

Parent Update on Justice and Race Lessons

Dear Parents,

Thank you for allowing us the privilege of talking through these difficult topics with your children! We realize that our students are incredibly likely to hear about these issues at school and/or on social media. We approach these conversations with great caution and humility, while also acknowledging the great need for our students to hear about these issues from a biblical perspective.

This is a summary of the main points that we have discussed during the past two youth group lessons; If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out! We will be more than happy to discuss with you further.

Blessings,
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Restorative Justice:

Please watch this [Bible Project video](#) for a summary of our lesson.

- Relationships between people were broken with the fall of man (just as the relationship between God and man was broken). Jesus came to unite us back to God and to each other.
- Every human is uniquely created in the image of God.
- Jesus made a way for restoration. God cares about physical needs in addition to spiritual needs.

Race:

Excerpts from the C&MA's statement on Justice and Race:

"Justice seeks to restore the harmonious relationships and order that God intended in Eden. As a result, we condemn racial inequality and embrace ethnic unity in diversity"

"When sin entered the world, shame distorted and devastated community, resulting in a lust for power, domineering hierarchy, subjugation, and violence."

"Some of the ways racial supremacy has been expressed are... vagrancy laws... Jim Crow laws of segregation, ongoing discrimination against Hispanics, exclusion of Chinese immigrants... redlining and housing codes, and disproportionate criminalization of communities of color."

"Avoiding racist actions is not enough; God's heart for the oppressed and marginalized calls us to oppose racial hierarchies."

(We encourage you to read the entire statement [here](#) for more information)

Key Bible Verses:

Micah 6:8, James 2:1-9, Galatians 3:28

Things to note:

- Much progress has been made regarding civil rights. However, the negative effects of oppression and broken systems last for a long time, while prejudiced attitudes continue to linger.
- We all have unconscious biases. When we become conscious of those biases, then we can move towards conscious inclusion, and eventually unconscious inclusion.
- Please refer to the “Bible Project” video on Biblical Restorative Justice above - this provides a good summary of God’s heart for restorative justice, and the role that believers’ play. This shaped much of our discussion below.
- We also acknowledge that people are often discriminated against for many other reasons - in addition to race. However, this is a topic that many of our students have experienced directly or indirectly, so we chose to discuss this topic as one mere example.

Questions that we discussed as a group:

- Have you ever witnessed someone being treated unfairly because of their racial or ethnic identity? If so, how did you respond? How did it make you feel?
- Why is it important to talk to one another about racial inequality and unearned privilege?
- How do you think Jesus would want us to respond to current racial issues?
- How does recognizing that each of us is made in God’s image impact your view of how you treat others?
- How can you use your sphere of influence to move toward kingdom-minded change and reflect the character of God?
- How do you think the Church should respond to issues of racial reconciliation?

Almost all of our students were able to note a time when they witnessed unfair treatment of someone because of their race. We encourage parents to continue this discussion at home.

If you have trouble accessing the links attached to this document, you can manually visit the sites below:

- Bible Project Restorative Justice Video: <https://youtu.be/A14THPoc4-4>
- C&MA’s Statement on Justice and Race: www.dorseyvillealliance.org/youth-group-resources
 - Statement can be found under Current Curriculum