

Why Skin Color Is Not the Crisis in Our Culture

In light of the present civil unrest, the sole focus has been on prejudice as it relates to skin color, with many Blacks accusing White individuals of oppression against them and pointing to the white privilege they enjoy in society.

In my opinion, discrimination based on skin color is a secondary issue, not the root issue. The root issue is humanity's alienation from their Creator, which began during the fall when Adam disobeyed God. This started a process of tremendous pain which pitted human beings against one another.

The first homicide had nothing to do with racism but envy. Cain slew his brother Abel out of jealousy (Gen. 4). Hence, human alienation from God had immediate consequences resulting in hatred and murder. The apostle John said that if we hate our brother, then we do not have the love of God and we are abiding in death (1 John 3:11-15). According to this interpretation of Cain's wicked deed, it was inspired by the evil one who took advantage of the sin of jealousy in his heart. Satan compels us to do what we are already entertaining in our hearts.

False Theology

Some have mistakenly claimed that the commandment by God to Adam to have dominion over His creation, ("The dominion mandate" in Gen. 1:28), offered one group of human beings the right to have dominion over other less-developed or less-civilized humans. This erroneous hermeneutic could have been used by some European colonialists to subjugate less cultured, non-Europeans because they believed Genesis 1:28 granted them the manifest destiny to rule the world for Christ. However, a closer look at Genesis 1:28 illustrates that the "dominion

mandate” was granted to all of humanity—not just to one ethnic group—to cultivate the earth. It could not have referred to exerting dominion over other less civilized humans since the earth was not yet populated when God spoke this to Adam and Eve.

In general, all humans who steward the created order are walking in this command regardless of their ethnicity. Although, promoting the first two chapters of the Genesis account is counter-cultural in contemporary times, especially in regards to its theistic worldview. This theistic worldview recognizes only one expression of marriage with only two genders—male and female—as seen in Genesis 1:27.

Slavery

Slavery is one of the cruelest manifestations imaginable regarding abuse among the human race.

The first illustration of slavery in the Bible was not between Whites and Blacks, but between Egyptians who subjugated the Hebrews. Since Egypt is considered part of North Africa and the Jews of those days would not look like the European Caucasians of today, slavery presented itself as African peoples subjugating people of Middle Eastern background (who probably had olive-colored or brownish skin tone).

European Slavery

During the days of Jesus, most of the population of the Roman Empire were slaves. Although this could have involved some light-skinned Europeans enslaving dark-skinned people from African nations, it most definitely involved Western Europeans enslaving other Europeans with similar skin color.

Slavery during this time most likely had nothing to do with ethnic racism but was encouraged because it directly impacted economics and those in power. Furthermore, even when we read Spanish and Portuguese historical accounts, the use of African

slaves started in the 13th century. In many instances, the slaves were not kidnapped but sold by their tribal heads for economic reasons. Hence, Africans participated in the wicked slave trade for their sustenance. This increased the slave trade in Europe, including its expansion into the British Empire and the initiation of slavery in the United States.

The Rwandan Genocide

During four months in 1994, there was an attempt to commit genocide against the Tutsi people by the Hutu. This was a demonically inspired, systematic plan based on historic grievances by one Black tribe against another in this African nation.

Black on Black slavery exists today. Some will argue that Africa is again the world's epicenter of modern-day slavery, "In recent years, serfdom in the continent has attracted global attention after videos showed slave markets in Libya where African migrants were being auctioned off in car parks, garages, as well as public squares."

I wonder why the "Black Lives Matter" movement doesn't often address this horrific situation taking place in our day? Is it because it doesn't fit into their White against Black narrative? If Blacks indeed do matter in the USA, shouldn't they also matter in other nations? I think the poor, enslaved and persecuted Blacks in Africa have the same human worth and value as Blacks, Whites and all ethnic peoples everywhere else! It's unfortunate that Black civil rights leaders and political leaders in the USA are not raising their voice against this injustice.

The USA

In our own country, we see high instances of "Black on Black," "White on White," and "Latino on Latino" crime. It is not relegated to just "White on Black" crime or seen just when abuse is committed by White police officers on Black citizens.

Hence, to my point, the main issue is a sin issue and not merely a color issue

Our Racist History

We all know that the USA has many warrants related to its initial history, none worse than the legal integration of African slavery into the southern economy. This resulted in the “war between the states” where thousands of mostly White northerners lost their life fighting against slavery. I agree that the Confederate flag and monuments to its southern separatist war heroes should be relegated to museums instead of displayed in the public square. I also believe the “Juneteenth” celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation that freed the slaves should be a national holiday. However, I do not think every vestige of American history should be deconstructed.

It’s one thing to point out that some of the founding fathers like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were slaveholders –forever diminishing their standing in the eyes of some– it’s another thing to tear down the flag of a southern secessionist group that wanted to divide our nation!

Along the lines of this reasoning, I agree with Dr. Michael Brown who tweeted, “In the spirit of pulling down historic statues and removing “racist” brand names, should there be a move to cancel the Democratic Party, since the Democrats were the party of slavery, segregation and Jim Crow?”

If we are going to go as far back as colonialist Christopher Columbus, and tear down his monuments, why not also hold the African nations accountable for who participated in the American slave trade by selling their people? Where does it end?

I will tell you where all these roads eventually lead to: back to the beginning. It started in the Garden of Eden when our common parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God. This had cosmic

consequences—not merely individual—since it negatively impacted every level of human reality, such as the spirit, human relations, the physical ground, the animal and plant kingdom and the immediate heavens (Gen. 3).

I believe now is the God-ordained moment for a healthy dialogue between White and Black citizens of America and beyond. I contend that we cannot lose sight of the fact that the only true cure for individual and systemic racism in the world is a strong, united Church that preaches the gospel of the kingdom of God.

Only the gospel can restore individual sinners to the Father and garner the intellectual and political capital necessary to reflect systemic biblical justice on the earth. {eo}