

**Racial Reconciliation: Examining Systemic Injustices**  
*Central Union Baptist Church | 24 August 2019*

**TALK 2: *Where Do We See It in D.C.? And How We Might Respond***

Our Goal

We desire to play a small role in bringing greater awareness to the historical roots and present forms of racism in our city. The goal is not merely greater intellectual knowledge but greater compassion, so that we are better positioned to empathize and strategize toward the end of “adorning the doctrine of God our Savior.” (Titus 2:10)<sup>1</sup> *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.*

Our Outline

1) Intro: Christians, care about justice and injustice (Ps. 145:7; Isa. 1:17; 61:8)

PROV. 1:1-3 | *The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: 2 To know wisdom and instruction / to understand words of insight / 3 to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity.*

2) Why the injustice of Systemic Racism?

- a. Because most people (not all!) see and abhor individual racism
  - i. Individual racism = racism that’s done by one individual to another (e.g. racial slurs)
- b. Because of two-speed thinking, a lot of people *only* see and abhor individual racism
- c. *But why is there still so much racial inequality and conflict today?*

3) What is the injustice of Systemic Racism?

- a. It’s not...
  - i. A hoax created by the left-wing media.
  - ii. A denial of individual agency. (Romans 3:23; Exodus 1:12-14, 6:9 below)

*12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel. 13 So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves 14 and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work they ruthlessly made them work as slaves... 6:9 Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.*

- b. It is...
  - i. **racism codified or embedded into a society and its institutions, even those in which the members do not intend to be racist; this racism can linger in subtle ways.**
  - ii. A claim that reveals the great rub: Has racism largely been resolved or not?

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<sup>1</sup>All Scriptures are taken from the English Standard Version.

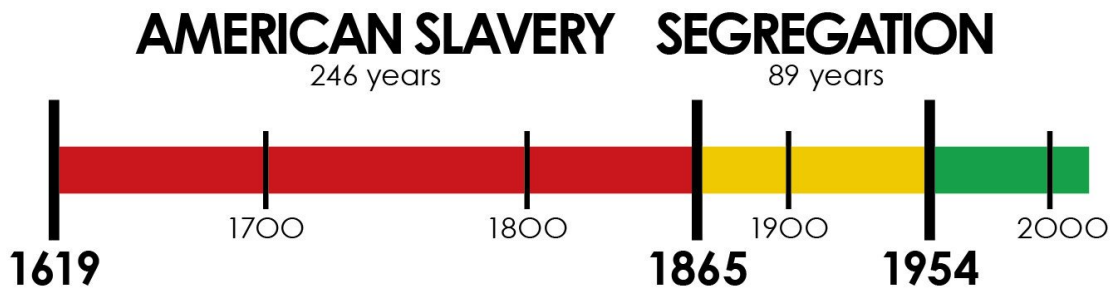
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**Where do we see systemic racism in D.C.?**

Answer 1: HOUSING

**Washington D.C. Timeline: 30,000-foot view<sup>2</sup>**

- Founded July 16, 1790 as the nation's capital (Af. Americans make up 25% of population in 1800, majority of them enslaved, but most freed by 1830)
- On April 16, 1862, Congress passed the District of Columbia Emancipation Act, making Washingtonians the first freed in the nation, nine months before President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863.
- During the Civil War (1861-1865) and Reconstruction (1865-1877), more than 25,000 African Americans moved to Washington.
- By 1900 Washington had the largest percentage of African Americans of any city in the nation.
- In 1948 the Supreme Court declared racially restrictive housing covenants were unconstitutional in the local Hurd v. Hodge case.
- In 1957 Washington's African American population surpassed the 50 percent mark, making it the first predominantly black major city in the nation, and leading a nationwide trend.
- By 1975 African Americans were politically and culturally leading the city with more than 70 percent of the population. According to the 2017 Census Bureau, the black population is now 49%



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**Blacks experienced discrimination for generations that largely prevented them from building on one of the major economic pillars of this country: Housing.**

**This discrimination, albeit more covertly, still happens today in the District, compounding the racism of yesterday.**

<sup>2</sup>I'm indebted to this article for these facts: <https://www.culturaltourismdc.org/portal/a-brief-history-of-african-americans-in-washington-dc>.

<sup>3</sup>Image is property of Zerflin: <https://twitter.com/Zerflin/status/963147034223108096>

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### Where do we see systemic racism in D.C.?

Answer 2: CHURCH

ACTS 6: 1-7 | *Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.*

### In light of systemic racism in our own city, how can we respond?

- Be the Good Samaritan devoted to *life-long faithfulness* not *short-sighted fixes*.
- Take up and read! See your homework below
- Pray, Pray, Pray (join us for prayer on the United? We Pray podcast)

### Our Homework: Read! Suggested Resources

#### Books:

- *Divided By Faith*, Smith & Emerson\*
- *Race & Place*, David Leong
- *Beyond Racial Gridlock*, Geoge Yancey
- *Warmth of Other Suns*, Isabel Wilkerson
- *Some of My Best Friends Are Black*, Tanner Colby
- *The Color of Law*, Richard Rothstein
- *Just Mercy*, Bryan Stevenson
- *The Color of Compromise*, Jemar Tisby\* (section on black church)
- *White Awake*, Daniel Hill

\*Find interviews with the author on United? We Pray podcast. Want more resources sent to you? Sign up at [www.praypod.com](http://www.praypod.com).

#### Articles

- "Mizzou and A More Excellent Way" – The Gospel Coalition, Isaac Adams
- "The Mississippi Delta's History of Black Land Theft" - The Atlantic, Vann R. Newkirk II
- "The 'heartbreaking' Decrease in Black Homeownership" – The Washington Post, Jason Henry
- "Discriminatory Housing Practices in the District: A Brief History" – D.C. Policy Center, Kathryn Zickuhr