

# Race

Grace and Truth—part 22

September 17, 2023

## DAY 1: A person-to-person response

- **Listen:**

*James 1:19 Let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to get angry.*

1. When you are talking to anyone who has perceived reasons or history for something awful happening to them, it is imperative that you let them tell their story, history, and emotions. The temptation is to react, and then to talk *at* each other, rather than *listen* to one another.

*Prov. 18:2 (RSV) A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but delights in airing his opinion.*

### UNDERSTANDING

I hear your heart's need,  
I hear your heart's bleed.

I hear your anger,  
I hear your hunger.

I hear your mopes,  
I hear your hopes.

I hear your thoughts,  
I hear your sore spots.

I hear your disconcert,  
I hear your hurt.

I hear your strain,  
I hear your pain.

I hear your intent,  
I hear what you meant.

I hear your dreams,  
I hear your heart's screams.

I hear your longing,  
I hear belonging.

I hear your heart's wilt,  
I hear your guilt.

I hear your heart's sigh,  
I hear your heart's cry.

## **DAY 2: What does the bible say about race?**

1. The bible talks about Adam's "race." This usage of "race" refers to what every human being has in common. Scientists says we are all homo sapiens.

*Acts 17:26 **From one man** he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. <sup>27</sup> God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. <sup>28</sup> For in him we live and move and have our being.*

2. When we look at the ministry of Jesus, He ministered, not just to Jews, but to Samaritans, and Gentiles. There were distinctions as to geography, language, history, and religion, but He ministered to everyone, without distinction.

3. The apostle Paul obliterates *any* earthly distinction when it comes to Christ's followers and God's family.

*Galatians 3:26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, <sup>27</sup> for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

4. Human beings have attempted to classify different types of people according to common physical features in different parts of the world. In previous times we heard *Caucasian, Negroid, and Mongoloid*. Since then anthropologists have detailed many more.

This classification is neither biblical or adequate.

5. The bible does not refer to the term "race" the way moderns do.

### **Racism: the problem of human pride and sin**

*Prov. 13:10 Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.*

6. The bible, as history, records thousands of years of conflict and hatred. World historians record racism all around the world, as far back as was recorded. Racism is not just a Western civilization problem. It has been a problem in every continent.

7. People have used general differences in physical features as a means of claiming superiority over another group of people. It is usually done by idealizing one form of ethno-centric orientations over against another.

8. This is just one form of pernicious pride. We "elevate" ourselves by "deflating" others.

9. What strikes you from today's writing?

### **DAY 3: The history of slavery**

1. When it comes to race, the elephant in the room is slavery. We offer some world history on slavery as well as American history.

#### **2. World history:**

- a. Slavery has been a part of world history as far back as we know.
- b. Slavery has also been a worldwide phenomenon, not just in North America, but in Africa, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and South America.
- c. Slavery has not just been a “white man’s” issue, but people of all colors have participated in slavery and the slave trade, worldwide.
- d. Millions of Slavic people, all white, were captured and enslaved by Muslims, and later by the Ottoman Turks.
- e. Slavery was so common during the Egyptian and Greek empires that Aristotle thought of it as “natural.”
- f. Even today in Africa, it is estimated there are at minimum 700,000 Africans who are enslaved by other Africans as child soldiers, human trafficking, and forced labor.

#### **3. The “media”:**

- a. We are rarely told of the murderous Persian, Mongol, Chinese, and Japanese Empires, or the indigenous tribes around the world who enslaved and cannibalized other tribes.
- b. The media beats the drumbeat of only one primary narrative: America is evil. It is told in four parts: (1) All white people are racist. (2) Slavery is a white phenomenon, and (3) America is a systemically racist country, even today, and (4) It is impossible for America to overcome racism.

#### **4. In America, and the new world**

- a. When Columbus landed in the Bahamas, the native Paino tribe implored Columbus to help them overcome another tribe, the Carobs, who were enslaving them, and on occasion, ate the Paino people.
- b. The first African slaves were brought to Jamestown in 1619.
- c. The northern colonies of America abolished slavery between 1774 and 1804.
- d. The African slave trade was abolished nationally in 1808.
- e. By the time of the American Civil War, about four million blacks were slaves.
- f. Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.
- g. As the northern armies marched through the South, slaves were freed before the end of the Civil War in 1865.

5. What strikes you from today’s writing?

## **DAY 4: The history of abolition and the Civil Rights movement**

1. White people were the first people to put an end to slavery.
2. In 1833, Great Britain was the first country in the world to pass the Slavery Abolition Act.
3. William Wilberforce dedicated his entire adult life in England's Parliament to get slavery abolished. He died three days after passage of the Act! He had worked on this from 1787 to 1833!
4. France abolished slavery in 1848.
5. America abolished slavery in the entire country in 1865, with the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution.
6. From the 1830s to the 1860s, the movement to abolish slavery in America gained strength, led by Frederick Douglass' speeches, writings, debates and influence with American politicians. White abolitionists included William Lloyd Garrison, who founded the abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Abolitionist societies sprung up in the 1800's in the northern states.
7. Most of the abolitionists were white Christians, who understood that every human being was made in the image of God.
8. The Underground Railroad was also made possible by both free Blacks and antislavery northerners beginning in the 1780's.
9. About 360,000 Union soldiers died during the Civil War, who were overwhelmingly white.
10. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed by the Senate, which include ninety-white men and two Asian-Americans.
11. Over the last fifty years, over two million black people have legally immigrated to America from Africa,
12. What strikes you from today's writing?

## **DAY 5: Final thoughts...**

*Matt. 5:13-16 You are the salt of the earth.... You are the light of the world.*

1. We should honestly acknowledge the evils of our past. This is one of the benefits of history, lest we repeat what was done.

2. We should also honestly acknowledge the *noble attempts* to move our nation “toward a more perfect union”, and a land where the ideals of the Declaration of Independence became closer and closer to reality. We are not the same nation we were four hundred years ago, two hundred years ago, not fifty years ago.

To minimize our progress is just as unfair as denying our past.

3. When we are talking with an individual, we must always listen first.

4. With touchy subjects, it is prudent to assume there has been some past family pain and/or personal pain regarding racism. It is important to find out if that’s been true with your friend.

5. Cultural divides are not won by debate. They are one, relationally.

6. Every day, we have the opportunity to be healers of racial division by the way we relate and love people of other races and ethnicities.

7. What strikes you from today’s writing?