

## Further Answers to Questions from Sermon

May 31, 2020

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There is a special live teaching and Q&A, “*Justice, Race and the Gospel*”, taking place on CFC Equipping YouTube Channel Thursday June 4 at 7p, which will address the events occurring at this time. Make sure to create a YouTube account in order to chat and ask your questions. Search *CFC Equipping* in YouTube to find the channel.

### • Why did you not mention or pray for the black community? Police brutality? Black Lives Matter?

Part of this question is specifically addressed to Doug, so I will not speak for him from that angle. But I can answer from a biblical and a general pastoral perspective.

Police brutality was condemned in the Q&A on Sunday. Please watch the video again to find it. Also, the fact that black people’s lives matter to God was also mentioned. To add to what was said, Genesis informs us God made one human race in His image. The varying skin color differences that developed from Noah’s three sons’ descendants are evidences of God’s creativity on display and should be celebrated.

We also know that Jesus loves all people and died for all people.

*2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; 15 and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.*

*Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

Notice in the last passage, God addresses some of the wrong racism of Paul’s day when He says Jews and Greeks are all welcome into the Kingdom of God. These two terms included every person on Earth and was refuting the sinful theology of some Jewish people that only Jewish people can be saved.

Any and all intentional and unintentional brutality towards another person or people group is evil and God does not just condemn it, but promises justice will be served in the end if not here. Jesus died so that those who repent of such acts can be forgiven and those who are victimized can have the eternal hope of the perfect world to come, where such evil will no longer exist.

From a pastoral standpoint, I do want to ask those of you who read this to please graciously consider any time a pastor or any other person for that matter tries to address complex subjects such as the ones mentioned here, it is almost impossible to be able to touch on every angle. Most of the time, if something is not mentioned on a multifaceted matter, it is not because it was on purpose. It is just hard to address every aspect in one setting.

- **What can we do to show our love to the African American community?**

I'll answer this one in simple bullet points in hopes we can get right down to doing some of them soon. Apply the BLESS acronym. That is...

1. **Begin by praying.** Pray for God to grow your love for African Americans, just as God loves them. As was mentioned Sunday, ask God to bring such an individual into your life to form a friendship with if you do not have any such friends. Once you have an African American friend, neighbor, co-worker, etc...
2. **Listen.** Ask them about their lives. Family life, hobbies, passions, work, faith.
3. **Eat.** Have them over for a meal or dessert and listen to them.
4. **Serve.** As you are listening and learn of any needs you can meet, do what you can to meet those needs.
5. **Share the Gospel.** If they still need Christ as Lord and Savior.

- **I would like to know why the church leaders have been so publicly silent as to racial injustices going on around us? Speaking now after the fact, after the violence has started...is disappointing.**

Please do not always take silence as a lack of concern for a subject or cause.

I could turn the table and ask you when is the last time you've spoken up about the murder of unborn children, the persecution of Christians in North Korea or China, the brutal treatment of the Kurds in Iraq, the wrongful elimination of Christian creationist professors at secular universities simply because of their beliefs, the bullying of Jr and Sr High students in Duval schools and so forth but would be wrong to accuse you of not caring about these matters simply because you have not spoken to, let alone did anything for any of these evil situations.

God tells us in 1 Corinthians 4:5 to not judge people's motives but leave that to the Lord.

Unfortunately, in this fallen world of sin, there are too many specific evils for any person to specifically address at all times. As God's people, we need to understand this and to believe the best of one another, as 1 Corinthians 13:7 says. The best is that everyone does care, even if you have not heard them speak about something recently.

On the other hand, it would be insensitive if we did not address such evils in the midst of the events in our nation at this time. Personally, I am grateful Doug chose to bring God's Word and the voice of a brother with black skin into these matters last Sunday and it shows these things are important to him and our church.

Can we all do more? Speak more? Pray more? Probably. May the Spirit show us all where we are doing well and where we need to do more. But let's also remember to show grace and unity to one another in these times and to be very careful not to jump to conclusions about one another's motives.

- **The most segregated hours in America are on Sunday morning. How do we change this?**

This is unfortunately very true. It grieves my heart greatly. There is one human race displayed by up the beautiful kaleidoscope of different skin color, languages and cultures. Heaven is going to have people from every tribe, nation and tongue worshiping God forever for such diversity and unity, among many other things!

So why cannot God's people on this side of eternity reflect God's heart and what Heaven will look like? I believe it can and that we should aim for it. Here are just a few personal ideas that I have applied in my own life as a Christian and church leader.

Please note: these are only my ideas and past experiences. Each Elder Team and Lead Pastor must prayerfully make decisions as God leads them. We have freedom in Christ how to show love in these situations.

1. On a personal level in all areas of life, I have tried to apply the BLESS acronym, explained in a previous question above, with all around me, including those different than me.
2. When gathered with our church, whether in worship service or a Family Group or event, if I see someone who is different than me (skin color, language, country of origin, gothic, even those who love country music (that's a joke!), etc), I purposely go over, introduce myself, ask them if they're new, ask how they heard about CFC, share how glad I am they are there and for meeting them and look for a way to invite them to another CFC activity if I think one would be of interest to them based on what I learn about their likes and passions.

About 10 years ago there was a an African-American-20-something who visited the church I was pastoring at in rural Indiana. I wanted to meet him and tell him how glad I was he had visited our church but he had made it outside before I could get close. So, I literally ran out and met him in the parking lot and invited him to an upcoming Young Adult Ministry event. Fast-forward to today and we are great friends and brothers in the Lord. He also happens to be a brother who has left the lifestyle of homosexuality and I've had the joy of walking alongside him through those battles. I say that to point out how powerful a simple, genuine greeting and invitation to another activity can be. And how powerful God is. He unites all, no matter how different. And He gives victory to all, no matter our struggles.

3. From a lead pastor role (my personal opinion and practice), I would ask my worship leader to play a song once in a while that reflected the worship style of some of those who were the "minority" in our Body. Again, this is not a right or wrong thing, just something that could be done and could encourage a diverse unity if the Elders of a church agreed.