



Racial Reconciliation Sunday

“For he is our peace, who made both groups one and tore down the dividing wall of hostility. In his flesh, he made of no effect the law consisting of commands and expressed in regulations, so that he might create in himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace. He did this so that he might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross by which he put the hostility to death.”

Ephesians 2:14-16, CSB

Where Do We Go From Here?

by *Matthew J. Hall*

In his famous speech at the 1963 March on Washington, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and famously spoke of the “fierce urgency of now” in the pursuit of racial justice.

While his critics seemed to assume that the “wheels of inevitability” would bring about progress, King recognized that the call to direct action was one deeply rooted in a realistic and biblical vision of the world and God’s purposes.

That urgency has not changed. America has changed in profound ways, to be sure, but recent events have proved that racism still lingers in the human heart and that the church has a long way to go to help heal these divisions.

So what will be needed in the days ahead? Simple optimism is bankrupt and unable to anchor us. But there is something deeper, something more enduring than optimism: hope. When optimism collapses under the weight of reality and pain, hope presses on. And there is love. When cynicism and fatigue press in, love is a ballast; love for God, love for neighbor.

In an age marked by incivility and polarization, what if the church led the way in love? When it comes to pursuing racial reconciliation, we may not always agree on the right step to take next. We will misunderstand one another and even offend one another. And quite often, our hearts will break as we walk the path of reconciliation.

The Apostle Paul understood this. In the midst of horrific suffering and the constant attacks of his enemies, he held up the priority of love.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

That’s the path forward for our churches as we press on toward the vision of racial justice and reconciliation. This is the path of the risen Christ, who calls us to himself and to one another. And we will only walk the path if we “stick with love.”



THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY COMMISSION
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION