

Breaking Racism's Curse

In the '70s Richard Harris made history by becoming the youngest Ku Klux Klan Grand Dragon state leader in history. Now a pastor, professor and author, Harris decries his former life and confronts the issue of racism head-on.

Harris says his change of heart happened at age 20, after four years in the Klan. His superiors assigned him to a chaplain position and required him to study the Bible.

"As I read the Bible, I found too many places that the Klan had twisted the Scriptures," he says.

That's when Harris left the KKK, gave his life to Christ and became active in civil rights organizations. Today he speaks at colleges and churches about his past and how to reverse what he calls the curse of racism. "This is the one thing that the Klan got right from the Scriptures-they actually called racism a generational curse."

In his book, *One Nation Under Curse*, Harris says racism is still present, even in the church. "The church pats itself on the back for small strides, but this is not a post-racial society," he says, adding that racial accord is not a group assignment but an individual one.

"Each person must purposefully and intentionally reach out to people of other cultures to develop friendships where they are not casual acquaintances but close enough to visit each other's homes.