

1. Struggling for words: exploring intent vs impact
2. Listening from the inside out
3. When to hold on; when to let it go
4. Translating body language
5. The “perfect one” in action

Part II – Learning Their Story

Role-Play & Case Study

Suggested Readings:

Gladwell, Malcolm. *Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know*. Toronto: CELA, 2020.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. New York, NY: One World, an imprint of Random House, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, 2015.

Survey

Please help us by filling out this brief survey after each session.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/C6HBBLK>