

Life + Line



VOLUME 1 Number 39

OCTOBER 4, 1992

THE COLOR OF GOD

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"And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:27)

In recent times there has been much attention on the tensions between racial and cultural groups. We see it on television, read about it in the magazines and newspapers, and hear in the music we listen to. The messages we receive are conflicting and confusing. For example, we listen to a song that promotes racial unity with the lyrics saying, "it doesn't matter if you're black or white." In sharp contrast, we hear a warning from a rap group about the dominant society in this country, "can't truss it."

Who are we to believe? Are we to believe the myths and rumors of stereotypes targeted at different cultural groups? Do we believe a theory of genocide committed by one race against another? Do we believe the opinions of a certain group or individual dictating our very thoughts and feelings about relating to another race? In the fading last years of the 20th Century, there are many questions to be answered in the matter of racial equality. Which voice will we listen to?

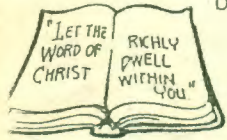
Who are we to believe?

Racial tensions and hate crimes have risen over the past decade. Of course, prejudice is nothing new. As written in Ecclesiastes 1:9, "That which has been is that which will be, And that which has been done is that which will be done. So, there is nothing new under the sun", and one would have to think that, like sin and avarice (i.e. greed), racism is nothing new either. From

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the dawn of the Egyptian rule over the Hebrews, the era of the Roman empire, to our present day America, there has been at least times in history where one cultural group believed itself superior over all others, feeling like they are the dominant race, ordained by God Himself.



God doesn't think like we do.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither your ways My ways," declares the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9) The color of one's flesh doesn't matter as much as his mental heart, which God focuses on. As He told 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." (I Samuel 16:7) Every person who has ever lived on this earth has been made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Whites, Blacks, Latinos, Orientals, and many other races are God molded, God shaped clay. "But now O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou art our potter, and all of us are the work of thy hand." (Isaiah 64:8-9)

Scientists are now starting to confirm the theory that the first man on earth, Adam, was black. Even if that were so, then Eve along with Adam took a bite of the forbidden fruit, and sin (which affects every human being regardless of skin color or culture) was still introduced into the world. Once again, color of the flesh makes no difference, only the state of one's heart. What must be understood if not stressed enough, is that our very actions and thoughts as individuals is what God sees and judges us by. Cain didn't kill Abel because his skin was a lighter or darker shade, but Abel was killed because of jealousy. Jealousy is one of many emotional traits each and every human creation of God shares in his or her mental heart. And evidence proves over the course of many centuries like Cain, jealousy and anger extend across the board to all races. Adam does have the claim of springing forth other races and cultures around this earth as written in Acts 17:26, "and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation." Why is that? Verse 27 gives the answer. "That they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us."

Then if what was written is true, what about the color of God? Aren't we all made in His image? Yes, we are. But it
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is a color not in the physical sense, but of the spiritual. the skin is physical; not only does it have pigmentation, it is also flesh. Flesh that suffers cuts and abrasions, grows old with wrinkles and sags after the body reaches a certain age. Physically, our bodies lack a soul or internal character which God sees in all of us. God is "spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth." (John 4:24) For those individuals who claim a White or Black God, John 1:18 dismisses that view. "No man has seen God at any time." Even when God spoke to Moses, He spoke to him in the form of a burning bush. Therefore, God is not a physical deity we humans can proclaim for being on our side, but He lives in all of us (that is, those who are Christians). When Christ was crucified on the cross, He eliminated the prejudice between the Jews and the Gentiles. "For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments, contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity." (Ephesians 2:14-16). Through the cross, Christ allowed both Gentiles and Jews to become one in Him. Through Him today, Blacks, Whites, and other races can also become one.

So...what is the color of God? Remember in Acts 17:27, it said, "He is not far from each one of us"? Well, He is not far from us at all. In fact, for those of us who are Christians, God is right there inside each one of us. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love." (I John 4:7-8) While we as humans were made in the image of God, we were made in an image of love. Love is inside each one of us, and love transcends every social class, culture or race. It is a powerful emotion and powerful gift given to us by the Creator. "Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant." (I Corinthians 13:4)

In composing this complex essay, it is the view of the author that the focus of skin color is a subject created by man over the centuries and that it is nothing new under the sun. Men have founded false religious claims based on it. Masses of people have blindly followed it, and unless we watch out, Christians may also find themselves caught in the racial trap when, in God's eyes, it means nothing. Christ removed prejudice when He died on the cross. And in the church, prejudice should be erased as well.

The color of God is Love.

(Charles Chatmon)

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That Binds

