

"The civil rights movement was based on faith. Many of us who were participants in this movement saw our involvement as an extension of our faith. We saw ourselves doing the work of the Almighty. Segregation and racial discrimination were not in keeping with our faith, so we had to do something." - John Lewis

Take time to process all the things.
Take time to have uncomfortable conversations.
Take time to build up your empathy.
Take time to lament.
Take time to understand.
Take time to pray.
Then, take action.

THE COLOR OF COMPROMISE *by Jemar Tisby*

"As we talk about the Civil War, and Christian defenses of slavery, and fighting on the side of the Confederacy, it should give every citizen and Christian in the United States pause to consider how strongly engrained the support for slavery in our country was. People believed in the enslavement of Black people so strongly that they were willing to form another country, fight a war, and die to defend it. And, throughout it all, Christian leaders and laypeople alike, looked to the Bible to justify their pro-slavery stance and made sophisticated theological arguments for it, and believed that God was on their side!"

AN OpEd by Jon Hopkins

Maybe Part 2 | Maybe I'm jaded or maybe I'm Black.

How do I begin to write again on things that I've written and spoken of time and time before, but write it differently so that MAYBE it might reach YOU? All week I've had conversations offline with friends and family on the current events more than likely flooding your feed. Here is my honest take on some of it. Let me start by saying, for those of you who don't know me, my name is Jonathan Hopkins. I am Black. I want to make the distinction clear, because with that I am stating what I've been labeled as, but also me owning and differentiating myself from my other African American brothers and sisters. For my family lineage on both sides were NOT immigrants. We were slaves. I want to start there because (largely) Blacks are the only group of people who don't know what country they come from. Am I African American? Yes. But I'm Black American, and this is my country. I am not speaking for every Black or African American, this is my take on some of this. But let me move on because that isn't the main point of this post.

The conversations that I was having this week started with my black friends. As it always does when an unarmed black person is killed. My friends were tiredly hurt with tears and such about the latest killings. We, as we always do, had a group huddle (socially distanced) to uplift each other. But then something weird started happening and I started to get messages and phone calls from my non-black friends checking in on me over the recent news. This has never happened, not about unarmed black people being killed, ever. My non-black friends were stating to me how shocked they were, how heavy hearted, how much they love me, and "they can only imagine what I must be feeling right now".

Can I be honest in my response? To them I appreciated them reaching out to me, and I really do. I told them I love them as well or gave them a heart emoji, which is also true. But, honestly? What do I feel? I feel like this happens FAR too often. I am wrestling with the tension of maybe I've dealt with death so much in my life that, this seemed horrifically regular. Or maybe I'm just Black. They mentioned that they were shocked, but how? Instances like this happen often and are also caught on video. So, I was more shocked that they were shocked. This couldn't have been the first video that they've seen on their news feed. So, why did it take 50 videos for your heart to break and for you to say something? Were you just turning a blind eye or did you know care? Will you still be this moved after your life goes back to normal post quarantine? I don't know... Maybe I'm jaded or maybe I'm Black.

On Friday night I texted 2 of my best friends. One was protesting and one is a police officer. I told them both the same thing: Be Safe. Can we talk about protests and riots? Let's start with peaceful protests, because that's what everybody says they love and are for right? And let's use the greatest example who everyone quotes: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. King led numerous peaceful protests and what was the response? He and those with him were: beat, fire hosed, pepper sprayed, bitten by police dogs, arrested, and killed. If people love peaceful protests so much, then why was this the response to them? Have people's hearts changed about peaceful protests since the 60's? If you jot your memory back just a few years ago, many athletes taking a knee in a peaceful protest over judicial injustice. Were they thought of in a good light or did you (you: as in those who oppose the fight for civil, human, and social justice for ALL) not agree with that way of peacefully protesting either? So, if one goes about protesting peacefully, they are ridiculed at least, what happens if they had enough and they riot? Are we just going to look at the riot, but not the cause of the riot? Let me state my opinion for the record. I am for peace. I think rioting does cause even more harm on oneself for a multitude of reasons. However, I understand it. What I don't understand is those who are so quick to post about being anti-protest and anti-riot, but won't post about black unarmed people being killed. I am not excusing black people for looting and rioting, but I do understand when someone feels they're living in hell, they don't fear going to hell. Now for non-black people who are using this as an

opportunity loot and riot, who exactly are you helping? People want to speak out against rioting but never want to bring up the Tulsa Oklahoma Massacre (in 1921 May 31st- June 1st) where a white mob bombed and burned the wealthiest black community in the United States and injuring over 800 people. If riots are condemned, then what would you call the Boston Tea Party? Was that a peaceful protest? Or was that a definitive moment in American history? I'm not saying I agree with riots. I along with my fellow coworkers got sent home from work today because of them. But some buildings can be rebuilt, maybe some can't, but once a life is taken there's finality to that.

Lastly, I want to end with an illustration. Since the Michael Jordan Documentary: The Last Dance recently aired, I want to use basketball as an illustration. Sometimes being black feels like you started the game with 5 fouls. This is a full court game, but you only have 3 players on your team and the other team has 5. Let's call that, the 3/5ths compromise and if you don't go along with those rules, then you'll never see the floor. But your team needs you and you want to win so you oblige. But in the flow of the game you realize the other team is not only scoring, but they are doing moving and illegal screens to knock you off your game to hopefully get you called for a 6th foul to be fouled out of the game. And if you complain to the ref your attitude might get you a technical foul, which will not only get you fouled out of the game, but also allow the other team to shoot a bonus free throw. So, all you can do is fight and learn to maneuver around the illegal moving screens that are trying to trap you. You are resilient. You can't show weakness or else you'll lose. The game was not built for you to win to begin with, but you're still trying to find a way not only to win, but to survive for you and your team.

These have been the complexities of the mind of a maybe jaded but definitely black man

Jon

KEY DEFINITIONS:

The following list of words with their definitions will give us a shared vocabulary for this month's discussions.

Bias	Prejudice in favor of a thing, person, or group compared with another usually considered unfair. (Oxford)
Justice	Equal distribution of power and privilege among all people. (Eric Law, Episcopal Priest)
Trauma	The imprint left by an experience on the mind, brain, and body. The imprint has ongoing consequences for how the human organism manages to survive in the present; it is not just an event that took place sometime in the past. Trauma results in a fundamental reorganization of the way the mind and brain manage perceptions. It changes not only how we think and what we think about, but also our very capacity to think. (The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma)
Colorblind racism	The worldview that suggests that since race should not matter, it does not matter; An ideology that insists that everyone be treated without regard to race, accompanied by a denial of the causes and consequences of racism.
Colorism	A practice whereby privileges, and disadvantages are systematically doled out on the basis of skin color, with a disproportionate amount of advantage provided to lighter-skinned people; <i>synonym</i> : light-skin privilege (experienced in various cultures)
Culture of poverty	The notion that poor and working-class people are poor because they do not know how to work, do not have the motivation to work, or are too dependent on public assistance; An idea that poverty is intergenerational because poverty is (psychologically) pathological and cyclical
Dehumanization	The notion that some people are less than human; The routine association of Blacks with demons and animals, such as apes
Epistemology of ignorance	A militant, aggressive willingness to not know; A process of knowing designed to produce not knowing about white privilege and white supremacy.
False equivalence	A logical fallacy, whereby two opposing sides of an argument are deemed equivalent when they actually are not; A reliance on feeble similarities in an attempt to make moot the more important observation and effect of the glaring differences.
Microaggression	Small, subtle, pernicious acts of racism; Brief remarks, vague insults, casual dismissals, and nonverbal exchanges that serve to slight a person due to the person's race.
White fragility	Is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.

(All definitions, unless specified otherwise, are from the article *The World We Want Special Issue: Solutions We Love The Language of Antiracism* by Sydney Worth)

MATERIAL LIST: (all required materials, all titles are hyperlinked)

Unconscious Bias Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

The Bible reminds us not to deceive ourselves (Psalm 19:12; Jer. 17:9; 1 Cor. 3:18) but examine ourselves instead (Lk. 6:41; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 6:4) One tool to do so is Harvard's test to reveal implicit biases (based on race, skin darkness, and other factors). The time is now to examine ourselves whether unpleasant, disturbing, convicting, or ugly. The test warns: "If you are unprepared to encounter interpretations that you might find objectionable, please do not proceed further." Nevertheless, let us proceed, lest we deceive ourselves about the state of our hearts.

Short Videos	
1. Episode # 1 Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man	9 min
2. Episode #2 w/Matthew McConaughey	13 min
3. Episode #3 feat. Chip & Joanna Gaines & children	10 min
4. Episode #4 Reverse Racism	7 min
5. Episode #5 Interracial Couples	13 min
6. Episode #6 The Ivey Family	16 min
7. Episode #7 w/Hillsong Pastor, Carl Lentz	19 min
8. Blind Spots	4 min
9. Racist Church Goers Harass Black Woman	8 min
10. Aunt Jemima Brand to Go	3 min
Written Materials:	
1. Devotionals (see page below)	10 min
2. Guilliard, D. D. (2015), Rethinking Incarceration: Advocating for Justice that Restores , Intervarsity Press, Downer's Grove, IL.	5-8 hrs
3. Tisby, J. (2019), The Color of Compromise Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI (available as a lecture series if you prefer to watch on Right Now Media)	5-8 hrs
Longer Videos:	
1. Black America Since MLK: And Still I Rise (Part 1)	1 hr 49 min
2. Black America Since MLK: And Still I Rise (Pt. 2)	1 hr 49 min
3. The Color of Compromise	65 min
Film	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When They See Us Part 1 - 4; based on the true story of the Central Park 5 (parental advisory language) 	63 min/ea
Podcast & Short Reads	
1. Emotionally Healthy Church Podcast: God's Revelation That Burns Through Racism (Pt. 2)	35 min
2. Microaggressions Are a Big Deal: How to Talk Them Out and When to Walk Away	21 min
3. Slave Patrols An Early Form of American Policing (Barbadian slave laws, colonists adopted slave patrols as a formal institution by the middle of the 18th century. These were among the first police forces in the colonies.)	3 min
4. A Brief History of Slavery and the Origins of American Policing	3 min
5. New York police commissioner ties NYPD to 'slave-catchers'	3 min

DEVOTIONALS

A Christian's Response to Racism and Injustice by Joel Muddamalle

“And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.’” Matthew 22:37-40 (ESV)

DO JUSTICE: The Hebrew word for justice is *“mishpat,”* and it deals with a legal decision. This speaks of having systems and structures that are not morally bankrupt but reflect the righteous justice of God.

LOVE MERCY: As a people who've experienced extravagant and undeserved mercy, we should pour out extravagant mercy onto others, even if it's undeserved.

Jesus teaches us that these three characteristics mentioned in Micah 6:8 should be embodied and reflected in the lives of Christians as we relate to our neighbors.

Who is our neighbor? Every image bearer of God. In other words — all of humanity. As Christ-followers, we love God with every ounce of our being, and we're then sent out to love our neighbors to be a reflection of the love, mercy and justice of God. This is what can be referred to as the “Law of love” (Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8; John 13:34-35).

Jesus is telling His people today to walk humbly, do justice, love mercy and love all of humanity. Will we listen to His voice and instruction?

Lord, thank You for teaching us so clearly what it means to love our neighbor through Your Word. Thank You for the gift of the Scripture and how it has the power to instruct and guide us in every situation and circumstance. Empower us through Your Spirit to live a life of love that serves as a sign and symbol of the goodness of the gospel to our neighbors that may not know You. Help us, Lord, when things are hard. Remind us to lean into You through Your Word by the power of Your Spirit and not on our own understanding. Stir our affections for You, King Jesus, and be with us as You've promised. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

TRUTH FOR TODAY

Galatians 5:14-15, “For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.” (ESV)

James 2:8, “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well.” (ESV)

WHAT IS BIBLICAL JUSTICE - Justice and Freedom by Tony Evans

Contrary to how some people feel, the aim of Biblical justice is freedom. Freedom can be defined as a release from illegitimate bondage in order to make the choice to exercise responsibility in actualizing and maximizing all that you were created to be. Biblical justice encourages freedom through affirming accountability, equality and responsibility by linking the spiritual to the social realm. That is, freedom and biblical justice must be founded upon spiritual truth from our vertical relationship with God and expressed in our horizontal relationship with each other. In other words, biblical justice is all about loving God and loving others. Jesus links our attitude towards God (the spiritual) with our attitude towards others (the social). Love is not merely a feeling, but rather, an action. Love is compassionately and righteously pursuing the well-being of another. So since loving others is all about pursuing their best interest, then we should seek to free any person from oppression and inequity. We see this in

Jesus' earthly ministry. He preached the kingdom (the spiritual), but He also addressed people's physical needs (the social).

As we fight for biblical justice and freedom, we need a balanced approach. We must confront sin and spread the gospel. But equally important, we must also stand against injustices, whether they be racial, socio-economical, political or criminal. If the gospel has changed your life, then praise God. If you are doing well and God has blessed you, then praise God. But understand, God doesn't grant us freedom solely for ourselves. He wants to use us to help others gain their freedom. This is where biblical justice comes into play, and this is why God tells us to fight for the weak, speak up for those without a voice, and defend the rights of the oppressed and marginalized. (Psalms 82:3,4; Matt. 22: 37-40; Luke 4:18-20)

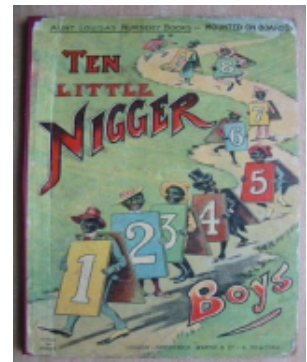
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: (Highly recommended but not required)

It's no accident that: You learned about Helen Keller instead of W.E.B. DuBois. You learned about the Watts and L.A. Riots, but not Tulsa or Wilmington. You learned that George Washington's dentures were made from wood, rather than the teeth from slaves. You learned about black ghettos, but not about Black Wall Street. You learned about the New Deal, but not "red lining." You learned about Tommie Smith's fist in the air at the 1968 Olympics, but not that he was sent home the next day and stripped of his medals. You learned about "black crime," but white criminals were never lumped together and discussed in terms of their race. You learned about "states rights" as the cause of the Civil War, but not that slavery was mentioned 80 times in the articles of secession. Privilege is having history rewritten so that you don't have to acknowledge uncomfortable facts. Racism is perpetuated by people who refuse to learn or acknowledge this reality. You have a choice.

HISTORY LESSON (The following was what was taught and used in schools by some)

This was one of several nursery books series that taught white children to count in the late 1800s and the early 1900s. Depicted in the book, caricatures of Black boys are eliminated by a series of events, counting down to the last one.

*Ten little nigger boys went out to dine;
One choked his little self and then there were Nine.
Nine little nigger boys sat up very late;
One overslept himself and then there were Eight.
Eight little nigger boys travelling in Devon;
One said he'd stay there and then there were Seven.
Seven little nigger boys chopping up sticks;
One chopped himself in halves and then there were Six. Six
little nigger boys playing with a hive;
A bumble bee stung one and then there were Five
Five little nigger boys going in for law;
One got into Chancery and then there were
Four little nigger boys going out to sea;
A red herring swallowed one and then there were Three.
Three little nigger boys walking in the Zoo;
A big bear hugged one and then there were Two.
Two little nigger boys sitting in the sun;
One got frizzled up and then there was One.
One little nigger boy left all alone;
He went out and hanged himself and then there were None*





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, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

— Nelson Mandela —

AZ QUOTES

White Christianity suffers from a bad case of Disney Princess theology. As each individual reads Scripture, they see themselves as the Princess in every story. They are Esther, never Xerxes or Haman. They are Peter, never Judas. They are the woman anointing Jesus, never the Pharisee. They are the Jews escaping slavery, never Egypt.

For citizens of the most powerful country in the world, who enslaved both Native and Black people, to see itself as Israel not Egypt when studying Scripture, is a perfect example of Disney Princess Theology. And it means that as people in power, they have no lens for locating themselves rightly in Scripture or society- and it has made them blind and utterly ill-equipped to engage issues of power and injustice. It is some very weak Bible work

- Erna Kim Hackett

liberated
TOGETHER