



Growing in the Grace and Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ...

Meeting at:
Hope Community Bible Church
2300 S. 13th Street ♦♦♦ Rogers, Arkansas 72756

Mailing Address:
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Statement on Racism - (Ethnic Prejudice)

In light of the national discussions concerning the issues of racial relations, Hope Community Bible Church believes it is prudent to state the church's stance on the issue of racism.

The positions stated herein by the Church Leadership Team (Elders and Deacons) are based upon the clear teaching of the Word of God, our only true and infallible source for all matters of faith and practice, the only necessary apologetic to what we believe, as well as the Church's defense against any person(s), group, or government entity that would seek to undermine the congregation in these matters.

In the current national debate and cultural climate, Hope Community Bible Church seeks to be clear. There are and have been various expressions of racism in our nation that have deeply grieved, sorrowed, and burdened people of color, and particularly within the black community.

Hope CBC affirms the genuine cry of those who desire to have their humanity, and thus their worth and dignity as humans, acknowledged and protected. There are obvious racial disparities that are the result of racism as well as due to other societal and cultural factors in which believers, as citizens of a nation that affords the right and responsibility to influence just policies and practices, are to identify and seek to correct (Psalm 82:3).

Hope CBC affirms that only faith in Jesus Christ, a faith that makes a person a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), a faith that comes through the hearing and understanding of the Gospel, can ultimately reconcile humanity to God (2 Corinthians 5:20-21) as well as humanity to humanity (Ephesians 2:11-22). And so, the proclamation of the Gospel is the mission and priority of the Church; a Gospel that instructs us to *"...love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength..."* And to *"...love your neighbor as yourself."* (Mark 12:30-31).

While racism is a socially constructed word, Hope CBC biblically understands and defines "racism" as: ***the harboring and/or exhibiting of "anger, wrath, and malice" (Colossians 3:8); "enmities, strife" (Galatians 5:19); or by holding favoritism and partiality against a person or persons because of his/their ethnic background.*** A more biblically nuanced phrase for racism is "ethnic prejudice." Such racism may be manifested individually, or individuals may impose such vices upon public polices, laws, and systems.

Hope CBC affirms that all people are sinners (Romans 3:23) and will sin against God and other people (1 John 1:8).

Hope CBC affirms that due to the depravity of the human heart, there is a constant temptation for all people to yield to the sin of racism in attitude and/or action (James 1:14-15). Therefore, believers must constantly examine their hearts for any evidence of this sin (Psalm 139:23-24).

Sola Scriptura
Scripture Alone

Solus Christus
Christ Alone

Sola Gratia
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Hope CBC affirms that all people have been guilty of the sin of partiality/prejudice at different levels and when this sin reveals itself through racism, it, as well as all sins of partiality/prejudice, are to be condemned and repented of in a person's life (James 2:1-9).

In contrast to racism – Hope CBC affirms that people of all ethnic backgrounds are equally created by God to be His image-bearers (Genesis 1:26-27); are all brothers and part of one race, the human race, by our common lineage from Adam (Acts 17:26); and thus all worthy of human respect and dignity (1 Thessalonians 5:15).

Hope CBC affirms that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Matthew 9:35-36). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual or group are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of the church (Titus 3:1-3).

Thus, Hope CBC condemns and renounces all forms of racism as a sin of pride that may subtly or overtly manifest itself as racial animosity or as racial supremacy (Luke 18:11). Such sinful prejudice and partiality falls short of God's revealed will and betrays the command of Jesus to *"love your neighbor as yourself"* (Mark 12:31).

Hope CBC affirms that all cultures contain policies, practices, laws, and systems that foster sinful attitudes and/or actions, which at times includes the sin of racism (Romans 3:23; 5:12). Any and all racist attitudes or actions made by individuals or found in the policies, practices, laws, or systems of our culture, are inconsistent with biblical Christianity and therefore must be denounced, rejected, and remedied. (Titus 2:11-13).

Hope CBC affirms the right and responsibility of human governments, both national and local, to administer justice and to police the people to that end (Romans 13:1-6; 1 Peter 2:13-14). Hope CBC affirms our gratitude to the LORD for providing men and women from every ethnic background who offer their lives to the faithful and solemn duty of upholding justice and protecting the lives and property of the citizens they serve and who do so with honor and commitment to the just rule of law (1 Peter 2:17). Hope CBC prays that all who serve in this governmental capacity will uphold justice in all cases according to the Word of God (Deuteronomy 1:16-17; 16:19) and God's goodness in giving us government (Romans 13:1-6).

Hope CBC affirms that since all people are sinful (Romans 3:23), that even those who serve in these governmental capacities will sin, either individually or in the practices, policies, and laws they implement. Such sin does not achieve the goodness of God in giving us government (Romans 13:1-6) or uphold God's justice and righteousness. Hope CBC denounces any and all individuals who serve in policing or any governmental capacities, as well as all practices, policies, and laws that may guide such individuals to abuse their power in order to pervert justice and exhibit any forms of racism in attitudes and actions (Exodus 23:6; Psalm 82:3).

Adopted by the Elders – July 14, 2020

Special thanks to the Church Leadership Team in crafting this statement

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