

Racial Justice

April 2022

Introduction

Our world is full of people of all different backgrounds and ethnicities. This diversity is God's design as all of us are created in the image of God (Imago Dei). From the beginning, humanity has and continues to distort and desecrate that image. This distortion and desecration are even seen in the creation and perpetuation of the philosophy of Race, such as racial categorization, racial prejudice, and racial supremacy. What does racial justice look like in the local church considering the current racially tense climate?

Summary Statement

Since diversity is rooted in the very image of God, and participation (actively or passively) in the distortion and desecration of that image (in you or others) is a blatant offense against God. Therefore, followers of Jesus, it is our duty to protect and promote the image of God in everyone, including and especially the marginalized of our society. This act of promoting and protecting the image of God in the world is the basis for the biblical doctrine of Justice. (Pro 31:8-9).

The Evangelical Covenant Church, of which Life Canton is a member, has done significant work in racial righteousness. It is distinctive of our denomination and our local church. Life Canton believes that all humanity is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and that our differences reflect the diversity of God in the Trinity (i.e., Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Differences are not a problem to be solved but a beauty to behold.

However, Racial injustice is not just found in our culture but also our churches. We do not and will not subscribe to the philosophy and functions of racial discrimination because it is antithetical to the Gospel. While we recognize there are institutions in our culture who rightly seek to dismantle racism in various ways, we believe dismantling racism must begin in the message of the Gospel, and flow forth into the actions of the local church.

Our obedience is to Jesus and his Word. It is not simply enough to "not be racist." Therefore, our **responsibility** is to **recognize** how we have been complicit with racial injustice, **repent** of it, and then seek to **restore** the **righteousness** that **reflects** God's original design. This is an ongoing work. This is done practically in three areas: ongoing dialog for greater awareness, building relationships to create greater proximity, and commitments to reaching out to our community to increase partnerships that pursue Biblical justice and love (Mic 6:8).

Primary Texts

Genesis 1:27
Proverbs 31:8-9
Micah 6:8

Secondary Texts

Luke 4:18
Acts 10:34-35
Acts 17:26
Galatians 3:28

In keeping with our intent to utilize the work of the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) when available, we recommend the following resources where significant work has already been done. [The Ministry of Compassion Mercy and Justice resource paper](#) and the [2008 Racial Righteousness statement](#).