

Tony Evans Offers Bible-Based, Redemptive Response to Critical Race Theory

The summer of unrest in 2020 spawned a movement with millions in the U.S. and around the world advocating for justice reform and racial equality. It also sparked spirited backlash, often summed up in three words: Critical Race Theory.

From then until now, the phrase has been a source of controversy and confusion—the topic traversing from the schoolhouse to congressional hearings to pundits arguing vastly divergent viewpoints across the airwaves.

“CRT,” its often-used shorthand, has also found its way to church pulpits, with some pastors casting it as sinful and others attempting to understand how it may fit into the Christian ethic of justice.

While Critical Race Theory continues to fuel cultural division, at least one prominent evangelical pastor and author believes the chaos it has caused could also be a part of God’s divine plan.

“He may have allowed this for the purpose of a wake-up call,” Tony Evans told CBN News during an extended interview at his ministry headquarters in southwestern Dallas.

Minefield of Race, Racism, and CRT

In the pulpit and now a newly-updated book, Evans is on a campaign to redeem the discourse around race.

Unlike many preachers uncomfortable stepping into the minefield of race and racism, the African American pastor is boldly diving into the crosscurrents of the cultural flashpoint, armed with a biblical message and a real-world

example of what he believes CRT attempts to expose—publicly sharing an experience of how structural, or systemic racism hit close to home.

After years of failed overtures, Evans' church, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, bought the nearby Golf Club of Dallas in 2020. Currently under renovation, the 157-acre course is open to the public, which was not the case originally.

"When we first moved to this community, the golf course—which comes up against the precipice of our church facilities—was segregated," Evans said, describing the neighborhood dynamics in 1976 when his church was founded. "African Americans were not allowed to play on it."

As times changed, so did the rules. Although the members' only club, formerly known as Oak Cliff Country Club, did not expressly deny Blacks, it adopted a policy of referral that required an invitation from a current member and then approval by two-thirds of the entire club. That made membership elusive for nonwhites.

According to Evans, the first African American that was allowed to play the course was in 1994.

"They had a structure in place to make sure that it stayed segregated," he explained. "Even if somebody would have invited me, I couldn't become a member. Even if that individual who invited me wasn't a racist."

Evans uses the property's history to describe what Critical Race Theory was designed to address—racism within systems rather than its existence among individuals. As a legal framework, CRT initially was conceived to give law school students a lens to examine laws that have changed for the good, while focusing on the legacy of unjust systems that evade the goal of equality.

Today, the CRT framework has been attached to gender identity

and other controversial issues often associated as cultural touchstones, particularly for people of faith.

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