

Does Christianity have anything
Unique to Offer about Racism?



The Problem

How can Christians contribute to solving the problems that racism causes in our society?



A RACIALIZED SOCIETY

A society wherein race matters profoundly for differences in life experiences, life opportunities, and social relationships.



Contrasting Views about Racism

- Racism is something that is overt and only done from one individual to another individual.
- Racism is structural as well as individualistic and social institutions can perpetuate racism even when individuals do not intend to be racist.

General Secular Models for Solving Racial Problems

- ColorBlindness
- Multiculturalism
- Anglo-Conformity
- White Responsibility



Colorblindness

Argues that we will have racial reconciliation if we ignore race and forget the past historical discrimination. Concentrating on the advances we have made and acting in a color-blind manner is the best way to overcome racism.



Anglo-Conformity

Encourages racial minorities to accept European-American values. Answer to racial strife helping minorities imitate how whites have move up economic/social ladder.



Multiculturalism

Deals with racial alienation by emphasizing the value and worth of minority cultures. Racial minority individuals and their subcultures are held in low esteem by the dominant society and so we must find worth in those individuals and cultures.



Whites Responsibility

Locates racial problems totally within majority-group culture and individuals. Racial minorities can not be racist since they lack the economic and social power of whites. Solutions revolve around total empowerment of racial minorities.




What all these Models Ignore
HUMAN DEPRAVITY

Human Depravity:

- convinces whites to ignore racial issues and keep the status quo (Colorblindness)
- convinces whites that people of color have created their own problems (Anglo-Conformity)
- convinces people of color that all problems reside within the culture of the majority group (Multiculturalism)
- convinces people of color that they have done nothing to create their problems (Whites Responsibility)


What Scriptural Principles can we use to deal with Racial Alienation?

- Repentance necessary to be sensitive to people of color – 2 Corinthians 7:10
- Forgiveness necessary to move forward – Luke 17:3-4
- Corporate nature of sin – Daniel 9:5-6
- Old nature must be countered – Romans 6:6
- Work together to find peace – Romans 12: 17-19



A Mutual Obligations Approach

A Christian based approach whereby we recognized that people of all races have a sin nature that has to be accounted for. Thus everyone has an obligations to work towards healthy interracial communications to solve racial problems.



Two Implications of Mutual Accountability

- Institutional Problems
- Interpersonal Relationships

Steps in Using a Mutual Obligation Approach

- Define the racial problem
- Identify the critical core
- Recognize the cultural or racial differences at play
- Develop ideas that address concerns of racial out-groups
- Work towards a solution that can be accepted by all

Personal Application – Active Listening

- Find someone you disagree greatly on racial issues
- Have lunch or coffee with them
- Listen to their perspective
- Talk to them until they are satisfied you understand their perspective
- If they are willing to listen to you then explain, otherwise let it go
- Finally, do not feel obligated to agree with them.

What this Exercise may Accomplish

- Help us learn the perspective of others
- Help us learn how to actively listen
- Prepare us to communicate with others when the next racial crisis occurs
- Create a larger atmosphere that promotes real useful interracial communication