

The Voice of History

The record of the past 20 centuries reveals these facts concerning prominent religious sects:

Church	Time	Place	Founder
Roman Catholic	606 AD	Rome	Boniface III
Lutheran	1520 AD	Germany	Martin Luther
Episcopal	1534 AD	England	Henry VIII
Presbyterian	1536 AD	Switzerland	John Calvin
Congregational	1550 AD	England	Robert Browne
Baptist	1607 AD	Holland	John Smythe
Methodist	1739 AD	England	John Wesley
Mormon	1830 AD	America	Joseph Smith
7th Day Adventist	1860 AD	America	Ellen G. White
Christian Science	1866 AD	America	Mary Baker Eddy
Jehovah's Witness	1872 AD	America	Charles T. Russell

Examine these "churches" very carefully!

- ☛ **Were they established at the right time?**
- ☛ **Were they established in the right place?**
- ☛ **Were they founded by the right person?**
- ☛ **Are their members called by the right name?**

Whose Voice will we obey?

The Voice of History?

-or-

The Voice of God?

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



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The Biblical Answer to Racism

Ken Weliever

This post was originally published in August 2017 following a racially motivated attack in Charlottesville, VA.

A 32-year-old woman, Heather Heyer, who was "a passionate advocate for the disenfranchised" was killed when a car was driven into a group of counter protesters. At least 19 others were injured. The driver, James Alex Fields, has been described as "very misguided and disillusioned." A former High School teacher told the *Associated Press*, "Once you talked to James for a while, you would start to see that sympathy toward Nazism, that idolization of Hitler, that belief in white supremacy."

More recently, Derek Chauvin, formerly a Minnesota cop, the man seen kneeling on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes — was charged with second-degree murder. Subsequently three other officers have also been charged with aiding and abetting second-degree murder. These two episodes, and others like them, fueled by racial bigotry are wrong. Sickening. Shameful. And sinful.

In each case as a reaction to the racists attitudes and actions of these individuals, some have written, published blogs, and posted on *Facebook* sweeping charges of racism against conservatives and Christians. Let me be clear. As a Christian and a social and political conservative, I disavow all forms of racial bigotry. It is wrong. And clearly against the teachings of Jesus, the apostles, and the entire tone of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

Consider these 6 Biblical reasons why racism is wrong.

(1) **All people are created in God's image.** On the sixth day of creation, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.'" Then the Bible says "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:26-27). All races of people who descended from the original pair share in the "likeness of divinity." Every person possesses an eternal soul. And has been endowed with the qualities and characteristics that can only come from our Creator.

(2) **Jesus taught that the second great command is to "love your neighbor as yourself"** (Matthew 22:39). Christ did not distinguish one ethnic group

from another. Love is not based on skin color or racial differences. In fact, Jesus associated with Jews, Gentiles, and Samaritans, who were traditionally discriminated against in that culture.

(3) Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. The golden text of the Bible says, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...” (Jn. 3:16). That’s everyone. Every nation. Every race. Every ethnic group. Jesus said his mission was “to seek and save the lost” (Lk. 19:10). All people. Regardless of their skin color. Or their language. Or their ancestry.

(4) The Gospel is for everyone. In the great commission, Jesus instructed the apostles to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk. 16:15-16). Revelation 14:6 states that “the everlasting gospel” was to be preached “to those who dwell on the earth — to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.”

(5) All are one in the Family of God. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slaves or free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). This passage was written to the churches of Galatia urging Christians to accept the equality of everyone as brothers and sisters in Christ.

(6) The Bible teaches that partiality, prejudice, and favoritism is sinful. James, the brother of Jesus, expressed this way, “My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.” (Jas 2:1). While the context speaks of relationships between the rich and the poor, the principle applies to all social, cultural and racial relationships. After illustrating the problem of partiality, James concluded “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors” (Jas. 2:8-9).

“⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well; ⁹ but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.”

—James 2:8-9

It is an ugly reality that racism still exists in America today. However, as set apart people to glorify God, Christians must be a shining light in a dark world. There is no place for bigotry or hatred in our hearts.

“Racism springs from the lie that certain human beings are less than fully human,” wrote civil rights leader Alevda King. “It’s a self-centered falsehood that corrupts our minds into believing we are right to treat others as we would not want to be treated.”

The Church Jesus Built (Part 12): Terms of Entrance

Craig Thomas

The New Testament (NT) church can only be identified by examining the divine pattern revealed in the Bible. For the Bible alone reveals God’s mind

(1 Cor. 29-13; Eph. 31-5; 2 Tim. 316-17). Let’s examine the NT concerning the terms of entrance into Christ’s church.

Who is the church? To determine the terms of entrance to Christ’s church we must first determine “what is the church”? The NT teaches that the church is composed of those people who have obeyed God’s call through the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-14) and as a result of their obedience “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:47). Thus, the church is the “saved,” those who gain salvation through God’s grace coupled with their faithful obedience (Eph. 2:8-9; Heb. 5:9). The conditions of salvation and terms of entrance into Christ’s church are one and the same, because being in Christ’s church is synonymous with being saved. What “saves” will of necessity place one in Christ’s church. What does the NT teach we must do to be saved?

1) **Hear Christ.** Since God has spoken unto us in these last days by his son (Heb. 1:1-2) it is Him we must hear (Matt. 17:5). According to Paul in Romans 10:17, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Since one cannot please God without faith (Heb. 11:6) we must first “hear” the gospel of Christ as revealed in the NT.

2) **Believe in Christ.** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (Jn. 3:16). We must believe Jesus is the Christ, God’s Son (Jn. 8:24; 20:31).

3) **Repent.** In Acts 17:30 we learn God commands all men everywhere to repent. True repentance involves confessing one’s sins to God (Acts 8:22, 1 Jn. 1:9) and turning away from them (Matt. 21:28-30).

4) **Confess Christ.** The Ethiopian confessed, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37). Timothy made this confession in the presence of many witnesses (1 Tim. 6:12). Confession is made “unto” (in order to) salvation “with the mouth” (Rom. 10:10), so one cannot be saved without this verbal confession.

5) **Be Baptized.** Jesus said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...” (Mk. 16:16). Jesus placed baptism squarely between the sinner and salvation. That is why every example of conversion in the NT involved folks being baptized (Acts 2-19). Baptism is “for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38), is immersion in water (Acts 8:38-39, Rom. 6:4, Col. 2:12), puts one into Christ (Gal. 3:27), and into the one body (1 Cor. 12:13), which is the church (Col. 1:24) that Jesus purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Have you submitted to this baptism?

“²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

—Galatians 3:26-29