

HOT TOPICS#3 – CHRISTIAN RACE THEOLOGY

EPHESIANS 2:11-22

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
Galatians 3:28*

I. Today's Racial Crisis

- ***The _____ issue has exploded on to the headlines*** – With George Floyd's death, the militancy of Black Lives Matter, intellectual push of Critical Race Theory, and the highlighting (exaggerating) of some relatively minor racial inequities. Critical Race Theory accentuates this by focusing on the negative and ignoring the positive. Terms such as White Privilege and Systemic Racism come from CRT.
- ***Fact: Racism still _____*** – Within every race, ethnicity, and culture. What is racism? It is the belief that one race is inherently superior to others, and the practice of discrimination because of that belief.
- ***Another Fact: Society has greatly improved over the last 55 years in _____*** – Today, generally racism is a very minor impediment to people in achieving their goals and dreams in life. America has become much more colorblind. But, we have lost ground recently with the rise of militant "anti-racism." It is turning people "off" and causing a backlash.
- ***God says racism is _____*** – In Christ we are equal in value in the eyes of God (Gal 3:28) and Christians are not supposed to show favoritism (James 2:1, 9). There should be no "us" and "them" in Christ, only "we."
- ***God's Better Way – not Critical Race Theory, but Christian Race Theology*** – The reconciled recognition, affirmation, and celebration of divinely created ethnic differences through which God displays His multifaceted glory, as His people justly, righteously, and responsibly function in unity under the mind and Lordship of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, it is not "us" and "them", but "we."

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men) – remember that at the time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and had destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of 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. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. 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 2:11-22

II. Origins: Sin Breaks Relationships Among People (vs. 11)

- ***Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians practiced _____*** – The Jews looked down on the Gentiles as inferiors call them “uncircumcised” – the “N” word of their day. The Gentiles responded by ridiculing circumcision as strange, developing their own racist label. There was a spiritual race war in the Church.
- ***This racism was hurting the kingdom of _____*** – The Jewish Christians had most of the power and used it against the Gentiles. The conflict made the Gospel message look like a lie. The Church looked no different than the rest of the world. It robbed the Gospel of its power and makes Jesus cry.

III. Through Jesus, Racial/Ethnic Groups Have Been Reconciled

- ***Through the Cross and His shed blood, Christian racial/ethnic groups have been _____ (brought together again)*** – This is also true of factions and divisions within the Church. Jesus is our peace – no division, no enmity, no conflict; just one in Christ.
- ***Christ’s purpose is to create one _____*** – When two become one, both are necessary to become one – a special spiritual bond of love. Similar to the successful Christian marriage.
- ***Christ’s reconciliation does not require that different groups lose their _____*** – Jewish Christians wanted Gentile Christians to follow their Jewish cultural rules. God told Peter (Acts 10) and Paul (I Cor 7: 17-20) NO! Each ethnic group’s culture is a reflection of God’s creative power. Celebrate, don’t denigrate!
- ***Together, we are a part of God’s _____*** – We are built together to become God’s holy temple – the Church. Within the Church dwells the Holy Spirit. Obviously, the Holy Spirit cannot dwell in a broken down house.
- ***For those that refuse to reconcile...***

You have rejected the Cross and the Blood of Jesus!

I’m indebted to Dr. Tony Evans pastor of Oakcliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, Texas for the inspiration and contributions to this message.

Answers: I. Race; exists; equality; sin. II. Racism; God. III. Reconciled; new man; uniqueness; house.