



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT RACIAL PREJUDICE

Joe Gilmore, deceased

To be prejudice against others simply because they don't look like we look is sinful. The Bible does not say teach and baptize all races, but keep them in their place.

In Acts 10:34-35 Peter said, *“Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”*

Whether you believe it or not, we are all prejudice about some things. Some of us are prejudice as to where we live. We wouldn't live over here; we want to live over there. Many are prejudice about where to go to school. We are prejudice about what we eat. But let me tell you: to be prejudice against others simply because they don't look like we look is sinful. In other words, there are many people prejudice because some people's hair is straight; they are prejudice against other people because their hair is curly; prejudice against other people because their hair is kinky. If that is the reason you are prejudice, you're in trouble. That kind of prejudice is being sinful.

The congregation where I preach is integrated. We have two black song leaders, a red preacher, and the audience is made up of red, yellow, black, and white. So, when you come to our congregation, you get a lot of color. It's all there. This is by choice.

The Bible has a lot to say about racial prejudice. Naturally, the Bible is against it. The Bible condemns it. We look back in the Old Testament and learn about a minority group of

Hebrews. The Egyptians were the majority. According to this verse (Gen. 43:32), the Egyptians thought it would be an abomination to eat with the Hebrews. There wasn't just a pocket of hatred that existed solely among the Egyptians. There was a pocket of hatred with the Jews and that is true today. Sometimes we think white people may be prejudice against black people. On the other hand, there is just about as much prejudice of the black man throughout the world against the white man as there is the white man against the black. So, as the Egyptians were prejudice against the Hebrews, the Hebrews, in turn, were prejudice against the Gentiles.

Think about the time when the apostle Paul announced to the Jews that he was going to the Gentiles to preach the Gospel. Did the Jews like it? They certainly did not. In Acts 22:22 the Jews said, *“Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.”* Here we have the viewpoint of the Jews toward a Gentile, and anybody that was going to go preach to the Gentiles isn't fit to live upon the earth. Paul, being a Jew, and going to preach to the Gentiles, *“away with him;”* he shouldn't even be alive — fit to live upon the earth.

If you want to see God's love for all races of people, you want to read the entirety of the book of Jonah.

Jonah despised the people of Nineveh. He didn't want to go and preach to them, and yet, God told him to go and preach, *“yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown”* (Jonah 3:4). God didn't say if they'll repent in forty days I'll save them, but that is implied. Because they did repent, and God saved them. It is strange indeed, later on, they went wrong again. This time, they did not repent, and God destroyed the Ninevites (Nahum 1-3). But here is a wonderful lesson. Jonah didn't want to go and preach to the people of Nineveh. He didn't like these people; he despised them. And, then, of course, you remember how he was put out of the ship, and God prepared a great fish to swallow old Jonah. You know, when that old fish spewed Jonah out on dry ground, I believe he went in a run to preach to Nineveh. Don't you believe he did? These were people he had despised, that he didn't want to preach to; but now, he is going to Nineveh.

In Genesis 1:26, *“God said, Let us make man in our image.”* Which man did God make? Did he make black man? Did he make yellow man? Did he make white man? Which man did God make? What color of skin did Adam and Eve have? Did they have black skin? Did they have red skin?

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Racial Prejudice...



Editorial...

ARE YOU A RACIST?

Garland M. Robinson

According to Webster, racism is “poor treatment of or violence against people because of their race. The belief that some races of people are better than others.” “Any program or practice of racial discrimination, segregation, persecution, and domination, based on racialism.” The World Book Dictionary says: “The belief that a particular race, especially one’s own, is superior to other races.” “Discrimination or prejudice against a race or races based on this belief.”

Racism is wrong, no matter on whose part it may be. It is sinful regardless which race is guilty. No particular race has a monopoly on it, even though some think so. Racism is totally unchristian. Christians cannot be racist and be pleasing to God.

Racism is totally man-made. It is not a natural born instinct. No one is born a racist. Children are innocent — a clean slate. They are molded and shaped by those around them. Racism has to be taught, fostered, promoted and learned. And sadly, there are many who foster the ill feelings of hatred, distrust and racism. Generations grow up thinking it is normal and natural to hate those of a different ethnic background, neighborhood, culture, or skin color. Basically, the truth of the matter is: “love and respect in, love and respect out” — “suspicion and hatred in, suspicion and hatred out.”

Racism is a double-edged sword. It cuts both ways. To oppose those of a certain race because of the color of their skin (or for whatever reason), makes one a racist. But on the other hand, to champion and promote your own race to the exclusion of a different race is likewise racist. It is racist (respect of persons and prejudice) to NOT support, defend or vote for someone because of the color of their skin. BUT, it is also racist (respect of persons and prejudice) to support, defend or vote FOR someone because of the color of their skin. It works

both ways doesn’t it? It’s just as wrong either way. As Christians, we owe no man anything “...but to love one another” (Rom. 13:8).

I do not owe someone my vote because of the color of their skin. Therefore...

Should we NOT vote for a person because he is black? No

Should we vote FOR a person because he is black? No

Should we NOT vote for a person because he is white? No

Should we vote FOR a person because he is white? No

“Color” has absolutely NOTHING to do with voting, whether FOR or AGAINST. When it does, you’re prejudice, you’re racist. Don’t you agree? When I vote for someone because he is “one of us”, or I do not vote for someone because he is not “one of us”, I’ve abandoned the principle of righteousness.

Brother Ken Burleson made some excellent points on this topic. He pointed out that RACISM IS NOT:

- 1) Arresting an individual of another race,
- 2) Hiring someone based solely on qualifications,
- 3) Police searching a neighborhood of a particular race when the victim says the attackers were of that particular race,
- 4) Marrying someone of your own race.

On the other hand, RACISM IS:

- 1) Attacking someone because of their race,
- 2) Saying you will not vote for someone because of their race,
- 3) The government providing benefits for someone because of their race,
- 4) Allowing solicitation of funds for colleges and universities of one race but not of another race,
- 5) Having a pageant for one race but not allowed for another (pageants are wrong, period),
- 6) Being hired for a job based solely

on race,

- 7) Adding points to the Civil Service test for a certain race so they might get a job but not add points for another race.
- 8) Having a special Bible for one race and rejecting a Bible for all races,
- 9) When employers do not pay certain employees a fair salary because they are of another race.

While great strides have been made in an effort to curtail racism in this country, there are still many who keep fanning the flames. They have a vested interest in keeping racism alive. They utilize it for their own advantage for all it’s worth. They make their living by it. They love the lime-light and notoriety. They feel entitled to privileges (that are denied to others) because of the color of their skin. We’ve even heard some say, “so and so is too white,” or “so and so is not black enough.” What in the world do statements like this mean!? We know the answer, they say it in order to keep racism alive! They don’t want it to cease. These are dissenters who thrive at sowing discord, unrest and turmoil. The recent violence in Ferguson, Missouri, New York, Sanford, Florida, Cambridge, Massachusetts and other places prove this to be the case. Some, even in high places, lift up their voice to charge an incident as “racism” before they know the facts. Actually, many don’t care about the facts. They have to keep stirring the pot! Our blessed Lord and Savior has no part or lot with such hatred.

Every human being on the face of the earth is equal in God’s sight. The Lord made of “**one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth**” (Acts 17:26). We all came from the same place. What color where Adam and Eve? Doesn’t matter! No race is better than another race, nor is one race inferior to another race.

Jesus never condoned violence nor promoted anarchy. When the Pharisees sought council how they might destroy him (Matt. 12:14), he did not raise a band of supporters and march in the streets to defend his rights and promote his cause. He did not set fires and destroy property because of his outrage. When He learned about the plot against him, “...he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him,

and he healed them all; ¹⁶And charged them that they should not make him known: ¹⁷That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, ¹⁸Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. ¹⁹He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. ²⁰A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. ²¹And in his name shall the Gentiles trust” (Matt. 12:15-21; cf. Isa. 42:1-4).

This text says the Lord did not “strive” (v.19). That is, he did not engage in strife, dissension and turmoil. He did not “cry” (shout, clamor, uproar); nor did anyone hear his “voice in the streets” (v.19). He did not take to the streets and march in protest. He did not lift up his voice to arouse anger and frenzied emotion in the community in order to exploit his own purposes. He was gentle and peaceful. He would not even break a reed (plant stem) that was bruised (broken to shivers, crushed) and ready to die. He would not extinguish a smoking flax (the smoldering, expiring wick of a lamp). His mission was to help, not hurt — rescue, not harm. Those engaging in protests around the world and right here in the United States have never learned the example and lesson of our blessed Lord. Racism is a major factor in their course of mayhem and destruction. They feel they have a license to wreck and destroy.

What does the Bible teach on the subject of racism? Note these very clear and plain passages.

God is color-blind. So are faithful Christians. God respects no man’s person. It is so also with faithful Christians. Peter was made to understand that centuries long segregation of the Jews and Gentiles would no longer to be maintained in the Christian Age. At the house of Cornelius he announced, “...Of a truth I perceive that **God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him**” (Acts 10:34-35). The middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile (the races) was broken down by the Lord’s

death and the preaching of the Gospel (Eph. 2-3). “*Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain (two) one new man, [so] making peace*” (v.15).

James chapter two clearly teaches against prejudice. The Lord’s people must not make a distinction between the rich and the poor; and, by extension, the lowly and the admirable, those of a certain status and those of another, those of one skin color and those of a different skin color. To have respect of persons is a sin (James 2:9).

Salvation is freely available to all, “*For there is no respect of persons with God*” (Rom 2:11). “...*He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons*” (Col. 3:25). “*And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning [here] in fear*” (1 Peter 1:17; cf. Gal. 2:6).

The Lord teaches to love our neighbor — fellow human beings. “*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*” (Matt. 22:39). The “golden rule” takes care of racism! Jesus said, “*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets*” (Matt. 7:12). May we all treat people the way God would have us treat them. Every person of every race has a soul that will one day stand before God.

What color was Jesus? He was not white, nor was he black. The point is, what difference does it make? Why would we think in terms of his skin having to be of one color or another? He was the sinless, harmless, undefiled son of God (cf. Heb. 7:26). His blood was red just like ours. His blood was the price paid for the forgiveness of humanity’s sins (Eph. 1:7). He did not die for men of a certain color. He died for all men (Heb. 2:9).

We cannot condemn, look down upon, or refuse to fellowship anyone because of the color of their skin. But neither can we give someone a “pass” (ignore their sin) because of the color of their skin. One’s status in life, their position in the church, the community or politics, whether they have money or don’t have money, who

their parents or ancestors are, or who they think they are, makes no difference according to the Scriptures. Our task is to preach and teach the unsearchable riches of Christ to every human being in the world.

EVERY soul is precious! We are no better than anyone else, nor are we any less than anyone else.

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Racial Prejudice...

(Continued from page 17)

Did you ever find a passage that told you what color of skin Adam and Eve had? I haven't been able to find it. Did God make Adam and Eve black? Did he make them red? Did he make them yellow? A lot of people said, "No, he made them white." I'd like to see that passage of Scripture. Where is it?

My people (American Indians) believe that Adam and Eve were red. Some of my relatives and I went to a Creek and Seminole pow-wow. My Indian cousin, Netsie Gray, was directing the ceremony. After a while he came by and said, "What color was Adam and Eve?" I didn't bite. He said, "What does earth mean?" I said, "It means dirt." "What kind of dirt?" "Well, red dirt." You'll have a hard job convincing him that Adam and Eve were not red people.

God said, "*Let us make man in our image.*" Again, I ask, "What man?" It means all men. It means black, yellow, red, white — all men. God made all men in His image.

We come to the New Testament and find there is much to be said against racial prejudice. Did you know that our Lord broke the normal barrier of etiquette of His day? When he came to Jacob's Well he asked the Samaritan woman for water. She was startled. She didn't know what to say about it. But here is her answer in John 4:9, "*How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which is a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.*" Here was the despised race of the Samaritans, and Jesus converted the woman about "living water" at Jacob's Well.

Jesus had set his face to go to Jerusalem and sends some of his disciples ahead. One of the villages of Samaria rejected Jesus lodging and would not let him stay in their city. No, not for a night. Do you know what James and John did? These two disciples of the Lord wanted to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them. Here is racial prejudice on the side of the Samaritans. They didn't want Jesus in their town. Here is prejudice of the Jewish disciples against the Samaritans — "Shall we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" What

did Jesus say? "*You know not what manner of spirit you are of. The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them*" (Luke 9:51-56). Here is a lesson against racial prejudice. Prejudice on two sides, both of the Samaritans and of the Jews.

What a lesson the Lord gave when the hero of a story turns out to be a Samaritan. I wonder what those Jews thought who heard Christ make the hero a Samaritan? Jesus tells in Luke 10 about a certain man that goes down from Jerusalem to Jericho. If you leave Jerusalem and go anywhere, it's down, because Jerusalem is the highest point. It shows you the Bible is historically and geographically accurate. As this man went, he fell among thieves. They stripped him, robbed him, and left him half dead. A priest and a Levite passed by (both Jews). Along comes a Samaritan, a despised race of people. He sees the man and pours oil and wine in his wounds; puts him on his beast and takes him to an inn and tells the innkeeper, "*take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee*" (v.35). Now, the question: Which of the three was neighbor to him that fell among thieves? Answer: He that showed mercy. Now, hear the Lord, "*Go, thou, and do thou likewise.*" This means a man of any nation, any nationality, regardless of who he is, help him. Put him into a place of care and even spend what you have, be responsible for a man of another race. This is what Jesus our Lord taught.

We see another picture in John 17. The Lord prayed, "*Neither pray I for these (apostles) alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: That they all may be one*" (17:20-21). Didn't say black. Didn't say red. Didn't say yellow. Didn't say white. "*That they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.*" That's the black man, the red man, yellow man, white man. All one. Here is unity. The Lord didn't pray for "unity-in-diversity." Unity in diversity is contradictory. You might as well talk about an honest thief. Did you ever see a truthful liar? Unity in diversity — there's no such thing. Just mixing blacks and whites all together and let them walk around on the street — that's not unity.

Jesus wants all races of people to

be "one" like he and His Father are one. That's for all the black, the white, the red, and the yellow. The Lord teaches against division. It's wrong to be divided. Congregations have been slow to answer the Lord's prayer.

Racial prejudice was in the early church. When the Gospel was first preached in the city of Jerusalem, God intended for all nations of men to obey. The early church understood, or so they thought, that the church was to be a Jewish church and they went along for some years believing that. God had to correct that Jewish thinking. It took a miracle to do so. Peter received a vision, a vessel descending from heaven as a great sheet lifted by the four corners and let down to the earth. On it were all manner of four-footed beasts and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air. There came a voice, "*Arise, Peter; kill and eat.*" Peter said, "*Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.*" This is a scripture that you very seldom hear quoted. Brethren just leave this passage alone. They talk about the sheet, the vision, that Peter was told to kill and eat and his reply that he had never done so. But they leave out verse 28. What does this verse say? "*God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.*" Peter gives a summary of all it meant. Isn't that beautiful? Have you ever called a man common and unclean? If you have, you need to repent. That's sinful.

The doctrine Peter preached was safeguarded by the Holy Spirit, but the way he lived was in his own control. He walked as a hypocrite. He didn't leave all his prejudice. He carried it on. It continued for a while. In Galatians 2:11 Paul said, "*When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.*" Peter didn't get rid of his prejudice. He held some of it. Paul, a member of the Lord's family, set another member of the family straight. There ought to be some setting straight today of members of the family. Here was a man acting as a hypocrite. Peter knew better. God had told him to call no man common and unclean. And now, he was doing the very thing opposite of what he had learned in the lesson of the sheet. There was a problem of prejudice in the early church and it had to be dealt

with.

The apostle Paul clearly and totally showed the equality of all men in Ephesians 2:14. *“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.”* Verse 16, *“That he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”* Christ makes peace in one body. This shows the equality of all men. People were divided in the days of the Jews and the Gentiles (the common two classes of the day). He made both one, one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.

What can we, as the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13-16), do to eliminate prejudice in the world and communities in which we live?

1) *We can be a Christian.* It would be a good idea to practice Christianity. We claim to follow Christ. So, why not just be a Christian? If you are a Christian, you are going to love all men. If you are a Christian, you aren't going to cull-out any race of people. You are interested in one just as much as another. One soul is just as precious as another. So, try being a Christian.

2) *We can search our hearts.* It might surprise you what is in your heart. Have you ever really stopped to search out what is in your heart, whether you're prejudice or whether you're not prejudice? It will surprise you what you might find. Some people are more prejudice than others. In the house of God, all races belong. If you have a problem that some race does not belong, then, you don't belong. The problem is with you.

3) *We can apply and live by the second greatest commandment of the Bible: “thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself”* (Mark 12:31). Who is your neighbor? If you're a white man, your neighbor is a black man, a red man, a yellow man. That's who your neighbors are. It may be another white man, also.

4) *We can understand that Jesus died for all men.* He didn't die for the black man, just the black man or the red man. We are told that Jesus tasted of death for every man (Heb. 2:9). Do you believe that scripture? If you do, you know that Christ died for the black and the red and the yellow and the white. He died for all.

5) *We can realize that God has made of “one blood” all nations of men*

to dwell on all the face of the earth (Acts 17:26). Some have misunderstood this. Hitler believed that the German people had superior blood — better than anybody else's blood. That belief cost the lives of six million Jews. Verse 29 says *“we are the offspring of God.”* This is not talking about monkeys. They're telling us in schools that we have an ape ancestry. Today, we're seeing boys and girls running up and down our streets acting like apes. I see a lot of them that remind me of an ape. We don't have a monkey ancestry. We have a divine ancestry. This is true of all races of people. Human beings are not animals. I get tired of hearing people talk about man being an animal. Man is a creature made in the image of God.

6) *We can begin by teaching our children.* Children have no “hate pockets” in their hearts. They're born pure, born in the image of God, born without corruption. They are called innocents in the Bible. The only way they learn hatred is from their parents. There is only one Gospel. Jesus said, *“preach the gospel to every crea-*

ture, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). In the past it has worked something like this: Go preach the Gospel to the Indian and baptize him, and then after he is baptized, put him in his place. I've used the Indian rather than some other race because I think I can get by with that better. It has happened to the Indian. It has happened to the black man. It has happened to the yellow man. Go baptize him, but, after that, put him in his place. That is not taught in the Bible.

7) *Put yourself in the place of the victims of prejudice.* Think about it and you won't be prejudice. You will say with Jesus, *“The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely”* (Rev. 22:17).

Brother Gilmore was a Creek Indian by physical birth and a child of God by spiritual birth. He traveled far and wide preaching the Gospel for many years. —editor

BIBLE CROWNS

Bill Boyd

A crown is an emblem of distinction and honor. There are different kinds of crowns in the Bible. There is the diadem of the king, the miter of the priest, and the laurels of the champion. The cruelest crown of all was the crown of thorns placed in mockery and derision upon the head of Jesus.

There are also metaphorical crowns. Paul wrote of the pride and glory he had in his brethren calling them his *“joy and crown”* (Phil. 4:1) and *“crown of rejoicing”* (1 Thess. 2:19-20). When writing in anticipation of his reward for faithful service he spoke of receiving a *“crown of righteousness”* (2 Tim. 4:6-8). For the special service of faithful elders, Peter wrote of a *“crown of glory that fadeth not away”* (1 Peter 5:1-4). The laurel wreath of an athletic champion would perish, but Paul wrote of an *“incorruptible crown”* (1 Cor. 9:24-27). In Revelation 2:10 Jesus told John to write, *“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”*

Sometimes earthly crowns come with a heavy price. Shakespeare has King Henry the 4th saying, *“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.”* Most of us have neither expectation nor desire for an earthly crown; we would rather settle for a good ball cap. But we who are in the Lord's service and faithfully remain, anticipate the reward of these metaphorical spiritual crowns. But like earthy crowns, sometimes spiritual crowns come with a great price and we may be tempted to lay them aside. We should resist that temptation. Paul said in Romans 8:18, *“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”* Jesus instructed John to write, *“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown”* (Rev. 3:11).

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OVERCOMING RACIAL PREJUDICE

James. W. Boyd

We may be able to remove some injustices and unfair treatment through laws, but education in “the way of God” is the only way to remove racial prejudice.

Acts 10:9-15, “On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: ¹⁰And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, ¹¹And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: ¹²Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. ¹³And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. ¹⁴But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. ¹⁵And the voice [spake] unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, [that] call not thou common.”

Our subject is very controversial and it is unlikely all will agree with what is presented here. Even though I have tried to avoid personal opinions and concentrate on facts, Scripture, and the spirit of Christ, the nature of the subject makes it difficult to disassociate oneself from the emotion of it and be totally objective. The day in which we live contributes to this.

We assume from the start that racial prejudice is something undesirable, and where it exists it should be overcome. A sense of fairness, the opposite of prejudice, and Biblical teaching lead us to this conclusion. Prejudice is a judgment-in-advance without examination. It prejudges. It is not prejudice to approve or disapprove of something or someone after adequate examination has been made and the evidence speaks. Racial prejudice is one of the more volatile and explosive kinds of prejudice, surpassed possibly by religious prejudice. Racial prejudice is an attitude and action that is injurious and

negative toward a person because of his race or color of skin.

REALISM

Shall we be realistic? We have racial prejudice all around us in this world, and probably within us. This is true internationally, nationally, and even among those of us in the church. What is the Christ-like way to handle this problem? What does God expect of His people? Regardless of what the rest of the world says or does, or how anyone of us may think or act, what must we do to please God?

Christianity was born in the midst of intense racial prejudice. It is not a product of it, but it began where it was thick and violent. No people have been more guilty of racial prejudice than the Jews and Gentiles of the first century in the land of Palestine. Some exalted themselves for no other reason than they were of a certain race, and considered others as outcasts, dogs, or worse; and on racial grounds. This was taught, expressed, reflected in behavior, laws and in every other way.

GENERALIZATION

One prominent mark of prejudice is the willingness to generalize concerning other people. Let me illustrate. Even though every person is an individual, unlike any other, yet, in describing each other and forming attitudes toward each other we will generalize. Southerners are this way; northerners are that way. Who could dare say that all southerners are alike in everything, or all northerners are alike? It has been said: College people are snobbish. The rich are money hungry and think they are better than others. The poor are lazy. Elders are holding back the church.

Preachers try to run things. Women are overly emotional. Blacks are not responsible. These generalizations are found in some of every race.

Right here, let us consider a thought that is worth the entire study if we can learn it. What may be characteristic of even a majority of a certain group is not necessarily characteristic of every individual in that group. Whether we realize it or not, we are guilty of too many generalizations that only announces our personal prejudices.

CAUSES

What has caused our present day racial prejudice? Certainly the past has contributed to it. Prejudice is taught, handed down by word and example from generation to generation. Run your own experiment. Children of different races can and do play peacefully with each other. The difference in color of skin does not affect their conduct toward each other. But after a few years of traditions, customs and adult examples, they learn to distinguish on the basis of race. Whatever may be their race, they are usually taught that those of their race are “right” and all others are either “wrong” or certainly “less right.”

Behind much prejudice is the attempt to build up oneself at the expense of running the other fellow down. This occurs not only in race relations but in many areas of life. It reveals jealousy, envy, inferiority and a lack of maturity and self-esteem. When we are inclined to consider ourselves “somewhat” and better than others, we would do well to realize that there are many others, in any race, who can excel and exceed us in whatever we attempt. We really have no justification to consider ourselves special simply

because of our race.

CHRIST'S WILL

How does the will of Christ deal with this problem? Romans 10:12, *“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.”* Acts 10:34,35, *“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.”*

These passages teach that God considers every person a soul worth saving and the plan of salvation is open to all on the same terms. Jesus used the Samaritan as an example of a man who showed love toward his neighbor (Luke 10:25-37). John the Baptist warned that the day of dependence on fleshly ancestry to be acceptable to God would soon end. The long standing social traditions that alienated one from another would come crashing down. But they would have to fall through teaching, not through violence and revolution that usually set prejudice in cement for generations to come (Matt. 3:1-12).

The “crash programs” designed to remove prejudice usually make the removal of prejudice far more difficult. They may temporarily remove some of the effects of prejudice. But people must be converted in heart to the doctrine that God loves every soul, and it is the will of Christ that all be treated as each would want the other to treat him. This is the “golden rule” (Matt. 7:12).

Something that ought to help us become less prejudice is to remember the brotherhood of the human family. Acts 17:26, *“And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth....”* The fact that God created Adam and Eve, from whom we have come, verifies this relationship. Not only is there Biblical evidence to this brotherhood of man physically, but scientific evidence as well. We do not propose to explain where the different races originated because we are not informed. *“But foolish and unlearned (untaught, JWB) questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife”* (2 Tim. 2:23). If we never know why there are such varieties among the

human family, our ignorance of that does not discount the fact that we are of one blood and ultimate origin.

PROBLEMS ATOP PROBLEMS

We often create problems trying to remove problems. This is true in dealing with racial prejudice. Impatience is a problem, and there is good reason why impatience exists. Hypocrisy and self-righteousness always has aggravated the problem. Some years ago a president of a northern university denounced the race riots at the University of Georgia, and they were reprehensible. But unfair discriminations existed on his own campus that had been suppressed through intimidation and there were no riots. Racial prejudice will not likely be dissolved, even eased, until each one considers himself. No one section, no one race, no one element of society has a monopoly on racial prejudice. Some, while denouncing it, exploit it for their own advancements as far as they can. Everything from the raised fist and the shouts of “Black Power” to the “Ku Klux Klan” is offered as evidence. We would again insist, though it demands patience, education in the way of God is the only way to remove racial prejudice. We may be able to remove some injustices and unfair treatment through laws, demonstrations, threats and such like (this has been prominent in race relationships in our time), but we shall never remove the taproot of one of humanities evils, racial prejudice, until there is greater conformity to the will of Christ.

NECESSARY MIXING?

Should we advocate an across-the-board mixing of all races? Is this what God requires? We think not, nor can we find the Bible calls for that. We have good reason to be proud of the race to which we belong and so do others of other races. All men have this right. But can we justify some being advanced over others just because of race? Can we exonerate a system of justice that is unequal? Can we “hate” one color but “love” another? It is not really a question of mixing the races. The races have been intermingled through the ages of history. The question is, To what

extent are they to be intermingled in keeping with God's will? What does His law teach us?

While it has proven expedient in many instances for there to be congregations predominantly one color or the other, to contend that this is a “must” is wrong. If we are to have segregated congregations, let it be because it may be easier to reach the lost with this arrangement, not because of racial antagonism or because we think God requires it. Let us be honest about it!

INTERMARRIAGE

Inevitably comes the question, “Do you favor intermarriage of the races?” Both the answer and the reason for the answer is important. It is not favored. We do not doubt that with more racial intermingling there will be more such marriages. Wisdom, experience, good judgment and the vast host of problems that would accompany such marriages in our society place unwarranted strains on such marriages that they would be more likely to fall, dissolve, or provide unhappiness possibly for generations. We would also not encourage a rich girl to marry a poor boy, or an educated man to marry an illiterate woman, or even people with extremely different customs. We do not favor such things on the grounds of wisdom and expedience. But have we the Scripture at hand that teaches such marriages are necessarily sinful, even interracial marriages? If so, where is the passage? Produce it! While it may be unwise to enter into a marriage with so many strikes against it from the start, where does the Bible teach it is a sin?

We should teach our children to seek those with whom they have an extensive compatibility, especially to marry a Christian. Some are so warped about race that they would never allow a marriage outside of their own race, but seem to care little about marriages to those who will take their souls to hell.

SPIRITUALLY BRETHERN

Galatians 3:28, *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”* Spiritually, we become united

in Christ. When a Jew is baptized he does not cease to be of Jewish ancestry and lineage. When a male is baptized he does not cease to be male. When a black, white, someone big or little, rich or poor obeys the Gospel, these things do not change. But our spiritual relationship with each other changes. Our attitude toward each other changes. We can recognize these differences because they still exist, but these differences will not separate us spiritually, but will make us brothers who are considerate of our differences and treat one another kindly.

I once baptized a black man. He went down black and came up black, just like I went down white and came up white when I was baptized. But if we have the right spirit, we are brothers in Christ, and are determined that such differences (that we both recognize exist) shall not separate our fellowship in the Lord. We will treat each other fairly, considerately, helping each other get to heaven. Is not that the way it should be?

THE RIGHT OF CHOICE

Christians have the right and privilege of choosing their companions, closest friends, daily associations, without being racially prejudiced, and we should grant that right to everyone without branding it prejudice. We make discriminations among those of our own race in many matters. Certainly it is not wrong to make certain distinctions elsewhere. All discrimination is not evil. But unfair, unjust, unkind, injurious discrimination is evil. The latter is motivated by racial prejudice and even hatred.

Many stand guilty as charged in this matter. Who is guiltless? Because the guilt is so widespread, the problem is hard to solve. Many good people in other areas of life have stumbled here. Peter and Barnabas did, and Paul rebuked them for it (Gal. 2:11-12). It has hindered our work among many elements of human beings. It has soured our attitude toward many good people. It has caused the church and individual Christians great embarrassment because of our inconsistency and guilt.

MATTHEW 7:12

Can't you almost hear the wail that the solution offered is to simplistic? But the matter goes back to the teaching of Christ and our attitude toward others. The "golden rule" is still a good place to start. When God considers every soul worth the price of His Son's blood, who am I or you to declare that all people of a certain class, element or group regarding race are this way, that way, some other way, without taking the individual into consideration. We might ask ourselves if Jesus sought to save those who were not His fleshly race? Should we do as He did? Did He persecute and mistreat anyone? Why should we? Are all blacks just alike? Are all Jews just alike? Are all whites just alike? Are we not individual souls before God, and deserve to be looked upon that way?

We both should study the matter in fairness and in the light of truth. But what is said here would go a long way toward making the world a better place if we would apply these things. As I write this, I think the best place for me to start is with me. Will you start with you?

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