



How Should Christians Respond to Racism? (Part I)

James 2:8-9: (NASB) *⁸If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing well. ⁹But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*

Guests: Karetta, Tekiya and Sebastian



George Floyd is needlessly dead. His life ended as a result of the uncalled-for brutality of a police officer. This killing has resonated throughout the United States as well as the world. It has put some of society's hardest issues in front of our faces. Peaceful protests decrying racism and injustices have occurred all over the world. Angry riots, looting, and yes, more killing have also erupted. The issues are ugly, serious and relevant. What are we struggling with? Is it racism? Is it bigotry? Is it prejudice? Is it ignorance? As Christians, we need to be open and honest when it comes to truth.

What is the truth about society's struggles? What is the truth that we, as Christians, should be standing for?

Our objective is NOT to solve the ills of our world regarding the mounting racial and social issues we face because that is beyond our capabilities. The purpose is to look introspectively for our own blind spots, identify where our tendencies are and to think and act more Christlike moving forward. With this episode, we are not looking to change the world; we are looking to change ourselves.



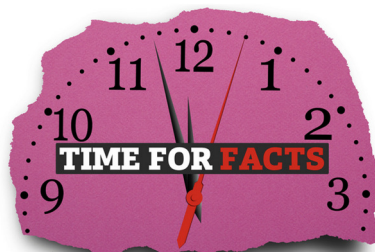
Our overriding beginning theme will be - **WORDS MATTER!**

We know a woman who ran a stoplight and killed the father of two small children in a traffic accident. She is devastated. We could say because she killed someone, we can call her *a murderer*. That would be wrong! **WORDS MATTER.** Murder is legally divided into first, second, and third-degree murder. There is also involuntary manslaughter. To call someone who involuntarily killed somebody a murderer is not an accurate accusation.



Proverbs 2:6-9: (NASB) *⁶For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. ⁷He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, ⁸Guarding the paths of justice, and He preserves the way of His godly ones. ⁹Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity and every good course.*

Knowledge is the first territory we must pass through! To the best of our ability, we need to have the facts correct.



The first and most formidable **FACT**:

There is **NO** partiality with God!

Romans 2:10-11: (NASB) *¹⁰but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹¹For there is no partiality with God.*

The lesson for us: If God is not partial, we should not be partial.

Merriam Webster:

racism (noun)

a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.

We interviewed three individuals who will share their experiences with us throughout the podcast: Karreta, Tekiya and Sebastian. *Commentary has been edited for brevity and clarity.*



Rick: I am here with Karreta, Tekiya, and Sebastian and we are going to take a look, a very close look, a very pointed look, at the racial issues we face from the perspective of different people. Now Karreta, can you tell us who you are and your general age bracket. And then Tekiya, we'll ask you for the same thing. Sebastian we will ask you as well. And I will add before we start that Karreta and Tekiya are both African American and Sebastian is white. Karreta, go ahead.

Karreta: I will tell my age. I'm 47 years old. I was born and raised in America, and being a Black person in America I have faced many challenges, simply from being a Black person in America. But I believe that the Lord has a plan and I'm in that plan. And not just me but everyone is in that plan. Generally, I don't focus on negative things, period.

Rick: Tekiya, what about you?



Tekiya: I'm Tekiya. I am 23 years old. Karreta raised me, so we have similar views and the fact that we don't focus on negativity. And I personally like to give everyone the benefit of the doubt on things they say, and tones of voice, even. I don't like to assume the worst in people. So, I haven't focused on racial issues a lot in my life and I think a lot of that came from my mom.

Rick: And Sebastian what about you?

Sebastian: Well, I'm Sebastian and I'm 23 years old. And I'm a white man. I've had a pretty relatively easy life with not too much conflict arising as a result of my skin color. And I'm also a Christian. I believe that God has a plan for all. That being said, the present circumstances and the circumstances leading up to the racial tensions and the racism that exists in society has caused me to evaluate my own position in society, how I view the world and how I view our country.

Premise:

1. Racism exists and is deeply serious.
2. All people are flawed.
3. The vast majority of people are NOT racist.

THERE ARE FOUR WORDS WE WILL FOCUS ON TODAY:

IGNORANCE, PREJUDICE, BIGOTRY AND RACISM



Rick: What has been your specific experience personally with racial issues?

Karreta: I have experienced racism in a broad range. I'll just use two examples. Something very subtle, which is walking into a store and being followed just because I'm Black. I have no intention, never have had any intentions of taking things that don't belong to me. And then if I happen to not purchase anything, then that makes the sense of, I guess guilt, even greater. And then of course on the other end of that spectrum, I have been called a racial slur. And that's very hurtful.

Rick: Yeah, I can only imagine with that. Alright, thank you. That's a good start. Tekiya, go ahead.

Tekiya: Similar to my mom, I've been followed around in the store. We were actually talking about the sense of - we couldn't find a word for it - guilt was the best thing that we came up with. But being followed around in the store or when window shopping, it feels like we shouldn't be doing that because, "Why are you in the store if you don't plan on buying anything?" But I think that most people go to the store and they just look around and walk out without any second thought. I think that most people aren't blatantly racist anymore;



however, microaggressions are things that people are more comfortable with. And I think the reason is that it can be excused as something else. “The reason I’m saying this statement is not because you’re Black but it’s for another reason.” A few examples that I’ve heard are, “You don’t sound Black,” “You don’t act Black,” “Wow you are so articulate (for a Black person.)” It seems like, “Oh, that’s a compliment. I just said that you’re articulate.” Why does it have to be associated with the white majority to be intelligent or to speak intelligently? But I’ve heard that one pretty much my entire life.

Rick: Tekiya, let me just ask you like a sub-question on that because I’ve heard you speak, and I’ve talked to you many times, and you *are* articulate. Now when I say that to you, does it even give you a twinge of that “...for a Black person” thing - coming from somebody that you know? Or is that like, okay, I get that for exactly what it is? Just a curiosity thing here.

Tekiya: Well, with you, since I know you, I know that you don’t have any ill intentions so I wouldn’t probably say anything about it to you because it would just probably hurt you on the other hand. Like wow, I was trying to give her a compliment and she attacked me for it. But I’d think it. That’s because in my mind it’s when you say a comment like that, why wouldn’t you expect me to be articulate? You don’t normally express compliments for things that you would expect.

Rick: Well, that’s good and I’m glad we’re talking about this. I want to just take that one small step further, just from my own perspective. Because when I would say that to you, it’s because for the average 23-year-old, you have a really strong ability to express yourself, more so than the average. And to me that’s like, “Wow, you’re really articulate because you can do that.” So, in my brain I’m saying, in comparison to those who have had the level of life experience you’ve had, this is something I think is really cool. And it’s just interesting. To me that thought still comes up and again it’s very revealing. Glad you said that. Thanks. Okay, Sebastian.

Sebastian: Like you said, I’m white, so racial profiling against me hasn’t been a huge part of my life or, at all really. But I have had an interesting perspective in the last few years because I actually started fishing. In my experiences fishing, I’ll be on the water and there will be predominantly more white people fishing next to me down the pier and they’ll engage in conversation, and I’ve heard some staggeringly racist things. People feel comfortable sharing with me because I’m also a white man and I’m fishing. And you put those two together - this guy’s probably on my side of this issue. And so, I feel like I’ve had this “in” where I hear this horrible language against those of any sort of minority.

Rick: So, while you were fishing you caught a lot of things you didn’t want to catch. Is that correct?

Sebastian: Yes.

Julie: The “Wow, you are so articulate” part of this interview caught me by surprise because I had no idea that could be perceived in a negative way. I am glad she brought this up. I know her and it is likely I said something along those lines to her, but what I would have meant was, “Compared to all the



other 20-somethings out there, you handle yourself more maturely than others.” And she does! *It is a comparison within her age group and not anything to do with color.* This might make me more nervous to approach someone of color because I do not want to offend anyone or have them take what I say the wrong way. I have to say, I have done my fair share of window shopping and never gave it a second thought.

If we do want to give a compliment, clarify the context of the compliment. In order to deal with racism, racial issues and tension, we need to learn how other people think, feel and see life.

We will define and explain how we see those four words (ignorance, prejudice, bigotry and racism) represent a downward journey into the darkness of human disrespect. We all need to stop, look and consider, “Where am I in relation to these four words?”



Merriam Webster:

Ignorance (noun)

the state or fact of being ignorant: lack of knowledge, education or awareness

Ignorance is a universal human condition. We ALL lack knowledge, education and awareness in many areas of life. The bad news is we generally do not know what we do not know, and therefore it can be easy to remain ignorant.

The good news is ignorance is a VERY treatable condition!

Merriam Webster:

Prejudice (noun)

1: injury or damage resulting from some judgment or action of another in disregard of one's rights especially: detriment to one's legal rights or claims

2a (1): preconceived judgment or opinion; (2): an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge

b: an instance of such judgment or opinion

c: an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics

While prejudice can be learned from a young age, it is also an easily adopted condition when we allow ignorance to remain unchecked. Prejudice litters the mind with the ignorance-based, broadly brushed strokes of generalized thinking. For example, we might carelessly demean an individual or class of people in our conversations. Prejudice casts a shadow over the heart. It can be magnified by rumors, bad impressions and groupthink. **Prejudice develops a deliberate disdain for that which we unjustly have perceived as disturbing.**

Merriam Webster:

Bigotry (noun)

1: obstinate or intolerant devotion to one's own opinions and prejudices: the state of mind of a bigot

2: acts or beliefs characteristic of a bigot



Bigotry can be learned from a young age as well. It is a more severe form of prejudice and develops when prejudice is supplemented by adverse personal experiences, observations and conclusions. **BIGOTRY CAN BE DESCRIBED AS TAKING ACTION WITH YOUR PREJUDICE.** It thrives on generalized hearsay. It further develops the disdain of prejudice growing into resentment or even anger. It deepens the shadows that cover the heart. **Bigotry draws definitive and defensive lines around our decisions and associations and puts up fences.**

Merriam Webster:

Racism (noun)

1: a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race

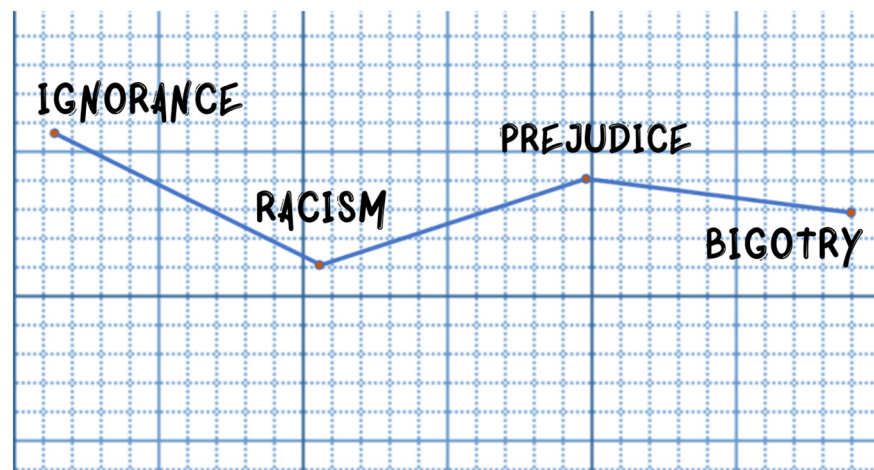
2: a doctrine or political program based on the assumption of racism and designed to execute its principles; b: a political or social system founded on racism

3: racial prejudice or discrimination

Racism can also be learned from a young age. Its development is the result of the focus and passion of one's own bigotry. Racism cements a hard line, a dramatic and unjust stance relating to others. The heart is now deadened as it is shut off from light and warmth. **Racism draws demonstrative and destructive lines that pointedly diminish the value of those who are not like us.**

These words tend to be tossed around interchangeably. We have created this grid of definitions - starting with the worst: all-out racism, then bigotry, then prejudice and then ignorance. We want to honestly examine where we are on this grid regarding race and culture - no matter what color or race we are. We might be in more than one category at any particular time.

OUR PERSONAL FOCUS SHOULD BE TO RECOGNIZE WHERE WE ARE AND MAYBE DROP DOWN A LEVEL AND EVENTUALLY GET OFF THE GRID ENTIRELY.



How? That is going to take some honest and humble reflection. Looking deep into our own heart, we must answer the “Where do I fall right now?” question as this podcast develops.

By first knowing ourselves, we can learn to know others.



**We have a foundation on which to build knowledge.
What do we need to build successfully?**

Knowing our personal reality regarding our perception of racial issues is a powerful beginning. No one has ever truly grown or changed their lives for the better without understanding first how they see things. You cannot follow directions unless you know your present location on the map.

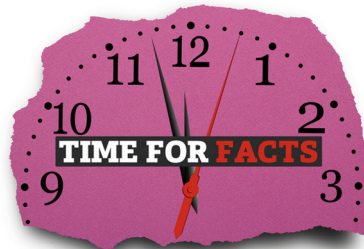
OUR THEME FOR THIS SEGMENT IS "IGNORANCE":

Rick: Everyone is ignorant. I would like to share some of my ignorance with you. I am ignorant about food preparation. I can design and build a kitchen, but I have no idea what to do with it. I can't cook.



There are a lot of things we are ignorant about, but we cannot stay ignorant about racial issues.

Continuing with Territory 1: Knowledge! To the best of our ability, we need to have the facts correct.



FACT: God's impartiality instructs us
to see others impartially!

Romans 10:12-13: (KJV) ¹²For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. ¹³For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Our beginning point on the road to knowledge is to focus on seeing specific issues through another's eyes.

Let's return to our interview.



Rick: Now let's talk about the George Floyd killing. Because look, this was one of the most horrific things you can imagine. We don't want to get into the details of that. We all agree that there is no explainable reason, no justifiable reason under the sun for that man to not be alive today. Did the killing of George Floyd change your personal racial views on issues? Go ahead, Sebastian.

Sebastian: So, I saw the video and it was shocking. I'd seen news stories over the years - past few years especially, of all this unjust killing and it always felt like, how can this happen constantly? But I don't really have to deal with it on a daily basis, so it gets pushed in the back of my mind. So, seeing that really started the cogs in my brain and I was moved to speak up and say some things



and in previous years I wouldn't have. I would have just said leave it in the Lord's hands. He has it covered. This is very sad, but ultimately, He has a plan for all mankind, and they will find peace in the kingdom. But it made me feel that there's this disparity between the races that can even affect those who are in my church, and I don't want to turn a blind eye to those who have such unique and powerful experiences just based on their skin color. So, it really helped me raise my voice in concern and the need for dialogue on this topic.

Rick: Tekiya, go ahead.

Tekeya: I think kind of like Sebastian was saying. I never felt the need to speak up before, and a lot of it I think has to do with being Christian and having that faith and comfort in God's promises and knowing that there is a kingdom to come, and these things won't be happening forever. However, it made me so uncomfortable that I had to do something. I had to speak up, and I had to pray for courage to speak up and say the right things in the right way because I wanted people who don't really understand, people who don't know, to think about it in a different way than they have before. I think with George Floyd, the thing that's stood out for me is that the video was out there for almost 10 minutes, everyone can watch, everyone sees this, and people still see different things or add on to the story. For me, there was no question about it. It was wrong, and I was just wondering how can an excuse be made up for this? And I realize that this one incident didn't just happen without a buildup towards it. The buildup towards it is the racism, the discrimination, the microaggressions. If you take a step back and address how you could possibly be allowing racism and how you can have that impact on the circle around you - in your family at home. How you can have conversations about what to say and what to do if you witness it, even if you don't experience it. I think that can have a big impact on these major events happening before they happen.

Rick: For you, Tekiya, it sounds like it was even a step further than Sebastian - I have to do something rather than even just speaking up - because it sunk into you that this is not the only time this has ever happened. And like you said, there is no excuse, and how can people create an excuse for something like this? Karreta, what about your response, your reactions to the George Floyd incident? Did it change anything for you?

Karreta: Initially, not really because it's the unfortunate thing that this happens so much in this country, and you kind of build up a sense of numbness to it because it happens so often. It doesn't change the fact that you're in fear of your husband's life, or if you have a son, or any male that's in the Black community. You have a fear; it's an underlying fear sometimes. Sometimes it's more on the surface depending on the climate of the country at the time. For this particular incident, it was "the straw that broke the camel's back" for a lot of people. I still have not watched the video; I refuse to because I've seen things so similar to it that I don't need to see that video. But I don't think it excuses the events that happened after it - the looting, the protests, the peaceful protests, as well as the rioting; however, for me it shows that people are really getting fed up, they really are.



HOMEWORK



You may see things differently than our guests. The exercise today is to listen, look through their eyes and see what they see. The only way to deal with our own ignorance is to expand our horizons and get more information.

We quoted the following on Part I of this topic, Episode 1131, and asked everyone to memorize it as a homework assignment:

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom. — Viktor Frankl

We need to work on our response to the racial issues and our response to those who experience it differently.

There are two New Testament words for ignorance.

FIRST word:

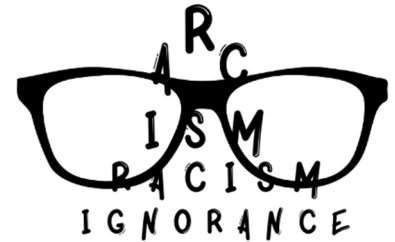
Ignorance: Strong's #2399 *idiotes*; a private person, i.e. (by implication) an ignoramus (compare "idiot")

The King James Version translates this word as ignorant, rude, unlearned

The context here is the end-of-the-age mocking about the evil in the world continuing as always:

2 Peter 3:5: (NASB) *For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice <2399> that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water.*

Things escape our notice when we do not step out of our own thinking bubble and look for them. See through others' eyes. We need to be willing to pay attention to things outside of our immediate sight.



SECOND word:

Ignorance: Strong's #50 *agnoeo*; not to know (through lack of information or intelligence); by implication, to ignore (through disinclination)

The King James Version translates this word as - (be) ignorant (-ly), not understand, unknown

Acts 17:22-23: (NASB) ²²*So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. ²³For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore what you worship in ignorance <50>, this I proclaim to you.*

We all tend to worship - to follow - the thinking and ideology right in front of us. Paul gave the Athenians an opportunity to know God. We can choose to rise above our ignorance. We need to feed what we follow with understanding and knowledge.



Rick: What would the three of you encourage others who are in a minority to do or not do in relation to the anger, the frustration and the things that people perhaps are feeling?



Sebastian: What we are doing now, having a conversation, is so powerful. I've been to church conventions and even just in my school, and those of the white race will tend to associate with each other instead of a lot of intermingling - which is unfortunate because there's so many valuable experiences that we can share with everybody. It takes courage to start these conversations. When we start them, when we talk and we see the value behind every human life, that's honestly what it comes down to - seeing that these are valuable people and they have so much to offer. And just because they have a different color skin, it seems obvious, of course they're human, they're equal, but we don't really see it until we develop a personal relationship. We understand the struggles that they go through.

Rick: You, as a white guy, are talking to those in a minority status and saying, try and have a conversation. Tekiya, go ahead.

Tekiya: Feel what you're feeling. Be angry about it because I think that you should be angry about it. It's wrong. Also be sad about it and cry and feel those emotions. I don't think that we should be insensitive or numb to those things that are going on around us because then that's when they get pushed to the back of our head and we don't do or say anything about it. And then after you feel those feelings, think about it. Think about how you can make an impact and have those conversations. I would say start with those close to you because they will be willing to listen to you. Having conversations with random people on the internet might not go so well. And I can say from experience, that having those conversations with people close to you is hard. For me, it's scary to think that someone close to me, that I've grown up with, been friends with my entire life might have racial tendencies. They might not agree on some of the things that are really important to me. I don't want to lose friends over this. I think we just have to pray about it and pray to say the right things at the right time in these conversations and not let our emotions overwhelm the conversation. Don't allow ourselves to attack the person on the other end of the conversation but attack the issue itself.

Rick: And I like the order you put things in - have a conversation but make sure you have felt what you need to feel. So, in other words, don't bury the reaction. Don't bury the anger or the sadness. Let it be because it's real and it needs to be recognized.

Karreta: We can use some of God's promises to just give them a little bit of hope. A glimmer of hope that there is something better to come. That's not going to necessarily pacify them; however, at least, a bit of hope I should say that you can give someone is better than nothing at all. Also being a Black person, you can also identify with where their anger is coming from so you can relate to it. That in it of itself gives them comfort.

Ignorance can, if we let it, be an open door for communication. It can provoke a give-and-take that leaves both parties with a sense of connection. For give-and-take to exist there must be humility on both sides of the issue. Without humility we will certainly do the giving, but our taking will be for the sole purpose of dismantling, rather than receiving.



Scriptural warnings against ignorance:

Proverbs 18:13: (NASB) *He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.*

Social media is not hearing truth. It is hearing repeated thoughts and feelings.

Proverbs 16:32: (NASB) *He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.*

Mirror question: Is our personal ignorance contributing to our anger?

It is scary to think how common ignorance is and how easily it can keep us uninformed. Let's pay attention.



**We fight the universal human condition of ignorance.
How do we elevate that to fighting prejudice?**

As we walk through the explosive minefield of racial issues, it is profoundly important to call out those things that are common but often hidden. Prejudice is one of those things. It destabilizes our minds and hides in our hearts and we generally do not even know it is there.

OUR THEME FOR THIS SEGMENT IS "PREJUDICE":

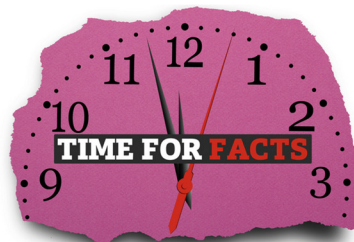
Ignorance is the basis for prejudice.

Rick: I am ignorant regarding chemistry, yet I can successfully drink from a plastic water bottle.

We should not tolerate ignorance when it comes to how to treat our brothers and sisters, no matter who they are or where they come from. We should work to rise above ignorant behavior.



Back to Territory 1: Knowledge! To the best of our ability, we need to have the facts correct.



FACT: God sees in others what we cannot see
– **the heart!** Let us NOT judge another's intentions!

1 Samuel 16:7: (NASB) *But the LORD said to Samuel, Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*

Our road to knowledge began with seeing through another's eyes and continues with attempting to know what that other individual stands for.



Rick: Would your encouragement change if you're talking to another dedicated Christian who is also a minority?

Karreta: If you're talking to a dedicated Christian and they are also a minority, that gives you even more things in common. I think you're even more on the same page because you can see the issue from both perspectives. They know what the struggle is, but they also know God's plan and then they understand where this fits into His plan. And so, there's an opportunity for a lot of conversation and it's probably going to be more agreed upon in that conversation, rather than with any other group.

Rick: So, use your common ground. And that's been a theme; whatever your common ground is - build on it.

Sebastian: Yeah, I definitely think there is something to add from my perspective of being white. Having the common ground of Christianity and having the goals that we share. Those who are of a different color and are dedicated Christians are brothers and sisters. We have to start from that common ground. Going back to the conversation, I think it's still incredibly valuable to have a conversation with those minority brothers and sisters that we have, that we hear them out and listen and say, has anything that I have been doing, or has my behavior reflected anything that would be a hindrance; your Christian walk should be as easy as possible. Because we can't just pretend that all of a sudden just because we're of the same faith that racial issues don't exist. We have to make sure that doesn't infiltrate our hearts, especially as Christians.

Rick: What you're adding from the perspective of a white guy is to talk to somebody who's a minority (you're making it personal, you're making yourself vulnerable) by saying, have I hindered you in your Christian walk because of things that I may not even be aware of? That's an important thing. There's a humility in that kind of an approach that can really build a bridge. Thank you for that. Tekiya, did you have anything you wanted to add here?

Tekiya: Just talking to another person of color who is a Christian, I think you can encourage them by saying, you know we have to experience the same experiences as the rest of the world and get much encouragement from the Scriptures, from the precious promises. We have an opportunity to suffer for the sake of righteousness and to help those in the kingdom to understand; I was there with you; I experienced it and there's something better.

Rick: Folks, our common ground should be massive. It should not only be massive; it should be incredibly strong. And when we have differences, if we can continually decide to land on the common ground, even if we may see things a little differently, we can still be brothers and sisters and we can still move forward.



Ignorance was the base and can be remedied by adding appropriate knowledge. To remedy prejudice requires the additional steps of specifically removing conclusions and emotions from the driver's seat of our intentions. In other words, do not mess with my comfort zone! But we need to become vulnerable so we can learn and grow through it.

A lot of this has to do with how people are comfortable within their own culture - we like our language, our food, our rituals, our values. What drives some peoples' prejudices, and even bigotry which we will get into soon, is that love of culture and fear of the "other" taking away or watering down that way of life that we love.

What about ME? We need to examine our own prejudices.

Proverbs 18:19: (NASB) *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a citadel.*



Rick: What would you like to say to those who are *not* of a minority race? You can do the Christian/non-Christian thing as you see fit with this.

Tekiya: Try to put down your defenses because no one likes to be called a racist or to even think that they would have racist tendencies and to have any thoughts of hatred in their heart. No one likes to hear that. I think the thing for me is, I realize that a lot of people don't have ill intentions. It's just been something that was socially acceptable and there were no thoughts of discrimination or hatred or microaggressions in the comments that were made. It just kind of happened like that. I would say, put down your defenses, be open to listening and you might come to the conclusion that you haven't done anything wrong and that's perfectly fine, but just think about it first. Be true to yourself and listen to others. We have blind spots and we don't always see where we have gone wrong or said anything wrong.

Rick: When you say put down your defenses, let me just give you my response. I'm a white guy and so now I can respond to that one of two ways. Okay, what are you going to blindside me with - or okay, how are you going to encourage me? That's one of the things where we have to be really cognizant that people just have their own ways of thinking about things and so when you're talking to somebody who's not a minority who may be in a position where they really don't understand where you're coming from, it takes great patience to be able to communicate with them. But the idea is to say, "Hey let's de-escalate this thing between us and let's start with something that we can commonly work on."

Tekiya: Be gentle in your response, in your conversation, and also remember to attack or address the issue, rather than the person. And I think that goes a long way because I've been posting on Facebook or re-posting on Facebook things that I agree with, can relate to. And I have friends on there that see it and sometimes I post it and I'm thinking about them. But if I sent it to them directly, they may feel attacked, but I post it and just let it be there. I've had

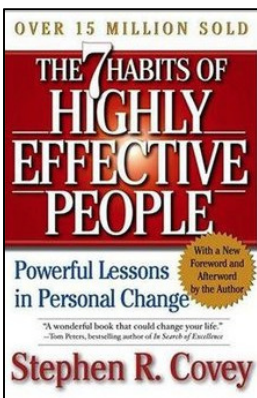




people come back to me and say, “Wow, I’ve said that to you. I’m so sorry. I didn’t realize that would be offensive, and I see it now.”

Rick: That’s huge. First, you said be gentle and then focus on the issue, not the person. Those two things together can change the environment of a conversation. The fact that you may have a good relationship with somebody and the ability to say, “Hey, look, I know you. That doesn’t bother me, but here’s a heads up for you.” That’s a wonderful little piece of education that you can help somebody to understand. Just be aware because we all want the same thing.

In a very practical way, how do we attack the ignorance and prejudice in ourselves, and how do we begin to approach it in others? Communicate! This is not easy, but it is worth it.



(Source: *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Stephen R. Covey)

“Can you see how limited we are when we try to understand another person on the basis of words alone, especially when we’re looking at that person through our own glasses? Can you see how limiting our autobiographical responses are to a person who is genuinely trying to get us to understand his autobiography?

You will never be able to truly step inside another person, to see the world as he sees it, until you develop the pure desire, the strength of personal character, and the positive Emotional Bank Account, as well as the empathic listening skills to do it.”

Communication in the face of tension requires seven things. We will start with the first three:



Humility:

1 Peter 5:6: (NASB) *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,*

As Christians, we will not be able to be adequately humble before others unless we are truly humble before God and open with Him first. Godly humility subdues ego.



Respect for self and respect for others:

1 Peter 5:7: (NASB) *casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.*

Respect is a function of trust. Casting our cares upon God teaches us to trust. Trusting God brings trustworthiness, and that brings respect. Godly self-respect enhances our ability to respect others.



Willingness to listen without a confrontational agenda:

1 Peter 5:8: (NASB) *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*



When we listen with a confrontational agenda to someone who deserves respect, are we being devilish, looking for someone to “devour” and defeat? Listen for the purpose of understanding.



Proverbs 11:9: (NASB) *With his mouth the godless man destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.*

Look at what is happening in our world. There is a lot of destroying going on with words. We need to listen with the intention of hearing.

This is turning out to be even harder than we first thought. How do we do all of this? One step at a time.

**We are seeing some daylight in dealing with ignorance and prejudice.
How do we deal with bigotry?**

The whole subject of racial intolerance is deeper and more twisted than we would like it to be. It is bad enough to have to face our own ignorance and prejudice, but what about bigotry? Are we willing to look in the mirror to see if we fit the definition? What does it take to confront such a deep character flaw?

FOR THIS SEGMENT WE WILL FOCUS ON "BIGOTRY":

Remember: Ignorance is the basis for everything.

Rick: I am ignorant regarding the engineering and mechanics of cars, yet I drive one every day. I don't need to know since we have mechanics.

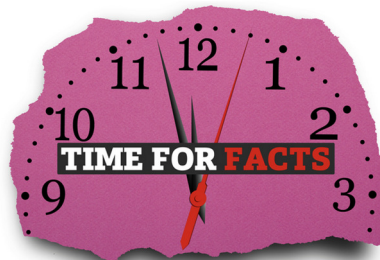
We do need to know about our ignorance when it comes to dealing with other people and elevate to knowledge.

With knowledge as a basis, we now can begin to grasp the necessity for true understanding.



Territory 2: Understanding! To the best of our ability, we need to assimilate those correct facts.

Proverbs 17:27-28: (NASB) ²⁷*He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.* ²⁸*Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is considered prudent.*



FACT: We **MUST** be impartial, otherwise
we are sinning against our brother!

James 2:8-9: (NASB) ⁸*If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing well.* ⁹*But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*

We have to be impartial. Easier said than done!



Continuing with our guests, Kareta, Tekiya and Sebastian:



Rick: What would you encourage those who are not of a minority race to do or not to do?

Sebastian: Count your blessings. See what life has been like because of the color of your skin. Do your best to imagine what it's like if your skin was just a few shades darker and how drastically different your life might be. Those questions that are floating around the Internet about things you can do safely and confidently as a white person that you couldn't do if you were Black because it could lead to possibly your death. It's really striking to look at those questions and see how they apply to your life. It's important to stay humble. That is what I would say to those who are not of a minority.

Rick: I really appreciate the phrase, *count your blessings*, because what that does is it takes the whole race thing out of the equation and says, you as an individual person, look at how your life is blessed and see what you have with those blessings. Then if you are in a place to be able to discuss with somebody who looks different than you, see what the differences are and say, "Wow! I never thought of that. Never realized that." But if you frame it with the idea of counting your blessings, it is an inviting way to address something that's really difficult.

Tekiya: I would say to also do research. It's great to ask other people their experiences but it's also difficult to explain those experiences in a way that others can understand. There's plenty of movies and books and documentaries and even YouTube videos. Some of the stuff on the Internet is questionable but do your research and see what others' experiences have been.

Rick: That's an excellent point. Do your research. I might add, if you've listened to Christian Questions before, I have become fanatical about talking about reading laterally. In other words, when you are reading a piece on something, you can read what the piece says and then do your research even further and check the sources. Just make sure that you're seeing the biggest picture possible so that you can get to the truth of the matter, rather than somebody's interpretation.

Karreta: I will add because of something that Sebastian said about counting your blessings. Recognizing that you do have an advantage. Use that advantage to educate others that are not a minority. Especially when you see them do something or hear them say something that could be hurtful or offensive. Use that. You have a power that someone of a minority race doesn't have in that they may listen to you, rather than listen to them because they may assume or take the position that the person of the minority that's trying to give them advice on this subject is trying to attack them. If it's coming from someone more like them, the attack might be removed from their mind and they will accept it more.



Tekiya: Don't think that there's nothing that you can do right now because there is. It's scary in a way because it's almost a responsibility added onto your plate to know that you have that power. With great power comes great responsibility, right?

Rick: Absolutely and that's so important. We all do have power within our social group. The question is, what do I do with the power I am blessed with?

Tekiya: Let your light so shine before men so that they see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Often when we have a perspective on something, we go to sources from someone who agrees with us. We challenge you to go to someone who disagrees with you and ask them to show you their study or sources.

Bigotry takes our ignorant conclusions, prejudicial feelings and thoughts, and develops them into distinct patterns of thought, emotion and action. The remedy for bigotry is a hard and painful road of enlightenment and change.

We must remember that when we unjustly demean our brother we are sinning against God.



A child learning to tie their shoes deeply focuses on each step. This is how we can learn to undo bigotry.

We talked earlier about how many people tend to feel more comfortable within their own culture. Sometimes prejudice and bigotry are rooted in fear. We may be ignorant about people and feel they are a threat that needs to be stopped. Bigotry is directed against those we fear but have no real reason to fear - they are not real enemies. Yet, we see them as the "other." Pick up a history book and point to any page - there has always been some culture or race against another. History has attacked the Chinese, Japanese, Jewish people, Muslims - the list is as long as there are groups of people.



Here's an example of bigotry: If you see a Muslim woman in a full-length black burqa, is the first word you think of "terrorist," and you walk on the other side of the street? That would fall into this definition.

Conclusions are often made by someone's appearance. We may see something uncomfortable and have a mental reaction, but the reaction does not need to be a response. We can, with our potentially-bigoted perspective, react but decide not to follow through.

There is also religious bigotry: wars with Catholics versus Protestants, Muslims versus Christians. And definitely in the United States and around the world, there is a great deal of political bigotry - people who are intolerant of people with different political opinions than their own.

We need to rise above this in our surroundings and associations.



Proverbs 28:21: (NASB) *To show partiality is not good, because for a piece of bread a man will transgress.*

One of the best ways to combat bigotry is to stop feeding it:

Proverbs 26:20-22: (NASB) ²⁰*For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.* ²¹*Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife.* ²²*The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, and they go down into the innermost parts of the body.*



Rick: How would you suggest to individuals on either side of a racial issue how they would bridge the gap of tensions between them?

Tekiya: It goes back to having conversations and finding common ground. Also, in these conversations try to emphasize the common ground, especially initiating the conversation. Maybe use the sandwich method and say, “Oh I agree with you on this. I like how you said this, here’s a thought that you may not have thought of before and thank you for engaging in the conversation with me. What are your ideas on this?” Things like that.



Rick: So, the Christian approach of wanting to bless and recognize the other individual on the other side for the goodness that they have.

Karreta: I think understanding or having the desire to understand those that are different from you. This isn't just about race, this isn't about male or female, or any other group. Someone that's different from you. If you have the desire to have a greater understanding of their perspective, that opens the door to release a lot of tension that may exist. I think just having a basic understanding of their perspective is very important.

Rick: That implies then that I have to do the work first because if I'm going to understand your perspective, I have to apply myself to really get to know your perspective. The four of us can't solve the issues of the world or of the country but we can positively affect the people that are around us. We can positively affect those who are listening to this podcast by encouraging all of us to get into the same boat of - I'll go first. I'll take the responsibility. I'll be the one to be vulnerable. I'll be the one to try to build something up and reach out where others may not. One person at a time, we can make a difference.

Sebastian: I'll just add that I think you summed it up perfectly. It's about opening your heart, opening your mind and looking for the understanding of what it's like to be someone that isn't you.

Tekiya: I want to quote you, Rick. You said in a previous sermon: “Use the space between stimulus and response.” In your conversations use that space to think about what you're saying and think about, is it kind? Is it necessary? Is it

loving? If it's doing all of those things before you press send, then it's glorifying God.

Rick: The key point is before you press send or before the words come out of your mouth if it's a conversation: Is it kind? Is it necessary? Is it loving? And just pause and consider.

Tekiya quoted Viktor Frankl's quote about the space between stimulus and response we previously discussed:

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom. — Viktor Frankl



Our Christian values, our ultimate goal, our individual “why” - why we follow Christ - these need to transcend everything else, and it needs to transcend this culture.

We need to ask ourselves: *Am I bigoted in any way?*

None of us like the tensions of the racial issues that are taking place. We can do something to help by starting with our own heart and mind.

Communication in the face of tension requires seven things. We continue with points 4 and 5:

4

Willingness to respond for the purpose of verifying:

1 Peter 5:9: (NASB) *But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.*

Choosing to respond to someone with whom we are at odds, with the real intention to truly verify their position, contributes to mutual trust. This is what resisting Satan can look like.

5

Willingness to speak candidly for the sake of presenting your best understanding of truth:

1 Peter 5:10: (NASB) *After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*



Once we pass through the testing ground of genuine heartfelt listening, our time to respond arrives. Active listening reframes our perspective and actually prepares our mind to compassionately and truthfully answer. This communication model is rare because it focuses on hearing the heart of another.



Ignorance, prejudice and bigotry are REALLY difficult!
What about racism? Is there any hope?

To be a racist is to live in a small world filled with images of one's own value which is largely derived from condemning others. Though sad and even pitiful, those who dwell here are not entirely unreachable, but they are generally unavailable.

THE THEME FOR OUR LAST SEGMENT IS "RACISM":

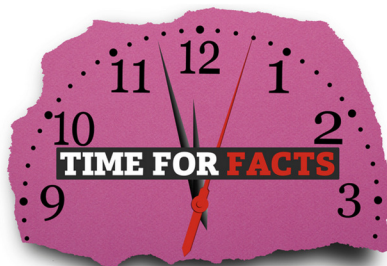
Rick: I am ignorant regarding the anatomy and physiology of how my feet work, and yet I can stand for Christ and attempt to walk in his footsteps!

The point is that there are some things we can remain ignorant about and trust others to handle. Ignorance about personal relationships needs to be investigated and put away through knowledge, wisdom and understanding.

We must realize that yelling at someone and accursing them of being racist never works to change them. It is a terrible way of dealing with racism.



Continuing with Territory 2: UNDERSTANDING! To the best of our ability, we need to assimilate those correct facts.



FACT: Once our partiality has descended into HATRED, we have ourselves **descended into darkness!**



1 John 2:9-11: (NASB) ⁹*The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now.* ¹⁰*The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him.* ¹¹*But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.*

Do I see through the eyes of another, knowing what they stand for? Do I really love my neighbor? These are important pieces to bring us to this question: Do I live in darkness because I HATE, or do I dwell in the light of God because I LOVE? Let's be truthful with ourselves to find out who we really are in order to find out more about each other.



The idea of “color blindness” is to be able to see everyone without seeing them through the eyes of race - looking at everyone the same. This seems like a great way to look at life, but there are things to consider.

Let’s go back to Karetta, Tekiya and Sebastian and hear their thoughts on color blindness.



TEKIYA: I think the intention behind color blindness for some people is that I am finding the common ground with you, that we're all human and I will treat you like a human. However, from what I've learned, color blindness takes away from the experiences of people of color. Because if you don't see their color then you probably won't think about how their experiences are different and more difficult. But it means so much more if you see the color in someone and the value that they have in their uniqueness. I think raising your kids to say, a human is a human and they deserve to be treated like a human is fantastic but there's also the fact that in history, Black people and people of color have not been treated like human. And that's been carried on and you may see that in public and know that that's wrong.

RICK: This is an interesting question. Let me give you my sense of when you address the idea of wanting to talk about color blindness. To me, color blindness is saying, I'm going to look at every person as a human being on an equal basis. In my mind it includes recognizing that whomever you are, whatever your background experiences, makes you unique. You have experiences that I know nothing about and can't even begin to identify with. So, see, to me the idea of color blindness is a really good thing as long as each individual and their experiences and their heritage is allowed to be exactly what it is. Color blindness to me isn't erasing things like your background and experience. It is more that you and I are the same as human beings, but your heritage is way different than mine and you can apply that to all kinds of different things. That's just my take on the idea of color blindness. I don't know if that's the definition or not but that is the way I've always seen it.

SEBASTIAN: Like you Rick, when growing up I thought color blindness was the goal. I thought, yeah, let's not look at color. We are all just people, right? That is what the goal is. And ultimately, I think that is true, but there is a lot of complexity to it because you should live your life in terms of daily interactions. I think as color blind you treat people just like they would be if color didn't exist. However, you cannot look at people and erase the fact that they have a struggle that you don't have to deal with.

RICK: Okay, good, and I appreciate that caveat there that color blindness is not an excuse to remove issues.



KARETTA: For me, the color blindness factor would work in a perfect world and unfortunately, we know that this world is not that. You can see everyone as being equal and think they are equal to me and I'm going to treat them the same. That is fine between you and that individual, but you also have to remember that individual still has to encounter the bigotry, the racism, the prejudice in the rest of the world.

RICK: You are right and so we have to be aware of the larger picture while we are living up to a higher standard in our own context of that larger picture.

TEKIYA: I think this is one of those phrases or instances that you should not just leave in the air, because just as we were having this conversation, that term color blindness means different things to different people. If you just say, you know, I'm color blind, it may be offensive because it may come across as he doesn't see the issues that are going on; the discrimination that's going on in the world. He just sees everyone is equal and there's no unlevel playing field.

RICK: That's a perfect example of being able to put it on the table so those you are communicating with understand exactly where you're coming from.

Color blindness is a great way to be, but if that word comes up in a conversation with a person of a different race we should explain. We could say, "I see you for everything that you are. While I feel we are equal, I respect the fact that your heritage and background are different."



Racism can only be remedied from the inside out. We cannot yell it out or force it out of somebody. This does not mean the condition makes one unreachable, but it does mean that several emotionally-protective "gates" and "bars" purposefully keep connections from being made. Racists do not generally want to be reached.

Given time, the display of love and kindness to such a person can begin break down their defenses.

Do not give up; chip away at them with goodness, kindness and God's grace:

Proverbs 29:11-13: (NASB) ¹¹A fool always loses his temper, but a wise man holds it back.

¹²If a ruler pays attention to falsehood, all his ministers become wicked. ¹³The poor man and the oppressor have this in common: The LORD gives light to the eyes of both.

Anger is often an excuse for rash behavior. When our eyes are filled with rage and hate they cannot be filled with light from God. Someone who is truly racist is filled with rage and hate. They see their race as better than another, and there is never a justification for that viewpoint.



TEKIYA: I want to bring up another controversial topic for you, Rick. There's a phrase, #blacklivesmatter.

RICK: Yes.

TEKIYA: And there's been a rebuttal phrase, #alllivesmatter. That is one of the phrases, again, that has to be explained, has to be discussed. And it's a good discussion to have because there are a lot of feelings about that and there are people who say, "All lives matter," and they have bad intentions. And there are people who say, "All lives matter" and they think, Jesus died for all. That is a good thing, that is a positive thing, let's emphasize that.

RICK: That is a tough one. Let me give you a "Rick perspective" on Black Lives Matter. I absolutely appreciate and understand the phrase "Black lives matter," as I absolutely, from my own perspective, appreciate and understand why someone would say, "All lives matter." When I think of "All lives matter," I think from the standpoint, like you said, of the plan of God. The only issue that I have with "Black lives matter" is that the organization Black Lives Matter, I think, to be blunt, has hijacked the phrase.

I have looked into what they stand for and they are for the deconstructing of the nuclear family. And I don't understand that. Why would you even begin to do that? This disturbs me. When you start to attach more politically oriented things to a phrase that is actually good as gold, I end up having a problem. I will stand up and tell anybody at any time that Black lives matter. Let's never underestimate that fact. But I do not want to be associated with the organization called by the same phrase. That's my issue because I do believe Black lives matter. Again, I'll say it 100 times. But I do not support the Black Lives Matter organization. I support the fact that Black lives matter, and I support it because it's clear that not enough people have a clear enough understanding of why that phrase needs to be said.

KARETTA: With the Black lives matter phrase, I think that just like so many other things, it started out as a good thing. Let's just say the Internet. The Internet, I believe, was created for a very good purpose. And that purpose was to be able to connect us with the rest of the world. It started out as something good but as it grew, bad things started to attach to it. So, I agree with what you just said in terms of the phrase Black lives matter. Yes, it's a good thing. But the organization may not be because of the attachment that has come along with it.

TEKIYA: I think I would put a disclaimer to just say that my thoughts and my feelings are mine. They are not affiliated with any political or organizational mission statement. They're not. They're not affiliated.

One other point about Black Lives Matter. It was founded by individuals who are, by their own words, trained Marxists. Communism is a system based on Marxist ideology.





The little words that surround the phrase, Black lives matter, or All lives matter, are important, because they can become knives or they can become bridges. You decide how you use those words.

Communication in the face of tension requires seven things.

Points 6 and 7 are an introduction to Part II which will focus on wisdom in dealing with racial tensions.



6. Willingness to embrace another's perspective of truth as valuable:

Romans 14:3: (NASB) *The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.*

Embracing another's perspective of truth can ONLY happen when you have confidence in the source. To embrace a point of view is to deeply appreciate and respect it. Embracing is accepting but it is not adopting. You may even disagree.



7. Willingness to trust even though you may not agree:

Romans 14:4: (NASB) *Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.*

To trust while disagreeing is to say: we are both fallible, and I have confidence in your stand before God. To trust is to give credibility. It is being able to represent someone else's value to a third party.

Racial tensions exist and they are difficult. Sometimes they even feel impossible.

- ✚ Work on ourselves to identify our own ignorance or any prejudices, bigotries or even racisms we might have.
- ✚ Decide to reach out, communicate and listen to someone of a different perspective or a different race or background.
- ✚ Listen with the intention of hearing, understanding and valuing what they have to say.

THEN we can build a bridge to success in our relationships.

*So, how should Christians respond to racism?
For Jonathan and Rick (and Julie) and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



Join us next week for our podcast on July 6, 2020
Ep. 1133: How Should Christians Respond to Racism?
(Part II)

Bonus Material and Study Questions

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.
— *Martin Luther King Jr.*

John Newton, author of the hymn “Amazing Grace” was a slave trader in the 1700’s and completely turned his life around. Megan Phelps-Roper left the bigotry and racism of the Westboro Baptist Church and turned her life around as well. We need to look at these examples and evaluate our own feelings and think about whether we contribute to harmony or divisiveness in our dealings with others who are different from us.

The answer to ignorance is empathy!

To be ignorant is to simply have a lack of knowledge. Ignorance is present in each and every human being who walks this earth for none of us knows all about everything. This can actually be a good thing for it opens the door for us to continually be vessels of learning. If we are willing to accept this premise, then we can begin to address the widespread problem of ignorance.

Ignorance can, if we let it, be an open door for communication. It can provoke a give and take that leaves both parties with a sense of connection. For give and take to exist there must be humility on both sides of the issue. Without humility we will certainly do the giving, but our taking will be for the sole purpose of dismantling rather than receiving.

Ignorance can be an invitation to trust someone else’s knowledge, to hear someone else’s perspective and to follow along with someone else’s thinking. The widespread prevalence of ignorance simply means that we - all of us - must keep learning. It means that individually we lack, but if we are open to another’s knowledge, we can be more whole. This is not to imply that another has the answer to an issue simply because they have experience. It does imply that their experience will at the very least be a tool of profound understanding as we seek an answer.



Our society has done a poor job of handling the ignorance that we all have. We have approached it as a poison that needs to be purged or a cancer that needs to be cut out when in fact; ignorance is simply a deficiency - a knowledge deficiency.

Scurvy is caused by a deficiency of vitamin C. The anemia, bleeding, ulcerated gums and exhaustion caused by this disease are cured by simply giving the patient what they lack - Vitamin C. Of course, the sufferer must be willing to accept the cure.

Ignorance is like scurvy - it can be treated by giving the sufferer what they lack - the information that expands their understanding. Of course, the sufferer must be willing to accept the cure, and this is not necessarily an easy thing. On the contrary, this is often what many who suffer from ignorance rebel against. We rebel because we too often find comfort and familiarity in our ignorance even though it is actively locking us out of a better life.

Ignorance cannot be identified with a protest or a sign. It cannot be exposed with a demand or a political platform. It cannot be solved with a tweet or a Facebook post. Ignorance can only be handled with communication. There is a specific protocol to handle ignorance that gives us the best possibility to alleviate its crippling effects. - Rick, CQ Host

The path to solving ignorance:

- Humility
- Respect for self and respect for others
- Willingness to listen without a confrontational agenda
- Willingness to respond for the purpose of verifying
- Willingness to speak candidly for the sake of presenting your best understanding of truth
- Willingness to embrace another's perspective of truth as valuable
- Willingness to trust even though you may not agree

Christian Questions Weekly Newsletter

CQ Rewind Show Notes and Study Questions

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to **22828** to get started.



Study QUESTIONS

Ep. 1132: How Should Christians Respond to Racism? (Part I)

<https://christianquestions.com/society/christians-racism-part-i/>

See:  **CQ Rewind**
SHOW NOTES

1. What is racism? Does God favor any race above another? What lesson can we learn from this? (See 1 Samuel 16:7, Romans 2:10-11, 10:12-13, James 2:8-9, 1 John 2:9-11)
2. How are ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, and racism defined? How do they differ from one another?
3. What are the two New Testament words for ignorance? How can we use it in a positive way? (See Proverbs 16:32, 18:13, 2 Peter 3:5, Acts 17:22-23)
4. What is the relationship between ignorance and prejudice? What must we do to remedy prejudice? (See Proverbs 11:9, 18:19, 1 Peter 5:6-8)
5. What are some examples of bigotry? What can we do to combat bigotry within ourselves? (See Proverbs 26:20-22, 28:21, 1 Peter 5:9-10)
6. What is the idea of “color blindness”? What are some benefits and risks of it?
7. What are the seven things needed for effective communication in the face of tension? (See 1 Peter 5:6-10, Romans 14:3-4)
8. What blessings have you received from God? How have they shaped and changed your life?
9. Give yourself an honest evaluation. Can any of your thoughts or actions be considered ignorance, prejudice, bigotry or racism? What will you do to change them?
10. What can you do to form a stronger connection with your brethren who come from different races and backgrounds?