

TOUGH QUESTIONS

and Straight Answers by Pastor Joe K. Taylor

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All Scriptures are printed verbatim with translations noted. • Pastor Joe's email is Joe@southreno.com.

Here's the **TOUGH QUESTION:**

What does the Bible say about

Racism

Here's the **STRAIGHT ANSWER:**

1. The Short Answer:

God hates it!

No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love.”

- Nelson Mandela

NOTICE: The focus on this project deals primarily with racism and African Americans. Pastor Joe fully realizes that many other groups (ie., Native Americans, Asian Americans, Jewish Americans, Latin American's, etc.) are targets of racism, as well. Pastor Joe has chosen to focus research presented here to educate and respond to the current race wars enveloping our country at this time (circa early June 2020).

The terms "African American(s)" and "Black(s)" are meant to be synonymous and not used in any insulting way, unless quoted by another source, as pejorative. That offensive source will be annotated and used only as illustrative material to speak against racism. The term "negro" will be used once to specify a certain genre of music in the black culture.

Major sources are documented after heading titles.

2. A Brief History of Racism in America

Primary Sources: • Smithsonianmag.com's "The History of Racism in America" (Web) • Washington Post's "Racism in America" (Web) • History Channel's "Black Milestones: Timeline" (Web) • *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race*, edited by Jesmyn Ward (Book), among other sources.

Understanding the history of racism is vital—please, carefully read this section.

1400s • Slavery roots on this continent

The date and the story of the enslaved Africans have become symbolic of slavery's roots, despite captive and free Africans likely being present in the Americas in the 1400s and as early as 1526 in the region that would become the United States. Soon their "freedom" would end.

1619 • Slavery comes to North America

To satisfy the labor needs of the rapidly growing North American colonies, white European settlers turned in the early 17th century from indentured servants (mostly poorer Europeans) to a cheaper, more plentiful labor source: enslaved Africans. It is well documented that European settlers did believe their "race" was superior.

After 1619, when a Dutch ship brought 20 Africans ashore at the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia, slavery spread quickly through the American colonies. Though it is impossible to give accurate figures, some historians have estimated that 6 to 7 million enslaved people were imported to the New World during the 18th century alone, depriving the African continent of its most valuable resource—its healthiest and ablest men and women.

1765-1783 • American Revolution

After the American Revolution, many colonists (particularly in the North, where slavery was relatively unimportant to the economy) began to link the oppression of enslaved Africans to their own oppression by the British. Many northern states had abolished slavery by the end of the 18th century, but the institution was absolutely vital to the South, where black people constituted a large minority of the population and the economy relied on the production of crops like tobacco and cotton.

1793 • Rise of the Cotton Industry

In the years immediately following the Revolutionary War, the rural South—the region where slavery had taken the strongest hold in North America—faced an economic crisis. The soil used to grow tobacco, then the leading cash crop, was exhausted, while products such as rice and other crops failed to generate much profit. As a result, the price of enslaved people was dropping, and the continued growth of slavery seemed in doubt. Around the same time, the mechanization of spinning and weaving had revolutionized the textile industry in England, and the demand for American cotton soon became insatiable. In 1793, a young Yankee schoolteacher named **Eli Whitney** came up with a solution to the problem: The cotton gin, a simple mechanized device that efficiently removed the seeds, could be hand-powered or, on a large scale, harnessed to a horse or powered by water. The cotton gin was widely copied, and within a few years the South would transition from a dependence on the cultivation of tobacco to that of cotton. The rise in the cotton industry led to an increase of "slaves" to pick the cotton.

1808 • Congress outlawed the import of new 'enslaved people'

Congress outlawed the import of new 'enslaved people' in 1808, but the enslaved population in the U.S. nearly tripled over the next 50 years, and by 1860 it had reached nearly 4 million, with more than half living in the cotton-producing states of the South.

1831 • Nat Turner's Revolt

In August 1831, **Nat Turner** struck fear into the hearts of white Southerners by leading the only effective slave rebellion in U.S. history. Born on a small plantation in Southampton County, Virginia, Turner inherited a passionate hatred of slavery from his African-born mother and came to see himself as anointed by God to lead his people out of bondage. Turner and a small band of followers killed his owners, **the Travis family**, and set off toward the small town of Jerusalem, where they planned to capture an armory and gather more recruits. The group, which eventually numbered around 75 black people, killed some 60 white people in two days before armed

resistance from local white people and the arrival of state militia forces overwhelmed them just outside Jerusalem. Some 100 enslaved people, including innocent bystanders, lost their lives in the struggle. Turner escaped and spent six weeks on the run before he was captured, tried and hanged.



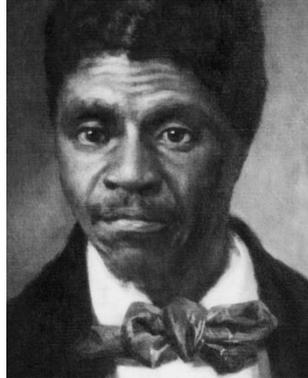
1831 • Abolitionism and the Underground Railroad

The early abolition movement in North America was fueled both by slaves' efforts to liberate themselves and by groups of white settlers, such as the **Quakers**, who opposed slavery on religious or moral grounds. Antislavery northerners—many of them free black people—had begun helping enslaved people escape from southern plantations to the North via a loose network of safe houses as early as the 1780s called **the Underground Railroad**—a bold rescue ministry lead by **Harriet Tubman**.

I grew up like a neglected weed—ignorant of liberty, having no experience of it. Once I tasted it...I reasoned in my mind, there were only two things I had a right to, liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other...I committed the rest of my life seeing that others would cross the line out....into freedom... out of slavery. - Harriet Tubman.

1857 • Dred Scott Case

Dred Scott was an enslaved African American man in the United States who unsuccessfully sued for his freedom and that of his wife and their two daughters in this legal case. On March 6, 1857, the **U.S. Supreme Court** handed down its decision in **Scott v. Sanford**, delivering a resounding victory to southern supporters of slavery and arousing the ire of northern abolitionists. The verdict effectively declared the Missouri Compromise (a 1820 declaration making slavery illegal in Missouri, Wisconsin and Illinois) unconstitutional, ruling that all territories were open to slavery and could exclude it only when they became states. While much of the South rejoiced, seeing the verdict as a clear victory, antislavery northerners were furious—giving rise to a preverbal 'sleeping giant.'



1859 • John Brown's Raid

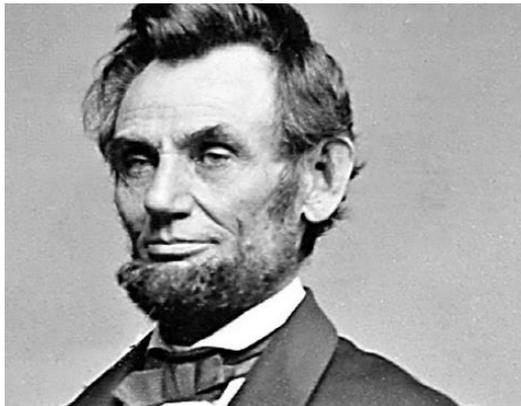
On the night of October 16, 1859, John Brown led a small band of less than 50 men in a raid against the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Their aim was to capture enough ammunition to lead a large operation against Virginia's slaveholders. Brown's men, including several black people, captured and held the arsenal until federal and state governments sent troops and were able to overpower them. **John Brown** was hanged on December 2, 1859. His trial riveted the nation, and he emerged as an eloquent voice against the injustice of slavery and a martyr to the abolitionist cause.

1860 • Abraham Lincoln becomes president

John Brown's courage turned thousands of previously indifferent northerners against slavery.

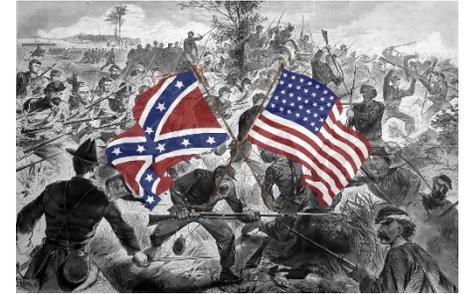
His dramatic actions convinced slave owners in the South, beyond doubt, that abolitionists would go to any lengths to destroy the institution of slavery. Rumors spread of other planned insurrections, and the South reverted to a semi-war status. Upon the election of the anti-slavery

Republican Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860, the southern states would begin severing ties with the Union, sparking the bloodiest conflict in American history.



1861 • The Civil War

In the spring of 1861, the bitter sectional conflicts that had been intensifying between **North and South** over the course of four decades erupted into civil war, with 11 southern states seceding from the Union and forming **The Confederate States of America**. **The Civil War**, at its outset, was not a war to abolish slavery. Lincoln sought first and foremost to preserve the Union, but within a year, *slavery* became the operative issue.



1863 • Emancipation Proclamation

Five days after the bloody Union victory at Antietam in September 1862, **President Lincoln** issued a *preliminary* emancipation (the freeing of slaves); on January 1, 1863, he made the **Emancipation Proclamation** official that enslaved people within any State, or designated part of a State in rebellion, "shall be then...forever free." Lincoln justified his decision as a wartime measure, and as such he did not go so far as to free enslaved people in the border states loyal to the Union, an omission that angered many abolitionists.

By freeing some 3 million enslaved people in the rebel states, the **Emancipation Proclamation** deprived the Confederacy of the bulk of its labor forces and put international public opinion strongly on the Union side. Some 186,000 black soldiers would join the Union Army by the time the war ended in 1865, 38,000 lost their lives. The total number of dead at war's end was 620,000 (out of a population of some 35 million), making it the costliest military conflict in American history.

1865 • Post-slavery South

Though the Union victory in the Civil War gave some 4 million enslaved people their freedom, significant challenges awaited during the **Reconstruction** period. **The 13th Amendment**, adopted late in 1865, officially abolished slavery, but the question of freed black peoples' status in the post-war South remained unclear. As white southerners gradually reestablished civil authority in the former Confederate states in 1865 and 1866, they enacted a series of laws known as the *black codes*, which were designed to restrict freed black peoples' activity and ensure their availability as a labor force.

The following year, **The 14th Amendment** broadened the definition of citizenship, granting—"equal protection" of the Constitution to people who had been enslaved. Congress required southern states to ratify the 14th Amendment before they could rejoin the Union.

The 15th Amendment, adopted in 1870, guaranteed that a citizen's right to vote would not be denied—"...on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

1870 • Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

During Reconstruction, black Americans won election to southern state governments and even to the U.S. Congress. Their growing influence greatly dismayed many white southerners, who felt control slipping ever further away from them. The *white protective societies* that arose during this period—the largest of which was the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)—sought to disenfranchise black voters by using voter fraud and intimidation as well as more extreme violence.



1896 • “Separate but equal”

On May 18, 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its verdict in **Plessy v. Ferguson**, a case that represented the first major test of the meaning of the 14th Amendment’s provision of full and equal citizenship to African Americans. By an 8–1 majority, the Supreme Court upheld a Louisiana law that required the segregation of passengers on railroad cars.

Southern state legislatures began enacting the first segregation laws, known as the “**Jim Crow**” laws. Taken from a much-copied minstrel routine written by a white actor who performed often in blackface, the name “Jim Crow” came to serve as a general derogatory term for African Americans in the post-Reconstruction South. By 1885, most southern states had laws requiring separate schools for black and white students, and by 1900, “persons of color” were required to be separated from white people in railroad cars and depots, hotels, theaters, restaurants, barber shops and other establishments.

Plessy v. Ferguson stood as the overriding judicial precedent in civil rights cases until 1954, when it was reversed by the Court’s verdict in **Brown v. Board of Education**.



1909 • NAACP is founded

First established in Chicago, the NAACP had expanded to more than 400 locations by 1921. One of its earliest programs was a crusade against lynching and other lawless acts against black people.

1920 • Harlem Renaissance is founded

In the 1920s, the great migration of black Americans from the rural South to the urban North sparked an African American cultural renaissance that took its name from the New York City neighborhood of Harlem, but became a widespread movement in cities throughout the North and West. The Harlem Renaissance published books, produced music, pushed political candidates and became an advocate of black equal rights.

1941 • African American’s in WWII

During World War II, many African Americans were ready to fight for what **President Franklin D. Roosevelt** called the “**Four Freedoms**”— freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear—even while they themselves lacked those freedoms at home.

More than 3 million black Americans would register for service during the war, with some 500,000 seeing action overseas. According to War Department policy, enlisted black and white people were organized into separate units. Frustrated black servicemen were forced to combat racism even as they sought to further U.S. war aims; this became known as the “**Double V**” strategy, for the two victories they sought to win.

The war’s first African American hero emerged from the attack on Pearl Harbor, when **Dorie Miller**, a young Navy steward on the **U.S.S. West Virginia**, carried white wounded crewmembers to safety and manned a machine gun post, shooting down several Japanese planes. In the spring of 1943, graduates of the first all-black military aviation program, created at the **Tuskegee Institute in 1941**, headed to North Africa as the **99th Pursuit Squadron**. Their



commander, **Captain Benjamin O. Davis Jr.**, later became the first African American general. **The renowned Tuskegee Airmen** saw combat against German and Italian troops, flew more than 3,000 missions, and served as a great source of pride for many black Americans.

In **July 1948**, **President Harry S. Truman** finally **integrated the U.S. Armed Forces** under an executive order mandating that “there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.”

1954 • Brown v. Board of Education

On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court delivered its verdict in **Brown v. Board of Education**, ruling unanimously that racial segregation in public schools violated the 14th Amendment’s mandate of equal protection of the laws of the U.S. Constitution to any person within its jurisdiction. The landmark verdict reversed the “separate but equal” doctrine that the Court had established with Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), in which it determined that equal protection was not violated as long as reasonably equal conditions were provided to both groups.

1955 • Emmett Till

In August 1955, a 14-year-old black boy from Chicago named **Emmett Till** had recently arrived in Money, Mississippi to visit relatives. While in a grocery store, he allegedly whistled and made a flirtatious remark to the white woman behind the counter, violating the strict racial codes of the Jim Crow South. Three days later, two white men—the woman’s husband, **Roy Bryant**, and his half-brother, **J.W. Milam**—dragged Till from his great uncle’s house in the middle of the night. After beating the boy, they shot him to death and threw his body in the Tallahatchie River. The two men confessed to kidnapping Till but were acquitted of murder charges by an all-white, all-male jury after barely an hour of deliberations.



Till’s mother held an open-casket funeral for her son in Chicago, hoping to bring public attention to the brutal murder. Thousands of mourners attended, and **Jet Magazine** published a photo of the boy’s corpse.

International outrage over the crime and the verdict helped fuel the civil rights movement: just three months after Emmett Till’s body was found, and a month after a Mississippi grand jury refused to indict Milam and Bryant on kidnapping charges, a **city-wide bus boycott** in Montgomery, Alabama would begin the movement in earnest.

1955 • Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

On December 1, 1955, an African American woman named **Rosa Parks** was riding a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama when the driver told her to give up her seat to a white man. Parks refused and was arrested for violating the city’s racial segregation ordinances, which mandated that black passengers sit in the back of public buses and give up their seats for white riders if the front seats were full. Parks, a 42-year-old seamstress, was also the secretary of the

Montgomery chapter of the NAACP. As she later explained:

I had been pushed as far as I could stand to be pushed. I had decided that I would have to know once and for all what rights I had as a human being and a citizen.

– Rosa Parks



Four days after Parks' arrest, an activist organization called the **Montgomery Improvement Association**—led by a young pastor named **Martin Luther King, Jr.**—spearheaded a boycott of the city's municipal bus company. Because African Americans made up some 70 percent of the bus company's riders at the time, and the great majority of Montgomery's black citizens supported the bus boycott, its impact was immediate.



About 90 participants in the **Montgomery Bus Boycott**, including King, were indicted under a law forbidding conspiracy to obstruct the operation of a business. Found guilty, King immediately appealed the decision. Meanwhile, the boycott stretched on for more than a year, and the bus company struggled to avoid bankruptcy. On November 13, 1956, in **Browder v. Gayle**, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a lower court's decision declaring the bus company's segregation seating policy unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. King, called off the boycott on December 20, and **Rosa Parks**—known as the “mother of the civil rights movement”—would be one of the first to ride the newly desegregated buses.

1957 • Central High School Integrated

Although the Supreme Court declared segregation of public schools illegal in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the decision was extremely difficult to enforce, as 11 southern states enacted resolutions interfering with, nullifying or protesting school desegregation. In Arkansas, Governor Orval Faubus made resistance to desegregation a central part of his successful 1956 reelection campaign. The following September, after a federal court ordered the desegregation of Central High School, located in the state capital of Little Rock, Faubus called out the Arkansas National Guard to prevent nine African American students from entering the school. He was later forced to call off the guard, and in the tense standoff that followed, TV cameras captured footage of white mobs converging on the “**Little Rock Nine**” outside the high school. For millions of viewers throughout the country, the unforgettable images provided a vivid contrast between the angry forces of white supremacy and the quiet, dignified resistance of the African American students.

After an appeal by the local congressman and mayor of Little Rock to stop the violence, President Dwight D. Eisenhower federalized the state's National Guard and sent 1,000



members of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne division to enforce the integration of Central High School. The nine black students entered the school under heavily armed guard, marking the first time since Reconstruction that federal troops had provided protection for black Americans against racial violence. Not done fighting, Faubus closed all of Little Rock's high schools in the fall of 1958 rather than permit integration. A federal court struck down this act, and four of the nine students returned, under police protection, after the schools were reopened in 1959.

1963 • S.N.C.C. and C.O.R.E.

On February 1, 1960, four black students sat down at a Woolworths counter to order a soda. They were asked to leave but did not. They came back the next day—with the media. Similar “protests” happened in Woolworths nationwide. From that, the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)** was founded in Raleigh, North Carolina in April 1960. Over the next few years, SNCC broadened its influence, organizing so-called “**Freedom Rides**” through the South in 1961 and the **historic March on Washington in 1963**; it also joined the NAACP in pushing for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Later, SNCC would mount an organized **resistance to the Vietnam War**. The **Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)**, another back group, sought to end discrimination and improve race relations through direct action in the courts. They would set up situations where blacks would be arrested, and court cases would be decided on. Cases centered around integration into all white colleges, including Ole Miss, reaction to black church burnings and public access to all restrooms, water fountains and similar public venues.

1963 • “I have a dream speech” by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On August 28, 1963, some 250,000 people both black and white; young and old—participated in the **March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom**, the largest demonstration in the history of the nation's capital and the most significant display of the civil rights movement's growing strength. After marching from the Washington Monument, the demonstrators gathered near the Lincoln Memorial, where a number of civil rights leaders addressed the crowd, calling for voting rights, equal employment opportunities for black Americans and an end to racial segregation. The last leader to appear was the **Baptist preacher, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), who spoke eloquently of the struggle facing black Americans and the need for continued action and nonviolent resistance. In his speech, Dr. King, expressing his faith that one day white and black people would stand together as equals, and there would be harmony between the races, stated:

I have a dream....I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

—The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King

At conclusion of his now famous speech, King quoted an old Negro spiritual: “Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!” King's speech served as a defining moment for the civil rights movement, and he soon emerged as its most prominent figure.



1964 • Civil Rights Acts of 1964

At its most basic level, the act gave the federal government more power to protect citizens against discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex or national origin. It mandated the desegregation of most public accommodations, including lunch counters, bus depots, parks and swimming pools, and established the **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** to ensure equal treatment of minorities in the workplace. The act also guaranteed equal voting rights by removing biased registration requirements and procedures, and authorized the **U.S. Office of Education** to provide aid to assist with school desegregation. In a televised ceremony on July 2, 1964, **President Lyndon B. Johnson** signed the **Civil Rights Act** into law using 75 pens; he presented one of them to King, who counted it among his most prized possessions. (Note: **President John F. Kennedy** made “civil rights” a centerpiece of his presidential campaign. He was in Dallas, Texas to speak on the issue when he was assassinated on November 22, 1963. President Johnson carried on his President Johnson’s dream forward. President Johnson was shamed by both democrats and republicans for continuing to act on civil rights.)

1964 • “Mississippi Burning” Murders

In the summer of 1964, civil rights organizations including the **Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)** urged white students from the North to travel to Mississippi, where they helped register black voters and build schools for black children. The organizations believed the participation of white students in the so-called “**Freedom Summer**” would bring increased visibility to their efforts. The summer had barely begun, however, when three volunteers—Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, both white New Yorkers, and James Chaney, a black Mississippian—disappeared on their way back from investigating the burning of an African American church by the Ku Klux Klan. After a massive **FBI investigation (code-named “Mississippi Burning”)** their bodies were discovered on August 4 buried in an earthen dam near Philadelphia, in Neshoba County, Mississippi.

Although the culprits in the case—white supremacists who included the county’s deputy sheriff—were soon identified and eventually arrested—following a public outcry as to the delay. In October 1967, an all-white jury found seven of the defendants guilty and acquitted the other nine. Though the verdict was hailed as a major civil rights victory—it was the first time anyone in Mississippi had been convicted for a crime against a civil rights worker—the judge in the case gave out relatively light sentences, and none of the convicted men served more than six years behind bars.

1965 • Selma to Montgomery March

In early 1965, Martin Luther King Jr.’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) made **Selma, Alabama**, the focus of its efforts to register black voters in the South. **Alabama’s governor, George Wallace**, was a notorious opponent of desegregation, and the local county sheriff had led a steadfast opposition to black voter registration drives: Only 2 percent of Selma’s eligible black voters had managed to register. In February, an Alabama state trooper shot a young African American demonstrator in nearby Marion, and the SCLC announced a massive protest march from Selma to the state capital in Montgomery.

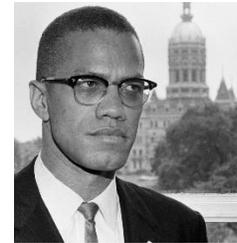


On March 7, 600 marchers got as far as the **Edmund Pettis Bridge** outside Selma when they were attacked by state troopers wielding whips, nightsticks and tear gas. The brutal scene was captured on television, enraging many Americans and drawing civil rights and religious leaders of all faiths to Selma in protest. Then On March 21, after a U.S. district court

ordered Alabama to permit the Selma–Montgomery march, some 2,000 marchers set out on the three-day journey, this time protected by U.S. Army troops and Alabama National Guard forces under federal control. “No tide of racism can stop us,” King proclaimed from the steps of the state capitol building, addressing the nearly 50,000 supporters—black and white—who met the marchers in Montgomery.

1965 • Malcom X assassinated

In 1952, the former **Malcolm Little** was released from prison after serving six years on a robbery charge; while incarcerated, he had joined the Nation of Islam (NOI, commonly known as the Black Muslims), given up drinking and drugs and replaced his surname with an **X to signify his rejection of his “slave” name**. Charismatic and eloquent, **Malcolm X** soon became an influential leader of the NOI, which combined Islam with black nationalism and sought to encourage disadvantaged young black people searching for confidence in segregated America.



On February 21, 1965, during a speaking engagement in Harlem, three members of the NOI rushed the stage and shot Malcolm some 15 times at close range. After Malcolm’s death, his bestselling book, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* popularized his ideas, particularly among black youth, and laid the foundation for the Black Power movement of the late 1960s and 1970s.

His death also led to other groups like **The Black Panthers** and societies like the **Black Power** movement and civil legislative pieces like **Affirmation Action**.

1965 • Voting Rights Acts of 1965

Less than a week after the Selma-to–Montgomery marchers were beaten and bloodied by Alabama authorities. In March 1965, President Lyndon Johnson addressed a joint session of Congress, calling for federal legislation to ensure protection of the voting rights of African Americans. The result was the **Voting Rights Act**, which Congress passed in August 1965.

1968 • Martin Luther King assassinated

On April 4, 1968, the world was stunned and saddened by the news that the civil rights activist and **Nobel Peace Prize winner Martin Luther King Jr.** had been shot and killed on the balcony of a motel in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had gone to support a sanitation workers’ strike. King’s death opened a huge rift between white and black Americans, as many black people saw the killing as a rejection of their vigorous pursuit of equality through the nonviolent resistance he had championed. In more than 100 cities, several days of riots, burning and looting followed his death.



The accused killer, a white man named James Earl Ray. He was captured and tried immediately; he entered a guilty plea and was sentenced to 99 years in prison; no testimony was heard.

1992 • Los Angeles Riots

In March 1991, officers with the California Highway Patrol attempted to pull an African American man named **Rodney King** over for speeding on a Los Angeles freeway. King, who was on probation for robbery and had been drinking, led them on a high-speed chase, and by the time the patrolmen caught up to his car, several officers of the Los Angeles Police Department were on the scene. After King allegedly resisted arrest and threatened them, four LAPD officers shot him with a TASER gun and severely beat him.

Caught on videotape by an onlooker and broadcast around the world, the beating inspired widespread outrage in the city's African American community, who had long condemned the racial profiling and abuse its members suffered at the hands of the police force. Many demanded that the unpopular L.A. police chief, Daryl Gates, be fired and that the four officers be brought to justice for their use of excessive force. The King case was eventually moved from a predominately black community and tried in the mostly white suburb of Simi Valley, and in April 1992. **The jury found the officers not guilty.**



Rage over the verdict sparked the four days of the L.A. riots, beginning in the mostly black South Central neighborhood. By the time the riots subsided, some 55 people were dead, more than 2,300 injured, and more than 1,000 buildings had been burned. Authorities later estimated the total damage at around **\$1 billion**. The next year, two of the four LAPD officers involved in the beating were retried and convicted in a federal court for violating King's civil rights; he eventually received \$3.8 million from the city in a settlement.

1995 • Million Man March

In October 1995, hundreds of thousands of black men gathered in Washington, D.C. for the **Million Man March**, one of the largest demonstrations of its kind in the capital's history. Its organizer, Minister Louis Farrakhan, had called for "a million sober, disciplined, committed, dedicated, inspired black men to meet in Washington on a day of atonement." Farrakhan, who had asserted control over the **Nation of Islam** (commonly known as the **Black Muslims**) in the late 1970s and reasserted its original principles of black separatism, may have been an incendiary figure, but the idea behind the **Million Man March** was one most black—and many white—people could embrace.

Rise of black heroes.

From the 1970s on, many African Americans became great influencers: **Shirley Chisholm**, who ran for president in 1972; **Rev. Jessie Jackson** who galvanized black voters beginning in 1984, **Oprah Winfrey** who launched a syndicated talk show in 1986; **Colin Powell** who became secretary of State in 2001 and **President Barack Obama**, who became the 44th president of the United States. There were many other politicians, academicians and athletes—all "hero's" to the Black community.

Black Lives Movement

The term "**black lives matter**" (BLM) was first used by organizer **Alicia Garza** in a **July 2013** Facebook post in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman, a Florida man who shot and killed unarmed 17-year-old **Trayvon Martin** on February 26, 2012. Martin's death set off nationwide protests like the **Million Hoodie March**.

In 2013, **Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi** formed the **Black Lives Matter Network** with the mission to "eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes."

The hashtag **#BlackLivesMatter** first appeared on **Twitter** on July 13, 2013 and spread widely as high-profile cases involving the deaths of black civilians provoked renewed outrage.

A series of deaths of black Americans continued to spark outrage and protests, including **Eric Garner** in New York City, **Michael Brown** in Ferguson, Missouri, **Tamir Rice** in Cleveland Ohio and **Freddie Gray** in Baltimore, Maryland.

The Black Lives Matter movement gained renewed attention on September 25, 2016, when **San Francisco 49ers players Eric Reid, Eli Harold, and quarterback Colin Kaepernick kneeled during the national anthem** before the game against the Seattle Seahawks to draw attention to recent acts of police brutality. Dozens of other players in the NFL and beyond followed suit.

According **www.m4bl.org**, the following is a broad overview their policy platforms:

The following are **direct quotes** from the "Black Life Matters" website.

- "End the war on black people."
- "End all jails, prisons, and immigration detention."
- "End the death penalty."
- "End the war of drugs."
- "End the war on black trans, queer, gender nonconforming and intersex people."
- "End militarization of law enforcement."
- "End the use of past criminal history for blacks."
- "End legal inequality via reparations (financially) to blacks for their suffrage."
- "End economic inequality by providing economic justness (payouts)...including stipends for housing, food and health insurance for all black people."

As [BLM] abolitionist: We believe that prisons, police and all other institutions that inflict violence on Black people must be abolished and replaced by institutions that value and affirm the flourishing of Black lives. – BLM (www.M4BL.org)

The movement swelled to a critical juncture on May 25, 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 epidemic when 46-year-old **George Floyd** died after being handcuffed and pinned to the ground by police officer **Derek Chauvin**.

Chauvin was filmed **kneeling on Floyd's neck for more than eight minutes**. Floyd had been accused of using a **counterfeit \$20 bill** at a local deli in Minneapolis. All four officers involved in the incident were fired and Chauvin was charged with second-degree murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. The three other officers were charged with aiding and abetting murder.

Floyd's killing came on the heels of two other high-profile cases in 2020 where black citizens, 25-year-old **Ahmaud Arbery** and 26-year-old **EMT Breonna Taylor**, were killed by police officers. Taylor, for example, was shot by police when they executed a 'no knock warrant' on March 13, 2020. Her boyfriend said he thought the officers were intruders, exchanged gunfire with the officers. The boyfriend was killed but Taylor died later at a hospital. No drugs were found in the apartment.



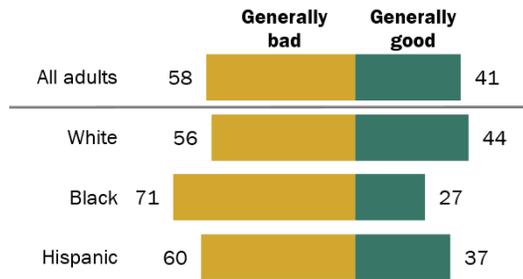
3. Racism in America

Primary Sources: Oxford English Dictionary and Pew Research Center "Report on Race in America" (April 9, 2019)

Definition: The Oxford English Dictionary defines racism as "*prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior.*"

Stats: In 2019, Pew Research Center reported that "*a majority of Americans say race relations in the United States are bad, and of those, about seven-in-ten say things are getting even worse.*"

Percentage of race relations in the US are....



4. Three Important Statements Regarding the Current Issue of Racism We Face as Americans.

Primary Sources: A address by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and a video blog by Dr. Robert Jeffress, Senior Pastor, FBC—Dallas and The Denison Forum article "What the Bible says About Racism" June 4, 2020, among other sources.)

A. God hates racism.

Luke 10:27, NASB -²⁷ *And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND [LOVE] YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."*

Galatians 3:28, NASB -²⁸ *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

John 7:24, NASB -²⁴ *"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."*

John 13:34, NASB -³⁴ *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you...."*

Acts 10:34–35, NASB -³⁴ *Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality,*³⁵ *but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.*

1 Corinthians 12:13, NASB -¹³ *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

Revelation 7:9–10, NLT -⁹ *After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands.*¹⁰ *And they were shouting with a great roar, "Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!"*

1 Timothy 5:21, NASB95 -²¹ *I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.*

Romans 2:11, NASB -¹¹ *For there is no partiality with God.*

Matthew 28:19, NASB -¹⁹ *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...."*

B. God hates lawlessness.

1 John 3:4, NASB -⁴ *Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.*

- Nothing wrong with protesting—it is necessary.
- In rare times, "social disobedience" is appropriate.
- In the rarest of moments, we fight—but we fight together.
- Rioting, looting, burning buildings, hurting one another, scaring one another and killing one another, etc. is never right.

Romans 13:1–7, NASB -¹ *Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.*

² *Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.*³ *For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;*⁴ *for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.*⁵ *Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.*⁶ *For because of this you also*

pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. ⁷ Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

Romans 13:1–2, NASB - ¹ Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

² Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

C. Racism is not the root problem of America today.

“We have a skin problem, but sin is our root problem.”

i. We all sinned and forgot that we were all created by God.

Genesis 1:27, NASB - ²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

ii. We all sinned and forgot that all people are equally valuable to God now.

Galatians 3:28, NASB - ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:28 sounds the clarion call that every form of racism known to Paul’s day was invalid and sinful. The God who made us all loves us all.

Colossians 3:11, NASB - ¹¹ a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

Paul was addressing the issue of racism. Jews considered Greeks to be unclean and inferior. Some claimed that God made Gentiles so there would be “firewood in hell.” Many refused even to look upon a Gentile in public.

iii. We all sinned and forgot that all people will be equally valuable to God later.

Revelation 7:9, NASB - ⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands...

iv. We all sin if we don’t love all people unconditionally.

James 2:9, NASB - ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

Acts 10:28, NLT - ²⁸ Peter told them, “You know it is against our laws for a Jewish man to enter a Gentile home like this or to associate with you. But God has shown me that I should no longer think of anyone as impure or unclean.”

5. What is the issue?

“We have a skin problem, but sin is our root problem.”

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. - Ephesians 6:12–13, NASB

A. God formed us.

Genesis 1:1, 27, NASB - ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...(and) God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them male and female he created them.”

Genesis 1:25b, NASB – ...And God saw that is was good.

B. Sin deformed us.

Romans 5:12, NLT - ¹² When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam’s sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

Isaiah 64:6, NLT - ⁶ We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind.

C. Christ Transforms us.

Romans 12:1–2, NIV - ¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. ² Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Psalms 51:10, ESV - ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

6. Practical Suggestions regarding Racism.

To White People...

- A. Know that racism is alive and well in America.
- B. Recognize our own unconscious bias toward racism.
- C. Care
- D. Listen / dialog
- E. Hear their concerns
- F. Be educated.
- G. Go out of your way to be nice to everyone
- H. Talk to you children, peers, family and friends about racism.
- I. "Silence (and inaction) is not a biblical option."
- J. This is our fight, also.
- K. Christ is the only long-term solution to racism. "We must believe this."
- L. Pray, pray and pray.

To Black People...

- A. Bear with us (as white people)—most of us do care about these issues.
- B. "We" want this inequality to be remedied.
- C. Humbly.... "Don't make hero's out of criminals."
- D. Rioting and destruction of property keeps us from hearing your concerns.
- E. "We" are willing to change but "we" will probably not be willing to completely implode the longstanding structures of society.
As [BLM] abolitionist: We believe that prisons, police and all other institutions that inflict violence on Black people must be abolished and replaced by institutions that value and affirm the flourishing of Black lives. - BLM (www.M4BL.org)
Major Changes? Yes! • Complete abolishment? No!
- F. Talk to your children and friends about the realities of being black.
- G. Don't break the law.
- H. This may be your fight—it may be ours, also. *Let us help!*
- I. Christ is the only long-term solution to racism. "We must believe this!"
- J. Pray, pray and pray.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. - 2 Chronicles 7:14, NIV

ADDENDUM

“Three Common Questions”

Primary Source: [Jim Denison's denisonforum.org/resources/what-does-the-bible-say-about-racism](http://JimDenison.com/denisonforum.org/resources/what-does-the-bible-say-about-racism)

What about the Curse of Cain?

After Cain murdered his brother, God sentenced him to be “a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth” (Genesis 4:12). Cain protested that “I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me” (v. 14). God replied, “Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold” (v. 15a). Then, “the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him” (v. 15b). The Hebrew word translated “mark” is **אֹת** (“ot” or “oth”) referring to a sign or token. It is used eighty times in the Old Testament; not once does it refer to skin color. Nonetheless, some have identified this “mark” with being black. Since Cain was cursed for his sin against his brother, it was claimed that those whose skin was black were his descendants and were cursed by God. This claim was used to justify the enslavement of Africans. This line of reasoning is completely wrong. As noted, the “mark” of Cain had nothing to do with his skin color. In addition, Cain’s family line probably died in the Flood. And note that Moses married a “Cushite woman” (Numbers 12:1). Cush was a region south of Ethiopia; its people were known for their black skin (Jeremiah 13:23). When Moses’ brother and sister spoke against him for marrying his Cushite wife, God rebuked them (Numbers 12:4–15). Clearly, the “mark of Cain” has nothing to do with black people.

What about the Curse of Ham?

Ham was one of Noah’s three sons. Ham had four sons: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan (Genesis 10:6). Ham is considered the father of black people, since some of his descendants settled in Africa. According to tradition, Cush settled in Ethiopia, south of Egypt; Egypt (also known as “Mizraim”) settled in the land of Egypt; Put settled in Libya; Canaan settled above Africa and east of the Mediterranean Sea. The Bible tells us that after the Flood, Noah became drunk (Genesis 9:21). Then “Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside” (v. 22). Shem and Japheth “covered the nakedness of their father” (v. 23). After Noah awoke, he said, “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers” (v. 25). Note that Noah cursed Canaan, not Ham.

Thus, his curse was irrelevant to Ham’s sons who had settled in Africa and their descendants. Also note that Noah’s curse was specifically directed at Canaan, with no mention of his descendants. If Noah’s curse was applied to his descendants, it related to the Canaanites living in the land that became Israel. It had nothing whatever to do with black people. Nonetheless, the Old Scofield Reference Bible of 1909 (often considered the authoritative Bible of fundamentalist Christians) interprets Genesis 9:24–25 to teach: “A prophetic declaration is made that from Ham will descend an inferior and servile posterity.” With his typically brilliant exposition, Dr. Tony Evans addresses this issue, noting that biblical curses are limited to three or four generations (Exodus 20:5) and are reversed when people repent and return to obedience (Exodus 20:6). As Dr. Evans shows, Scripture consistently rebukes and rejects the claim that black people (or any other race) are inferior to any other.

Did proponents of slavery use the Bible to justify their position?

Tragically, many who supported slavery in the antebellum South used the “mark of Cain” and “curse of Ham” to justify their position. They also noted biblical statements encouraging slaves to obey their masters. As we saw in the section on slavery, the Bible deals realistically with the practice where necessary, but it clearly endorses the intrinsic sacred value of each person. The biblical emphasis on the sanctity of life was one of the key motivating factors for William Wilberforce and others who worked so sacrificially to abolish slavery. Like any other book, the Bible can be misused by those who misinterpret and misrepresent its teachings. For instance, when chloroform was developed, some were resistant to using it for women in childbirth since Genesis 3:16 teaches “in pain you shall bring forth children.” When oil wells were first dug in Pennsylvania, many New York ministers opposed the project on the grounds that it would deplete the oil stored for the predestined burning of the world (2 Peter 3:10, 12). And winnowing fans were rejected by Christians who thought they interfered with the providence of God since “the wind blows where it wishes” (John 3:8). (For these and other examples, see John P. Newport and William Cannon, *Why Christians Fight Over the Bible*.) When a doctor misuses medicine, we blame the physician, not the science. When an attorney misrepresents a legal statute, we blame the lawyer, not the law. In responding to racists who misused the Bible to justify slavery, we should blame the racists, not the word of God.