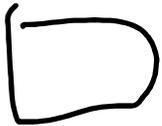
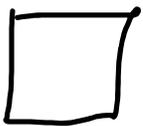


February 9, 2020

CONFUSED 2: RECONCILIATION AND THE CHURCH



What is the Christian's role in racial reconciliation? And what are some practical ways to walk that out in our daily lives?

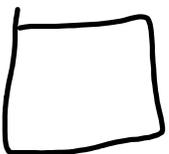


Xenophobia

(A New Latin origin): "*fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign.*" - Greek lit. "*stranger fearing*"

There are countless examples of xenophobia throughout world history which grew into racial injustices.

Here are a few examples:



Slavery has existed throughout history:

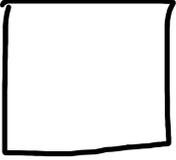
- The Babylonian times
- Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome enslaved people in horrific conditions to bolster their economic and social success.

In the early 1800's European countries were visibly prejudiced against Jewish people which led to the Nazi's mass-murders of the Jews up to and during the 2nd World War.



The xenophobic mindset determined that they:

- Were an inferior race
- Had unique physical traits
- And unique personality quirks
- Were considered to be contaminated and contagious to the indigenous people.



Statistics are available and reveal different dimensions of racism as it exists in the United States today including

- Blacks,
- Hispanics,
- Arabs,
- Asians and
- A vast number of others including those who are lost in the grey area of racial identity.

This is a clear reminder of how far the country needs to go in addressing the problem.

Most of “White America” has a misconception that we are farther along in race relations than we really are.

- So, we may tend to disguise the issue;
- And we may be less likely to give much thought to it because it hasn’t affected us personally.

For example

Racial profiling:

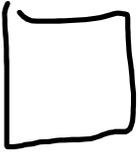
Men and women of color or with a “foreign appearance” are more often targets of suspicion than are Caucasians.

Biases in the workplace:

With very similar backgrounds, ethnicity often becomes the ultimate determining factor for employment, or if hired, the level of compensation.

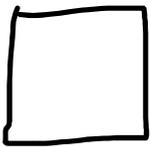
A recent study found white men with a prison record were more likely to be offered a job than African American men who had a clean record!

Everyone has dealt with feelings of **prejudice** at one time or another.



Prejudice (defined) - *an affective feeling towards a person based on that person's perceived group membership.*

But **racism** is a social plague of *negative action* that seems to never be satisfied.

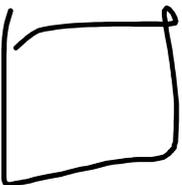


Racism (defined) - *discrimination, or antagonism directed (a negative act) against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.*

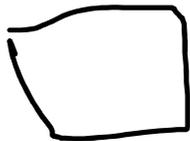
When we “dig a little deeper,” we learn racism stems from a deeper problem:

HATRED

Hatred takes many forms, and racism is just another rotten incarnation.

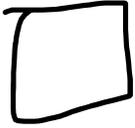


According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, **47% of hate crimes are racially motivated**



Second place, a tie between religion and sexual orientation, doesn't even come close, accounting for only **19% of hate crimes**, respectively.

Where does hatred come from? Why does hatred exist in **any** form?

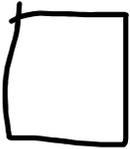


Hatred is a bi-product of PRIDE, ENVY, JEALOUSY, etc "SIN"

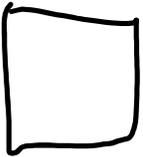


There is no Biblical justification for hatred of other people groups.

As Christians inequality puts us in a position of contributing to the cause of justice, and being examples to the world of what pure and true religion looks like.



Micah 6:8 "This is what the Lord requires of you; seek justice, love mercy and to walk humbly with your God"

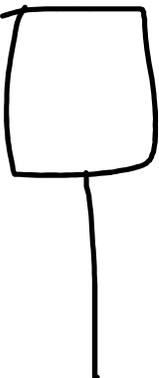


From Jarvis J. Williams - *associate professor of New Testament Interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is also an elder at his church in Louisville, KY.*

I am a proud black, multi-racial Southern Baptist. I became the first person of color to join Hindman First Church in Hindman, Kentucky in 1996. I came to faith in Jesus Christ through the ministry of this all white SBC church and began to see racial reconciliation personified as the brothers and sisters there ministered to me and my family, nourishing us in the faith and into my calling into the ministry. Furthermore, I am privileged to be the only African-American New Testament scholar teaching at any Southern Baptist seminary or institution of higher education (to my knowledge). Therefore, Southern Baptists who rightly understand and promote gospel-centered racial reconciliation as a gospel issue should, are very dear to my heart, and the ethnic diversity that exists in the SBC should be commended.

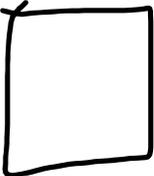
However, in my view, at the moment, Christians in general must do a better job at defining the gospel, race, and racial reconciliation, and we must be intentional about pursuing racial reconciliatioi

1. First, Christians must believe and preach the whole gospel, including what the gospel says about racial reconciliation.
2. Second, Christians must be honest about our racist past to answer some of the complicated questions in our racist present.



Moreover, progress will be difficult, if not impossible, if we deny that racism still exists—individually and systematically, in both church and society.

3. Third, Christians should work to listen to ethnic minority voices within the Christian movement who have thought long and hard about the race of issue, how it intersects with the gospel, and how this intersection applies today.
 - a. Whites must welcome minority voices at the leadership table whenever and wherever discussions about the gospel and race happen.
 - b. And the white majority must share their privilege and power with those sensible voices among the underrepresented minorities and suffer with them.
 - c. Minorities must be willing to sacrifice some preferences to live in a reconciled way in the church.
4. Fourth, Christians and Christian churches must boldly press the claims of the Christian gospel onto a racist society, and we must be willing to stand against any and all forms of racism with legal and peaceful means whenever we see racism raise its ugly head.
5. Fifth, as citizens and residents of the United States, we must hold our leaders accountable.

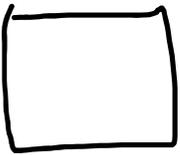
 God wants to restore man to himself (2 Corinthians 5:20-22).

For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. ²⁰ So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" ²¹ For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin [or

become sin Himself], so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

God used His Son's life to show us that our **condemnable**, sinful, character would be overlooked by forgiving us!

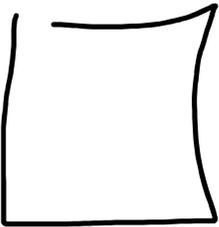
How can we hold the **un**condemnable "traits" of people (i.e. actions, facial/body structure, culture, skin color, or country of origin) against them?



"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Removing Structural Inequalities



Break down the walls of hatred:

¹⁴ For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. (Ephesians 2:14)

Now Jews and Gentiles are united heirs of God's kingdom (Ephesians 2:11-13)

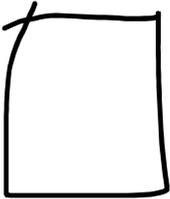
Christ unified Christians of every ethnicity together.

He removed ethnicity as a barrier.

The good news of the gospel, in that sense, includes racial reconciliation.

ALL

Christ did it! He reconciled us both to the Father and to one another!



Love Like Jesus

“Love one another as I have loved you.” (John 13:34-35)

NOTES:

9 Marks - Equipping church leaders with a biblical vision and practical resources for building healthy churches

<https://www.9marks.org/article/racial-reconciliation-the-gospel-and-the-church/>

Reverence* <https://www.reference.com/world-view/historical-examples-discrimination-prejudice-9d5ef9b5ed7bf912>

CrossExamined.org is an evangelical, inter-denominational Christian ministry. We seek to present evidence that the Bible is true.

<https://crossexamined.org/racism-racial-reconciliation-the-gospel/>

Get involved:

Indy SURJ-Showing Up for Racial Justice Indianapolis, Indiana is on Facebook. SURJ is a national network of groups and individuals organizing people for racial justice. <http://www.indysurj.org/>

ABC-GI Sacred conversations on race relations (available periodically). office@abcgi.org | www.abcgi.org | (317) 484-9336 | 1100 W. 42nd Street, Indianapolis, IN 46208

Center For Racial Justice - <https://centerracialjustice.org/>