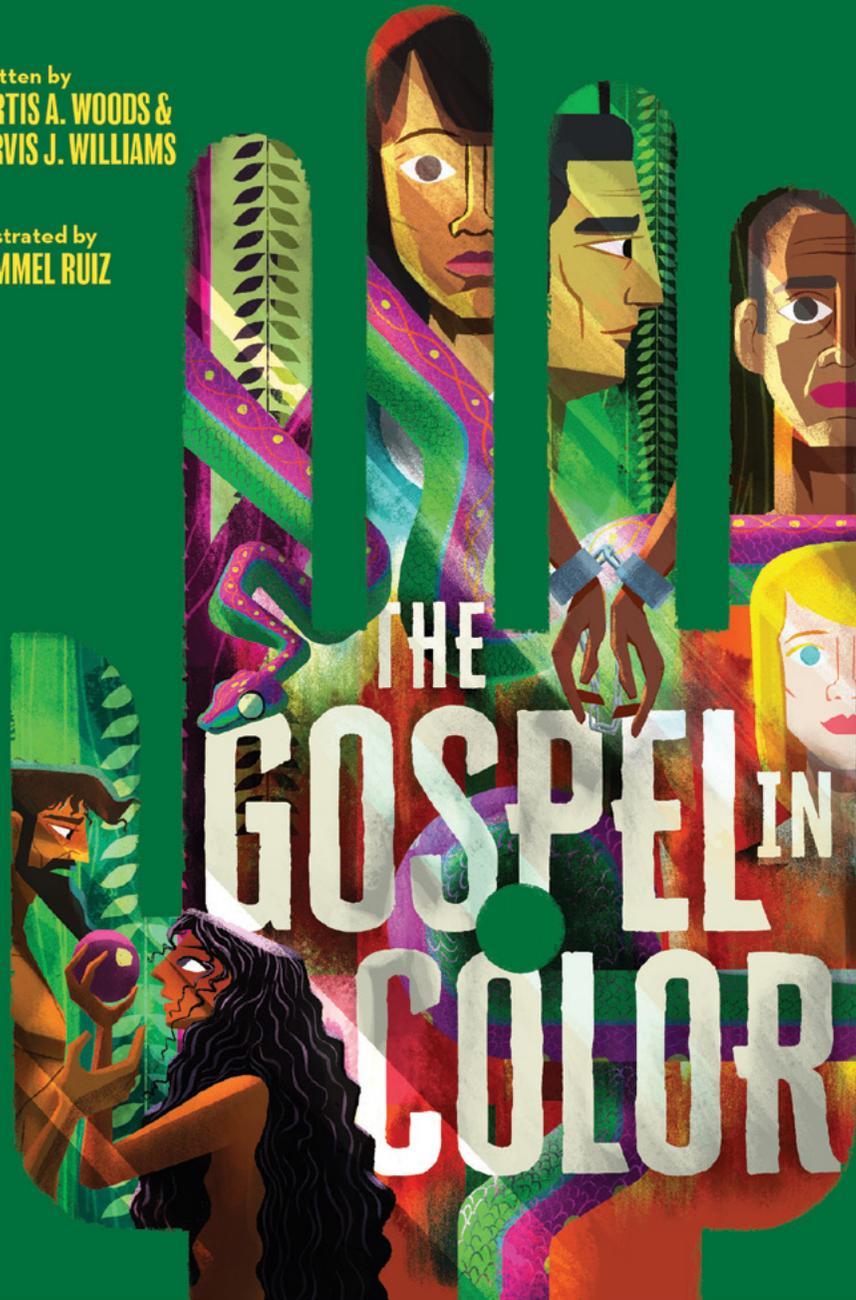


A **Patrol** Original Book

Written by  
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**A THEOLOGY OF RACIAL RECONCILIATION FOR PARENTS**

### THE GOSPEL IN COLOR – FOR PARENTS

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# THE GOSPEL IN COLOR

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The idea for this book came as a result of a conversation that Jarvis had with Rommel and Eleazar Ruiz in Portland, Oregon, at the first Canvas Conference, sponsored by Humble Beast and Western Seminary. Jarvis' assignment at this conference was to talk about "The Idolatry of Race." After his talk, Rommel and Eleazar approached Jarvis regarding the possibility of a partnership in writing an illustrated book focusing on the gospel and racial reconciliation. After discussing a general direction and vision for the book in Portland and after ongoing conversations about the aim of the book, Jarvis, Rommel, and Eleazar agreed to proceed with the project. Realizing that the

book would be much better if written with a brother with more knowledge of race issues, more experience teaching kids about race, and more experience in parenting, Jarvis asked his dear friend and big brother in the faith, Curtis, to partner with him to write this book. This book is the result of God's good providence to us.

There are many people to thank for helping this book become a reality. Many thanks to Humble Beast and Ryan Lister for inviting Jarvis to the first-ever Canvas Conference focusing on theology and the arts. Many thanks to Rommel and Eleazar for partnering with us in this work — especially for the illustrations. Many thanks to the entire team at Patrol for editorial advice and the nice reminders about our deadline.

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Finally, Curtis dedicates this book to Tracy, Anthony, Timothy, and Tristan Woods. Boys, your mom and I absolutely love bathing your minds in the gospel. The Father defines your worth, and union with the Son makes him delight in you by the Spirit. Jarvis dedicates this book to “Auntie” and “Uncle” Wendell who taught him much about love and justice.

Curtis A. Woods  
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## PARENTS' GUIDE

# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is specifically designed so that you, as a parent, can dig deep into what the Bible says about race, racism, and reconciliation. To facilitate times of reflection and response, every chapter ends by giving you a specific framework for further study, thought, and prayer:

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER** Each chapter contains much food for thought, and these questions will help you reflect on your own life experiences, your view of the gospel, and how to respond to these pressing issues. Whether you consider these questions alone or with a reading companion, this section is designed to draw you into prayerful reflection and contemplation.

**FURTHER READING** Go deeper in exploring the issues covered in each chapter by reading a list of Scriptures covering the same topics, organized thematically.

At the end of each chapter, you'll also find the **Talking With Kids** section, which is designed to be used in conjunction with the companion book *The Gospel in Color — For Kids*. Since each

chapter in this parents' book corresponds to the same chapter in the kids' book, you'll be able to help your child understand the themes covered in each reading, explaining concepts and vocab words while also helping your child complete the corresponding activity section of the companion book as needed. In each of these **Talking With Kids** sections, you'll find:

**GOALS WHEN TEACHING YOUR CHILD** Contains helpful objectives to keep in mind when talking with your child about the themes of each chapter.

**WORDS TO EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD** Contains succinct definitions of the vocab words covered in each chapter.

**SCRIPTURE READING & REFLECTION WITH YOUR CHILD** Contains specific Scriptures to read with your child along with themes to discuss afterward.

**WAYS TO PRAY WITH YOUR CHILD** Contains suggested prayer points to help you lead a time of prayer with your child based on the topics of each chapter.

Introduction

# WHY THIS BOOK NOW?

By Jarvis J. Williams

# WHY TEACH YOUR KIDS ABOUT THE GOSPEL AND RECONCILIATION?

I grew up in a rural town in the American South, in an environment where racism was part of the normal rhythm of everyday life, both in overt and covert forms. The ugly word “nigger” was a common white epithet for black people, one that black people internalized and used as well. As a black/brown person of mixed ethnic heritage, there were certain white communities I simply could not go to, and I still remember how certain individuals spoke of black people in dehumanizing ways, even to our faces. Growing up in that environment, I often struggled

**“IS THERE  
SOMETHING WRONG  
WITH MY SKIN  
COLOR?”**

**RACISM ISN'T JUST SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST.**

with the question: “Is there something wrong with my skin color?”

For almost two decades now, I’ve lived in a city and had the opportunity to preach and teach in diverse contexts throughout the country, and sadly, I’ve seen that racist ideologies and constructs exist beyond rural communities and small towns. The same ideas I grew up around are still present in highly populated, diverse, and well-educated cities — albeit in subtle and socially acceptable ways.

The book you hold in your hands exists because of this social reality. The fact is that we as parents need to talk with our children now about the underlying issues of racism and ethnic difference. Below are three pressing reasons why this is so vital.

**REASON ONE: CURRENT RACIAL DIVISION**

Racism isn’t just something that happened in the past. One need only look at tragic events in the recent news to see that. Indeed, racism, ethnocentrism, and ethnic discrimination are deeply embedded within the American social fabric. Tragically, these evils have also entered into the church — despite racism’s complete incompatibility with the gospel — and many Christians have stood on the wrong side of racial and

ethnic justice in America. Consider, for example, the number of churches that fought against equal rights for blacks during slavery, reconstruction, and the era of Jim Crow laws. Consider also the way some people who identify as Christian speak to, about, or of brown immigrants particularly, as well as about black and brown people generally.

I remember the time my son overheard a child say he was stupid because he had “brown skin” — an event which occurred, sadly, within a predominantly white Christian context. I also recall a recent season in which my son was deeply grieved when he perceived expressions of racism in certain parts of American culture. One particular evening we spent a long time talking about the image of God, sin, racism, and the gospel, as he peppered me with tearful questions about these issues. Even as an eight-year-old, he recognized the way that the larger culture, and even Christian spaces, prioritized whiteness and marginalized his brown skin. As a Christian father, I must work diligently to assure my son that God loves his brown skin, that brown skin is beautiful, and that white skin is *not* superior to brown skin.

**AS A CHRISTIAN FATHER, I MUST WORK DILIGENTLY TO ASSURE MY SON THAT GOD LOVES HIS BROWN SKIN AND THAT BROWN SKIN IS BEAUTIFUL.**



SERVICE TIMES  
SUNDAYS 9AM & 11AM





The reality of racial and ethnic division in our country today means that Christian parents of all ethnic backgrounds need to teach their kids about the gospel, race, racism, ethnic difference, and discrimination. Like it or not, as parents, we will be forced to have uncomfortable conversations with our children about these issues.

## REASON TWO: COLOR-BLINDNESS ISN'T A SOLUTION

In response to racism, I've heard many well-meaning Christians and Christian parents espouse a naïve commitment to color-blindness. Essentially, color-blindness is the idea that we ought not to see color or make race-based decisions.

The concept of color-blindness at first seems appealing and even biblical. After all, we live in an age when many people of color have influence, power, and wealth — as evidenced by the fact that our country recently experienced a two-term black presidency. And *Galatians 3:28* states that “there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, and neither male nor female, for we are all one in Christ.” As a result, some people argue that there is no such thing as a black Christian or a white Christian — we're all just Christians. People say that Christians should stop talking about race, because talking about race will make

## COLOR-BLINDNESS INADVERTENTLY PERPETUATES THE VERY RACISM IT SEEKS TO AVOID.

race an issue.

This color-blindness insists that ignoring race and looking beyond ethnic differences will lead us to a more racially equal and just society. Right? Wrong.

The problem with color-blindness is that Americans, including Christians, have inherited race-based social constructs based on a biological fiction (as we'll see in Chapter 2). As a result, our society continues to uphold structures and ideas which prioritize and marginalize groups based on their perceived race, in both intentional and unintentional ways. The truth of the matter is that so-called color-blindness will not create reconciled community, because racism and ethnic discrimination are deeply rooted in the American conscience and experience.

Regardless of how good color-blindness may sound to Christian parents, it's actually cruel and damaging to the many people who experience marginalization on a regular basis precisely because of their perceived race. Color-blindness inadvertently exacerbates the very racism it seeks to avoid, because it allows the majority cultural group to maintain their privileged position, continuing a social status quo in which minority groups continue to experience discrimination and

domination. Christian parents who affirm color-blindness do a great racial injustice to their kids and to the black and brown people in their churches and communities, deepening racial wounds and setting up children for emotional, spiritual, and psychological devastation when they do experience racism.

**WE ALL LIVE IN A RACIALIZED SOCIETY, WHERE ONE'S PERCEIVED RACE PROVIDES ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES IN SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS.**

So no matter how hard we try to deny these facts and look beyond the color of one's skin, we live in a country which makes decisions based on false beliefs about skin color and race. Ethnic discrimination is part of the ordinary and everyday rhythm of the American experience — and so we must address it frankly and wisely, by the power of the Spirit.

### **REASON THREE: RACISM IS A SYSTEMIC PROBLEM**

As the following chapters will demonstrate, my co-author Curtis and I believe that racism and ethnic discrimination possess both individual and systemic dimensions. We also believe that these forms of discrimination are deeply ingrained in the structural fabric of the United States, including within many Christian spaces and institutions, often showing up in subtle ways.

We are not saying that every individual person intentionally practices racist behavior against those from a different race, nor does this necessarily mean every problem experienced by black and brown people in America or in any given context results from racism.

But like it or not, we all live in a racialized society, where one's perceived race provides advantages or disadvantages in social interactions and achievements. And many of the challenges black and brown people have historically experienced in the U.S. (such as slavery, Jim Crow, and the exploitation of immigrant workers) have been directly caused by racism. In the American experience, racial injustice has been especially evident between blacks and whites, but can also be seen amongst other marginalized groups as well. Native Americans, Asians, Latinos, the Irish, Jews, Arabs, and many other groups have experienced racism and discrimination simply because of their perceived differences.

American history, tragically, is marred by the legacy of a social order which placed non-white men, women, and children — people created in the image of God — at the bottom, and the destructive effects of this social order are arguably still felt today.

## AN INVITATION

The reality of racism is a deeply important issue for parents to grapple with, especially because it is ultimately a spiritual problem. As we shall see in the following chapters, racism's origins go all the way back to the Garden of Eden, and the sin of racism can only find complete healing through the victory of Jesus Christ on the cross. That's why this book seeks to equip parents to have honest, fruitful conversations with their children about the issues of race, ethnic divisions, and racial reconciliation in a way which is gospel-centered and biblically accurate.

My co-author Curtis and I are two African-American men from different backgrounds, with diverse cultural and educational experiences. In the following chapters, we'll discuss what the Bible says about race, where the modern idea of race originated, where racism comes from, and how the good news of Jesus brings about healing and unity in the area of ethnic difference. Throughout this book, you'll find biblical exposition, concise definitions of key terms, real-life examples, and personal stories, along with visual illustrations to help illuminate the content. We know it's not necessarily easy to talk about these things with your kids, so we designed the book to work hand in

**RACISM'S ORIGINS GO ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE GARDEN OF EDEN, AND THE SIN OF RACISM CAN ONLY FIND COMPLETE HEALING THROUGH THE VICTORY OF JESUS CHRIST ON THE CROSS.**

hand with a companion book written specifically for children: *The Gospel in Color — For Kids*. After reading through each chapter of this *Parents* book, you can read through the *Kids* version with your children, explaining vocabulary words, reading Scripture, and praying together. The content in this book will help you walk through conversations with your kids in order to help equip them to view the world through a robust gospel lens.

Before we begin, we'd like to briefly note that portions of this book speak honestly about the historical and ongoing reality of racism and its effects, many of which were perpetrated by people of European descent. While we seek to accurately reflect this truth, we would never want our white brothers and sisters to read this book under the weight of condemnation. Our goal is to speak the truth in love, and this book is intended to be something that everyone can read and learn from. Our hope is that any readers who realize they have held racist attitudes would lament and repent as the Spirit convicts their hearts; other readers may become aware for the first time of the privileges they enjoy in American society because of their

white skin color. In any case, the truth of the matter is that we are all sinners, and we all need God's grace and forgiveness, which is readily available to us in Christ.

Our prayer is that the Spirit would use our work to help you teach your kids the message of gospel-centered racial reconciliation. May this book support you as you lead your kids in seeking the unification of all things and people in Christ through the gospel. Our hope is that our book would celebrate the beauty of the gospel in color, and that together as believers, we would proclaim our unity within our diversity, and teach our kids to do the same.

**MAY THIS BOOK  
SUPPORT YOU AS  
YOU LEAD YOUR  
KIDS IN SEEKING THE  
UNIFICATION OF ALL  
THINGS AND PEOPLE  
IN CHRIST THROUGH  
THE GOSPEL.**

**“SO GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE,  
IN THE IMAGE OF GOD HE CREATED HIM;  
MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM.”**

*—Genesis 1:27 (ESV)*

Chapter One

# **WHAT IS RACE?**

By Curtis A. Woods

## BIG IDEA

To understand the truth about race, we need to turn to the Bible. There we see that God made all people in the image of God. As image-bearers, human beings were made to reflect who God is, to wisely care for God's creation, and to treat each other with dignity and respect. Biblical truth reveals there is only one race... the human race. Yet in stark contrast to this, the modern concept of race arose within the last few centuries, as key thinkers in the European Enlightenment claimed that human beings could be divided up into different racial categories of varying value. They taught that some races were superior to others, and as a result, this lie was used to justify centuries of oppression and cruelty.

## IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

I responded to the gospel in 1994. The Holy Spirit showed me my sins, and I realized that I was a merciless person who needed the Lord's mercy. After deciding to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior, God gave me a love for Scripture. I started reading the book of *Genesis* — and I discovered a whole new way of looking at the world.

Now, many years later, as a Christian parent who affirms the authority of Scripture, I often ask myself: Why is there so much confusion concerning the meaning of race? When we speak about certain skin colors as indicators of fixed racial categories, do such statements fit the narrative of Scripture? Or is our understanding of race informed by a worldly intellectual system created just a few centuries ago — one which represents a demonic attack on the goodness of God's creation?

Just as I first read the Bible as a Christian to make sense of the world, so too, we need to look to the Bible to truly understand race — so that we see God's creation through God-centered eyes.

## BACK TO THE BEGINNING

The opening chapters of *Genesis* show us how God created the world out of nothing by speaking all things into existence. He created the heavens and the earth, the seas and the dry land. He filled the earth with vegetation, made the sun and moon, and populated the world with living creatures on sea and land and air. All these creatures were fruitful and multiplied their species on the earth and in the sea. God was happy with what he had made (*Genesis 1:20-25*).

Lastly, God created the crowning jewel of creation — Adam and Eve — in his image, giving them the task of acting as stewards over his world. No other creature could help them fulfill God's command. God was deeply pleased with his creation and rested to enjoy his artistry (*Genesis 1:26-2:3*).

The creation account presents a beautiful picture of love. God cared for his creation by crafting a world that could sustain the physical and emotional needs of humanity. The man and woman loved and trusted one another without fear (*Genesis 2:23-25*). The animals and sea creatures enjoyed their habitats without territorial fighting. It was literally *all good!*







## THE TRUTH ABOUT RACE

As we see in the *Genesis* account, God created every family from the loving relationship of the first man and woman. Thus, according to Scripture, every human being has a common ancestor (*Acts 17:26*). It's extremely important to understand that when the Bible utilizes words referring to race and ethnic difference, it is not referring to the modern conception of racial categories of differing value. The Bible clearly rejects the idea of a special race of people who sit above other skin colors.

**EVERY COLOR WAS  
MADE TO BE LOVED  
AND CHERISHED,  
BECAUSE GOD  
CREATED ALL THINGS  
GOOD.**

The Bible is clear that there are not different races of human beings in the sense of different categories of people. Every person is made in God's image, and as such, has a unique worth and identity.

Each skin color on the earth points back to the first person created from the earth — Adam (*Genesis 2:7*). God's vision was for all colors to love one another and treat one another with dignity. To label different hues as inferior goes against the clear teaching of Scripture.

## THE LIE ABOUT RACE

The modern conception of race is a fictional construct developed to separate humans based on color. In contrast to God's word, which depicts the commonality of all people, the idea of race was created to uplift one skin color as superior to other colors and ethnicities.

During the European Enlightenment in the 18th century, influential intellectual figures like Immanuel Kant invented racial categories which privileged Europeans as inherently superior to other ethnicities. They taught that there were multiple, radically different races rather than one human race. Respected thinkers in a variety of academic disciplines advanced theories to support their preconceived notions of white superiority.

As this imaginary concept of race caricatured and oppressed any ethnic group branded inferior, many Europeans learned to see non-European individuals as inferior beings — even though the same color of blood runs through all our veins. Since “lesser colors” were viewed as less than human, they could be bought and sold like property, justifying slavery.

Some of these European false teachers were religious, so they dishonorably used the Bible as a source to explain God's greater love for white people over other shades in the global community. Claiming that non-white Europeans lacked a special connection to God, white Europeans thought they had a manifest destiny to determine the potential value and economic use of non-whites.

In so doing, these thinkers rejected the biblical teaching that all people, in every shade of skin, are precious in the sight of the Lord; instead, they exchanged truth for the lie of racial superiority. Essentially, they developed a fictional creation story — a twisted alternative to the biblical account. They used their imaginations against God himself, seeking to create a new story of the world.

Yet the biblical testimony has always testified clearly to the equality of human beings, and the power of the gospel breaks down the lies of racial superiority. God wants to give us new

**WHEN YOU SEE  
THE GOSPEL IN  
COLOR, THE WORLD  
BECOMES BEAUTIFUL  
AGAIN.**

eyes to see all the colors of humanity without fear or anger. Every color was made to be loved and cherished, because God created all things good. We are each a part of God's good creation,

and all human colors are valuable because they bear God's image. When you see the gospel in color, the world becomes beautiful again.

So where does the destructive lie of racism actually come from? What is its ultimate root? The very *Genesis* account we just considered contains the answer, as we'll see in the next chapter.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Are you shocked to learn that the modern conception of race is a fictional construct? How does the concept of separate racial categories shape relationships in Western culture?
2. What kind of understanding of race did you grow up with?
3. How have you seen people believe the lie of racism, whether in overt or subtle ways? How can you be part of the solution and share the biblical truth to counter this lie?
4. Are there any ways you have absorbed the lie of racism, or felt a temptation to view your ethnic heritage as superior or inferior to that of other ethnicities?

## FURTHER READING

- God made humanity's first parents, Adam and Eve, in his image: *Genesis 1-2*
- God made all humanity with dignity and honor: *Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8; Psalm 139*
- God calls all people into his kingdom, from every people group on earth: *Revelation 5:9-10, 7:9-10*

# TALKING WITH KIDS

## GOALS WHEN TEACHING YOUR CHILD

1. Help your child understand that God made the world and everything in it, and that he saw his creation as good.
2. Help your child understand that the Bible does not teach that people belong to separate racial categories of differing value. Instead, the Bible teaches that all people are made in the image of God, which means they have great worth.
3. Help your child understand that the idea that some skin colors and ethnicities are better than others is a lie, and that the Bible teaches that all skin colors are of equal value.

## WORDS TO EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD

**Equal:** Having the same worth and value.

**Race:** A word which can simply refer to the human race or a specific ethnic group, but which can be falsely used to mean a category of people with an inherently different value than other people.

## SCRIPTURE READING & REFLECTION WITH YOUR CHILD

Read the creation account in *Genesis 1-2*. Discuss what it means that all people are descended from the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, and that all people are made in the image of God.

## WAYS TO PRAY WITH YOUR CHILD

- Give God thanks for the fact that he made the world and all things in it, and praise him that you and your child have the incredible honor of being made in the image of God.
- Pray that God would help people of all skin colors see that he is the one who made them, and that he made us all to bear his image and treat one another with love and respect.
- Give God praise that the way he made you and your child — including your skin color and ethnic heritage — is no mistake, and that your skin color and ethnic heritage are good.
- Pray that God would give you eyes to see his hand in the wonderful diversity of all people in the world, and thank him that he is the God of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation.

**“YOU SHALL TREAT THE STRANGER WHO SOJOURNS WITH YOU AS THE  
NATIVE AMONG YOU, AND YOU SHALL LOVE HIM AS YOURSELF, FOR YOU  
WERE STRANGERS IN THE LAND OF EGYPT: I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD.”**

*—Leviticus 19:34 (ESV)*

Chapter Two

# **WHAT IS RACISM?**

By Curtis A. Woods

## BIG IDEA

Where does racial conflict come from? To find the answer, we turn once more to the Bible, where we see the origin of human sin. Adam and Eve's rebellious disobedience in the Garden of Eden has led to all the conflict and pain we see in our world today — including the sin of racism. Racism is a sinful proclivity that deems another image-bearer a problem based on skin color or ethnic difference. Within American history, racism has led to systemic oppression, chattel slavery, and an ongoing social system of race-based privileges and disadvantages.

## A REMARK AT PLAYTIME

**T**he first time my eldest son encountered racism was at a predominantly Anglo-American Baptist church located in a small Kentucky city. He was six years old. As the only person of color in his Sunday school class, he knew that his skin tone was different than the other children, but he never assumed it was a problem. But one day, during playtime, an Anglo child made an insensitive remark, planting a seed in my son's imagination that said he was not special because he was not white. My son was confused and crushed. One evening he asked my wife and me, "How can I change my color?"



**NOT ONLY DO THE  
OPENING CHAPTERS  
OF GENESIS SHOW US  
WHERE HUMANITY  
COMES FROM, WE  
DISCOVER THE  
ORIGIN OF RACISM  
AS WELL.**

would be rebuked and uprooted before it germinated and did catastrophic damage to his view of the world and himself.

Then, after speaking with our pastors, we confronted the situation with compassion and conviction. As Christian parents, we could not sit idly by while racism's evil seed festered in the minds of these two boys. Both the victimizer and victim needed counsel. One child's belief required correction while the other child's emotions needed protection. When encountering a situation like this, it is natural to wonder: where does the lie of racism come from?

## THE ORIGIN OF SIN

Not only do the opening chapters of *Genesis* show us where humanity comes from, we discover the origin of racism as well. *Genesis 3* tells us how evil stole its way into God's good creation through a lying serpent. The serpent told Adam and Eve that God could not be trusted, insinuating that God wanted to withhold something good from the first family. He convinced Eve that God was jealous and insecure. As Eve listened to this voice questioning God's sovereignty and goodness, she decided to separate from God's authority and disobey God's command. In a sense, she wanted to be her own god by changing God's instruction to fit her own desires. This is the very essence of sin.

Eve and Adam both defied God's command not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thus bringing the destruction of sin into the beauty of Eden. As a result, death came into the world, and humanity's innocence was ended. Adam and Eve's relationship with God and with one another was shattered and twisted.





After the fall of mankind, there was global strife on earth. Men and women had fights with one another, and groups of people divided based on their differences, even though all people bear God's image. Farming became burdensome. Animals attacked humans and ate other animals. God had created an orderly cosmos, but sin birthed chaos.

### THE SIN OF RACISM

Since the fall, the serpent continues to spread lies about God's original good creation. The lie of race which we considered in the last chapter is the fruit of this same poisoned seed. This lie leads to racism, a sinful proclivity that deems another image-bearer a problem based on skin color or ethnic difference.

Racism within a society leads to laws and social norms designed to keep ethnic minorities "in their place" while advancing the status of those in the ethnic majority. As a result, individuals are labeled problems simply because of their ethnic background. You can be declared a criminal or potential threat based on your ethnicity, rather than your actions. These false labels create a system of advantage for the "superior race" while creating a disadvantage for others — even though everyone is an image-bearer of God.

**A COUNTRY THAT  
CLAIMED "IN  
GOD WE TRUST"  
ENACTED LAWS  
WHICH SEPARATED  
FAMILIES AND  
DEPRIVED MOTHERS  
AND FATHERS  
OF PARENTAL  
AUTHORITY OVER  
THEIR CHILDREN...**

### AMERICAN SLAVERY

Within American history, the legacy of slavery is one of the most tangible manifestations of racism's effects. For centuries, human beings were treated as property — "chattel" — and forcibly taken from their homes in Africa, placed in warehouses, and transported all over the globe like cargo in the bottom of rat-infested ships. Children were kidnapped from their mothers and fathers. Many people died during these voyages to slave ports.

In chains, enslaved families were separated and sold on auction blocks to keep their captors out of debt. They were given to the highest bidder to live a life of slavery, a life in which they had no human rights. Their masters could do anything they desired to them, even treating them like disposable items. Each enslaved African was deprived of their God-given human dignity — an act which ultimately dishonors God.



**SLAVERY MAY HAVE BEEN OVER, BUT THE COUNTRY CONTINUED TO GRANT PRIVILEGES TO A WHITE MAJORITY WHILE OPPRESSING PEOPLE OF COLOR AND OTHER MINORITY GROUPS.**

It is ironic that despite the supposed freedom that America stood for, the state-sanctioned institution of slavery blocked people from experiencing life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Not only were kidnapped black and brown individuals enslaved, but American laws supported hereditary slavery — meaning any child born to an enslaved black mother, even if his or her father was a free black or white man, was automatically the owner’s lifetime property. A country that claimed “In God We Trust” enacted laws which separated families and deprived mothers and fathers of parental authority over their children, even as these oppressed people gave blood, sweat, and tears to build the nation.

America’s founding documents themselves reflect the deep influence of racism during the country’s inception. The Declaration of Independence called for universal liberty based on natural rights given by the Creator — but the constitutional framers removed specific antislavery language from the Declaration to appease slaveholding delegates. Many framers of the Constitution held sympathies toward the gradual emancipation of enslaved Africans, even while they rejected

the biblical belief that every human being has equal worth and dignity before God.

**SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION**

Frederick Douglass, a 19th-century Christian abolitionist and intellectual who challenged institutional racism, wrote about the crippling social consequences of slavery: “We are then a persecuted people; not because we are colored, but simply because that color has for a series of years been coupled in the public mind with the degradation of slavery and servitude.” In other words, black and brown people were stigmatized as unequal by a society that privileged whiteness.

True to Douglass’ words, racial oppression continued even after the Civil War’s conclusion. Though the Emancipation Proclamation officially ended slavery in Confederate states and parishes, Jim Crow laws were established throughout the United States under Rutherford B. Hayes to ensure that whites retained the upper hand in American society. State-sanctioned segregation and oppression continued for a century of American history. Slavery may have been over, but the country continued to grant privileges to a white majority while oppressing people of color and other minority groups. Whiteness, as an idea of universal purity, defined rightness in every sphere of

political engagement. This dangerous idea poisoned potential friendships between white, black, and brown people for many years to come.

Beyond slavery and Jim Crow laws, individuals from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds have experienced oppression through centuries of American history, whether through explicit legislation such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Indian Removal Act, or hurtful cultural caricatures and subtle social oppression. Many people groups have been marginalized and discriminated against in the past (as well as in the present), including Asians, Jews, Iranians, Arabs, Native Americans, Latinos, Italians, Romanis, and others, simply because of their perceived difference or immigrant status.

Today, the legacy of slavery and racism sadly continues. The fact that for centuries, America's laws officially privileged whiteness means that children of color are still affected by these structural systems of advantage, even when explicitly racist laws have been ended. Many individuals in minority populations have worked hard to achieve

**CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO HONOR GOD BY SPEAKING THE TRUTH AGAINST RACISM IN A GRACIOUS WAY, WHILE SEEKING TO UNDO RACISM'S DEVASTATING EFFECTS.**

equitable employment opportunities by exemplifying character, competence, and commitment in the workplace, yet they have discovered that a glass ceiling prevents them from achieving the highest positions in predominantly white spaces.

This history of lopsided privilege has fostered an atmosphere of social animosity and racial tension. Those who are perpetually unprivileged often refuse to build up a society that limits advancement opportunities. Meanwhile, many white people have not realized or acknowledged that they have received benefits from a history of racial privilege — and, worse still, some have shown a lack of genuine concern for the cries of injustice from the unprivileged. Racial privilege sickens the foundational soul of a nation.

### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

As Christians, we are not called to despair over the reality of racism nor to hate those who hold to racist ideas. Instead, Christians are called to honor God by speaking the truth against racism in a gracious way, while seeking to undo racism's devastating effects. That means we should not see people who have racist ideas as the enemy. They are victims of mankind's oldest enemy, Satan, who is the true author of racist ideas. He hates God's beautiful creation, and spreads lies to destroy it.

If you encounter a person who hates people because of their skin color or perceived ethnic difference, you are hearing the serpent's voice.

The good news is that even after sin first entered the world, God promised to restore humanity's vertical and horizontal relationships alike (*Genesis 3:15*). He vowed to redeem the impact that Adam's sin had brought upon the entire world. God's promise of restoration includes the reconciliation of diverse groups of people to God and to one another, as we'll see in the next chapter.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How is racism similar to that first sin in the Garden?
2. How should the spiritual nature of racism affect the way we speak about ethnic divisions?
3. How does the gospel give us the resources to counter the lie of racism?
4. Jesus calls us to do good to our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. How can we recognize the evil of racism without hating those who propagate this lie?

## FURTHER READING

- Sin shattered humanity's relationship with God and with one another: *Genesis 3; Romans 5; Romans 6:23*
- Racism is a sin: *James 2:8-9; 1 John 2:11; Leviticus 19:33-34; 1 John 4:19-21*
- God promised he would defeat the seed of the serpent by means of the seed of the woman: *Genesis 3:15*

# TALKING WITH KIDS

## GOALS WHEN TEACHING YOUR CHILD

- Help your child understand that sin is an act of rebellion against God and an attack on the goodness of God's world.
- Help your child see that racism is a sinful lie, one which goes against the truth that God made all people in his image.
- Help your child understand that the idea that some people are better than others is a lie which many people have taught over the years. Even though this lie still affects our world today, the good news of Jesus is stronger than any lie.

## WORDS TO EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD

- **Sin:** An act of rebellion against God and his good laws.
- **Racism:** The poisonous idea of people or governments rewarding social and economic privileges to one group of people by virtue of skin color or ethnic background.

## SCRIPTURE READING & REFLECTION WITH YOUR CHILD

Read the account of the fall in *Genesis 3*. Discuss what sin is (rebellion against God) and why it is so serious. Talk about the fact that all the pain, evil, and sadness we see in the world comes from sin, and that Jesus came into the world to forgive our sins and overcome the consequence of sin, which is death.

## WAYS TO PRAY WITH YOUR CHILD

- Ask your child if he or she has ever been cruel to someone because they were different, whether they had a different skin color or simply acted differently. If so, pray with your child to ask God for forgiveness for that sin, and ask him to give your child wisdom in how to apologize to that person, if at all possible.
- Is there anybody your child has a hard time showing kindness to because they are different than them? Ask God to help you and your child to see that person the way he would have you see them — as someone loved by God.
- Ask your child if he or she has heard anybody say something racist. If so, pray for that person, and ask God for wisdom on any ways your child can lovingly, graciously correct those words (as appropriate to the situation). Ask God to heal any pain those racist words have caused your child.

**“BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD,  
WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!”**  
*—John 1:29 (ESV)*

Chapter Three

# **WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST?**

By Jarvis J. Williams

## BIG IDEA

The overarching narrative of the Bible shows us how God's good creation was marred by the entrance of sin, which lies at the root of all forms of racial and ethnic division. Yet after the fall, God promised that he would send a Savior — a prophecy fulfilled by Jesus Christ, God become man. The good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is the best news possible for our world, and as Christians are shaped by the gospel, ethnic and racial divisions are healed.

## A MESSAGE OF GREAT JOY

**A**s a parent, it's always a delight to see a child excited about good news. My wife and I love it when our son is excited to share something with us. And there's no greater delight as a parent than to see your child get excited about the gospel. I recall a specific occasion when I walked into our nine-year-old son's room while he was praying, and after he finished, he gave me a big bear hug. He exclaimed: "Daddy, I'm so happy!" and I asked why. He responded with a smile: "Because I repented of my sins and asked Jesus to make me his faithful servant." As his father, I thought: this is good news indeed.



**GOD'S PROMISE  
OF RESTORATION  
INCLUDES THE  
RECONCILIATION OF  
DIVERSE GROUPS OF  
PEOPLE TO GOD AND  
TO ONE ANOTHER...**

**A LONG-AWAITED ANNOUNCEMENT**

In fact, the gospel of Jesus Christ isn't just really, really good news; it's actually the best news of all! The actual word *gospel* refers to an announcement — specifically, the announcement that God has fulfilled all of his saving promises for all people, regardless of ethnic or racial distinction, redeeming a fallen creation through Jesus Christ.

To put this good news in context, we need to understand the overarching narrative of the Bible. As we saw in the opening chapters of *Genesis*, God's original creation was beautiful and in perfect harmony. The climax of his creation was humanity. However, when the serpent entered the Garden of Eden, he deceived the woman, and she deceived the man. Sin opened their innocent eyes. In righteous response, God cursed the entire creation with judgment. Sin shattered the man and woman's relationship with God and with one another; sin brought the curse of death into the world. Yet God promised that he would defeat the seed of the serpent by means of the seed of the woman (*Genesis 3:15*).

Adam and Eve fled from God when they sinned, and their son Cain murdered his brother, Abel, because of sin (*Genesis 4:1-8*). But God promised to restore humanity's vertical and horizontal relationships alike. He also promised to redeem the impact that Adam's sin had brought upon the entire world. God's promise of restoration includes the reconciliation of diverse groups of people to God and to one another, as well as the restoration of the entire universe.

**SIMPLY PUT,  
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RECONCILIATION.**

### **THE GOOD NEWS AND ITS RESULT**

In the New Testament, the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the foundation of the gospel of Jesus Christ (*1 Corinthians 15:3-8*). Jesus' death and resurrection guarantee that God has accomplished reconciliation for all in Christ and that he has fulfilled his promise to renew and restore everything lost in the Garden of Eden because of sin's curse (*Genesis 3:15*). The good news that diverse groups of people can repent of their sin, enter into the kingdom of God, confess Jesus as Lord, call upon the name of the Lord, and be saved from God's judgment can only be a true announcement if Jesus died and resurrected in

bodily form. Simply put, without Jesus, there is no good news, including in the area of racial reconciliation.

God's work of salvation through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ is seen on a personal level when enemies become reconciled friends in Christ. We see this most clearly when the apostle Paul became a Christian. Paul was initially a violent persecutor of the church, but after placing faith in Christ, Paul lived as an incredible ambassador of reconciliation. Paul's ministry shows us that God's act of reconciling the world to himself through Christ is the foundation for God's reconciliation of diverse people to himself and to one another in Christ (*Ephesians 2:11-3:8*).

Soon after Paul became a Christian, he toiled to unify all things and all people in Christ through the gospel without ethnic distinction. He helped people understand that in Jesus, ethnic identities are transformed, but not erased. God used him to not only spread the gospel, but to urge people from diverse backgrounds to live in reconciled community with each other (*Galatians 3:28*).

Paul taught that neither Jews nor Gentiles should require one another to forfeit the distinct and beautiful aspects of their ethnic identities which were in step with the gospel and the Spirit. All people are justified by faith in Christ apart from the works of the law and are transformed by the power of the Spirit. Each distinct ethnic group in Christ is made to experience new creation, while still maintaining aspects of their distinct ethnic identities (*Galatians 2:16-5:26*).

### THE RENEWAL OF ALL THINGS

Just as the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden brought a universal curse upon the entire world, Jesus' cross and resurrection renew and transform the entire fallen universe. The Spirit enables different ethnicities, skin colors, genders, and classes of people to live in pursuit of reconciled unity with one another in Christ through the gospel. One way this renewal is visibly expressed

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in the world is when Spirit-empowered, racially and ethnically diverse believers begin to live in reconciled community with each other as they sit under the apostles' teaching, share resources with each other, spend time in one another's homes, bear each other's burdens, and praise the Lord together with glad hearts (*Acts 2:42-47*).

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the announcement that God will restore this fallen universe in and through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (*Revelation 5:9-10*). His diverse, redeemed people will reign on a transformed and glorified earth forever in perfect reconciled community with their Jewish King Jesus, while continuing to maintain their different beautiful skin colors.



In short, the dark-skinned Jesus died to redeem many colors. This gospel is truly good news! It's the best news for diverse ethnicities and races of people alienated from God and from each other because of sin and because of the racism, ethnocentrism, and discrimination which sin has produced. The good news of Jesus Christ announces that God has acted in Christ Jesus to deal with the power of sin over the entire creation.



## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How should the gospel shape the way you view racial reconciliation?
2. How did Jesus' atoning sacrifice for sin and victorious resurrection bring together people from different backgrounds in the first-century church?
3. What does it mean that in Jesus, ethnic identities are transformed, but not erased?
4. How does the good news of Jesus provide the strongest possible foundation for racial reconciliation?

## FURTHER READING

- Jesus' death and resurrection guarantee that God has accomplished reconciliation for all in Christ, fulfilling his promise to renew and restore everything lost in the Garden of Eden because of sin's curse: *Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 65:17-25; Romans 5:12-21, 8:18-39; Galatians 1:3-4, 6:15; Revelation 21-22*
- Jesus' resurrection is our only hope of restoration: *1 Corinthians 15:12-19; Ephesians 2:11-3:8*
- Jesus died and rose from the dead to draw all people to

himself: *John 1:29, 3:16, 12:32; Romans 3:21-5:11; 1 Corinthians 15; Ephesians 1:7-10; 1 John 2:2, 4:7-21*

## TALKING WITH KIDS

### GOALS WHEN TEACHING YOUR CHILD

- Help your child comprehend where sin started (in the Garden of Eden, as we saw in Chapter 2) and understand that sin is radically destructive, both in terms of our relationship with God and our relationship with other people.
- Help your child realize that the only cure for sin and hope for restoration is found in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection — a cure he gives us freely out of his great love for each and every one of us.
- Help your child understand that the good news of Jesus affects the way we live our lives now — and brings healing not just between us and God, but between ourselves and people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

## WORDS TO EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD

- **Resurrection:** The act of someone being raised from death to life. Jesus was resurrected after his death on the cross, and because of Jesus, all who believe in his name have the future promise of being raised from death to everlasting life.
- **Gospel:** The good news that through Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension (going into heaven to rule our world with his Father), the kingdom of God has come and all can be saved through faith in him.

## SCRIPTURE READING & REFLECTION WITH YOUR CHILD

Read *1 Corinthians 15:20-23* and talk about why the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is the greatest reason for rejoicing that we could ever have.

## WAYS TO PRAY WITH YOUR CHILD

- Thank God for the forgiveness and redemption we have in Jesus' freely given sacrifice. Rejoice in the fact that the Lord counts you and your child as his beloved children because you've put your faith in him.

- Pray that everyone in your family would continually turn to Jesus for forgiveness and restoration whenever they sin, knowing that Christ has already paid the price for sinners — including if they sin by regarding one skin color as better than another.
- Pray that people all over the world who do not know Jesus would come to experience forgiveness and peace with God through the gospel. Pray that this good news would bring healing to all those who are divided over skin color and other issues.
- Is there anyone your child knows who they'd like to share the good news of Jesus with? Ask God how your child can tell them about Jesus, and pray for an opportunity to share this exciting news with them. Give your child advice on how to share the gospel.

**“ALL THIS IS FROM GOD, WHO THROUGH CHRIST RECONCILED US TO HIMSELF AND GAVE US THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION...”**

*–2 Corinthians 5:18 (ESV)*

Chapter Four

# **WHAT IS RECONCILIATION?**

By Jarvis J. Williams

## BIG IDEA

Reconciliation is part of the very heart of the gospel, and the good news of Jesus includes the mending of broken relationships between different ethnic groups. As Christians, we are called to be a community made up of reconciled people who are marked by love for one another and whose racial divisions are healed and redeemed.

## A STORY OF RECONCILIATION

One of the most powerful stories of reconciliation in the Bible is the story of the prodigal son. In *Luke 15:11-32*, Jesus shared this powerful tale of a father who had two sons. The older son seemed to serve his father well, while the younger son did not serve his father well. The younger son asked for his inheritance, then left his family and wasted all of his money on parties, food, and friends.

After wasting his money, the younger son ran back home to beg his father's forgiveness. As the father saw his son coming from a distance, he rushed to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him, and then celebrated his younger son's return with a party. The older son who had stayed home and served his father complained that his father had showed the younger son too much affection. The father exclaimed to the older son that the son who returned was lost, but now was found. His return home was a reason to celebrate!

The father's response to his younger son is a beautiful picture of reconciliation. The younger son acted as an enemy when he abandoned his father. But when he returned to his father after coming to his senses, the father received him as a friend.







This is the heart of reconciliation: when enemies become friends. We use the phrase *racial reconciliation* to refer to the restoration of broken relationships between diverse ethnic groups and skin colors within the human race.

### RECONCILIATION IS NOT OPTIONAL

Reconciliation is part of the Christian gospel. Jesus' death and resurrection reconcile image-bearers to God and to one another. This is the mystery of the gospel (*Ephesians 1:9-3:13*). Ethnically diverse groups of people have equal access to God and the Spirit by faith in Jesus Christ and are co-heirs of his promises of salvation through the gospel, because Christ died for their sins and was resurrected from the dead to draw all men to himself.

As Curtis discussed in the previous chapters, both racism and the very concept of race in the American experience are tremendous sources of social and spiritual alienation. Race in our context is uniquely connected to fictional racial categories, white supremacy, and the history of racism in our country. But even though the understanding of race and racial division is different in other parts of the world, the need for racial reconciliation is universal and global — and vitally important.

**THIS IS THE HEART  
OF RECONCILIATION:  
WHEN ENEMIES  
BECOME FRIENDS.**

The gospel explicitly addresses the issue of ethnic difference, and the reconciliation and unity of all things and all people in Christ (*Ephesians 2:11-22*).

In fact, ethnic division was an issue present during the early church, in which Jews and Gentiles — two groups from radically different backgrounds — were united by their common faith in Jesus. When divisions and tension arose, the apostle Paul commanded both parties to receive one another, not to judge one another, and to bear each other's weaknesses (*Romans 14*). Paul's command is just as relevant to us now; we must actively, passionately seek racial reconciliation today, in our context.

Jesus' death for sin included a death for the sin of racism. Racism makes people enemies of one another, but Jesus' death and resurrection can reconcile enemies and make them friends — and not merely friends, but brothers and sisters in Christ. This reconciliation of groups of people previously divided by racism is a powerful example of how the gospel of Jesus Christ accomplishes friendship and unity where there was once enmity.

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AND UNITY OF ALL  
THINGS AND ALL  
PEOPLE IN CHRIST.**

## A PEOPLE MARKED BY UNITY

Jesus prayed for his followers to experience this kind of gospel unity in *John 17*. Shortly before his arrest, betrayal, and death to take away the sins of the world, Jesus prayed for the unity and protection of present and future disciples. He asked our Father to glorify himself by bringing unity to his current and future disciples through Christ's atoning sacrifice.

Jesus prayed that his disciples would be "one," just as he and the Father are one. Jesus desired unity amongst his disciples so that the world would know the Father sent him and that he loves his disciples just as he loves Jesus. Jesus prayed that the reconciling and unifying love the Father has for his Son would be found in Jesus' followers (*John 17:11-26*).

Jesus died and rose from the dead so that his followers would be reconciled to God, and would also experience and pursue this unifying, reconciling love for one another. The reconciliation and unity of disciples scattered throughout the earth is part of the gift of eternal life for which Jesus died, and testifies to the world of the power of the gospel. The reconciled community of Jesus' disciples is to be a community marked by love for God and for one another (*Mark 12:30-31*), both now and into eternity.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Do you see racial reconciliation as an important gospel issue? Is that a new concept for you?
- In what ways have you seen God bring unity in your relationships with Christians from different ethnic backgrounds?
- Is there anybody in your life you need to seek reconciliation with? Take some time to ask God to bring about reconciliation and lead you in seeking unity.
- Are there ways you and your spouse or another family member have different views regarding racial reconciliation? How can you look to the gospel together in this?

## FURTHER READING

- By faith in Christ, we are reconciled to God: *Romans 5:6-11*; *2 Corinthians 5:16-21*; *Ephesians 1:3-2:22*
- Ethnically diverse groups of people have equal access to God and the Spirit by faith in Christ: *Acts 2:1-40*; *Ephesians 2:11-3:13*
- Jesus' disciples are to be marked by love for God and one another: *Mark 12:30-31*; *John 13:35*; *Acts 13:1*

# TALKING WITH KIDS

## GOALS WHEN TEACHING YOUR CHILD

- Help your child to understand what reconciliation looks like, and how the gospel brings about reconciliation between different people and groups.
- Explain to your child why it is important to always forgive people and seek reconciliation, even when it's hard.
- Help your child to see that we are able to be reconciled to other people because God came to reconcile us first. Jesus came to heal us, forgive us, and bring us back into full friendship with our Creator and other people.

## WORDS TO EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD

- **Reconciliation:** The restoration of a previously broken relationship between people.
- **Unity:** When people are peacefully joined together in love even when there is disagreement.

## SCRIPTURE READING & REFLECTION WITH YOUR CHILD

Read the story of the Prodigal Son from *Luke 15:11-32*. Discuss how God is a loving Father who wants to welcome us home.

## WAYS TO PRAY WITH YOUR CHILD

- Pray for people who believe the lie of racism, that the Holy Spirit would open their eyes to the truth that all people are made in God's image.
- Pray that God would bring all Christians together in unity as one family in Jesus, and that God would remove all forms of division from our hearts.
- Has anyone in your life made your child feel bad because they're different from them? Ask God to help your child to forgive them and seek reconciliation with them. Help your child understand how to respond wisely when this person is cruel.
- Does your child know anyone who seems very different from them? Ask God how you and your child can reach out to show the love and kindness of Jesus to them.

Conclusion

# THE GOSPEL IN COLOR

Curtis A. Woods and Jarvis J. Williams

# CELEBRATING THE GOSPEL'S GOODNESS

**T**he gospel of Jesus Christ proclaims the best news possible, bringing with it the power to heal every painful rift and wound that the world has known. The sufficiency of Jesus' death for the many colorful sinners in the world is testified by the historical fact that God raised him up from the dead. Consequently, the gospel of the crucified, resurrected, and glorified Christ freely offers to every tongue, tribe, people, and nation God's solution for the problem of racism and ethnic division and his provision for reconciliation. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, the one and true living God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ becomes the God of Jews and Gentiles with many different colors of skin (*Romans 3:21-30*).

## SEEING THE STORY IN FULL COLOR

Imagine some friends invite you over to their house, and boast about how they have an incredible entertainment system. Sitting down, these friends show you their black-and-white television set, and ask if you are impressed with how modern it is. You would likely counsel your friends to get an upgrade, because they are not seeing the images on the TV as they were intended. A color screen gives a fuller picture, showing the image as it was meant to be seen.

That's what seeing the gospel in color is all about.

We want to see children grow up knowing this full-color gospel, that they would see every image-bearer through the biblical lens of love instead of a false cultural lens of racial superiority and inferiority. Our dream is that all Christian parents would raise their children to view different skin colors with appreciation, because the gospel has transformed their worldview and approach to life.

It's been our honor and pleasure to seek to share the complicated story of race and the power of gospel-centered racial reconciliation in a way that parents and children can

understand. Of course, it is ultimately up to each parent to shepherd their children's hearts through each section. Our great hope is that you find this book, and its companion *The Gospel in Color — For Kids*, to be helpful resources to go back to again and again, and that they help children learn to view God's glorious creation and salvation story in its radiant technicolor glory — the way it was meant to be seen.

## TEN EXHORTATIONS

We'd like to conclude with some exhortations for parents. These may feel challenging, but they are things we would prescribe for ourselves as well! And as we all look to our Lord and rely on the power of the Spirit, he can equip and empower us in all areas of life, including the area of racial reconciliation. Here are ten goals for all Christian parents:

1. **Admit** where we have fallen in our understanding of the gospel and race. We all need help in this area.
2. **Give** fellow Christians a chance to express their sorrow and disappointment about issues of race and racism in a non-threatening environment.
3. **Create** opportunities for our children to build friendships with people who have different skin colors and life experiences.

4. **Remind** our children that they are fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God, and that no color is better or worse than another color.
5. **Encourage** our children that Jesus doesn't just save us, but calls us to grow in following him. We have been saved to become disciples of Christ who properly love one another until our blessed Lord returns.
6. **Learn, practice, and help** our kids understand the whole gospel.
7. **Spend time** thinking critically and teaching our kids about race, racism, and racial injustice.
8. **Help** our kids understand how the gospel intersects with racial and ethnic diversity.
9. **Teach** our kids how to value and honor the beautiful colors of their skin as created by God, without seeing other colors of skin as inferior in any way.
10. **Teach** our kids to desire and celebrate the unification of all things and all colors in Christ.

## A FURTHER RESOURCE

Again, we realize these are challenging things to walk through with your children — which is sadly why some parents don't talk about them at all. But we all need to be intentional, leaning on the Spirit as we look for moments to walk our kids through these issues and seize teachable opportunities as they come up in the course of everyday life.

We hope you've found *The Gospel in Color* books to be helpful companions when walking through important conversations, and that they will prompt times of thought, prayer, and reflection with your child, equipping him or her to view the world through a robust gospel lens.

Thanks for going on this journey with us. May our good and gracious Lord draw his people ever closer, until the day we celebrate him together in the new creation.



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