

Tasteless 'Burn the Cracker Jesus' Challenge Goes Viral

You've heard of the #IceBucketChallenge to support Lou Gehrig's Disease research. I've told you about the sick and twisted #TacoandBeerChallenge that aims to fund abortion. Now, a tasteless new challenge is sweeping across the Internet.

It's called the "Burn the Cracker Jesus Challenge," hashtag #BurnWhiteJesus. (Some call it the Kill White Jesus or Burn White Jesus challenge). Savannah Black posted a disturbing video, complete with titling that says, "Burn Cracker Burn!!!" and plenty of blasphemy to boot. I chose not to show the video in this column, but you can find it on YouTube if you feel the need to view it.

Black takes issue with the fact that an image of Jesus as a white man has been burning in mindsets of blacks since they were, he explains, "kidnapped and brung over to the shores of America." Black is challenging African-Americans to liberate their minds by burning images of what he calls "cracker Jesus."

It Wasn't Jesus' Fault

Mockingly, Black does warm-up exercises before setting fire to the images. For African-Americans having difficulty burning an image of Jesus, he suggests thinking about their ancestors who were held in bondage as slaves, then looking at a picture of Jesus and saying "You cracker, the [stuff] you did to my people for 400-plus years, the way you have us bamboozled and hoodwinked. You know what, cracker? You dead. You dead to me now."

Black insists he's not asking anyone to give up their religion of Christianity if it helps them cope, but assures his viewers that accepting his challenge to burn an image of Jesus will

liberate their minds. After saying some other disrespectful words about the Messiah, he burns an image of Christ with a string of cuss words, then burns another picture before stomping it on the ground repeatedly calling Jesus a “punk-...”

I can't begin to imagine the suffering African-Americans endure in the face of racism—or that their ancestors endured in the face of slavery. White men, sometimes in the name of Jesus, have committed atrocities against black men, women and children. Some say propagating images of Jesus as a white man is a tool to forward white supremacist thoughts in society. I can't say they are right or wrong. I don't know but I'm certain that burning images of Jesus isn't the answer.

Jesus Was Not White

Racism surely exists. I remember when I lived in Alabama. My two best friends were black. We'd ride through town together, and some people would stare and glare and display their displeasure that I was keeping company with another race. I even drove up on a house that was clearly owned by a proud member of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). It frightened and sickened me and opened my eyes to a level of racism I didn't know still existed in America. Still, I'm certain burning images of Jesus isn't the answer.

Most Christians understand that Jesus was not white. Jesus was Jewish and His skin tone did not look anything like what most modern depictions suggest. Whatever the color of His skin, Jesus does not approve of abuse, racism or persecution of black people—especially not in His holy Name. But burning images of Jesus isn't the answer.

As a church, we need to by all means continue civil discussions on eradicating racism with the love and truth of the gospel. I don't see how cussing at Jesus and burning images of Him accomplishes that goal. Persecuting Jesus is ultimately not going to set anyone free. The truth is what

sets people free, and we'd all do well to allow Jesus to reveal truth to our hearts about Him and everybody else.

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