



BRAVE CHURCH
TACKLING TOUGH TOPICS
TOGETHER

Antiracism

Part I

Opening Prayer

God of justice,

In your wisdom you create all people in your image, without exception. Through your goodness, open our eyes to see the dignity, beauty, and worth of every human being. Open our minds to understand that all your children are brothers and sisters in the same human family. Open our hearts to repent of racist attitudes, behaviors, and speech which demean others. Open our ears to hear the cries of those wounded by racial discrimination, and their passionate appeals for change. Strengthen our resolve to make amends for past injustices and to right the wrongs of history. And fill us with courage that we might seek to heal wounds, build bridges, forgive and be forgiven, and establish peace and equality for all in our communities.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen

Covenant Rules

RULE 1

We will accept conflict and commit to the way of kindness.

RULE 2

We will take responsibility for how our own words are received.

RULE 3

We will ask permission before we challenge someone's views on a subject.

RULE 4

We will show respect for one another and graciously receive feedback if someone feels disrespected.

RULE 5

We will use 'I' instead of 'you' statements. We will not accuse or attack."

RULE 6

Give everyone who wants to speak an opportunity to do so.

Topics on Antiracism

April 12

What is the difference between Antiracism and Racism?
How do we address Institutional Racism vs. Individual Racism?
What effect does White Privilege have on the race issue?

April 19

Reparations – To be or not to be
Microaggressions – What are they?

In the Beginning

Genesis 1: 26-27 and 31

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

²⁷ So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

³¹ Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

In the Beginning (continued)

Galatians 3:28

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

In the Beginning (continued)

Philippians 2:1-4

¹ So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Discussion Questions

If we believe in the message of 'Imago Dei,' how does it play out in our daily living?

Definitions

- Racism / Racist
- Antiracism / Antiracist
- Institutional or Systemic Racism
- Whiteness / White Privilege

Racism / Racist

A complex system of beliefs and behaviors, grounded in a presumed superiority of the white race. These beliefs and behaviors are conscious and unconscious; personal and institutional; and result in the oppression of people of color and benefit the dominant group, white people. They lead to racial inequity.

A racist is one who is supporting a racial policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist idea.

A racist policy is any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between racial groups – institutional racism, structural racism, systemic racism.

We are surrounded by racial inequity—as visible as the law and as hidden as our private thoughts.

Antiracism / Antiracist

The active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices, and attitudes so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

The only way to undo racism is to constantly identify it and describe it - and then dismantle it.“

Ibram X. Kendi

We have an issue in this country, and it has to do with race.

Whoopi Goldberg

Antiracism (continued)

Antiracism is an active way of seeing and being in the world, in order to transform it. Because racism occurs at all levels and spheres of society and can function to produce and maintain exclusionary “levels” and “spheres,” antiracism education/activism is necessary in all aspects of society.

It does not happen exclusively in the workplace, in the classroom, or in selected aspects of our lives. Antiracism theory analyzes/critiques racism and how it operates, which provides us with a basis for taking action to dismantle and eliminate it.

Understanding race and racism is rooted in understanding the experience of racialized people. Understanding racism involves becoming aware of how race and racism affect the lived experience of people of color and Indigenous people, as well as becoming aware of how we participate, often unknowingly, in racism.

Analyzing or theorizing about racism refers to understanding how racism functions at personal, ideological, and institutional levels. Understanding the complex and specific ways that racism operates helps us to develop effective actions to eliminate or address it. Antiracism also examines the power imbalances between racialized people and non-racialized/white people. These imbalances play out in the form of unearned privileges that white/light-skinned people benefit from and racialized people do not.

Antiracism (continued)

In summary, a person who practices antiracism is someone who works to become aware of:

- How racism affects the lived experience of people of color and Indigenous people. How racism is systemic and has been part of many foundational aspects of society throughout history and can be manifested in both individual attitudes and behaviors as well as formal (and “unspoken”) policies and practices within institutions.
- How people participate, often unknowingly, in racism. How white privilege supports white people in learning how whiteness—often without them recognizing it—shapes their place in society, and its impacts.
- How racism affects the wealth of marginalized people. How 60% of the population holds 90% of the wealth and how 2/3 of the money earned by the educated black man compares to the uneducated white man’s earnings.

The Concept of Being an Antiracist

Video with Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, Director of the Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University, and author of *How to Be an Antiracist*.

https://www.aspenideas.org/sessions/how-to-be-an-antiracist?utm_source=google&utm_medium=adgrant&utm_campaign=Dynamics&utm_term=&gclid=Cj0KCQjwiZqhBhCJARIsACHHEH8MrDaY4zBXqqp129yj_hp cXsYnGERbv2kBPggXpW90wxX7A2tpEEEaAhe-EALw_wcB



It's hard to understand antiracism without understanding what it means to be racist.
Ibram X. Kendi

Discussion Questions

What is your response to the message we heard in the video?

You're either racist or antiracist; there's no such thing as 'not racist.' Author and historian Dr. Ibram X. Kendi claims there's no such thing as being 'not racist.' He explains that even inaction (simply being 'not racist') in the face of racism is, in fact, a form of racism. The idea of an innocent bystander is wishful thinking for Kendi; instead, there's only racism and antiracism.

Institutional or Systemic Racism

Refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may appear neutral on the surface but have an exclusionary impact on particular groups – their effect is to create advantages for white people and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as non-white.

***One does not simply sit by and do nothing.
Rev. Dr. Ben Trawick***

The Effects of Racism

In the context of secondary and post-secondary institutions, antiracism practice might look like:

- Developing new policies and procedures
- Providing antiracism education for teachers' personal development
- Reviewing hiring practices to ensure diversity and inclusion
- Examining curriculum materials to identify racial bias
- Developing antiracism curriculum materials, resources, and strategies
- Ensuring inclusive classroom practices

In the context of health equity, antiracism practice might look like:

- Treating all patients the same
- Health care for all people
- The kidney factor – inequity that keeps us from receiving additional care.

In the context of the racial wealth gap, antiracism practice might look like:

- Extraction of wealth from the African-American community
- Laundered through the state into the white community through
 - ✓ GI bill
 - ✓ FHA loan program
 - ✓ Redlining
- Reparations – eliminate the wealth gap

Discussion Questions

Systemic racism vs individual racism?

Which came first—institutional racism or interpersonal racism?

Is it a system problem or an attitude problem?

Do we want to deny that systematic racism exists because that means we might need to do something that we would rather not do?

Do we insist that racism is all about the individual and not the system so that we can point to others as the problem without having to change the system, the laws, and the way that things are done?

Whiteness / White Privilege

Whiteness is racism based on the concept of whiteness—a powerful fiction enforced by power and violence. 'Whiteness,' like 'color' and 'Blackness,' are essentially social constructs applied to human beings rather than veritable truths that have universal validity. Whiteness is a constantly shifting boundary separating those who are entitled to have certain privileges from those whose exploitation and vulnerability to violence is justified by their not being white.

White privilege is the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits, and choices bestowed upon people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

There may be no more consequential White privilege than life itself!

Discussion

Questions

What does white privilege mean?

Do you think privilege still exists for whites in this country?

Prayer of Confession

Holy one, lover of all, in raising Jesus from the grave, you shattered the power of sin and death. We confess that we remain captive to doubt and fear, bound by the ways that lead to death. **We overlook the poor and the hungry, not seeing the connection between our excess and their need. We pass by those who mourn, wrapped up in our own concerns. We ignore the cries of the oppressed and are blind to the causes of their oppression. We fail to cherish your creation, and each creature of it. We still do not know (or do not choose) the things that make for peace. Forgive us, God of mercy. Help us to trust your power to change our lives and make us new. Teach us the ways of love and life, of humility and grace, of justice and mercy, of compassion and care, that we may know the joy of life abundant given in Jesus Christ, the risen Lord. Amen**

Discussion

Questions

Do these words from our Prayer of Confession remind us of “the things that make for peace” and do they encourage us to seek out new ways to love and live?

or

Is the church complicit in spectating racial/social justice?

Closing Reflection

Race and racism is a reality that so many of us grow up *learning to just deal with.*

But if we ever hope to move past it, it can't just be on people of color to deal with it.

It's up to all of us—Black, white, everyone—no matter how well-meaning we think we might be, *to do the honest, uncomfortable work of rooting it out.*

Michelle Obama