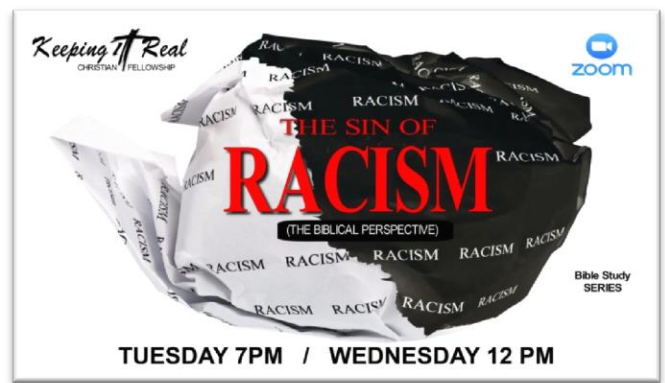


# “THE SIN OF RACISM” Pt. 1

“Jesus said to him, *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’*” -- Matthew 22:37-39



*Biblically, sin is anything that falls short of God’s will and glory, that violates his law and His character (1 John 3:4; Romans 3:23). There are at least four (4) ways in which what we will be calling “racism” is a violation of God’s glory and therefore sin. IT IS SIN!*

**1. BECAUSE OF THE IMAGE OF GOD.** It is a sin to violate—in thought, word, or deed—the divine truth that all humans have equal dignity and worth as persons created in the image of God (**Genesis 1:26-28**).

One of the many ways that truth can be violated is given in James 3:9, where we are told that to even curse a human being—to address them without respect—violates the image of God. When Jesus explains “You shall not murder” (**Matthew 5:21**), he says if you treat someone with contempt, calling him or her ‘Raca’ or ‘fool,’ “**worthless**” you are violating the principle of the command and are “in danger of the fire of hell” (**Matthew 5:22**).

In **James 3** it is a sin to treat any class or group unequally, as being less worthy of respect, love, and protection.

## 4 BASIC REASONS WHY RACISM IS SIN

- 1. Because of the image of God.**
2. Because of the commandment to love your neighbor.
3. Because of the new creation.
4. Because of the gospel of justification by grace through faith alone.

Treating people unequally on the basis of race is only one version of this sin, though it is a particularly prevalent, grievous, and pernicious one. To presuppose one’s own race or nationality is inherently superior to another ... and to treat those of other races and nationalities with (a) unfairness or unequal justice, with (b) dismissiveness (the probable meaning of ‘Raca’ is “you nobody”) ... or with (c) active contempt is a sin, and one that is “*in danger of the fire of hell.*”

### **God’s law is based on His character.**

The Lord is, literally, “**no respecter of persons.**” (**Deuteronomy 10:17**) The context for this statement is a discussion of race and class prejudice. “*He shows no partiality... He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.*” (**Deuteronomy 10:17-18**).

Understanding divine inspiration and God's sovereign influence over man to communicate and make known His will ... (2 Peter 1:21) teaches us, **"For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."** (Also cp. 2 Tim. 3:16) ...

Having said this ... **"I believe God's inspirational motivation divinely influenced"** the framers of the Declaration of Independence and US Constitution, as their Christian faith and the pursuit of it was foundational to the establishment and independence of America from England. Compare the language used in those documents. **Note: Many framers were in fact slave owners at the time, not fully considering the application of this divinely inspired language.** (cp. Genesis 50:20)

**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE ... "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."**

**(Preamble) – US CONSTITUTION ... "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."**

- **The notion that "all men are created equally" is not an American right. It is a GOD-GIVEN right!**

**In Acts 10: Peter has this dream...**

- A great sheet coming down from heaven and in it were a number of animals the Jews thought of as unclean: birds of the air, reptiles, pigs (the original, "pigs in a blanket" idea) and a voice from heaven telling Peter, **"Kill, and eat."**
- Peter responds by saying, **"Not a chance, Lord. I have never touched anything unclean."** Sometimes I don't think we appreciate the magnitude of this. For 1400 years they've avoided these animals because God told them they were unclean (**"to them" Leviticus 11**). And now God is saying to Peter, **"Eat up!"**
- God responds by saying, **"What I have cleansed, Peter, you are not to call unclean."** Well, Peter is trying to figure out what all this means... when someone knocks at his door and Peter opens it and there stands Cornelius and a bunch of Gentile soldiers saying, **"An angel told us to come to talk to you."** ... **and then Peter puts it all together (light comes on...)** [34] **"Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,** [35] **but in every nation anyone who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him."**

**In Acts 10:34**, Peter learns that **"God shows no partiality"** on the basis of national or ethnic status. **It is a sin to be partial, and discriminatory ... because it falls short of God's character and glory!**