

Teach Your Children What the Bible Says about Racism

I. People can be grouped according to legitimate shared criteria.

- Exodus 23:23; Genesis 9
- The Bible does categorize people according to ancestry, geography, and the like. And doing so is not inappropriate when we do it correctly. The main issues that arise occur when people define the categories differently.
- People may not like being categorized a certain way, but it's a normal human way of understanding the world.
- In addition to illustrating our modern understanding of race, the Bible also adds two very important concepts that do not appear in Merriam-Webster.
 - The Bible makes it very clear that every single person to ever live shares four common ancestors with every one else. We all go back to Noah and His wife, and before them we all go back to Adam and his wife. All Christians need to teach their children that every single person on this earth is a unique creation of God — all equally created in His image, all equally human. And each is deserving of the love and respect that God commands people to have for each other. (Genesis 1:26-27; Luke 10:29-37)
 - We may categorize people by geographical locations, culture, and skin color, but first, we're all humans — equal in our image-bearing — but — in Christ — our ethnicity means even less than it did before. (Galatians 3:28; Romans 10:12-13; Revelation 7:9-10) Mankind started as nothing more nor less than a special creation of God designed to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever. And that's exactly how God intends for us to enter into eternity. That fundamental reality transcends any superficial differences or categories we may place on ourselves or others.
- There is nothing wrong with that practice as long as it's accurate and used for Christ-honoring purposes. Christians should never be manipulated to feel guilt because they accurately group people for valid reasons.
- People can get their noses bent out of shape for lots of sinful reasons. In fact, people hated Jesus simply because He spoke the Truth. If what you are saying and doing is being done in God's Truth with God's love, you do not have to feel bad because someone doesn't like it.
- However, if you're sinning by being unkind, unloving, sinfully hateful, having a superiority complex, or the like, then you should feel shame over your actions. You should confess that and repent.

II. Racism makes no sense because all mankind is the same kind of human.

- We're all image-bearers of God with only superficial physical and experiential differences.
- It's never appropriate to judge a book by its cover, but we are to judge a person by their actions. The world doesn't like this reality. If you judge what they're doing, they will likely call you a racist in order to frighten you to stop. Again, we need to think biblically about this.

III. In Christ, our superficial differences melt away.

- God calls all people to Himself and welcomes them the exact same way. In Christ we are *unified* in our original created purpose. It's amazing how brothers and sisters in Christ from every walk of life, ethnic background, and life experience, can meet and all of that melts away in light of the fact that we are children of the King of Kings.
- We need to teach this glorious truth to our born again children and exemplify it in our own lives.

IV. God commands that we love all people.

- Romans 2:11; Acts 10:24-25; John 7:24; James 2:9
- Even if people didn't all come from the same ancestor, even if they could be accurately categorized as less intelligent, more dangerous, or less valuable than another — and, by the way, they can't — but even if that were true, God still commands that we love everybody.
- We need to want and work toward God's best interest for everyone He brings into our lives. We're to love our families, friends, fellow citizens, and even our enemies.
- We have no right to be partial or prejudicial to anyone because of superficial differences.

V. Therefore, sinful hate and prejudice is a sin.

- A legitimate “belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race” is a sin.

VI. Does Genesis 9 Encourage Slavery?

- Some early Americans justified slavery based off this passage. They basically said that because the Africans were descendants of Ham, they were cursed by God to be the slaves of the Jews and the European peoples. Their justification was that God pronounced Himself the God of Shem, Japheth was invited to dwell in Shem's tent, but Canaan would end up being their servant.
- It is true that Ham's descendants include the people group who migrated to Africa, but those people were not descendants of Canaan. Ham has four sons, the Ethiopians descended from Cush, the Egyptians descended from Mizraim, and the Libyans descended from Phut.
- Canaan's descendants settled above Africa east of the Mediterranean Sea known as the Land of Canaan.
- The just curse God leveled against Canaan through the mouth of Noah was not on all of Ham's descendants — it was on Canaan's descendants.
- The partial fulfillment of that curse was accomplished millennia ago when the Children of Israel entered the promised land.
- God's whole plan from the beginning was that the fulfillment of Noah's prophecy would come during the time after the Exodus.
- No one can use Genesis chapter 9 to argue that God expects people living today to be the servants of other people living today.

