

THE BIBLICAL MANDATE FOR

**RACIAL  
RECONCILIATION  
& EQUALITY**



(*Genesis 1:1-3*); (*John 1:1-3*) God is Triune; He is one and yet exists in three equal, eternal, and distinct persons. He is perfect unity in diversity and diversity in unity. In *Ephesians 4:1-6*, we are called as Christians to live unified in our diversity just like our God who is —“one Spirit...one Lord...one God and Father of all”. We are called to live unified across barriers of race and culture.

Jesus came into the world claiming that He was the One prophesied of in *Isaiah 42*, who will “proclaim righteousness to the Gentiles” (*Matthew 12:18-21*, quoting *Isaiah 42:1-3*). When He told the crowd at the synagogue that His ministry was for all races, His listeners were so offended that they tried to throw Him off a cliff (*Luke 4:24-30*). Nevertheless, Jesus stayed true to His mission of equality.

He found the faith of a Roman centurion (a foreigner) greater than any in Israel (*Matthew 8:5-13*), and healed his servant.

In *Matthew 15*, a Canaanite (Gentile) woman’s faith was rewarded when her daughter was healed.

In *John 4:1-30*, Jesus revealed Himself as the Messiah to a Samaritan woman, at a time when great racial hostility existed between Samaritans and Jews. Society would have frowned upon this interaction as inappropriate based on both racial divisions and gender oppression that existed at the time. Because of His intentional interaction with her, many other Samaritans in her village came to believe in Jesus as well.

Jesus healed a Gadarene (Gentile) demoniac in *Matthew 8:28-34*.

Another time, among 10 lepers healed, one was a Samaritan, and Jesus remarked upon the fact that only the foreigner returned to thank Him (*Luke 17:12-19*).



**IN JOHN 4:1-30, JESUS REVEALED HIMSELF AS THE MESSIAH**

**TO A SAMARITAN WOMAN, AT A TIME WHEN GREAT RACIAL**

**HOSTILITY EXISTED BETWEEN SAMARITANS AND JEWS.**

Jesus responded to a Jewish man's question, "Who is my neighbor?" by telling the story known today as the Good Samaritan found in **Luke 10:25-37**. In this story, Jesus makes a Samaritan man the heroic figure, the one whose compassion we are to emulate in lives. In doing so, Jesus was defying the racial prejudices of His audience.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, when He sent His disciples out with the Great Commission, He sent them to "all nations" without exception or favoritism (**Matthew 28:18-20**).

After Jesus' ascension, in **Acts 2:5-12**, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples, the apostles began to preach publicly, and people from many other nations and racial backgrounds heard God's message miraculously in their native languages and became believers. From the very beginning of the early Church, the Body of Christ was racially diverse.

## IN **ACTS 10-11** WE SEE **GOD'S DESIRE TO** **ERADICATE RACISM** THROUGH THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL.

In **Acts 10-11** we see God's desire to eradicate racism through the work of the gospel. God wanted Peter to go and share the Gospel with a Roman centurion, Cornelius. The Holy Spirit sent multiple supernatural signs to Peter in order to get him to visit a Gentile. These events and Cornelius and his household's consequential eagerness to place their faith in Jesus and receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit eventually led Peter to renounce strong racial prejudices that existed in his day and embrace the equality God intended as part of His redemptive work on the earth: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right" (**Acts 10:34-35**). This became a central message throughout the book of Acts as we see Jewish followers of Jesus, under the power of the Holy Spirit, accepting and embracing first Samaritans, then Africans (**Acts 8**), Romans (**Acts 10**) and Greeks (**Acts 11**).

The call for unity and justice across all races, classes and gender was taught to the early Church. In **Galatians 3:28**, believers were taught that, "there is neither Greek nor Jew, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." In **Ephesians 2:14**, the Apostle Paul further explained that the cross removes the pride and privilege that leads to racial animosity and injustice.



Now the Church is to show the world how through faith in Jesus we can live racially reconciled as brothers and sisters in Christ. And as we wait for the second coming of Jesus, we hold on to the hope of a new dawn that will be vibrantly diverse, because “the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it” and “the glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it” (*Revelation 21:24, 26*). And *Revelation 7:9* tells us that in the new heaven and new earth, the people of God will be of “every tongue, tribe, people, and nation.”

As we hold on to this hope, we advocate for racial equality and display God’s heart for all humanity. Our biblical mandate is to seek racial justice and defend the oppressed as outlined in the following scriptures:

- “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” -*Micah 6:8 NIV*
- “Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.” -*Leviticus 19:15 NIV*
- “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.” -*Psalms 89:14 NIV*
- “The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.” -*Psalms 103:6 NIV*
- “Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong. Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.” -*Isaiah 1:17 NIV*
- “I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.” -*Ezekiel 34:16 NIV*

We are also called to the ministry of reconciliation- an ongoing spiritual process that involves forgiveness, repentance, and justice, that restores broken relationships and systems to the way God intended them to be (*2 Corinthians 5:18-19*).

We recognize that we are one Body, united in Christ, while remaining racially diverse. We are committed to the process of lamenting, repenting, and healing together in pursuit of racial reconciliation that reflects the fullness of Christ on the earth for all people (*1 Corinthians 12:21-27*).



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**THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS WE CAN LIVE RACIALLY**

**RECONCILED AS BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST.**