

ABSTRACT

Contemporary Racial History of an African American Pastor in a Local Congregation through Shared Anamnesis: Overhearing and Evaluating a Pastor's Experience of Racism

Arbra L. Bailey

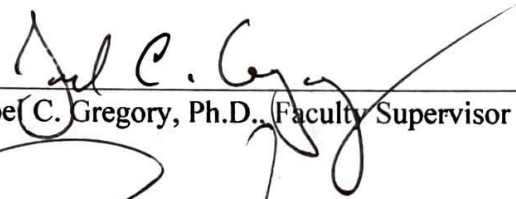
Faculty Supervisor: Joel C. Gregory, Ph.D.

This project aimed to assist Black and white Greater Houston pastors desiring personal, congregational, and community transformation to embody the Great Commandment by seeing, hearing, and confronting racism more clearly.

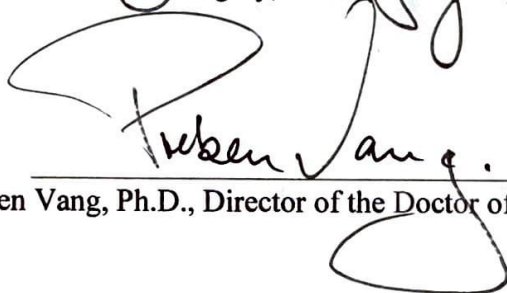
The five-week seminar (held once per week for 120 minutes), "A LUVE Talk on Racial History," focused on exploring a local Greater Houston African American pastor's racial history by listening, understanding, validating, and evaluating (LUVE Talk) the pastor's experience with racism. The project measured the impact of theological and biblically based remembering of racial history through the perspective of an African American pastor in relation to identifying and confronting racism. The Great Commandment served as a key biblical passage studied. The seminar also explored the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on contemporary pastoral remembrance of racial history. Participants examined personal, church, and community racial histories. The final seminar explored a biblical model for embracing unity, considering the African American pastor and participants' contextualized and shared racial histories. Opportunities for

participants to explore their racial history included developing a racial autobiography, church racial history, and community racial history (these opportunities were for the participants' usage and not a part of data collection for the project).

For data collection purposes, participants completed an online pre- and post-racial history survey (with reflection and discussion questions). After each seminar session, participants also completed a weekly online reflection journal assessment. Through a mixed-method research approach, comparing participants' survey responses with the control group, the results indicate an increase in racial history awareness, leading to pastors identifying and confronting racism more clearly.



Joe C. Gregory, Ph.D., Faculty Supervisor



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Contemporary Racial History of an African American Pastor in a Local
Congregation through Shared Anamnesis: Overhearing and
Evaluating a Pastor's Experience of Racism

A Culminating Project Report Submitted to the Faculty of
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of
Doctor of Ministry

By
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Graduating with an MDiv from seminary, I felt a strong calling to grow in my theological and practical education of the Black church and its contributions to the academy, society, and the local community. The Black church has always been a place of comfort, joy, hope, and encouragement for me. I am grateful for the opportunity to shine a little light on the tradition, theology, experiences, and hermeneutics that continue to shape my life. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, nor of my context, being a product of the Black church.

My Doctor of Ministry cohort provided the staying power to press forward in completing this work. My colleagues' ongoing support, prayers, and encouragement are immeasurable. I had the honor of sharing this doctoral journey of divine synchronicity with my cousin, Cokiesha Bailey Robinson, who was a cohort member. Her gift of presence and sisterly love exemplified the cohort's generosity.

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consider the pursuit of a doctoral degree. I value and hold dear his friendship and confidence in my scholarship.

I am blessed and happily married for over twenty-five years to an amazing woman of God, my helpmate and best friend, Helena Bailey. Her graceful gift of patience, love, and sacrifice during this season of ministry made it possible for me to focus on this project until completion. Friday Family Movie Night has been a staple in the Bailey family tradition for more than twenty years. It is customary at the Bailey household on Fridays for Helena, AJ (our youngest son), my mom, and me to exercise the art of negotiation in determining the movie selected for entertainment. During the last month of this project, team Bailey graciously extended an opt-out for my participation. I look forward to returning and refining my Friday night negotiation skills.

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Finally, but certainly not least, I acknowledge my Lord and Savior and the empowering presence and lived experience reality of the Spirit, "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." (John 14:26, NRSV)

I am grateful to the Almighty God for the opportunity to develop this work on racism and racial justice. For my entire theological and ministerial career, I have longed to study, investigate, wrestle with, reflect on, comprehend, and apprehend the Christian faith and praxis from the unique and contextual lens of my community, the African American church. Racism and racial justice are matters that we must attend to in the household of faith. How do we learn to listen, hear, and see the context of the other and respect their position? How do we allow God's grace to motivate us to run this Christian race? How do we engage others in the grace gift of the Gospel? I acknowledge this project as the pursuit of a response to these relevant and vital questions, and to God be the glory for the great things he has done!

DEDICATION

To my Proverbs 31 wife Helena (my *agape*), our adulting young adults Arbra, II (AJ),
Vanessa, and Jerryll, and my amazing mom.

&

To my village
(in heaven above and here on earth below).

CHAPTER ONE

An Introduction to the Project

The project intervention, “A LUVE Talk on Racial History,” aims to help pastors desiring personal, congregational, and community transformation embody the Great Commandment by seeing, hearing, and confronting racism more clearly.

Project Context

The setting occurs in the backdrop of American society, Christianity, and communities with real problems (specifically historically underserved Black communities).¹ Big data has sounded the alarm on the state of unity in Greater Houston;

¹ Mike Laws, “Why We Capitalize ‘Black’ (and Not ‘White’),” *Columbia Journalism Review*, accessed April 28, 2023, <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/capital-b-black-styleguide.php>. The researcher intends to capitalize “Black” and keep “white” lowercase. The researcher also plans on utilizing African American and Euro American, minus the hyphen, for several reasons. The researcher concurs with the *Columbia Journalism Review* and The Diversity Style Guide; capitalizing “white” continues to support white supremacy and the racial dominance of white culture as the majority in America. A critical issue the researcher is addressing in the project involves the negative repercussions of a white majority culture imposing its viewpoint as the de facto position on race, religion, socioeconomics, and politics. As The Diversity Style Guide suggests, the researcher capitalizes “Black” to represent the African Diaspora and even Africans who make their way to America. They are seen (if not heard) by white culture as Black. Also, the researcher capitalizes “Black” because it is a shared phenomenon, heritage, way of life, rooted historical perspective, connection with African ancestors, and a rich history and heritage from The Motherland. So, the researcher is capitalizing Black for a sense of communal connection and solidarity. A vital part of the project is seeing and hearing through the lens of the Black church. So, Black takes center stage, and white carries a supporting role. The researcher recognizes this as a role reversal since the beginning of slavery (before 1619) when white took center stage, relegating Black to the margins of life. The project promotes Black history front and center (Black church tradition specifically) to change perspectives, paradigms, and lenses to hear and see God at work from a different angle throughout history. When the researcher utilizes the term “African American,” the researcher is explicitly referring to African Americans, descendants of enslaved Africans in America—a unique historical, social, economic, political, and religious disposition. The researcher chooses not to hyphenate African American because to do so would imply an identity beginning with slavery—that apart from an imposed identity given to African Americans as Americans, African Americans have no history beyond this nation. African Americans have a rich Christian history before American and European Christianity, per Thomas C. Oden’s research. See Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2007). So, the researcher chooses not to place or attach a dependence on identity based on the researcher’s African roots and heritage in America. Instead, the researcher’s African heritage and its dominance have led the researcher to have a unique perspective on

racial inequity and injustice are prevalent within local communities. Understanding Houston's *Poverty and Social Mobility in Houston* study outlines the impact of racism in Greater Houston area communities.²

Race, poverty, and social mobility (systemic factors) continue to limit participation in the Houston economy (an indicator of human flourishing). One out of five Black and Hispanic residents live in poverty within Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties. Within these three counties, one out of three single-parent households live at or below the poverty line. One out of four working families in ALICE (asset-limited, income-constrained, and employed) households struggle to make ends meet in these three counties alone. The average Black child from a low-income family in Fort Bend County earns a household income of \$27,000 in adulthood, compared to \$44,000 for a white child. A Black child from a low-income family raised in Montgomery County earns a household income of \$25,000 compared to a white child making \$39,000.³

living in America and being American. The researcher also realizes and adopts the stance of Africentrism, where the end goal is to have African Americans and Euro Americans on equal footing, not subservient to one another. So, the researcher recognizes that Euro Americans have a European history that shapes and forms how they view and see the world as Americans. "African American" and "Euro American" are capitalized to acknowledge a shared predisposition for remembrance while now living and being assimilated into American culture—Americanized. Nevertheless, the researcher will capitalize Black for the intentionality of seeing and hearing anamnesis of the Great Commandment through the lens of the Black (African American) church. The Black church is synonymous with the African American church based on its historical usage.

² The community impacts identified originate from an excerpt of the researcher's Covenant Community Houston proposal, presented in the Baylor University Truett Seminary LEAD 7V21 Faith, Philanthropy, and Fundraising class taught by Dr. Dustin Benac in July 2022.

³ Understanding Houston, "Poverty and Social Mobility in Houston," accessed June 21, 2022, <https://www.understandinghouston.org/topic/economic-opportunity/poverty-social-mobility>.

Neighboring diverse local congregations divide over race, politics, socioeconomics, and religion. Local faith communities have strayed away from the Great Commandment to love God with all their heart, soul, and mind while loving their neighbor as themselves.⁴ In this post-Christian era, local trust in the faith-based community is waning. Over half of society believes religion is the problem and claims they are better off without God.⁵ How can nearby diverse congregations combine theology and behavior in concrete ways?

The American experience of racism in Christianity impacts the local church experience in the fabric of every congregation. Local white evangelical pastors' limited exposure to African American pastors' experience with racism reinforces a case of spiritual deafness and moral blindness to racism's impact on theology and behavior.⁶ Nationally and locally American churches, specifically white evangelical churches, have perpetuated racism with a history of compromise and complicity in local community

⁴ See Baylor University's series of Racism in the White Church conferences addressing racism as a gospel issue, sponsored by The Eula Mae and John Baugh Family Foundation, The Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing, The Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI), and Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary.

⁵ Karl Zinsmeister, "Less God, Less Giving? Religion and generosity feed each other in fascinating ways," 2019, accessed June 22, 2022, <https://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/magazine/less-god-less-giving/>.

⁶ See J. Alfred Smith Sr., "Answering the Call of God for Sankofa Leadership in These Times," in *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Wisdom from the Sankofa Institute for African American Pastoral Leadership*, ed. Dwight N. Hopkins (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2018), 68-82, for understanding racism as moral blindness. See Bryan Massingale, "Race and Reconciliation," in *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Wisdom from the Sankofa Institute for African American Pastoral Leadership*, ed. Dwight N. Hopkins (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2018), 133. Massingale quotes Taylor Branch, "Almost as color defines vision itself, so race shapes the cultural eye—what we do and do not notice, the reach of empathy and the alignment of response. Race shapes what we see, who we notice, who is deemed important to notice or with whom we are concerned."

churches.⁷ For example, local church history is often told through a Western European lens, minimizing the significance of Black church history.⁸

Problem Statement

Racism, a social and power construct predicated on race, is embedded in the fabric of American culture and society, including religion.⁹ Racism, analogous to the air breathed, is often invisible and audibly muted until extreme environmental conditions unveil its ubiquitous and structural nature (e.g., the recent COVID-19 pandemic).¹⁰

The same racism evident nationally finds expression in particular local church experiences. Amnesia of Scripture's call to an anamnestic praxis hinders Greater Houston pastors from collaborating across racial lines to address contemporary, local, community concerns of racial injustice and inequality exacerbated by recent pandemics, poverty, and policing crises.

⁷ Jemar Tisby, *The Color of Compromise: The Truth About the American Church's Complicity in Racism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2019); Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁸ For the contributions of Black Baptist history, see Leroy Fitts, *A History of Black Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1985).

⁹ For racism as a social construct, see J. Deotis Roberts, "A Black Ecclesiology of Involvement," *The Journal of Religious Thought* 32, no. 1 (April 1, 1975):36-46; Smith Sr., "Answering the Call of God for Sankofa Leadership in These Times," 68-82; Massingale, "Race and Reconciliation," 133; and Ibram X. Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist* (New York: One World, 2019), 41. Kendi expands racism's reach as a power construct.

¹⁰ See African American pastor's post during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic concerning foreign and domestic missions, see Lawrence Aker, Twitter Post, June 23, 2020, 11:06 AM. <https://twitter.com/preachingtoday/status/1275460109825499136?t=qFK8M89-56rF9hrpzPbeKw&s=09>.

*Rationale*¹¹

The project's purpose entails developing a five-week cohort experience with a group of Greater Houston African and Euro American pastors, overhearing the contemporary racial history of a tenured African American pastor through shared anamnesis,¹² and equipping them to identify and confront specific instances of racism.¹³

Basic Assumptions

This dissertation and project derive from some basic assumptions of the researcher:

- (1) No one religion, denomination, or race has a monopoly on religion or theology.¹⁴
- (2) Racial justice aligns with God's kingdom justice and Christ's holistic gospel.

¹¹ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011). Sensing conveys the Doctor of Ministry degree's desired transformation outcomes for the pastor-student and congregation (corresponding to the Doctor of Ministry researcher and participating pastors accordingly).

¹² The tenured African American pastor's context of Black biblical hermeneutics, Black church tradition, Black theology, and the Black religious experience shapes the cohort's shared remembrance.

¹³ Participants will overhear and evaluate racial history from an individual, church, and community context. For a practical three-phased approach to identify, confront, and dismantle racism, see Jemar Tisby, *How to Fight Racism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Reflective, 2021). Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice progresses from awareness to relationships to commitment. Tisby is the president of The Witness: A Black Christian Collective, where he writes about race, religion, politics, and culture. Tisby's writings receive coverage by *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, and *CNN*. He is the co-host of the *Pass the Mic* podcast and a nationwide conference speaker. Tisby earned his BA from the University of Notre Dame, an MDiv from Reformed Theological Seminary, and a PhD in history at the University of Mississippi. He studies race, religion, and social movements in the twentieth century.

¹⁴ James Woodward and Stephen Pattison, "An Introduction to Pastoral and Practical Theology in Historical Perspective," in *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*, eds. James Woodward and Stephen Pattison (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 12.

- (3) Race is a social and power construct.¹⁵
- (4) Racism is a sin and does exist.
- (5) Scripture is infallible in matters of faith and practice.
- (6) Greater Houston Black churches, while not monolithic, have a historical center whose roots reside in the soil of Africa (via African traditional religion).¹⁶
- a. Greater Houston Black churches have African American church distinctives compared to Greater Houston Euro American (white) churches.
 - b. The Black ecclesial tradition is one viable historical reflection of Greater Houston African American churches.¹⁷
- (7) The tension, anxiety, and crises of the COVID-19 pandemic heightened the racial tensions between Greater Houston African American and Euro American churches.

¹⁵ Roberts, “A Black Ecclesiology of Involvement,” 36-46; Smith Sr., “Answering the Call of God for Sankofa Leadership in These Times,” 68-82; Massingale, “Race and Reconciliation,” 133-160; and Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 41.

¹⁶ Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*.

¹⁷ Esau McCaulley, *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020). McCaulley focuses on the reformist/transformist strand of Black church tradition.

*Definitions*¹⁸

As a primer to the multilayered complexity of gaining awareness of race and racial history in Greater Houston, a shared lexicon follows. For multiple terms, there exists a semantic range and, at times, dissonance in definitions based on the context of the definer. The dissonance and variations alert the reader of the difficulty (due to fluidity) in identifying and grasping the vast reach of race and racism within American society, Greater Houston, and the church community (at large).

Activist

Per Kendi, “One who has a record of power or policy change.”¹⁹

Advanced Capitalism (see Conscious Capitalism and Racist Capitalism)

Dehumanization of people as commodities.²⁰

African American (see Africentricism)

Denotes a distinct ethnic group of people born in America from an ancestry of Africans enslaved in America.²¹

¹⁸ A plethora of critical terms is introduced based on the conviction that the ability to describe a person, place, thing, or idea empowers the ability for active engagement (definitions, context, and semantic range matters).

¹⁹ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 222.

²⁰ Keri Day, *Unfinished Business: Black Women, the Black Church, and the Struggle to Thrive in America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012).

²¹ J. Deotis Roberts, *Africentric Christianity: A Theological Appraisal for Ministry* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2000). Roberts draws the correlation between African American and Africentricism: African American is African-centered, enabling the embracement of a pre-slavery heritage and an equal participant status on the multicultural playing field of America. Thus, African American is congruent with Africentricism.

African Consciousness

A collective consciousness and self-identification of African descent people, necessitating unity predicated on their African history;²² the term implies the importance of growth in awareness of their social context.²³

African Tradition(al) Religion(s)/Traditional African Religion (ATR/TAR)

Based on African categories derived from African peoples' experiences, historically, religious expression occurs through the tribe.²⁴

Africentrism (see African Consciousness)

Embracing Africentric Christianity for a culturally relevant Black church ministry, requiring praxis (thought and action).²⁵

*Anamnesis*²⁶

Remembrance.²⁷

²² See Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*, 1-16.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ See J. Deotis Roberts, *Black Religion, Black Theology: The Collected Essays of J. Deotis Roberts*, ed. David Emmanuel Goatley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003), 128-144. Per Roberts, African traditional religion may inform Christian theology's communion of the Saints by bridging the living and the dead in fellowship through the practice of the sacraments (as a shared event experienced throughout the ages). See Chapter Two for more details on the Lord's Supper.

²⁵ Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*.

²⁶ See Chapter Two for more details on anamnesis.

²⁷ Richard Ginn, *The Present and the Past: A Study of Anamnesis* (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1989), 19-20. Per Ginn, the meaning of anamnesis is derived from context. When considering the New Testament as context, the meaning of anamnesis must confer with the Johannine and Synoptic traditions of the Passover and the Last Supper.

Anthropological Model

An indigenization or ethnographic contextual theology model, focusing on personal fulfillment while believing human experience is equal in authority with Scripture and tradition.²⁸

Anthropology

Linda Thomas states, “*Anthropology* is rational inquiry into and understanding of human beings and culture.”²⁹

Antiracist

According to Kendi, “One who is expressing an idea of racial equality, or is actively supporting a policy that leads to racial equity or justice.”³⁰

*ARC of Racial Justice*³¹

An approach to fighting racism leading to racial justice; ARC stands for awareness, relationships, and commitment: 1) Awareness: Proactively raising self-awareness and education; 2) Relationships: Intentionally developing cross-racial and ethnic relationships with people; 3) Commitment: Personal commitment to racial justice at the systemic and individual level.

²⁸ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology: Faith and Cultures* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992), 141.

²⁹ Linda E. Thomas, “Introduction,” in *Living Stones in the Household of God*, ed. Linda E. Thomas (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), vii.

³⁰ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 15. Per Kendi, antiracist work is a collective, constructive, and liberating endeavor.

³¹ See Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 1-15. Tisby provides an overview of awareness, relationships, and commitment. For this project, see Chapter Two for more details on the ARC of Racial Justice. Tisby’s ARC of Racial Justice informs awareness (as a heuristic) by measuring participants’ ability to identify and confront a shared racial history within context (individual, church, and community).

Assimilationist Idea

Kendi notes this concept is “any notion that suggests that a racial group is culturally or behaviorally inferior, which justifies support for cultural or behavioral enrichment programs to develop that racial group.”³²

Bebbington’s Quadrilateral

Based on David Bebbington’s definition, a shared theological framework for the meaning of evangelical(ism).³³

Biological Antiracist Idea (see Biological Racist Idea)

According to Kendi, “Any notion that suggests that the races are meaningfully the same in their biology and there are no genetic racial differences.”³⁴

Biological Racist Idea

According to Kendi, “Any notion that suggests that the races are meaningfully different in their biology and that these differences create a hierarchy of value.”³⁵

*Black Biblical Hermeneutic*³⁶ (see *Black Ecclesial Interpretation*)

Interpreting Scripture through the lens of the Black experience as the centrifugal point of reference.

³² Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 30.

³³ See Chapter Two for more details on Bebbington’s *Quadrilateral*.

³⁴ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 51.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ See Chapter Two for more details on Black biblical hermeneutic.

*Black Ecclesial Interpretation*³⁷

McCaulley coins the phrase “Black ecclesial interpretation” to describe his version of a Black biblical hermeneutic:

My claim then is that Black biblical interpretation has been and can be

- Unapologetically *canonical* and *theological*.
- Socially located, in that it clearly arises out of the particular *context* of Black Americans.
- Willing to *listen* to the ways in which the Scriptures themselves respond to and redirect Black issues and concerns.
- Willing to exercise *patience* with the text trusting that a careful and sympathetic reading of the text brings a blessing.
- Willing to listen to and enter into dialogue with Black and white critiques of the Bible in the hopes of achieving a better reading of the text.³⁸

*Black Ecclesial Theology*³⁹

McCaulley makes a case for Black ecclesial theology as a relevant word, providing hope for today (with a track record of social justice, identity, dignity, and vision for a multiethnic community).⁴⁰

*Black Ecclesial Tradition*⁴¹

A theologically rooted dialogue between the Black experience and the Bible as the past and present pathway forward.⁴²

³⁷ See Chapter Two for more details on Black ecclesial interpretation.

³⁸ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 21.

³⁹ See Chapter Two for more details on Black ecclesial theology.

⁴⁰ See McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 1-24.

⁴¹ See Chapter Two for more details on Black ecclesial tradition.

⁴² See McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 1-24. As a living tradition, the Black ecclesial tradition provides access to Ginn’s unknown history.

Black Experience (see Double/Duel Consciousness)

A contextualized-localized-cultural encounter of being, seeing, hearing, and living life through a dissonance lens rooted in African ancestry and consciousness.⁴³

*Black Theology*⁴⁴

Based on Thomas's definition of anthropology and theology, she concludes, "Black theology then is critical reflection about the relationship between black humanity and God in culture."⁴⁵ Per Roberts, Black theology is a theological reflection on the Black religious experience considering the Black revolution with an end goal of liberation and reconciliation.⁴⁶

Bodily Antiracist Idea (see Bodily Racist Idea)

Kendi defines this term as "any notion that is humanizing, deracializing, and individualizing nonviolent and violent behavior."⁴⁷

Bodily Racist Idea

According to Kendi, this concept is "any notion that a group of racialized bodies is more animal-like and violent than others."⁴⁸

⁴³ See Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989); and Mikhail Bakhtin's chronotope for contextualized-localized-cultural frameworks.

⁴⁴ See Chapter Two for more details on Black theology.

⁴⁵ Thomas, "Introduction," vii.

⁴⁶ Roberts, *Black Religion, Black Theology*.

⁴⁷ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 78.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Class Antiracist Idea (see Class Racist Idea and Racial Capitalism)

Kendi understands this term as “any notion that suggests that the race-classes are equals and the economic disparities between them are the result of the policies of racial capitalism.”⁴⁹

Class Racist Idea (see Racial Capitalism)

According to Kendi, this concept is “any notion that suggests that a race-class is superior or inferior to another race-class in any way, to justify the relative disparities in poverty and wealth between the race-classes brought on by racial capitalism.”⁵⁰

Color Antiracist Idea (see Color Racist Idea)

Kendi defines this term as “any notion that suggests that Dark people and Light people are equals, or defends policies that lead to justice and equity between Light people and Dark people.”⁵¹

Colorist Idea (see Colorism)

According to Kendi, this concept includes “any notion that suggests that Dark people or Light people are superior or inferior in any way, or justifies racist policies that lead to injustice or inequity between Light people and Dark people.”⁵²

⁴⁹ Ibid., 168.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., 119.

⁵² Ibid.

Colorism

Tisby says it is “a practice in which people of color discriminate among themselves based on skin color.”⁵³

Conscious Capitalism

Keri Day’s antidote to advanced capitalism via conscious leadership and conscious business practices. Per Day, “Socially conscious capitalism moves from a business model focused solely on the pursuit of profits to one focused on integrity, higher standards ... the community, and the world at large.”⁵⁴

*Contextual Theology*⁵⁵

Per Bevans, contextual theology focuses on “a reflection-in-faith on God’s revelation in particular situations.”⁵⁶ McCaulley concretizes Bevan’s abstract “particular situations” by highlighting the inherent social location of all theology, implying everyone reads Scripture from their location.⁵⁷

⁵³ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 22.

⁵⁴ Day, *Unfinished Business*, 143. See Chapter Two for more details on American capitalism.

⁵⁵ See Chapter Two for more details on contextual theology.

⁵⁶ Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 17.

⁵⁷ See McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 1-24:168-184.

Countercultural Model

A prophetic contextual theology model, it champions the need for a cultural U-turn. It calls for a hermeneutic of suspicion for context (including the primacy of Scripture and tradition).⁵⁸

Culture

Bryan Massingale's definition of culture as the soul of society proves helpful. Massingale states, "Culture is more fundamental than visible social institutions, patterns, and policies. It informs these ... Culture is to society as the soul is to the body. Culture expresses the meaning of the social. It answers the question: Why these social arrangements and customs? ... It's an ethos that endures despite visible changes."⁵⁹

Cultural Antiracist Idea (see Cultural Racist Idea)

According to Kendi, this concept is "any notion that rejects cultural standards and equalizes cultural differences among racialized ethnic groups."⁶⁰

Cultural Racist Idea

Kendi states, "Any notion that creates a cultural standard and imposes a cultural hierarchy among racialized ethnic groups."⁶¹

⁵⁸ Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 143. The countercultural model resonates with Keri Day and Linda Thomas as womanist theologians. See Rosemary Radford Ruether, "A White Feminist Response to Black and Womanist Theologies," in *Living Stones in the Household of God*, ed. Linda E. Thomas (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 51-58, for a white feminist perspective on Black and womanist theologies.

⁵⁹ Massingale, "Race and Reconciliation," 141.

⁶⁰ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 91.

⁶¹ Ibid.

Cultural Location

The epistemology of one's cultural heritage (history).⁶²

Cultural Toolkit

The historical and social context that influences a people group's interpretation of reality.⁶³

Dueling Consciousness (see Double Consciousness)

Kendi's assessment of Black and white double-mindedness:⁶⁴

- (1) Black dual conscious of being African and American (antiracist versus assimilationist).
- (2) white dual conscious of being an assimilationist or segregationist.

Double Consciousness (see Dueling Consciousness)

Based on James H. Evans's Literary-Cultural Expression framework, the dialectical struggle via critical-reflective self-examination (seeking to balance the inner self with the outer social environment).⁶⁵

⁶² Jeremiah A. Wright Jr., "Doing Black Theology in the Black Church," in *Living Stones in the Household of God*, ed. Linda E. Thomas (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 13-23.

⁶³ See Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 69-91. Emerson and Smith claim that the United States cultural toolkit varies by race.

⁶⁴ See Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 30-40.

⁶⁵ Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*, 48. See James H. Evans Jr., *Spiritual Empowerment in Afro-American Literature* (Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987).

Ethnic Antiracist Idea (see Ethnic Racist Idea)

According to Kendi, “Any notion that suggests that the racialized ethnic groups are equals or substantiates policies that lead to justice and equity between racialized ethnic groups.”⁶⁶

Ethnic Racist Idea

According to Kendi, “Any notion that suggests that a racialized ethnic group is superior or inferior to another racialized ethnic group in any way, or justifies policies that lead to injustice or inequity between racialized ethnic groups.”⁶⁷

Familyhood

According to Roberts, “*Ujamma*, or ‘familyhood,’ is descriptive of African communalism. The extended family is at the heart of African community life.”⁶⁸

Gender Antiracist Idea (see Gender Racist Idea)

Kendi states this concept is “any notion that suggests that the race-genders are equals, or substantiates policies that lead to justice and equity between race-genders.”⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 64.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Roberts, *Black Religion, Black Theology*, 140.

⁶⁹ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 201.

Gender Racist Idea

According to Kendi, the term includes “any notion that suggests that one race-gender is superior or inferior to another race-gender in any way, or justifies policies that lead to injustice or inequality between race-genders.”⁷⁰

Geographical Location

Geography’s impact on awareness and education of Black theology’s issues.⁷¹

*Imago Dei*⁷²

Recognition of basic humanity, a shared dignity and worth as God’s image bearers.⁷³ Per Tisby, it means “that we all bear, in a limited way, characteristics of God’s image; qualities such as morality, personality, rationality and spirituality that make us distinct from the rest of God’s creation.”⁷⁴

*Jesusology*⁷⁵

A high Christology, a Black church distinctive.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Wright Jr., “Doing Black Theology in the Black Church,” 13-23.

⁷² See Chapter Two for more details on *imago Dei*.

⁷³ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 27-28.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 28.

⁷⁵ See Chapter Two for more details on Jesusology.

Localization

The translation of Christianity in the language of the hearers.⁷⁶

Orthodoxy

Oden's definition proves helpful: "Orthodoxy in the classical Christian sense is right remembering in accord with the apostles' teaching."⁷⁷

*Power*⁷⁸

The exercise of control over a person, creature, group, entity, time, space, place, or thing by utilizing agency, influence, gender, culture, privilege, position, (class) status, race, ethnicity, resources, structures, policies, and ideas (e.g., economics, capitalism, and politics).

Practical or Pastoral Theology

Woodward and Pattison provide a helpful definition: "Pastoral/practical theology is a place where religious beliefs, tradition and practice meets contemporary experiences, questions and actions and conducts a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical, and practically transforming."⁷⁹

⁷⁶ John S. Mbiti, "CHRISIANITY AND TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS IN AFRICA," *International Review of Mission* 59, no. 236 (1970): 430-40. Cf. Acts 2:5-13. This dissertation and project aim for contextualization via localization. See Chapter Two for more details on contextual theology.

⁷⁷ Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*, 127.

⁷⁸ While not comprehensive, this is a working definition for grasping the ubiquitous reach of power. See Chapter Two for more details on power.

⁷⁹ Woodward and Pattison, "An Introduction to Pastoral and Practical Theology in Historical Perspective," 6-7.

*Praxis*⁸⁰

Faith in action.⁸¹

Praxis Model

A situational or liberation contextual theology model; it promotes an iterative process of practice-reflection-practice.⁸²

Psychological Location

Psychology's impact on racial identity (e.g., identifying as Black).⁸³

*Race*⁸⁴

A power and social construct for classification, categorization, and identification.

Kendi defines race as “a power construct of blended difference that lives socially.”⁸⁵

⁸⁰ See Chapter Two for more details on praxis.

⁸¹ See Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*, 1-16. Roberts conveys praxis as thought plus action; Woodward and Pattison, “An Introduction to Pastoral and Practical Theology in Historical Perspective,” 11. The authors subscribe to praxis as the union of theory and practice; See Laurie Green, *Let's Do Theology: Resources for Contextual Theology*, 2nd ed. (New York: Mowbray, 2010), 3-16. Green stresses that theology includes action, deriving praxis as action-reflection.

⁸² Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 142.

⁸³ Wright Jr., “Doing Black Theology in the Black Church,” 13-23.

⁸⁴ See Chapter Two for more details on race.

⁸⁵ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 41.

Racial Autobiography

According to Tisby, “a self-reported account of your history with race, and its purpose is twofold: to better understand your own story and to build empathy for others.”⁸⁶

Racial Capitalism

Kendi claims that racism and capitalism are a hendiadys, “Capitalism, in producing racial injustices and inequities between race-classes, is essentially racist; racism, in also producing economic injustices and inequities between race-classes, is essentially capitalist.”⁸⁷

*Racial Identity*⁸⁸

Tisby quotes Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum’s definition, “The meaning each of us has constructed or is constructing about what it means to be a White person or a person of color in a race-conscious society.”⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 52.

⁸⁷ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 181. See Chapter Two for more details on American capitalism.

⁸⁸ See Chapter Three, Four, and Five for more details on racial identity.

⁸⁹ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 41. Dr. Tatum is a social psychologist and former president of Spelman College in Atlanta, GA.

*Racial Identity Development*⁹⁰

Tisby quotes Dr. Tatum's definition, "The process of defining for oneself the personal significance and social meaning of belonging to a particular racial group."⁹¹

Racialization

This is Emerson and Smith's framework to view contemporary United States adaptive racial practices that perpetuate racial division. These practices are covert, institutionalized, elusive to direct racial terminology, and practically invisible to most whites.⁹²

*Racialized Society*⁹³

Used by Emerson and Smith to describe the meaning of race in America, "*a society wherein race matters profoundly for differences in life experiences, life opportunities, and social relationships.*"⁹⁴

*Racism*⁹⁵

Moral blindness and spiritual deafness.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ See Chapter Three, Four, and Five for more details on concepts relating to racial identity development.

⁹¹ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 41.

⁹² See Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 5-19.

⁹³ See Chapter Two for more details on racialized society and race in America.

⁹⁴ Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 7.

⁹⁵ See Chapter Two, Three, Four, and Five for more details on racism.

⁹⁶ See Smith Sr., "Answering the Call of God for Sankofa Leadership in These Times," 68-82.

Racist (Singular)

An individual, idea, or policy.⁹⁷ According to Kendi, a racist is “one who is expressing an idea of racial hierarchy, or through actions or inaction is supporting a policy that leads to racial inequity or injustice.”⁹⁸

Racist Idea

According to Kendi, this term encompasses “any notion that suggests one racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group in any way.”⁹⁹

Racist Cycle

Kendi’s theory, predicated on self-interest:¹⁰⁰

- (1) Making people of color feel less than themselves and more susceptible to racist ideas.
- (2) Making white people feel more than themselves, increasing their attention to racist ideas.

Segregationist Idea

According to Kendi, this term is associated with “any notion that suggests that a permanently inferior racial group can never be developed, which justifies policies and practices that kill, terrorize, deport, incarcerate, or separate away that racial group.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ See Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 15-29.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 30.

Sociology

Michael Northcott states, “Sociology involves analysis of the nature of social structures, systems, classes, and institutions. It can be used as a tool for understanding human behavior. It illuminates how human values and rules are sustained and shared.”¹⁰²

Space Antiracist Idea (see Space Racist Idea)

According to Kendi, “Any notion that suggests that the racialized spaces are equals or substantiates policies that lead to racial justice and equity between integrated and protected racialized spaces.”¹⁰³

Space Racist Idea

According to Kendi, “Any notion that suggests that a racialized space is superior or inferior to another racialized space in any way, or justifies policies that lead to injustice or resource inequity between racialized spaces or the elimination of certain racialized spaces.”¹⁰⁴

Synthetic Model

This term is a dialogical or analogical contextual theology model (a melting pot perspective); it fosters a middle-of-the-road position seeking to converse with all conversational partners in the theological enterprise.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Michael Northcott, “Pastoral Theology and Sociology,” in *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*, eds. James Woodward and Stephen Pattison (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 151.

¹⁰³ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 185. Cf. Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*. Emerson and Smith advocate for integrated congregational spaces.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 142.

The New Jane Crow

A co-op between systemic structures and the prison system targeting Black women's involvement in the labor market, reproductive capacities, and cultural capital.¹⁰⁶

Theological Location

Theological orientation is a determining factor in Black theology; this includes the location of theological training.¹⁰⁷

Theology

Thomas states, "*Theology* is critical reflection about the God-human relationship."¹⁰⁸

Thriving

An indicator of human flourishing. Per Keri Day, "*Thriving* refers to poor people developing the economic and cultural resources needed to participate on a par with their nonpoor peers."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Day, *Unfinished Business*. Believing racism is the systemic undercurrent for poor Black women, but not the only current, Day conveys the need for Black churches to address the racist welfare system.

¹⁰⁷ Wright Jr., "Doing Black Theology in the Black Church," 13-23.

¹⁰⁸ Thomas, "Introduction," vii.

¹⁰⁹ Day, *Unfinished Business*, 5. Day recommends an asset-building approach where the goal is thriving, not surviving.

Transcendental Model

A subjective contextual theology model that appreciates individual experience through conversation to gain a proper perspective (reaching objectivity through subjectivity).¹¹⁰

Translation Model

An accommodation or adaption contextual theology model which seeks to learn the culture for ideal engagement with the gospel. It is the most utilized model and the model of choice for evangelicals.¹¹¹

Underclass

Keri Day's description for those unable to produce in society "commonly experience[ing] chronic, persisting experiences of economic and cultural invisibility and powerlessness."¹¹²

White Supremacy

According to Tisby, "The belief or assumption that white people and their culture are inherently superior to other people and cultures."¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 143.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 141.

¹¹² Day, *Unfinished Business*, 9. Per Day, class standing depends on a person's ability to produce in society. See Chapter Two for more details on American capitalism.

¹¹³ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 11. See Kendi's color racist idea and cultural racist idea.

Delimitations

While the previous section on definitions introduces racism's broad reach, depth, and grasp, it is necessary to set some realistic boundaries for racial history awareness and anamnesis considerations. Greater Houston area Baptist pastors are selected for the project to enable theological continuity. While many American and Black church expressions exist to consider for racial history awareness and anamnesis, this dissertation and project centers on theological and biblical studies from the Black ecclesial tradition. Scripture is replete with applicable biblical texts for exploration. However, examination of selective Old and New Testament passages enables an achievable and competent scope.

Limitations

Based on the project's methodology, there exist several constraints.¹¹⁴ The project's duration is five weeks. While a longer observation period is preferred, the schedules of the project's participants (pastors) require consideration. The project's duration is a weighty request for the project participants, indicating the significance of the topic for pastors desiring to participate.

Since the project intentionally explores African American and Euro American clergy race relations, the experiment utilizes a purposive sampling technique. Therefore, the project may be partially representative of a population. A smaller sampling size of pastors is intentional to facilitate engagement during the project intervention.

¹¹⁴ See Chapter Three for project methodology details.

Project Significance

The project addresses local community issues of racial inequality and injustice, requiring Greater Houston area pastors' shared responsibility of racial history remembrance, informed by African and Euro American reflections of Scripture and theology, to identify and confront racism in individual, church, and community contexts.¹¹⁵ It is paramount that participants realize simultaneously the limitations and power of history. While history helps pastors remember God's work, it is limited to their subjective and contextualized perspective (chronotope or plausibility structure) as the historian, a snapshot of unknown history.¹¹⁶

Overhearing a local African American pastor's account of racial history—culturally contextualized by Black theology, Black church tradition, Black religious experience, and Black biblical hermeneutics—facilitates a covenantal dialogue of respect between Euro and African American pastors with mutual and equal regard.¹¹⁷ Once Greater Houston Euro and African American pastors enhance their ability to identify and

¹¹⁵ Jeffery D. Arthurs, *Preaching as Reminding: Stirring Memory in an Age of Forgetfulness* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 8. Arthurs avers the minister serves as the Lord's remembrancer. Green, *Let's Do Theology*. Green provides a communal contextual theology approach to address local community issues.

¹¹⁶ Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society*. Newbigin discusses the difference between the plausibility structures of the world and the church community. For Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian literary scholar, specific chronotopes (time-space) correspond to particular genres, established ways of speaking, and present particular worldviews and ideologies. Ginn, *The Present and the Past*. Ginn discusses the limitations of the historian's attempt to grasp known and unknown history.

¹¹⁷ African American pastors, the minority, are familiar with the Euro American account of theological history as a matter of survival. However, the majority, Euro American pastors, may lack exposure to an African American account of theological history. A polyvalent approach to theology is biblically based, as observed in the multiple accounts of the gospel via the Synoptic Gospels. Visible culture embodies language, and audible language embodies culture. See ASPIRE's double entendre slogan, "See Yourself Here": 1) See yourself belonging here, and 2) See your culture and context presented authentically here.

confront racism, the opportunity to expand their ministerial network with interracial relationships becomes a viable next step on the journey to racial justice.¹¹⁸

Should the project produce positive results, it will serve as a model for future seminars with Greater Houston African and Euro American pastors desiring to identify and confront racism in their individual, church, and community contexts.

¹¹⁸ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*. See Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice.

CHAPTER TWO

Biblical and Theological Foundations

Contextual Theology

Can a contextualized theology be gleaned from Scripture? Scripture is contextual, as evidenced by the four Gospels' situational accounts of the life of Christ. The purpose of Scripture is not merely information but transformation.¹ Scripture's transformative teleology is for theory and practice.² Therefore, theology is contextual. Contextual theology becomes the phenomenological vehicle for engaging Scripture's call to orthodoxy and orthopraxy while attentively listening to the theologian's surroundings.

Based on a need for critical realism, Bevans provides a model approach to discern the relationship between the gospel message and culture (context) while respecting tradition and social change. He advocates for the necessity of contextual theology for contemporary times. Lived experience, human experience embedded within culture, social location, and social change all echo the realities of context facilitating Bevans's claims.³ Bevan's praxis model shows promise as a theological method for exploring racial history's contextualized experience.

¹ Green, *Let's Do Theology*. See Green's praxis approach to contextual theology for transformation: Experience-Explore-Reflect-Response.

² Woodward and Pattison, "An Introduction to Pastoral and Practical Theology in Historical Perspective," 11. Woodward and Pattison argue that pastoral/practical theology promotes praxis that changes and enhances both practice and theory.

³ Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*. Bevans examines six inclusive theological methods for contextual theological consideration: the translation, anthropological, praxis, synthetic, transcendental, and countercultural models. See Chapter One for definitions of Bevan's six theological models.

Racial History as Contextualized Experience

Racial history is a contextualized construct influenced by locations (like an onion with multiple layers) predicated on Greater Houston area pastors' geographical, psychological, cultural, and theological locations.⁴ Geographical location identifies where a person was raised and currently lives. Psychological location defines a person's racial identity and how they see themselves as Black, brown, or white. Cultural location signifies an individual's cultural heritage and history. Theological location equates to God-talk: how people think about God, talk about God, and embody their faith.

Racial History in Black Church Context

This project explores racial history through the African American church context. Based on the assumption that Greater Houston area Black Baptist churches, while not monolithic, have a historical center with roots in Africa, J. Deotis Roberts echoes the significance of the Black church's connection to African traditional religion.⁵ In a quest for a relevant theology resonating with the Black church context, Roberts quotes a young seminarian from the Deep South in his systematic theology class:

I came from a small town down South. All I have known is suffering, poverty, and deprivation from the most brutish form of racism. My people share my experience. We are victims of racism at its worst. My call to ministry emerged out of this setting. I am here to study the Christian faith in order to comfort and deliver my people. I do not need to *prove* that God *exists*. I already *know* this. What I really want to know is "Does God care?"⁶

⁴ See Chapter One for definitions of racialized geographical, psychological, cultural, and theological locations.

⁵ J. Deotis Roberts is considered one of the fathers of Black theology—extending James Cone's Black theology of liberation to include reconciliation. Bevan's list of external factors warranting contextual theology (classical theology's lack of relevance and oppressive nature, the growing identity of local churches, and the contributions of contemporary social sciences for gleaning culture) cosign the motivations behind the evolution of Black theology.

⁶ Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*, 17.

Roberts points out a Black church racial history distinctive: wrestling with the question “Does God care?” as opposed to “Does God exist?” According to Thomas C. Oden, Christianity arrived at the doorstep of Africa and African traditional religion long before it went to the Western world.⁷ As a result, enslaved Africans in the Americas would already know that God does exist. Based on their disposition of occupation, oppression, and marginalization, the question they are deliberating is, “Does God care?” Bringing front and center the racial history equation: Social location+Contextualized experience=A different concern.⁸

What is the significance of Roberts, his student, and Greater Houston African American pastors that embody the Black experience for contextual theology?⁹ Why does this matter regarding racial history? The Black experience serves as a lens for interpreting Scripture; it is the centrifugal point of reference. When relating the Black biblical hermeneutic to the collective African consciousness, Roberts claims, “To understand the mindset of black believers is to enter into their use of Scripture and its meaning.”¹⁰ Esau McCaulley uses the term Black ecclesiastical interpretation to describe the practice of Bible reading and scriptural interpretation in the Black church.¹¹

⁷ Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*.

⁸ See Chapter Three for elaboration on the racial history equation ($Sl+Ce=C$) and its role in the intervention.

⁹ See Chapter One for definitions of African American and the Black experience.

¹⁰ Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*, 49. Roberts advocates a Black biblical hermeneutic of particularity (a concern for spiritual and physical liberation from [racial] oppression) and universality (a concern for solidarity with humanity).

¹¹ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*. McCaulley is an associate professor of New Testament at Wheaton College. See Chapter One for the definition of Black ecclesiastical interpretation. McCaulley focuses on the reformist/transformist stand of the Black church.

Anamnesis

What is anamnesis and its role in contextual theology? Anamnesis, remembrance, is situational, with its meaning contingent upon context.¹² Since anamnesis requires interacting with the past, the historian's context (e.g., the writers of the four Gospels) plays an indelible role in interpreting the past's significance in the present. It stands to reason that the living tradition of the historian's community (e.g., the Matthean community) provides one glimpse of the past's significance and transformative power in the present. Tradition serves as the epistemological bridge between the present and the not-yet. When looking at the tradition of the New Testament,¹³ Ginn avers anamnesis (remembrance via living tradition) is a call to Christian discipleship, or it is an inadequate portrayal of Christ who beckons believers to "Live as I have lived."¹⁴ Gleaning from Morrill's anamnestic context, imitation of Christ requires remembrance of Christ via praxis of liturgy and narratives of Scripture.¹⁵ Hikota describes anamnesis as the "memory of accumulated suffering," following in the footsteps of Christ (via unity and solidarity with the poor), a call to praxis-based social activism.¹⁶ Like Scripture, anamnesis is transformative with a teleology to transform Greater Houston pastors' theory and practice.

¹² Cf. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 for the New Testament context of anamnesis.

¹³ See Chapter One for a definition of anamnesis governed by the New Testament as context.

¹⁴ Ginn, *The Present and the Past*, 85.

¹⁵ Bruce T. Morrill, *Anamnesis as Dangerous Memory: Political and Liturgical Theology in Dialogue* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000).

¹⁶ Riyako Cecilia Hikota, "The Eucharist as a Source of Political Action: Dorothy Day as a Living Example of Johann Baptist Metz's 'Dangerous Memory,'" *The Expository Times* 133, no. 5 (2022):185-91. Cf. Matthew 25.

The Role of Remembrance

What are Greater Houston pastors to remember? History. What is history? The past, present, and future.¹⁷ According to Ginn, the past consists of known and unknown history. Known history is fragments of historical information that have survived.¹⁸ Unknown history is the totality of past history.¹⁹ The present is history in the making, impacted by the past. Finally, the future is the impact of the past on the present, not yet fully realized.²⁰

History is also subjective and carries limitations. Quoting historian Kevin Gannon, “But the idea of an objective version of history-telling from which all others are deviant, is an absurdity. There is no objectivity in History. The very act of selecting a topic, for example, is privileging certain facts-making them ‘historical’ – over others.”²¹ By definition, history points to its limitations. All remembering has subjectivity and finite human limitations applicable to the past, present, and future.

Based on a working definition of history, what are Greater Houston pastors to remember in history? The faith community’s indebtedness entails remembering God’s presence (who he is) and work (what he has done for humanity) in the past and future, enabling staying power in the present. The Christian’s charge resides in remembering a

¹⁷ Ginn, *The Present and the Past*. Ginn provides two categories for history: the past and the present. The researcher proposes adding the future as a third element of history.

¹⁸ Ibid., 37.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ For example, the past history of Christ’s crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension reaches its ultimate climax at the Eschaton and the Promised Land.

²¹ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 69.

theocentric identity and the purpose of humanity—to love God, self, and neighbor. Since pastors live in a Greater Houston area racialized society—a society predicated on race and racism, remembering history includes racial history. Comprehending the complexities of the past enables Greater Houston pastors to address racism in the present.²²

How might Greater Houston pastors remember a shared racial history?

Remembering a shared racial history implies remembering contextually and theologically via a practical or pastoral theology that starts with a “theoretical or practical concern.”²³

Pattison and Woodward claim, “No group or individual has the monopoly on how, where, or when practical theology should be done, or on who should be ‘allowed’ to undertake it.”²⁴ The researcher’s translation: no religion, denomination, or race monopolizes religion or theology (encompassing Greater Houston’s shared racial history). Per Esau McCaulley, all theology is socially located, as everyone reads Scripture from their location.²⁵ As demonstrated earlier, even Scripture embodies contextualized locations of remembrance. Each writer of the Synoptic Gospels provides a contextualized account of Jesus’s life and ministry based on the specific concerns of their community.

The Role of Living Tradition

So, how do pastors in Greater Houston remember a shared racial history?

Remembering or anamnesis occurs through living tradition: preaching, teaching, singing,

²² Ibid., 81.

²³ Woodward and Pattison, “An Introduction to Pastoral and Practical Theology in Historical Perspective,” 12.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*.

signs, ordinances, symbols, and stories. Remembering through living tradition embodies the past to shed light on the present. For Greater Houston pastors, anamnesis informed by theory and practice intersects at the crossroads of a shared racial history.

James Baldwin avers, “For history, as nearly no one seems to know, is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do.”²⁶ Per Ginn, what a person thinks they know about their history via historical writing is only a shadow of the past, as living tradition, not history, is the vehicle to remembrance. If Greater Houston pastors desire a greater glimpse of unknown history, the on-ramp engages with and within a living tradition. For this project, the researcher stresses the importance of exploring African American (Black) church living tradition through Black biblical hermeneutics, theology, and the Black religious experience to fill in vital missing pieces of the Greater Houston racial history puzzle.

Racial History Context

Black Biblical Hermeneutics

Reflecting on Scripture and theology enables validation of a Greater Houston shared racial history, specifically a Black biblical hermeneutical lens, where the Passover in Exodus is an essential element of remembrance.

Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list’ning skies,

²⁶ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 63.

Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might,
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

- *Lift Every Voice and Sing* by James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)

James Weldon Johnson's poem (an Africentric prayer and hymn), known as "The Negro National Anthem," serves as a reminder for the Black church to stay faithful to God and native Africa (the source of the Black church prayer tradition).²⁷ Moreover, Johnson's lyrics, resounding with notes from the Exodus (reverberated in Deuteronomy), respond to J. Deotis Roberts's call of a Black biblical hermeneutical question: "Does God care?" As the Black national anthem implies, the journey towards a shared racial history context

²⁷ See Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*, 92-110.

begins with Israel's story in Exodus, residing at the heart of the Black biblical hermeneutic and the contemporary Black experience.

Exodus 12:1-14, 17²⁸

The passage and chapter begin with Moses's account of Yahweh's monologue with Moses and Aaron, the pastors and leaders of the faith community, and their role of availability to listen and understand God's divine directives.

Exegetical insights.

The success of Israel's deliverance depends on the faith leaders' courageous obedience. God intentionally and meticulously articulates the protocol and procedures for Israel's pending exodus from bondage. Yahweh unveils the motivations behind his actions of justice and deliverance by branding the event as the Passover, meaning compassion ("have compassion on—to suffer with—to get under the skin of another in order to identify with," "to protect").²⁹ Moses and Aaron are to tell the people to remember this day of their holistic divine deliverance. God's instructions are an individual and communal expectation—a perpetual intergenerational ordinance of celebratory remembrance; this is Yahweh's "Do this in remembrance of me" (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:24-25). The text showcases God's identity, sovereignty, and character.³⁰ Yahweh also outlines how, when, where, and why he intends to keep his promise to

²⁸ A theological and contextualized history by the author, Moses.

²⁹ See *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, Augmented 3rd ed., 2007, for interpreting Passover as compassion.

³⁰ God's identity ("the LORD" or "Yahweh"); God's sovereignty: Stronger than any other god (including Egypt's pagan gods) and authority (Pharaoh); God's character: Compassionate, just, and righteous.

Abraham. How and when? Yahweh will execute judgment on every firstborn human and animal at the start of the Jewish day (evening) of the 14th of Nisan (during the full moon).³¹ Where? In the land of Egypt (Israel's oppressor). Why? Because God is the LORD: compassionate, mighty to save, caring about his creation, and a mediator of justice (a righteous God).

The text contains a parenthesis (vv. 1, 13) with Yahweh communicating his divine activity in the land of Egypt. The LORD speaks to Moses and Aaron (representing Israel) in the land of Egypt (v. 1). The LORD foretells of his striking the land of Egypt while informing Israel of the blood's symbolic significance (v. 13). The bookends (vv. 1, 13) accentuate the prominence of the Passover meal (v. 7) as Yahweh commands Israel to take the blood of the sacrificial lamb and place it on the entryway of each house where they eat the lamb.

Elements of the Passover.

The central motif provides the central theme of the passage, Passover. The perfect (divine action) active verbs עבר ("I will pass through," v. 12), נכה ("I will strike down," v. 12), ראה ("I see," v. 13), פסה ("I will pass over," v. 13), and the imperfect (divine action) active verb עשה ("I will execute," v. 12), propel Yahweh's activity center stage for Israel's deliverance from enslavement in Egypt. God's actions contrast Israel's posture of worship while anticipating Yahweh's imminent deliverance: 1) Selecting a lamb (v. 3); 2) Keeping or guarding the lamb (v. 6a); 3) Sacrificing the lamb (v. 6b); 4) Smearing the

³¹ Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 2004). Childs identifies the day of the Exodus as the 15th of Nisan (v. 14—"this day") and the Passover on the 14th day of Nisan (rather than the night of the Passover).

blood of the lamb (v. 7); and 5) Preparing and eating the lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (vv. 8-9).

In addition to Yahweh's salvific act of deliverance, Israel's "day of remembrance" (v. 14—signaling divinely instituted anamnesis) of the Passover resides in the elements of the Passover. The sacrificial lamb and its blood symbolize Israel's offering of gratitude in response to Yahweh's protection and providence.³² The blood on the doorpost and lintel of the house (v. 7) serves as the identifying mark or sign (v. 13) of the Israelite faith community (as the property of or belonging to Yahweh).³³ Unleavened bread (bread of affliction) triggers a sense of urgency and immediacy, with no time to wait for the yeast to rise.³⁴ As for the bitter herbs, they signal God's hearing of the horrendous outcries of the Israelites' enslavement.³⁵ Yahweh's prescribed attire ("tunic tucked in," "sandals on feet," "staff in hand") stresses the necessity of advanced preparation (in the present) as a demonstration of faith in what God has promised to do in the future.

³² John I. Durham, *Exodus*, Vol. 3, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Academic, 1987), Kindle, "Chapter 3," "The Ten Mighty Acts and the Exodus," section "Yahweh's Passover (12:1-13)". Durham states, "The sacrificial flock-animal became a gift of gratitude and a catalyst of family communion instead of an offering of pacification. Its blood became a mark of protection instead of an apotropaic charm." For Christianity, the lamb and its blood foreshadow the crucifixion of Christ as the Passover lamb (without sin), affecting the forgiveness of sins.

³³ Durham, *Exodus*; Thomas B. Dozeman, *Commentary on Exodus* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2009), 267. According to Dozeman, the blood is not redemptive. However, for Christianity, when Jesus serves as the sacrificial lamb of humanity, he fulfills the requirements of the Law, making his Passion redemptive. Blood must be shed, as without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission of sin (the price for sin is death—a life for a life).

³⁴ See Dozeman, *Commentary on Exodus*, 269, for the connotation of a hasty exit.

³⁵ Affirming the existence and reality of the temporal minor keys of bondage, affliction, and persecution in life.

Yahweh provides the “why?” behind the command for Israel’s perpetual and generational remembrance of the Passover (pointing to the Exodus event) through cultic worship (the Festival of the Unleavened Bread) and his dossier (v. 17). For Israel, the challenge is not to forget the LORD and what he has done for them when they find themselves enjoying the benefits of the Promised Land, a land of milk and honey. It is imperative that when the current and future generations’ children ask Israel about the significance of the Passover, the parents are prepared to tell their children about their rich theocentric history and heritage, propelling them to join the ancestors in bowing down in worship of Yahweh (“I am the LORD”) (v. 27).³⁶

Canonical context.

The text occurs in the first movement of the book (deliverance from Egypt) before the LORD carries out his promise of deliverance, followed by the giving of the Law (inaugurating the Sinai covenant). The passage provides a divine perspective on God’s imminent (salvific) deliverance from bondage. Moreover, the passage signals the inauguration of the faith community’s new identity, resting on the foundation of God’s desired relationship with Israel. Genesis echoes God’s purpose for creating humanity,³⁷ setting the stage for Israel’s deliverance (exodus from Egypt),³⁸ journey to the Promised

³⁶ Cf. Deuteronomy 6:4-6, 12.

³⁷ Humanity is created to worship God.

³⁸ Requiring Israel’s perpetual remembrance as they embark on an epic journey from bondage to liberation, from captivity to liberty.

Land,³⁹ and eventual receiving of the Law.⁴⁰ Ironically, canonical consideration recalls Exodus 1, pointing to Israel's current bitter herbs predicament resulting from a lack of remembrance. Pharaoh and the people of Egypt suffer from a bad case of amnesia.⁴¹ Later in Exodus, Israel also forgets its divine deliverance, claiming they had it better off while being enslaved in Egypt (14:12).

Contemporary application.

The faith community's charge is remembering God's compassion and deliverance from its (spiritual and physical) *sitz im leben*. God expects perpetual remembrance to govern Christian ethics (actions, attitudes, and behaviors), resulting in a lifestyle of worship, gratitude, and faithful obedience. The Passover provides a timely response to the inevitable question derived from the pews of the Black experience: Does God care? Yahweh's preferential option for oppressed and enslaved people condemns slavery and racism as violations of God's divine plan for his human creation (made in the *imago Dei*).⁴²

Like Israel, the Greater Houston faith community is also in danger of forgetting its divine holistic (spiritual and physical) deliverance. Recent statements claimed that slavery benefited the enslaved—showing the danger of amnesia from the seat of power

³⁹ It required trust and faith in a compassionate God who cared about his creation and perpetual remembrance when the Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years.

⁴⁰ Mandating Israel to worship the Lord their God (cf. Deuteronomy 6:5).

⁴¹ God delivered Egypt from famine through Joseph, an ancestor of Israel.

⁴² Cf. Genesis 1:26-27.

and control in American society.⁴³ Today, forces promote amnesia of the bitter herbs of a shared racial history, much less a shared remembrance. Racial history remembrance involves a theocentric reflection of God's activity in human history, drawing attention to God encounters to calibrate worldviews and perspectives with the power to transform awareness of a shared racial history. For African Americans, remembrance (of the Exodus) lives in the Black biblical hermeneutic, rehearsed in Black preaching, teaching, and even singing.⁴⁴

Personal Racial History

Black Theology

Every theology comes with a qualifier, a situational concern.⁴⁵ Black theology is a contextual theology promoting the situational concern of Black humanity.⁴⁶ James Cone describes the situational concern of enslaved Africans in America, writing,

Black slaves' hope was based on their faith in God's promise to "protect the needy" and to "defend the poor." Just as God delivered the Hebrew children from Egyptian bondage and raised Jesus from the dead, so God will also deliver African slaves from American slavery and will "soon" bestow upon them the gift of eternal life. That was why they sang:

Soon-a-will be done with the trouble of this world;

⁴³ See Kevin Sullivan and Lori Rozsa, "DeSantis doubles down on claim that some Blacks benefited from slavery," *Washington Post*, accessed October 24, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/07/22/desantis-slavery-curriculum/>, for racially charged claims.

⁴⁴ See "Mary Don't You Weep," a Negro spiritual developed before the American Civil War with the Exodus motif embedded within its lyrics. For a contemporary song, see "Deliver Me (This is My Exodus)" by Donald Lawrence and The Tri-City Singers, featuring Le'Andra Johnson. Historically, Israel's exodus from Egypt and the Passover symbolizes African American's deliverance by God from American slavery and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ as the Passover lamb.

⁴⁵ For example, Black theology, liberation theology, white evangelical theology, and Black Baptist Greater Houston area theology.

⁴⁶ See Chapter One for definitions of Black theology and McCauley's Black ecclesial theology.

Soon-a-will be done with the trouble of this world;
Going home to live with God.⁴⁷

Black theology provides a contextual lens for Greater Houston pastors to examine Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 12, an anamnestic scriptural passage known as the *Shema* (meaning “hear”), stirring up the collective memory of Israel not to forget their theocentric past, encompassing bondage and deliverance, to facilitate change in their thoughts and behaviors in the present.⁴⁸

*Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 12*⁴⁹

This passage spotlights the role of personal remembrance in biblical anamnesis.

Exegetical insights.

In Deuteronomy 5, Moses introduces the Ten Commandments to a new generation of Israelites about to cross over into the Promised Land, stressing that God’s covenant is not just with their ancestors but also with them. Now, in Deuteronomy 6, Moses is on a divine assignment to deliver God’s instructions to the people as God’s (and Israel’s) mediator. He preaches this iconic sermon on the Great Commandment (6:5) to the faith community with a word of remembrance—remember your past in the present to secure your future. Remembrance implies loving God and hearing the words (statutes and

⁴⁷ James H. Cone, “Calling the Oppressors to Account: God and Black Suffering,” in *Living Stones in the Household of God*, ed. Linda E. Thomas (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 5.

⁴⁸ Remembrance entails loving God. Arthurs, *Preaching as Reminding*. Arthurs highlights the impact of repetition, rhythm, and collective remembrance (through ceremony and symbols) in Deuteronomy 6.

⁴⁹ A theological and contextualized history by the Deuteronomistic author.

ordinances) of God. God grants Israel the green light to live in the Promised Land in the presence of God.

Shema.⁵⁰

The central motif provides the central theme of the passage, the *Shema*. What is Israel to hear? Israel must obey, rehearse, remember, and never forget the commandments of Yahweh, beginning with the priority of the Great Commandment. The text contains a parenthesis (vv. 4, 12) via parenthetic markers. Israel should hear the commandments of Yahweh as theological imperatives (v. 4), identifying Israel's exclusive relationship with Yahweh and his *sui generis* triple-entendre nature.⁵¹ God's sovereignty deserves Israel's complete devotion and loyalty (vv. 4-5). The imperative active verb (divine command) שָׁמַע ("hear") announces God's expectations for communal covenantal accountability (v. 4). Israel is to be devoted to the one God, Yahweh, and him alone. They are counseled to אָהַב ("love," perfect active verb) Yahweh holistically by loving him with all their "heart," "soul," and "might" (v. 5).⁵²

⁵⁰ A Jewish prayer ritual.

⁵¹ The text appeals to the Israelites' belief in God's exclusivity, supremacy, and integrity. "The LORD is our God" claims Yahweh is Israel's only God. "[T]he LORD alone" points to Yahweh's sovereignty and supremacy as the only God, period. Richard Nelson, *Deuteronomy*, The Old Testament Library (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), Perlego, section "Keep the Law Diligently 6:1-25," <https://www.perlego.com/book/3239421/deuteronomy-a-commentary-pdf>. Per Nelson, the text illuminates God's integrity and unitary nature without duplicity.

⁵² Love equates to total devotion, loyalty, and attachment. Mark E. Biddle, *Deuteronomy* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2003), 125-127; and Patrick Miller, *Deuteronomy*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), Perlego, "The Heart of the Matter (6:4-25)," section "The Great Commandment (6:4-5)," <https://www.perlego.com/book/2101055/deuteronomy-interpretation-a-bible-commentary-for-teaching-and-preaching-pdf>. See Miller and Biddle for the heart (v. 5) standing for Israel's will (volition), decision-making, and undivided loyalty. See Biddle for the soul (v. 5) standing for a person's "life" (holistically), even martyrdom (per Miller). Strength (v. 5) refers to Israel's might: total (best) effort in worship (Talmudic sages interpreted to include one's wealth); "without reservation or limitation" (per Biddle); "substance, wealth, property given in the service of God" (per Miller).

Moreover, God's words (commands) deserve Israel's (holistic) remembrance (vv. 6-9). Israel must *היה* ("keep," perfect active) "these words" internally (in their hearts) to govern their volition (v. 6).⁵³ God expects Israel to share his commands and their theocentric history relationally with their children (v. 7).⁵⁴ Moses provides a plan of pedagogy for teaching Israel's children their covenantal obligations with Yahweh that transcend geographical location (in and away from home) and temporality ("night and day").⁵⁵ Moses conveys practical ways to remember Yahweh's covenantal commands as symbolic faithfulness by embodying them physically (on the hand and forehead) and branding them typographically (on their domestic doorposts and city gates) (vv. 8-9).⁵⁶

The imperfect imperative *שכח* ("do not forget") calls for Israel's perpetual remembrance of God's divine deliverance (v. 12).⁵⁷ The verse is a forewarning for Israel not to forget its theocentric history and significance predicated on Yahweh's deliverance from the land of Egypt (a life of enslavement). Israel did not save themselves (but by the grace of God).⁵⁸

The beginning (v. 4) and the end of the text (v. 12) work together to bring home the importance of hearing and remembering the words (commands) of Yahweh for

⁵³ Israel must keep the lamb in Exodus and now the Law in Deuteronomy.

⁵⁴ God's instructions have relational and familial connotations.

⁵⁵ See Biddle, *Deuteronomy*, for the "night and day" deduction. The geographical and temporal effects of pedagogy equate to all times and in all places.

⁵⁶ The text appeals to the Israelite practice of wearing phylacteries (v. 8). It also appeals to the significance in Exodus of the blood placed on the doorposts and lintel of a Jewish home (v. 9) for remembrance. The doorpost of the home is the identical location where the sacrificial lamb's blood was a sign of God's faithfulness and compassion.

⁵⁷ The text appeals to the Jewish tradition of Passover, a theme from Exodus 12.

⁵⁸ The verse counters the mindset of Israel pulling itself up by its bootstraps.

Israel's prosperity and posterity (v. 7), a divinely crafted recipe for Israel so that it will go well for them in the Promised Land. This recipe serves as the answer for Israel to their children when they inquire about the significance of Yahweh's covenantal agreement, governing their ability to do what is "right and good" in Yahweh's sight (vv. 20-25).⁵⁹ Verse 7 becomes a focal point to preserve the line and lineage of Israel in the Promised Land by perpetuating generational covenantal worship and obedience. Suppose Israel fails to teach their children the commandments and their significance. In that case, it will lead to a case of convenient amnesia (covenantal disobedience), forfeiting the Abrahamic covenant as Israel's theocentric inheritance.

Canonical context.

Deuteronomy serves as a contractual agreement, a covenant initiated by God with Israel predicated on their remembrance. God dictates the terms of a blessed relationship with him. The passage occurs in the second movement of the book (Moses's second speech on the terms of the covenant outlining how Israel is to live in the land) after the giving of the Law (the basic principles of the covenant). The text provides the key, the Great Commandment addressed by the *Shema*, to Israel's covenantal love and obedience towards Yahweh, an appropriate response to God's divine deliverance and continual favor and blessings in the Promised Land. When the Israelites arrive at the Promised Land, they are charged not to forget God's compassion, faithfulness, and Great Commandment—to hear, to listen, to love the Lord their God through perpetual worship, to love the Lord their God through perpetual obedience. In essence, Israel must remember

⁵⁹ Biddle, *Deuteronomy*, 130.

its theocentric history. Notably, loving God also requires passing on Israel's theocentric history to their children.

Contemporary application.

God expects total allegiance and perpetual generational remembrance of a theocentric history renovating the Christian community's identity and destiny based on his *sui generis* fidelity (demonstrated by the Exodus). This remembrance should lead to Christian ethics, doing what is right and good in his sight.

Once again, like Israel, the Greater Houston faith community is also in danger of forgetting its theocentric history and its call to listen—a history that contains the bitter herbs of a shared racial history—charging adults and their children to remember God's compassion, track record of faithfulness, and the expected response of obedience. For Greater Houston, a shared racial history includes American slavery. Slavery is not merely an ancestry history or even African American history; slavery is American history.

Church Racial History

Religion and Race

Emerson and Smith conducted a historical analysis of race relations and examined the structural role of American religion to arrive at their conclusion of evangelicalism in Black-and-white relations.⁶⁰ While American religion is the panacea for racialization, structurally, it perpetuates a racialized society.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*.

⁶¹ See Chapter One for Emerson and Smith's definition of a racialized society.

Instead of a person's theophany governing identity, in a racialized society, race and skin color seek to confiscate this divinely occupied position. The Euro American viewpoint is given a position of privilege as the normalized experience in a shared racial history, despite it being only one layer in a multi-layered contextualized story. As a result, the African American experience resides in the margins. Emerson points to the white Evangelical tendency of promoting being color blind with the belief that race problems are primarily outside the church. This results in making the choice not to see or to forget race (amnesia) and a shared racial history while maintaining majority racialized norms.

Per Emerson (Greater Houston) cultural toolkits vary by race and are shaped by their historical and social context for interpreting reality. Emerson avers, "The racially important cultural tools in the white evangelical tool kit are 'accountable freewill individualism,' 'relationalism' (attaching central importance to interpersonal relationships), and antistructuralism (inability to perceive or unwillingness to accept social structured influences)."⁶² While white evangelicals desire racial harmony and equality, Emerson and Smith claim the approach to reconciliation exasperates the matter. How? Per Emerson and Smith, white evangelicals developed a theology of racial reconciliation focused on the individual while ignoring social sins (i.e., racism), requiring societal, institutional, and cultural reconciliation. Emerson and Smith state, "One consequence of thoroughgoing evangelical individualism is a tendency to be ahistorical, to not grasp fully how history has an influence on the present. A variation of the other-

⁶² Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 76.

group-is-to-blame position was to express frustration with people trying to reference the past to account for today.”⁶³

Emerson and Smith also raise the issue of isolation from racial pluralism. Most white respondents lived in a 90% white world, desensitizing them to the race problem sociologically. The lack of exposure to Black Americans’ experiences led to group loyalty concerning matters of race and racial inequality.

Racial History Puzzle

So, what is missing in the conversation on Greater Houston’s shared church racial history? The racial history and contributions of the African American church are rooted in an African context. The Black church has a connection with early African Christianity: over two thousand years of Christianity in early Egyptian Christianity, remembering Egypt is in Africa.⁶⁴ The Black church has ties with African traditional religion: elements of pre-Christian traditional African religion exist in the works of Origen, Athanasius, and Pachomius (e.g., spiritual ascent and eternal life motifs from ancient Pharaonic religion).⁶⁵ The African American church’s connection with this living tradition emphasizes remembrance via the role of the sage.

⁶³ Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 81. An evangelical individualism ahistorical position beckons the need for a shared anamnesis.

⁶⁴ Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*, 24. Oden says, “The Egyptian Christians have steadily resided in the Nile Valley for almost two thousand years. Could it be said that Bantu oral traditions (only arrived in parts of the south within the last few centuries) are more an expression of African traditional religion than Egyptian Christianity?”

⁶⁵ Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*, 65-66.

Black Church Anamnesis

The sage.

Kenyetta Gilbert picks up on the influence of the sage for the Black church in Black preaching. Gilbert defines the transformative sagely voice as an “active practice of hope,” keeper of the community’s oral tradition of singing and storytelling, mediating biblical wisdom and melancholy hope.⁶⁶ Gilbert calls out the similarity between the African American preacher and the African prophet (*muntu*) known for their rhetoric (*nommo*). The slave preacher exemplified a trivocal role as the seer, pastor, and messianic figure while engaging the congregation in a dialogue of remembrance regarding its corporate Christian witness. Gilbert states, “In the act of proclamation the preacher as sage reminds believers of their commitments as redeemed persons who have declared allegiance to the crucified and risen sage—Jesus the Christ.”⁶⁷

Preaching is one of a plethora of methods for remembrance through living tradition. Teaching, singing, signs, ordinances, symbols, and stories are additional ways living tradition embodies the past to shed light on the present.⁶⁸ Examining the role of Black church tradition in remembrance pulls back another layer of a Greater Houston shared racial (religious) history.

⁶⁶ Kenyatta R. Gilbert, *The Journey and Promise of African American Preaching* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 1-18.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 62.

⁶⁸ Arthurs, *Preaching as Reminding*.

Black church tradition.

Esau McCaulley describes four Black church traditions: 1) Revolutionary/nationalist, 2) Reformist/transformist, 3) Conformist, and 4) Pentecostal.⁶⁹ McCaulley uses the term Black ecclesiastical tradition to describe the common tendencies of reformists/transformists, paralleling his definition of Black ecclesial interpretation.⁷⁰

Bill Crouch and Joel Gregory share testimonials, anamnestic accounts, of African American church distinctives rooted in Scripture.⁷¹ Their primary focus is enhancing the white church's awareness, education, and appreciation of the Black church while simultaneously providing the Black church an olive branch for reconciliation. While not an exhaustive list, Crouch and Gregory present thirteen Black church tradition distinctives: Black preaching, encouragement, laughter and light, pastoral mentorship, freedom of expression, respect for the elders, power of touch, the First Lady, hospitality, gratitude, empowerment, praise and respect, and Jesusology.⁷²

⁶⁹ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*. McCaulley added the fourth tradition, Pentecostal, during his lecture at Baylor University's Truett Seminary *Racism in the White Church 2023* conference.

⁷⁰ Black ecclesial tradition is 1) socially located, 2) theological, 3) canonical, 4) patient (not rejecting the authority of Scripture), and 5) Double apologetic (via encounters with Black secularists and white progressives).

⁷¹ William H. Crouch, Jr. and Joel C. Gregory, *What We Love About the Black Church: Can We Get a Witness?* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press), 2010.

⁷² Synopsis of the thirteen distinctives explored by Crouch and Gregory, *What We Love About the Black Church*: 1) Black preaching derives from the Black experience in America; 2) Encouragement is the source of Black hope, built on mutual trust, respect, grace, and compassion; 3) Laughter and light serve simultaneously as a balm in Gilead and the joy of fellowship; 4) Hands-on pastoral mentorship for sons and daughters in the ministry is a timeless tradition; 5) Freedom of expression is a hallmark of the Black church experience, worship (preaching, praying, and praising) led by and in the Spirit; 6) Respecting the elders beyond death originates in the African tradition; 7) The power of touch provides a sense of belonging; 8) The First Lady of the church is regarded with high esteem in the Black church as the model of womanhood; 9) Hospitality is a core component of the African American experience, considered a congregational affair; 10) Gratitude is a way of life for a people with an oppressed past; 11) Empowerment fuels the praxis of the Black church's holistic (economic, spiritual, political, and spiritual) ministry disposition and lay leadership model where, quoting Roberts, "Justice and love cannot be separated." (108); 12) Praise and respect embody the ongoing individual and communal affirmation, spanning the sacred and secular horizons as a

Black Baptist church tradition.

Leroy Fitts documents the rich tradition of Black Baptists and their contributions to American Christianity.⁷³ He explores how Black Baptists have adapted European and white American Baptist traditions to fit Black Americans' psychological, sociological, and political landscape.⁷⁴ According to Fitts, Black Baptists left white churches due to segregation, discrimination, and the theological epiphany of Black Baptist preachers. The Black church serves as a counter-racist movement for Black America's contextualized (Christian and secular) education, countering white anthropology as the standard for quality education in America. Fitts conveys a Black Baptist tradition of a liberating sociopolitical praxis based on the life of Jesus predating Walter Rauschenbusch.

Considering the rich history and heritage of the Black church tradition leads to examining one of two (recognized) Baptist ordinances, the Lord's Supper. First Corinthians 11:23-26, an anamnestic scriptural passage, preserves the ordinance instituted by Jesus through ceremony and symbol, continually stirring the local (Baptist) church community's memory.

way of life; 13) Jesusology points to a high Christology. Reflecting on Dr. Gardner C. Taylor's preaching, Gregory articulates it is a continual call to a deeper and more profound commitment to Christ and the social gospel.

⁷³ Fitts, *A History of Black Baptists*.

⁷⁴ Ibid. Fitts traces the Baptist tradition from its European background, developing from Anabaptist to its genesis in North America, calling out its track record of accommodation to American slavery, leading to the expansion of Black Baptists via Black preachers on plantations, and concludes with observations of contemporary religious, social, and political trends of Black Baptist life.

*1 Corinthians 11:23-26*⁷⁵

This passage spotlights the role of ecclesial (living) tradition in biblical anamnesis.

Exegetical insights.

In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul, the apostle and spiritual father of the Corinthian church, provides warnings and instructions regarding the believer's freedom in Christ. Now, in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul aims to relay instructions on public worship. Prior to this pericope, Paul addresses the church's practice of discrimination (via blatant abuse and misrepresentation) at the Lord's Supper during the *agape* feast. Instead of it being a time of *koinonia*—unity, and fellowship as the body of Christ—in the remembrance of Christ, it is a time of drunken revelry and oppression of the poor. The church's practices express contempt for the body of Christ, and Paul will have none of it. Now, the stage is set for Paul to provide instructions for proper protocol, practice, and remembrance of the Lord's Supper—an ordinance given by Christ for the followers of Christ.

⁷⁵ A theological and contextualized history by the author, Paul. Paul Ellingworth and Howard Hatton, *A Handbook on Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1995). Paul's remembrance of the Lord's Supper parallels the contextualized synoptic ("seen together") accounts found in Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, and Luke 10:25-28 with a shared focus on 1) taking the bread; 2) giving thanks; 3) breaking the bread; 4) the words of Jesus, "This is my body;" 5) the cup; and 6) "blood" and "covenant." Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1914). While the writing of 1 Corinthians occurs before the Gospels, Robertson claims the possibility of Mark as the principal source of the tradition. Hans Conzelmann, James W. Leitch, and James W. Dunkly, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, ed. George W. MacRae (1517 Media, 1975), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvb6v88r>. Contra Conzelmann for Luke as the original source.

The Lord's Supper.

Paul paints a picture of proper remembrance for observance. The pericope contains a parenthesis (vv. 23, 26) via the explanatory conjunction γάρ (“for”), serving as an explanation of Paul’s non-committal praise of the church’s behavior when partaking of the Lord’s Supper (vv. 17-22). Paul stresses the Lord’s expectations of a remembering church (vv. 23-25).⁷⁶ In doing so, Paul contrasts the unethical, abusive behavior of the Corinthian church members at the Lord’s Supper with the authorized protocol and procedure for practicing the Lord’s Supper.

The aorist active verbs παραλαμβάνω (“I received”) and παραδίδωμι (“handed on to you”) serve as third-party credibility, authorizing and validating Paul’s version of the Lord’s Supper as Christian tradition (v. 23).⁷⁷ The Corinthian church is to remember the (ironic) betrayal of Christ (v. 23). Paul mentions the bread, triggering the church’s remembrance of Passover. Ironically, just as Judas betrayed Jesus on the night of the festival of Unleavened Bread, so too is the church betraying Jesus in their unholy disposition, causing division.

The center of the inclusio (vv. 24-25) provides the Lord’s Supper tradition with the proper protocol (orthodoxy) and practice (orthopraxy) for imitation and

⁷⁶ Cf. Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 6.

⁷⁷ Paul’s reception of the Lord’s Supper tradition is not literally from the Lord, but rather from the apostles of the Christian community (“body of Christ”), equating to reception from the Lord. Cf. Kenneth E. Bailey, *Paul through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in 1 Corinthians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011); Conzlemann, *1 Corinthians*; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987); David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003); Ellingworth, *A Handbook on Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians*; Preben Vang, *1 Corinthians*, Teach the Text Commentary Series, eds. Mark L. Strauss and John H. Walton (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014); Dachollom Datiri, “1 Corinthians,” in *Africa Bible Commentary*, ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo (Zondervan, 2010), Perlego, “11:2-14:40 Issues Concerning Public Worship,” section “11:17-34 Proper Celebration of the Lord’s Supper,” <https://www.perlego.com/book/561417/africa-bible-commentary-pdf>.

remembrance. The church is to remember the body of Christ (v. 24). The aorist active verb κλάω (“he broke it”) triggers the church’s memory of Christ’s crucifixion, symbolizing the Passover’s sacrificial lamb (sacrificed on the night of Israel’s deliverance). Jesus’s authoritative words solidify the connection between the bread (of life) and his body,⁷⁸ “Do this in remembrance of me.”⁷⁹ Just like the Day of Remembrance (Passover), Jesus calls his disciples to perpetual celebratory ἀνάμνησις (“remembrance”) of his compassion and the temporal bitter herbs of his Passion on their behalf during his crucifixion.

Also, the church is to remember the blood of Christ (v. 25). The present active subjunctive verb πίνω (“you drink it”) continues stirring up the church’s memory of their deliverance by the cup (of blessing), symbolizing the new covenant between humanity and divinity sealed by the blood of Christ shed on Calvary (affecting salvific deliverance).⁸⁰

Once again, Paul quotes Jesus’s words and command for the perpetual remembrance of Christ. The blood of Christ serves as the covering over the spiritual doorposts and lintels of their lives: “Do this in remembrance of me.” Not only has Christ paid the price for the penalty of their sins, but he has also satisfied the stipulations of a

⁷⁸ “This is my body”: The near demonstrative “this” refers to the body of Christ sacrificed on the church’s behalf. See Garland, *1 Corinthians*; and Vang, *1 Corinthians*.

⁷⁹ The present imperative verb ποιέω (“do”) is repeated in v. 25, magnifying the significance of the bread and cup practice for remembrance.

⁸⁰ For the new covenant sealed by Christ’s blood (self-sacrifice), see Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*; Garland, *1 Corinthians*; Vang, *1 Corinthians*; and Ellingworth, *A Handbook on Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians*.

new agreement or covenant between God and the church (as the body and bride of Christ).

Paul concludes by underscoring the significance of a remembering church (v. 26). He provides the reason for adherence to the authorized version of the Lord's Supper (vv. 23-25), imitation of Christ as a perpetual public proclamation of Christ's death and life that promotes solidarity and *koinonia*—until he returns (v. 26). The present active verb καταγγέλλω (“you proclaim”) sets the expectation for the church's continual eschatological declaration to promote the death, messianic reign, and ethical life of Christ in their walk and witness until the Parousia.

The central point of the passage is a contrast between the religion and ethics of the Corinthian church's public worship during the Lord's Supper and the authorized version instituted by Jesus. Paul instructs the Corinthian church to perpetually imitate the Lord's Supper tradition for authentic worship and witness of the Lord until his imminent return.⁸¹ How? Paul provides the answer to the pericope's implied question in the opening verse of the chapter, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” (11:1, NRSV)

Canonical context.

The book of 1 Corinthians serves as the director's cut of Paul's missionary and pastoral concerns for a local faith community wrestling with embodying the Christian faith while struggling to overcome the influence of unethical practices in Corinth. Per Richard Ginn, the meaning of anamnesis (or remembrance) is contextual, requiring consideration of the Johannine and Synoptic traditions of the Passover and the Last

⁸¹ Cf. Matthew 22 emphasis on biblical hermeneutics and lifestyle homiletics.

Supper.⁸² The Lord's Supper reminds the church of Jesus's Passion (suffering and endurance), demonstrating his love on the cross. Just like Israel, the church could not save itself. Because of Jesus's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, however, it is now a new community with a new identity, living under a new covenant of God's grace, mercy, and unconditional love. Paul seeks to aid the local congregation to learn the call sign of true spirituality, where *koinonia*,⁸³ remembrance, and the imitation of the love of Christ serve as the hallmarks of spiritual maturity.

Contemporary application.

Jesus commands perpetual remembrance of the Lord's Supper during public worship via imitation to accurately proclaim his sacrificial life that promotes unity in the body of Christ. Every Christ follower is indebted to Christ's Passion and compassion. Christ charges the body of Christ to remember that it did not and cannot save itself. The Lord instructs the faith community to remember the details of its deliverance as a means of public worship. The Greater Houston faith community's charge is to remain vigilant for Christ's presence to manifest itself on the scene, remembering it is the Lord who fights and defeats its foes. It is the Lord who breaks the chains of (spiritual and physical) bondage in people's lives and the community. It is Jesus who calls the faith community to celebrate his compassionate deliverance. Echoing Yahweh's call in Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 6, it is the Lord who calls his disciples to perpetual remembrance. Moreover, the Lord's Supper tradition mandates the Greater Houston church community

⁸² Ginn, *The Present and the Past*.

⁸³ A caring and sharing community where everybody is somebody. Cf. Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*.

to exercise its social responsibility to live as Christ lived, informing its contemporary Christian ethics and shared racial history as a public witness. Since Christian ethics necessitates the imitation of Christ, division and discrimination (including racism) are not acceptable for the Christian or Greater Houston community.

Community Racial History

Greater Houston Baptist pastors' desire to grasp a fuller picture of a shared anamnestic racial history necessitates biblical and theological exploration in the context of community. The Great Commandment shines light on the role of teaching and preaching in communal remembrance. Jesus's teaching on discipleship stirs up the memory of the Old Testament, specifically the *Shema* and the Golden Rule, to inform Greater Houston pastors' kingdom-based community ethics, leading to a community racial history awareness intertwined with the Black religious experience.

*Matthew 22:34-40*⁸⁴

Exegetical insights.

The pericope occurs between Jesus's fourth discourse (18:1-35) about the community of the Messiah and his fifth discourse (24:1-25:46) at the Mount of Olives (or Olivet), foretelling the destruction of the Temple. In this section, Jesus exposes false discipleship by clarifying the goal of true discipleship (love for God, self, and neighbor). Jesus instructs his disciples on faithful discipleship (instructions for imitating and

⁸⁴ A theological and contextualized history by the author, Matthew. Matthew's remembrance of the Great Commandment parallels the contextualized synoptic ("seen together") accounts found in Mark 12:28-34 and Luke 10:25-28 with a focus on the *euangelion* ("good news") of Jesus. Matthew and Luke omit the repetition of the commandment to love and the statement about burnt offerings and sacrifices in Mark.

following Christ). The immediate setting occurs after Jesus silences the Sadducees regarding the resurrection and before silencing the Pharisees regarding the identity of the Messiah.⁸⁵ The significance resides in the emphasis on a loving relationship with God and people, a concept the Sadducees and Pharisees missed in their quest for legalistic holiness without a genuine relationship with God, the Messiah (His Son), and Israel (His chosen people).

The Great Commandment.

An investigation into Matthew's contextualized account of Jesus's teachings reveals a question pondered by the faith community: What is the key to faithful discipleship?

Matthew uses a story about and the words of Jesus to emphasize that living a life that pleases God is not based on rules nor technicalities but rather on relationships. Faithful discipleship entails avoiding shameful motivations and unethical behaviors (vv. 34-36). The verses provide a picture of religious and ethical motivations gone awry. Though on the surface the religious leaders' actions and speech may appear piteous and sincere, ulterior motives predicated on grasping God's glory and honor at the expense of humanity are at play. Ironically, the Pharisees are coming to the defense of the Sadducees when hearing that Jesus, their common enemy, is responsible for silencing the Sadducees. The aorist passive indicative verb συνάγω ("gathered") tips off the Pharisees' impromptu gathering under the influence of the ultimate enemy, deceiver, and destroyer—Satan (v. 34). Satan, the evil one, is the very one Jesus instructs the disciples to pray for

⁸⁵ Cf. Matthew 22:46.

deliverance from in the model prayer of Matthew 6:13. Conspiring with the Pharisees, the lawyer (an expert in the Law) attempts to test Jesus,⁸⁶ the lawgiver,⁸⁷ with a question about the Law, setting the stage for Jesus's response (vv. 35-36). The lawyer's endeavor to challenge Jesus is an offense, as he and the Pharisees claim to be Jesus's social equal (v. 35).⁸⁸ Equality with God is not something even Jesus chose to aspire to via *kenosis* when Jesus, the Word, became flesh and dwelt among humanity. Next, the challenge attempts to undermine the honor of Jesus (v. 36).⁸⁹ While "teacher" is a term of respect and endearment traditionally,⁹⁰ the lawyer uses the term irreverently and mockingly as his covert motive is to shame the teacher by showing that the student knows more.⁹¹

Faithful discipleship entails loving God, self, and neighbor (vv. 37-39). The verses provide a contrasting picture of proper religious and ethical motivations rooted in a loving relationship with God and humanity, as evidenced in God's Word. Jesus's speech and prescribed actions revolve around a love for God and neighbor (without compromise or middle ground). His response to the lawyer's honor/shame challenge

⁸⁶ Cf. Matthew 22:35=Luke 10:25 ("to test him"), Mark 12:28 omitted; Matthew and Luke call "foul play" for the lawyer's motives.

⁸⁷ Cf. Matthew 22:35=Luke 10:25 ("a lawyer"), Mark 12:28 ("one of the scribes"); here, lawyer and scribe are synonymous terms.

⁸⁸ Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 113-14. Malina and Rohrbaugh highlight a challenge-riposte dynamic, predicated on a shame and honor culture, playing an impactful role in the background.

⁸⁹ Cf. Matthew 22:36=Luke 10:26 ("in the law"), Mark 12:28-29 ("which commandment ..."); Matthew and Luke emphasize this is a legal examination of Jesus by the lawyer. Mark does not draw attention to Jesus's challenge-riposte with the lawyer and keeps Jesus's targeted response general.

⁹⁰ Cf. Matthew 23:10.

⁹¹ Cf. Matthew 22:36=Luke 10:25 ("Teacher"), Mark 12:28 omitted; Matthew and Luke emphasize the vocative (direct address) of the lawyer to Jesus (necessary for a challenge), the authority of Jesus as a teacher, and the insincerity of the lawyer's question.

provides an answer in equal measure and ups the ante. The lawyer asks for a great commandment; Jesus responds with the two greatest commandments, along with providing clarity to the “heavy” and “light” ones (v. 37).⁹² Jesus begins with a familiar commandment describing how to love God (cf. Deuteronomy 6:5),⁹³ signaling the remembrance of the *Shema* and a willingness to martyrdom for God’s glory and public honor.⁹⁴ Contrastingly, the lawyer and the Pharisees think of shaming God to diminish his glory in the quest to elevate their honor in the court of public opinion. The brothers in arms seek to acquire God’s glory through illegal possession. It is against this backdrop of hostility by the religious leaders, propelled by a quest for earthly power, that Jesus describes how to love self and neighbor (v. 39). The Golden Rule takeaway: Model your love for others in the same way that you love yourself.

Finally, Christ charges the religious community to prioritize relationships with God and humanity (above all else) for his glory (v. 40).⁹⁵ While Jesus is not abolishing the Law, he is clarifying the order of significance and focus of primary importance for the Pharisees’ hermeneutics and homiletics (up to this point, they have been guilty of legal malpractice). Furthermore, it is this gross neglect that the lawyer and Pharisees are found guilty of committing in their attempt to hush mouth Jesus. Ironically, they also join the

⁹² Cf. Matthew 22:37-40.

⁹³ Cf. Matthew 22:37=Luke 10:27=Mark 12:30 (“and with all your mind”); Matthew lists three items “and with all your mind” as the final item. Luke adds a fourth item, “and with all your strength,” and places it before “and with all your mind.” Mark adds a fourth item, “and with all your strength,” placing it after “and with all your mind.”

⁹⁴ Cf. Matthew 22:37=Luke 10:27 (omission of the *Shema*) and Mark 12:29-30 (quotes the *Shema*). Matthew implies the *Shema* by using an imperfect verb tense. Luke uses the aorist as a rhetorical device to move the narrative forward. Mark quotes the *Shema* in Jesus’s reply.

⁹⁵ A theme revealed in Genesis 1 is that humanity serves as God’s representative.

tight-lipped Sadducees, unable to trip up the lawgiver with an impromptu exam over the Law. Jesus essentially indicts the lawyer and the Pharisees based on the greatest two commandments as they are guilty of taking an offensive posture against God and their neighbor. Jesus's ability (as the authoritative teacher) to end the ongoing rabbinic debate over the categorization of light and heavy commands is something neither the lawyer nor the Pharisees were competent to do. His response shames the lawyer and the Pharisees, thus rightfully taking away their honor for God's glory.⁹⁶

Verses 34 and 40 serve as parenthesis, utilizing the passive voice verbs συνάγω ("gathered") and κρεμάννυμι ("hang").⁹⁷ The pericope starts with the Pharisees' actions governed by the evil one (v. 34). Jesus and the *Shema* reside at the center (v. 37). The text ends with the *Shema* and the Golden Rule serving as the governing principles for faith (religion) and righteous living (ethics) of Jesus's disciples (v. 40). The actions of the Pharisees and the speech of the lawyer contrasts with the speech of Jesus and the actions deemed honorable for followers of God.

The primary concern appears to be a contrast in the religion and ethics of a person influenced by God's Word (Jesus) and a person influenced by the evil one (a wolf dressed in sheep's clothing). The text moves from a focus on the importance of a single commandment to the correct interpretation of Scripture (based on relationship) via the two greatest commandments, signaling a total commitment (being all in) to love (attachment) towards God and neighbor.⁹⁸ Jesus's prescribed kingdom ethics resolve all

⁹⁶ Cf. Matthew 22:46.

⁹⁷ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005). Luz identifies vv. 35 and 40 as brackets via the keyword *nomos* ("law").

⁹⁸ Cf. Genesis 9.

theological debates, hinging on the nearness of Deuteronomy 6:5 (“this”) and Leviticus 19:18 (“these”), which carries weight over all of Scripture (the heavy and light commandments).

Canonical context.

Matthew is writing to a mixed congregation of Jewish and Gentile disciples, desiring to survive and thrive in an honor-shame culture predicated on loyalty to the Temple (symbolizing the presence of God) and the Torah (symbolizing God’s words and track record). The Matthean congregation lives in the crossfire of the Pharisees and Sadducees’ power struggle for earthly glory as rivals in the Sanhedrin (functioning as the Supreme Court and legislative body of ancient Israel). The pericope serves as Jesus’s rebuttal to the earlier questions by the Pharisees and Sadducees designed to trap or trip up Jesus. Now, the Pharisees take another swing at Jesus concerning the greatest commandment in the Mosaic Law. The Great Commandment serves as a calibration for canonical context. If the entire Law and the Prophets hinge upon the Great Commandment, so do the book and the canon of Scripture.

Contemporary application.

Jesus guides Matthew’s readers and Greater Houston Baptist pastors to interpret the Scriptures based on the double love commandment.⁹⁹ Jesus moves local pastors to an introspective legal examination by reflecting on their faith and practice of Scripture. Are Greater Houston religious leaders allowing the lighter things to overshadow the weightier things of Scripture?

⁹⁹ Luz, *Matthew 21-28*. Luz refers to the Great Commandment as the double love commandment.

Local faith communities can attempt to hide behind commandments, rules, and regulations. However, they do not justify falling short of loving God, self, and others by not treating them compassionately. When local pastors subscribe to Jesus's three-point plan for faithful discipleship, it prevents susceptibility to false discipleship: being influenced by Satan (the evil one), society, and the ubiquitous presence of racism that brings shame to the faith community, the King, and His kingdom. When the Greater Houston faith community subscribes to Jesus's three-point plan for faithful discipleship, it is empowered and influenced to live in *koinonia* (a caring and sharing community) by the Spirit, bringing honor to Christ and the local church via a corporate witness. The local Baptist community embraces its identity as faithful followers of Christ (seeing, hearing, and confronting racism more clearly) when it prioritizes relationships with God and its neighbor in life through the lens or guiding principles of Christ. Furthermore, just in case members of the local Baptist community raise the questions "Who is my neighbor?" and "Where are they?" like the lawyer in Luke's account of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus makes it clear that a person's neighbor is anyone and everyone that comes across their path, including people in one's neighborhood and the Greater Houston community.

How can local Baptist pastors practice Jesus's biblical hermeneutics (leading to orthodoxy) and lifestyle homiletics (leading to orthopraxy) in solidarity that are not mutually exclusive but rather a divine hendiadys? The Greater Houston Black community's racial history experiences are essential and beckon exploring the Black religious experience.

Black Religious Experience

What I have said respecting and against religion, I mean strictly to apply to the slaveholding religion of this land, and with no possible reference to Christianity proper; for, between the Christianity of this land, and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible difference.... I love the pure, peaceable, and impartial Christianity of Christ: I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land.¹⁰⁰

Long before Emerson and Smith published *Divided by Faith*, Douglass called out America's racialized society.¹⁰¹ The Black religious experience in Greater Houston (and America) is a contextualized phenomenon, predicated on a racialized society, inescapably connected to racism, white supremacy, the question of power, and capitalism.

Racism shapes the Black religious experience. According to Bryan Massingale, racism is a culture of deformity that shapes perceptions of meaning, value, and identity based on skin-color differences: "If cultures inform our visible social institutions, policies, and practices, then we can understand racism as a culture—a culture of malformation."¹⁰² For Massingale, "racism is a soul sickness."¹⁰³ Meanwhile, J. Alfred Smith Sr. describes racism as a state of moral blindness.¹⁰⁴ The Black religious experience, sculpted by racism, also clashes with white supremacy and power.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 16, quoting Frederick Douglass.

¹⁰¹ See Chapter One for the definition of racialized society.

¹⁰² Massingale, "Race and Reconciliation," 141.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 154.

¹⁰⁴ Smith Sr., "Answering the Call of God for Sankofa Leadership in These Times."

¹⁰⁵ See Chapter One for Tisby's definition of white supremacy's power dynamic. Kendi diagnoses racism as the byproduct of powerful self-interest.

Laurie Green discloses the inevitable interpersonal and intercultural power dynamic interrogative: “How should we deal with power?”¹⁰⁶ Green avers, “God is the all-powerful one, and yet, unlike us, uses that power only in the cause of love. I have, therefore, come to believe with all my heart that to wrestle with the question of power is to wrestle with the character of God.”¹⁰⁷ Like Jacob wrestling with God in Genesis 32:23-32, the Greater Houston Black religious experience “wrestl[es] with questions of power, authority, and blessing.”¹⁰⁸

Still, what is the meaning of the Black experience?¹⁰⁹ The Black experience is a contextualized phenomenon where geographical location plays a significance. Dr. Gardner C. Taylor explains the African American (Black) preacher via the Black experience in America: “Blacks are enough of a part of the total culture to understand it. Yet, they are enough apart from the total culture to see it from the side, from another angle. It is the experience of having one foot in the larger culture and one foot out of the larger culture that gives the unique angle of vision to the black preacher.”¹¹⁰ Based on J. Deotis Roberts’s assessment, the Black experience offers a vital perspective to Christian social ethics due to its unique experience of unmerited suffering at the hands of humanity.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Green, *Let’s Do Theology*, 12. Green is a retired British Anglican bishop. Black theology influenced his contextual theology while he lived in New York during the Civil Rights Movement.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Green, *Let’s Do Theology*, 16 n9.

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter One for a preparatory definition of the Black experience, serving as an on-ramp for expansion.

¹¹⁰ Crouch and Gregory, *What We Love About the Black Church*, 1-2.

¹¹¹ Roberts, *Black Religion, Black Theology*, 50-60.

While not an exhaustive list, the Black experience also co-habits with capitalism.¹¹² Emerson and Smith shed light on the racial dynamics of American capitalism via research-based claims that the contemporary white evangelical perspective supports laissez-faire capitalism: America is a meritocracy, resulting in a just economic inequality. In contrast, Keri Day speaks up for the underclass, conveying, “Class does matter” when considering the impact of class discrimination.¹¹³ Day also spotlights the precarious position of African American women living in the New Jane Crow.¹¹⁴

What is the relevance for the Greater Houston community? Racial disparities fester in the fibers of the Greater Houston Black experience.¹¹⁵ Local Euro and African American Baptist pastors can choose to break the racialized systemic cycle, constituting a shared bitter herbs racial history,¹¹⁶ for future generations through remembrance. The Great Commandment promotes the Greater Houston faith community to love God, self, and neighbor. Meanwhile, the *Shema* in Deuteronomy 6 and the Golden Rule prompts a continual pedagogy of racial history awareness, lest local pastors and congregants perpetuate a Greater Houston culture of racial injustice (and a watered-down witness).

¹¹² See Kendi’s definition of racial capitalism in Chapter One.

¹¹³ Keri Day, *Unfinished Business*, 9. See Chapter One for a definition of the underclass. Day is a champion for Black women in America oppressed by racial and socioeconomic systemic factors.

¹¹⁴ See Chapter One for a definition of the New Jane Crow.

¹¹⁵ See Understanding Houston, “Poverty and Social Mobility in Houston” in Chapter One–Project Context.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Exodus 12:8.

Racial History Unity

Scripture and theology serve as guides, developing a pathway to a common unity for racial history awareness. Moreover, Genesis' creational story aids in the journey towards racial history unity. Why does racial history unity matter?

Racial history unity is about identity, dignity, and destiny. Moreover, since human history embodies limitations and subjectivity, so is a racial history rooted in a racialized Greater Houston society dictating a race-class-based identity. Stephen Breck Reid offers a theocentric alternative to humanity's identity via a Black biblical hermeneutic that seeks God's creational intent for living together in unity.¹¹⁷ According to Reid, the first step is acknowledging that Scripture is the Word of God by God.¹¹⁸

*Genesis 1:26-27*¹¹⁹

Exegetical insights.

Based on the remembrance of God's creational intent story, Genesis 1:26-27 emphasizes the importance of the worth and value of all humanity, made in the image and likeness of God. The text occurs in the first movement of Genesis (the story of creation—"in the beginning") prior to the details of humanity's story (captured in the story of Adam and Eve). The pericope sets the tone for the rest of the book, the canon of Scripture, and humanity. God is the Creator of all things: humanity, the earth, the heavens, and all other

¹¹⁷ Stephen Breck Reid, "Biblical Interpretation: How I've Changed My Mind," in *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Wisdom from the Sankofa Institute for African American Pastoral Leadership*, ed. Dwight N. Hopkins (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2018), 120-132. Reid is Professor of Christian Scriptures at Truett Seminary and Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and Belonging at Baylor University.

¹¹⁸ Reid's initial hermeneutical step synergizes with David Bebbington's *Quadrilateral* of biblicism.

¹¹⁹ A theological and contextualized history by the author, Moses.

living things. God's cosmic sovereignty on display prompts the inquiry, "Who is like the Lord?" Nobody!¹²⁰

Imago Dei.

A close look at God's account of human theocentric history penned by Moses after the Exodus reveals God's sovereign plan, pattern, purpose, and activity.¹²¹ God's creation story begins with his sovereign plan. Israel's God, Elohim—the Creator of the universe—has a deliberate plan for humanity that demonstrates his sovereignty. The phrase "Then God said" places the hearer on notice that this is God's divine public service message for humanity. Next, God's sovereign pattern is on display (v. 26b). The imperfect active cohortative Qal verb עָשָׂה ("Let us make") denotes God's conversation takes place in the courts of heaven or heavenly realm.¹²² God conveys his intentionality for the blueprint of humanity (in his image and according to his likeness) as royal representatives of the Divine.¹²³ Gregory of Nyssa affirms humanity's royal

¹²⁰ Cf. Exodus 15:11; Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 12.

¹²¹ Allen P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing: Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 112.

¹²² Ibid. Ross explains the first-person implied plural personal pronoun as the plural of majesty or a potential plural. Cf. Martin Luther, *Commentary on Genesis, Vol. 1* (Perlego, 2015), Perlego, "Part 6," "God's Work on the Sixth Day," section "II. V. 26a. And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness," <https://www.perlego.com/book/1716957/commentary-on-genesis-vol-1-luther-on-the-creation-pdf>; and Barnabe Assohoto and Samuel Ngewa, "Genesis," in *Africa Bible Commentary*, ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo (Zondervan, 2010), Perlego, "1:1-11:19 God and Humankind," section "1:1-31 Creation of All Things," <https://www.perlego.com/book/561417/africa-bible-commentary-pdf>, pointing to the Trinity; Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), Perlego, "Text and Commentary," "I. Primeval History (1:1-11:32)," section "A. The Creation of the World (1:1-2:3)," <https://www.perlego.com/book/2015730/the-book-of-genesis-chapters-1-17-pdf>. Hamilton prefers the "plural of fullness" from the six potential interpretations presented; Gordon John Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017), Perlego, section "In the Beginning (1:1-2:3)," <https://www.perlego.com/book/561351/genesis-115-volume-1-pdf>. Wenham argues in favor of Philo's interpretation of God addressing the heavenly court (the angels).

¹²³ Cf. Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed., The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Westminster Press, 1973), Perlego, "Chapter 2," "The Biblical Primeval History,"

representation, writing, “Let us add that [man’s] creation in the image of the nature that governs all demonstrates precisely that he has from the beginning a royal nature.”¹²⁴ The *imago Dei* signifies God’s compassion and desired relational state with humanity as the climax of the Creator’s creation. The text then moves to God’s purpose of stewardship. God conveys his will for humanity’s divine destiny, the grace gift of dominion over all non-human creation above, below, and on the earth. The sovereign purpose identifies God’s desired relational state for humanity with the rest of the Creator’s creation. Finally, the Creator’s trustworthy activity is on display (v. 27). God follows through on his plan for the pattern and purpose of (a diverse) humanity. God can be trusted to deliver on his Word (his promises), and God cares for all humanity equally (both male and female).

The text contains an A-B-C-D-C’-B’-A’ chiastic pattern (where A-A’ functions as an inclusio): Elohim dictates his divine plan for the creation of humanity (A–v. 26a), Elohim communicates to the Godhead his divine pattern of making humanity in their image (B–v. 26b), Elohim provides additional details or specifications concerning the pattern to make humans according to the Godhead’s likeness (C–v. 26c), Elohim provides the purpose or destiny for humanity–dominion of non-human creation (D–v. 26d),¹²⁵ Elohim carries out his detailed pattern of creating humanity–according to the Godhead’s likeness (C’–v. 27a), Elohim completes the divine pattern by making humanity in his

section “The Creation Story in the Priestly Narrative,” <https://www.perlego.com/book/3239330/genesis-revised-edition-a-commentary-pdf>; cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*; and Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*.

¹²⁴ Cf. Andrew Louth, ed., *Genesis 1-11*, Old Testament I, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2016), Perlego, “Genesis 1-11,” section “God Creates Man and Woman Genesis 1:26-27,” <https://www.perlego.com/book/2985958/genesis-111-pdf>.

¹²⁵ Refuting the mistreatment, bondage, slavery, and captivity of Israel by its captives/enemies/adversaries based on claims of divine authority.

image (B'–v. 27b), and Elohim completes his divine plan for the creation of humanity, inclusive of male and female (A'–v. 27c). The divine activity of Elohim depicts him as the sovereign God who can be trusted, Elohim deliberates (v. 26) and creates (v. 27). The pericope moves from God's verbal deliberation concerning his expressed desire of specifications to make humanity to acting upon his volition, and completing his work of human creation according to his divine specifications—for both male and female human beings.

The middle of the chiasm (v. 26d) reveals the primary concern, the purpose of humanity (specifically Israel). Through the hardships of life, the exodus from Egypt, and the Babylonian exile, the divinely ordained destiny of Elohim for Israel cannot be thwarted; it is verifiable and trusted. Because Elohim, the God of Israel, executes his divine plan for the creation of humanity, Israel can take comfort, refuge, and find hope in their God, delivering on his Abrahamic covenant of the Promised Land. Moreover, Israel's God is greater than any other god, and their creation story provides the faith community with its theological, anthropological, sociological, and psychological identity.

Canonical context.

Canonically, Genesis 1 sets the stage and foundation for understanding human history (the beginning). The story of humanity's creation articulates that God creates human beings in his image and according to his likeness. God's purpose for human beings reveals God's plan for human survival and thriving.¹²⁶ The divine contextual design of humanity communicates male and female human beings. Humanity's

¹²⁶ Cf. Genesis 1:26-28.

relationship with creation appropriates having Godlike authority to steward the earth, sky, and waters. Genesis answers the ontological questions of humanity, a contextualized (male and female) being and knowing contrasting all other living creatures. Genesis answers the teleological question of humanity, the blessing of a unified purpose of stewardship and procreation. Bruggeman provides a segue for the contemporary application of Genesis:

This text is not an abstract statement about the origin of the universe. Rather, it is a theological and pastoral statement addressed to a real historical problem. The problem is to find a ground for faith in this God when the experience of sixth century Babylon seems to deny the rule of this God. This liturgy cuts underneath the Babylonian experience and grounds the rule of the God of Israel in a more fundamental claim, that of creation. The use of this text is not for general ruminations about the world. It continues to be a ground for faith in this God when more immediate historical experience is against it. Its affirmation is: this God can be trusted, even against contemporary data. The refutation of contemporary data may include sickness, poverty, unemployment, loneliness, that is, every human experience of abandonment.¹²⁷

Contemporary application.

Humanity is created according to the plan, pattern, purpose, and activity of its compassionate Creator, not predicated on skin color, race, or ethnicity. God endows humanity with authority and a purpose: 1) Dominion over his non-human creation, and 2) Prosperity through procreation via a man and a woman (vv. 27-28). God's creational intent describes a journey where the Christian community, including the local Greater Houston faith community, is charged with treating people based on God's evaluation because how God's earthly representatives treat people matters to God. Genesis 1:26-27

¹²⁷ Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), Perlego, "Part 1," "The 'Pre-History': The Sovereign Call of God," section "Genesis 1:1-2:4," <https://www.perlego.com/book/2101006/genesis-interpretation-a-bible-commentary-for-teaching-and-preaching-pdf>.

refutes racism as a violation of God's divine plan for his human creation, made in the *imago Dei*.

Considering Genesis' reminder of Greater Houston area pastors' mutual purpose ordained by God, contrasting a shared contemporary racial history, where do local Baptist pastors go from here? How do they move forward in unity?

*Unity in Mutual Purpose*¹²⁸

God's story of creational intent establishes mutual purpose based on a shared identity, being made in the image of God. Every person is a representative of the Creator, charged with stewarding healthy relationships with creation to survive and thrive in *koinonia*. In this caring and sharing Greater Houston community, everybody is somebody.

Local pastors do this work faithfully with expectation and anticipation of living in a Greater Houston community of *koinonia*, in the present and at the return of Christ. They remember they represent a loving God specializing in manufacturing masterpieces out of what appears as lifeless (dead) and hopeless situations. Unity in mutual purpose calls for confronting a common enemy, racism, that wages war in individual, congregational, and community contexts.

Contemporary Ecclesial Approaches to Unity

The journey towards (racial) unity beckons examination of contemporary ecclesial frameworks for consideration. In *Preaching as Reminding*, Jeffery D. Arthurs

¹²⁸ See Kerry Patterson et al., *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2012). The authors advocate for a mutual purpose to resolve disagreements when emotions are high, the stakes are high, and viewpoints vary.

emphasizes the preacher-leader's role as the Lord's remembrancers. Arthurs outlines nine vital things *reminding* does to its listeners:

- (1) "*Prompts thankfulness.*"
- (2) "*Raises hope.*"
- (3) "*Prompts repentance.*"
- (4) "*Fosters humility.*"
- (5) "*Helps believers walk wisely.*"
- (6) "*Warns of unbelief and disobedience.*"
- (7) "*Encourages belief and obedience.*"
- (8) "*Prompts mercy.*"
- (9) "*Forms individual and community identity.*"¹²⁹

Unity necessitates living in mutual purpose as priest, prophet, and sage,¹³⁰ as the Lord's remembrancers. Contemporary ecclesial approaches to unity entail Christian ethics governed by God's creational intent with a perpetual memory of the Exodus. Ecclesial unity entails listening to the *Shema*'s reminder to pass down a shared racial history to future generations while practicing table fellowship in public worship as a witness via the Lord's Supper (with the reminder to live as Christ has lived). Unity necessitates feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and caring for the widow and the oppressed in the Greater Houston community.¹³¹ Greater Houston unity calls for continual remembrance of being the community's keeper.¹³² It requires hearing the words of Jesus, "A new command I give you. Love one another. As I have loved you, so you

¹²⁹ Arthurs, *Preaching as Reminding*, 7-8.

¹³⁰ Gilbert, *The Journey and Promise of African American Preaching*. Gilbert calls out the necessity of trivocal preaching as a prophet, priest, and sage.

¹³¹ cf. Matthew 25:31-46 (The Sheep and the Goats).

¹³² cf. Genesis 4:1-9; Romans 14:13-23.

must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35, NIV)

Still, unity in mutual purpose entails building on the early Christian Church’s evangelical framework, captured via Bebbington’s *Quadrilateral*, by broadening African and Euro American Christians’ shared convictions of (social) activism.¹³³ McCaulley provides a helpful summation of Bebbington’s work:

Conversionism: the belief that lives need to be transformed through a “born-again” experience and a lifelong process of following Jesus.

Activism: the expression and demonstration of the gospel in missionary and social reform efforts.

Biblicism: a high regard for and obedience to the Bible as the ultimate authority.

Crucicentrism: a stress on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as making possible the redemption of humanity.¹³⁴

Contemporary ecclesial unity is a call to confront racism where Tisby’s ARC of Racial Justice, seen as a continual journey, provides a practical approach. He subscribes to measuring impact by actions and (personal) transformation. Awareness (the head) entails developing familiarization with racist strategies to confront them proficiently via knowledge, information, and data. Relationships (the heart) involve cultivating authentic relationships with people of different backgrounds, racial groups, and ethnicities. Finally, commitment (the hand) admonishes a resolve to dismantle racist structures, laws, and policies via social activism.

¹³³ See Bruce Hindmarsh, “What Is Evangelicalism?” *Christianity Today*, accessed September 9, 2023, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2018/march-web-only/what-is-evangelicalism.html>.

¹³⁴ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 10.

Summary

Exploration of Scripture and theology yields the building blocks required for racial history awareness of a Greater Houston shared racial history. A text's limited polyvalence (multifaceted nature) allows for more than one legitimate reading.¹³⁵ Therefore, a biblically based and anamnestic African and Euro American contextual theology completes the Black and white racial history puzzle to pursue the journey of racial history unity.

Exodus 12 establishes a connection between Roberts's question, "Does God care?" and God's response, labeling his actions of justice and deliverance as the Passover (or compassion). God's compassion-in-action addresses Israel's concerns, serving as an on-ramp for a Black biblical hermeneutic conditioned by a history of enslavement.

Affirming Black theology as a bonafide contextual theology promotes the situational concerns of Black humanity. Gleaning from the *Shema*, God's command for Israel and their children to remember their theocentric history of divine deliverance parallels a contemporary charge to remember and teach our children about God's compassionate track record of faithfulness. Moreover, the *Shema* speaks to the necessity of remembering the bitter herbs of a shared racial history, including American slavery.

The Lord's Supper dictates Christ's directive for the Black and white church community's remembrance of its salvific deliverance as an expression of public worship and social responsibility to live as Christ lived, as a *koinonia* community. The perpetual

¹³⁵ Michael J. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001).

call of Christ to “Do this in remembrance of me” informs contemporary Christian ethics and a shared racial history as a public witness (without room for divisions and racism).

Validating the Black religious experience entails acknowledgment of living in a racialized society that harbors racism and white supremacy. The African American community’s confrontation with Green’s theological question of power receives consolation from the Great Commandment’s response that love is the antidote.¹³⁶ Matthew 22 also answers the lawyer’s question in Luke’s parable of the Good Samaritan, “Who is my neighbor?” A neighbor includes everyone encountered, including people in one’s neighborhood and the Greater Houston Community. Like the Lord’s Supper in 1 Corinthians 11, Christ speaks to the priority of social responsibility, encompassing the praxis of a shared racial history witness.

Remembering the power of contextual anamnesis through signs, symbols, teaching, preaching, and story paves the way for a Greater Houston racial history awareness promoting racial justice, fulfilling Kendi’s call to be an antiracist. Ultimately, a shared anamnesis that promotes racial history awareness is a commission to the Great Commandment while remembering that humanity serves as God’s royal earthly representatives made in the *imago Dei*.

Since love leads the way in realizing a Greater Houston racial history unity, the question of efficacy remains for “A LUVE Talk on Racial History’s” promotion of a contextualized shared anamnesis that enables pastors to identify and confront specific instances of racism.

¹³⁶ Cf. Matthew 22:34-40.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Method

Introduction

Greater Houston area Baptist pastors seek ways to embody Christian ethics that promote understanding, unity, and positive change within their communities. Conversely, racism contradicts the Christian ethic to love God, self, and neighbor needed to address contemporary local community concerns of racial injustice and inequality. The amnesia of a shared racial history and absence of a shared anamnestic praxis of Scripture hinder cross-racial collaboration to ignite transformation. This project aims to help pastors desiring personal, congregational, and community transformation embody the Great Commandment by seeing, hearing, and confronting racism more clearly.

Description of Intervention

This study attempted to help Greater Houston pastors desiring personal, congregational, and community transformation embody the Great Commandment by identifying and confronting racism more clearly. A five-week shared anamnestic cohort-based seminar, “A LUVE Talk on Racial History,” was developed to engage participants in overhearing and evaluating a tenured Greater Houston African American (host) pastor’s anamnestic experience of racism. The seminar took place at the church of the host pastor within an African American community in the Greater Houston area.¹ Prior to

¹ The seminar intentionally shifted the context of participating pastors’ contextual space for amnestic practice via contextual immersion, facilitating racial history awareness through shared anamnestic experiential learning.

the beginning of the seminar, a video captured the host pastor's amnestic experiences of racism for engaging with participants during the seminars. The video was edited into four segments for Weeks One through Four of the five-week seminar period (see Appendix A for video details).

Seminar Approach

Each 120-minute weekly session entailed a shared anamnestic experiential encounter to facilitate racial history awareness from the host pastor's African American church orientation of biblical hermeneutics, church tradition, lived experience, and theology (see Appendix C for weekly seminar session details). The Scriptures and African American church distinctives came from the biblical and theological considerations gleaned from the working bibliography and selected biblical texts (see Chapter Two for selected biblical texts and theological considerations). The host pastor shared specific instances of racial history.² The cohort participants (local African American and Euro American pastors) explored the host pastor's anamnestic account of racial history in individual, church, and community contexts. During the five weeks, participants were instructed to complete their racial autobiography, church racial history, and community racial history (see Appendix C for weekly seminar agenda, slides, participant handouts, and journal questions).

² See Appendix A for the racial history topics engaged by the host pastor and Appendix C for a manuscript and outline of each weekly seminar session.

*LUVE Talk*³

A LUVE (Listening, Understanding, Validating, and Evaluating) Talk,⁴ provided a structured contextual theology approach for participants to engage in shared racial history awareness: 1) Participants listened to the anamnestic racial history of the local host pastor in a specific context; 2) Participants asked clarifying questions to understand the host pastor's lived experience; 3) Participants validated the host pastor's anamnestic racial history through biblical and theological reflection; and 4) Participants evaluated the session by submitting online journaling responses to three diagnostic questions, promoting the identification and confrontation of racism through the host pastor's contextual lens.⁵

*Journaling Diagnostic Questions for LUVE Talk*⁶

1) What do you see—and hear?

2) What do you wonder—or perhaps wrestle with?

³ See Appendix C for each weekly session's layout. LUVE Talk is an adaption of LUV (Listening, Understanding, and Validating) Talk, a tool utilized for married couples to increase their ability to see and hear one another during crucial conversations (i.e., when emotions are high, opinions vary, and the stakes are high). LUV talk is like placing an order at the drive-thru window. It begins with the drive-thru attendant (spouse #1) listening while the customer (spouse #2) describes what they think, feel, want, or need. Essentially, this is the "place-an-order" stage. Next comes understanding, as the attendant repeats what they heard to ensure reception accuracy ("repeat-the-order" stage). Finally, the customer acknowledges that the attendant hears correctly, validating the order's accuracy. During this three-stage communication process, it is vital to understand the multidimensional communication layers, both verbal and non-verbal. When communicating, 7% of understanding comes through words or lack of words, 55% is from our body language and facial expressions, and 38% comes from tone of voice.

⁴ Acronym used to describe the format of each five-week anamnestic cohort-based seminar session. See Green's *Let's Do Theology* for a Spiral Approach to contextual theology. See Bevans's contextual theology approach in *Models of Contextual Theology*.

⁵ Since the journey of identification and confrontation of racism begins close to home (i.e., the racial history of each participant), weekly journaling assignments yielded insights into the ability of the participants to identify and confront racism in their local context.

⁶ Rubric adapted from Dr. Dustin Benac's contextual theology summer 2022 intensive course on faith, philanthropy, and fundraising at Baylor University's Truett Seminary.

3) What is now possible in light of this LUVE talk on racial history?

LUVE Talk House Rules

Understanding the sensitivity, anxiety, and potential trauma of having conversations concerning race, the researcher-facilitator established guidelines for participants' engagement. The researcher-facilitator encouraged participants to practice:

1) HOT Communication: Honest, open, and transparent communication with one another.

2) Confidentiality: Creating a safe space and place by keeping cohort LUVE Talk conversations confidential.

3) Grace: Providing grace to cohort members during conversations.

The researcher-facilitator conveyed the probability, if not inevitability, of each participant (researcher-facilitator included) feeling uncomfortable at some point during the five-week seminar. The researcher-facilitator requested participants' agreement to PICK LUVE Talk when experiencing anxiety.

PICK LUVE Talk

1) Present: The researcher-facilitator requested that participants be fully present during the cohort sessions (including setting phones to silent mode).

2) Intentional: The researcher-facilitator requested participants' intentionality in expanding their racial history awareness.

3) Committed: The researcher-facilitator requested participants' commitment to leaning into crucial conversations on race.⁷

4) Kind: The researcher-facilitator requested that participants be kind to one another by giving each other the benefit of the doubt of positive intent.

Statement of Research Question

The seminar approach described above aimed to address the major question of this project: How does participation in a five-week shared anamnestic cohort-based seminar program, "A LUVE Talk on Racial History," influence the ability of African American (Black) and Euro American (white) pastors to identify and confront racism? Research entailed testing the hypothesis that Euro and African American pastors participating in "A LUVE Talk on Racial History," would increase their racial history awareness.⁸

Methodology

According to Sensing, "What is important is to choose at least one method which is specifically suited to exploring the structural aspects of the problem and at least one which can critique the essential elements of its meaning in those involved."⁹ Gleaning from Sensing, the researcher selected a mixed-method research approach for this study.

⁷ Crucial Conversations. Crucial conversations occur when emotions are high, stakes are high, and there are opposing views.

⁸ This project defines racial history awareness as "the ability to identify and confront racism in thought or practice." See Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*. Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice promotes awareness as the first step towards confronting racism. See also Safet HadžiMuhamedović, *Waiting for Elijah: Time and Encounter in a Bosnian Landscape* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018). HadžiMuhamedović's schizochronotopic, built on Bakhtin's chronotope, hypothesizes the potential impact of two chronotopes sharing the same space and time.

⁹ Excerpt from Sensing quoting Fielding and Fielding, *Linking Data*, 33-34.

An intervention survey (pre- and post-) with post-survey reflection and discussion questions measured qualitative and quantitative growth in racial history awareness (see Appendix D for the survey and Appendix E for post-survey reflection and discussion questions). Weekly journaling qualitatively measured the participants' ability to identify and confront racism.¹⁰

Role of the Researcher

The researcher acted as a participant-facilitator in this intervention.¹¹ Participants were made aware of his role as participant-facilitator. Beyond serving as the primary facilitator for the five-week seminar sessions, the researcher enrolled the samples, administered the intervention's pre- and post-survey, distributed weekly online journal entries via email, performed data analysis, and reported the project's findings.

The Sample

The researcher used a criterion-based purposive sampling strategy. The sample of participants for the project was drawn from African American and Euro American pastors (by the participant's definition), at least eighteen years of age, and pastoring in a Baptist church within the Greater Houston area.

The researcher compiled two email distribution lists to recruit participants: 1) A contact list of pastors associated with the Union Baptist Association (UBA), located in

¹⁰ See Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice for identifying and confronting racism in America to promote racial justice.

¹¹ John Lofland et al., *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 4th ed. (Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.), Kindle, 3. According to Lofland, qualitative research (field study) necessitates the researcher's dual role as an observer (witness) and participant (instrument).

Houston.¹² 2) A list of former Proclaimer Place attendees limited to pastors in the Houston area.¹³ The invitation to participate in the project occurred through a promotional video developed by the researcher.¹⁴ A link to the video, distributed via email (primary recruitment method), text, social media, and hosted on a landing page, facilitated participants' enlistment into the intervention.¹⁵ Recruitment texts and social media posts targeted the researcher's existing network of pastors in the Greater Houston area. The researcher enlisted the assistance of the host pastor to recruit pastors within his network in Fort Bend County, Texas.¹⁶ The researcher intentionally recruited female and male pastors for participation.

The researcher followed up with people expressing interest via email, phone, or text. The researcher sent a follow-up email invitation to pastors expressing interest containing the seminar's details (seminar description, date, time, venue, and address) and an invitation to complete the pre-survey (containing the consent form and detailed participant requirements). The researcher selected pastors who expressed interest in the project and confirmed availability to participate in the seminar's in-person sessions. From the pool of candidates, a final group of six African American and two Euro American

¹² The researcher collected a list of UBA pastors from the UBA public prayer page for pastors and performed a Google.com search for each pastor's contact information: <https://www.ubahouston.org/pastors>.

¹³ Dr. Joel Gregory, founder of GregoryMinistries.org and Proclaimer's Place, provided access to prior Proclaimer's Place attendees' contact information. The Proclaimer's Place seminar is a world-renowned program for equipping and educating pastors and proclaimers of God's Word.

¹⁴ Promotional video uploaded to YouTube Channel for accessibility: <https://youtu.be/z19tUkqTN3c>.

¹⁵ Landing page used to facilitate participants' registration with a list of Greater Houston area zip codes: <https://bit.ly/aluvetalkonracialhistory>.

¹⁶ The pastor of Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church in Richmond, TX, Fort Bend County, Rev. Curtis Lucas, served as the host pastor.

Greater Houston Baptist pastors emerged. After the five-week seminar, all eight participants submitted the second survey in the allotted time window. However, one African American participant could not attend most of the seminar sessions, rendering the exclusion of their results. The final group of seven participants was 71% Black and 29% white; 86% male and 14% female; 86% unmarried, and 14% married; 86% with a graduate degree and 14% with a college degree as the highest level of education. The group displayed the most diversity in age, with 57% in the 50-64 age range, 29% age 65 or greater, and 14% in the 40-49 age range.

The researcher established the control group from the list of pastors expressing interest in the project but unable to commit to the seminar's five-week in-person commitment. The eleven participants received an invitation via email and completed the pre-survey. Five weeks later, ten people submitted the second survey in the allotted timeframe, serving as the control group of six African American and four Euro American Greater Houston Baptist pastors.¹⁷ The control group was 60% Black and 40% white; 80% male and 20% female; 80% married and 20% unmarried;¹⁸ 80% with a graduate degree, 10% with some graduate work, and 10% with a college degree as the highest level of education. Like the test group, the group displayed the most diversity in age, with 50% in the 50-64 age range, 30% age 65 or greater, and 20% in the 40-49 age range.

The Field

The researcher in this study is the President of Bailey PPS Consulting, Founder and President of Covenant Community XD (a faith-based non-profit focused on student

¹⁷ One white participant opted out of completing the post-survey.

¹⁸ Contra, the test group majority, is unmarried.

debt elimination), and a minister at Brookhollow Baptist Church (serving in a volunteer capacity). The researcher has over twenty-five years of ministry and leadership experience in the Black church, non-profit, for-profit, and academic arenas. He has served as the Director of Ministry at Brookhollow Baptist Church, National Director of African American Relations at Compassion International, and Director of Baylor University's Truett Seminary in Houston.

The researcher knows that his participation as a researcher-facilitator can influence the outcome.¹⁹ He is also aware of some deliberate choices made with the research approach and design based on his unique context as an African American Baptist male minister.²⁰ The researcher entered the study with a derived racial history equation: $SI+Ce=C$ (meaning a participant's unique social location, plus their contextualized experience, yields a different concern when identifying and confronting specific instances of racism).²¹ The synthesized equation emanates from the project's biblical and theological considerations.

Data Collection

The researcher administered an online survey in July 2023 (before the intervention) and a second survey in September 2023 (after the five-week intervention). The Likert-scale survey consisted of three parts (individual, church, and community) to

¹⁹ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 43.

²⁰ See Chapter One—Project Context, n1, for additional details of the researcher's context.

²¹ The researcher utilized the racial history equation as a heuristic interpretive tool for identifying and confronting participants' different racial history concerns based on their social location (e.g., geographical, cultural, psychological, and theological) and contextualized experiences (personal, church, and community).

measure racial history awareness via contextualized contexts (see Survey in Appendix D).²² Post-survey reflection and feedback questions facilitated content analysis, providing insights into survey responses (see Post-Survey Reflection and Feedback Questions in Appendix E).

Participants completed weekly digital journaling responses to the diagnostic questions for each LUVE Talk seminar session, providing insights into the significance of each session's ability for participants to identify and confront racism. Journaling responses were captured on Jotform.com to maintain privacy and security.

The researcher also maintained field notes by observing participants during the five-week seminar sessions to capture "descriptions of what [was] being experienced and observed ... the observer's feelings and reactions to what is observed, and field-generated insights and interpretations."²³ The verbatim report, "a transcript from memory," was chosen based on Sensing's valuation, "They are excellent tools in analyzing motivations and behaviors, and they can help you in learning to be more sensitive and responsive to the needs of people."²⁴

Data Analysis

The researcher collected survey responses via Qualtrics online survey software. Quantitative analysis was performed on de-identified coded data to determine

²² Survey derived from the Presbyterian Panel Survey on Racism and Racial Justice (2000); and Jemar Tisby, *How to Fight Racism Study Guide: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Reflective, 2021), 8.

²³ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 180.

²⁴ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 190. Verbatims are common in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) programs.

intervention efficacy. The researcher also performed a secondary analysis of the survey results through comparison by race. The researcher performed careful thematic qualitative analysis on de-identified journal responses by coding, memoing, and diagramming.²⁵ Furthermore, word cloud analysis provided support for the determination of major themes.²⁶

A word cloud is a special visualization of text in which the more frequently used words are effectively highlighted by occupying more prominence in the representation. The product demonstrates a fast and visually rich way to enable researchers to have some basic understanding of the data at hand. Word clouds can be a useful tool for preliminary analysis and for validation of previous findings.²⁷

Data Reporting

Since relationships move at the speed of trust, the researcher aimed to provide a safe space and place for pastors to convene and discuss racial history. Therefore, the researcher strove to report findings with honesty and integrity while maintaining the anonymity of the pastors.²⁸ Chapter Four contains the findings of this research. The researcher's synthesized conclusions reside in Chapter Five.

²⁵ Coding data facilitates answering "What is it?" Memoing categorizes data by addressing "What does it mean?" Finally, diagramming connects the data via concept mapping. The researcher utilized NVivo, descriptive, and processing coding methods. See John Lofland et al., *Analyzing Social Settings*.

²⁶ Markus Bockmuehl, an Oxford professor, utilized a word cloud for analyzing N. T. Wright's *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* to identify major and minor interpretative themes. See Markus Bockmuehl, "Wright's Paul and the Cloud of (Other) Witnesses," *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters* 4, no. 1 (2014): 59-69.

²⁷ Carmel McNaught and Paul Lam, "Using Wordle as a Supplementary Research Tool," *The Qualitative Report* 15, no. 3 (2010): 630.

²⁸ All project findings were de-identified for reporting purposes.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher strove to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. He provided thick descriptions of the data collected and used member checking. The researcher is aware of biases he brought to the project that could impact the validity of the research. The research followed Sensing's recommendation of "clarifying your assumptions, worldviews, and theoretical orientation at the outset of the study."²⁹ Moreover, Sensing claims, "Researcher's bias is one example of reflexivity."³⁰

Validity

The researcher selected a mixed-method convergent design while adhering to Sensing's recommendations for a multi-method approach to aid in credibility.³¹ The researcher's motivation entailed "promoting credibility and trustworthiness, not claiming 'objective' truth through validation."³²

Reliability

According to Sensing, "Dependability and confirmability are provided through an audit trail that clearly describes the processes of collecting and analyzing data and provides the means by which readers may refer to the raw data."³³ Sensing states,

Moschella suggests three ways to read the data. A literal reading will highlight particular words, phrases, language, interruptions, and gestures. An interpretative

²⁹ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 224. See The Field section of this chapter and Chapter One—Basic Assumptions and Project Significance.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 221. The researcher collected qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously while analyzing them separately.

³² Ibid., 220.

³³ Ibid., 219.

reading of the data allows you to select and organize the document according to “implied or inferred meanings.” Finally, she suggests a reflexive reading that brings to bear your personal feelings and understandings of the data.³⁴

Based on Moschella’s recommendations, the researcher analyzed the data literally, interpretively, and reflexively.³⁵ The administered survey (see Appendix D) derived questions from the Presbyterian Panel Survey on Racism and Racial Justice (2000) and the work of Tisby, enhancing the validity of these findings.

Ethical Issues

Committed to the ethical standards of Baylor University, the researcher submitted the Non-Human Research Determination Form to Baylor’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB determined that this project does not meet the definition of human subject research since the sample size was insufficient to generate generalizable findings (see Appendix H). Still, the researcher abided by the Common Rule’s framework of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. The researcher informed each participant verbally and in writing of the expectations for the project. Each participant reviewed and digitally acknowledged the informed consent (captured via Qualtrics) before the project began, detailing participants’ expectations. Participants were free to leave the research at any point if they decided to do so.

The researcher upheld the ethical principle of “do no harm,” as at no point during the project were participants under threat of injury or harm, and disclosed all possible

³⁴ Ibid., 196-197.

³⁵ The researcher analyzed the journal responses literally and interpretively via coding, memoing, and diagramming. The researcher interpreted the data by social location and contextualized experiences. Finally, the researcher considered personal feelings and understandings captured via field notes. See Chapter Four for findings.

risks. Integrity and care served as the hallmarks for reporting findings without deception. The researcher distributed the benefits and burdens of the research fairly. Participants did not receive payment, nor did it cost them anything to participate. Each person who participated in the project by completing both surveys (pre- and post-intervention) was offered complimentary access to 600 online sermons of Dr. Joel C. Gregory (Professor of Preaching at Baylor University's Truett Seminary), expiring six weeks from the seminar's conclusion. Seminar participants had the opportunity to expand their ministerial network, and the host pastor voluntarily catered a meal after each seminar session, facilitating table fellowship.

For reporting the findings of this study, pseudonyms replace the participants' names. All records related to this research will be kept electronically and stored on a secure cloud storage platform for three years before being destroyed. All data is only accessible to the researcher. The researcher answered any questions and concerns participants may have concerning this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Summary and Results

Introduction

This study was guided by one research question:

How does participation in a five-week shared anamnestic cohort-based seminar program, “A LUVE Talk on Racial History,” influence the ability of African American (Black) and Euro American (white) pastors to identify and confront racism?

Testing the hypothesis that Black and white pastors participating in “A LUVE Talk on Racial History” would increase their racial history awareness,¹ the study produced multiple memorable findings.² For pastors desiring personal, congregation, and community transformation through embodying the Great Commandment to identify and confront specific instances of racism more clearly, these findings may prove helpful.

An intervention survey (pre- and post-) with post-survey reflection and discussion questions and weekly online journal responses measured quantitative and qualitative growth in racial history awareness. The researcher utilized a mixed-methods research approach to facilitate contextualization of the results and enhance the credibility of the findings through methodological triangulation. The results of this study are reported in chronological order of data collection, simulating the project’s convergent design and the participants’ racial history awareness journey.³

¹ The researcher defined racial history awareness as “the ability to identify and confront racism in thought or practice.”

² “A LUVE Talk on Racial History” is referenced as LUVE Talk throughout this chapter.

³ The researcher collected quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously while analyzing them separately, synthesizing the findings to formulate a conclusion.

Key Pre-Intervention Findings

Both the control and test groups completed the pre-intervention survey, which, after preliminary analysis, revealed overall and context-specific (individual, church, and community) findings.

For the individual context, participants evaluated their ability to identify racism based on an awareness of history (including their racial history), Scripture, Black biblical hermeneutics, Black church tradition, and Black theology. Participants also indicated their ability to identify the pulse of race relations in America and their track record of confronting racism via involvement with racial justice-related activities. Moreover, participants conveyed their theological beliefs concerning biblicism, Christology, soteriology, and evangelism.

The church context measured the participants' local church identification and confrontation of racism via social activism with racial justice activities and interracial joint congregational worship. Participants also conveyed their theological position concerning the local church's role in confronting racism.

Lastly, the community context measured participants' ability to identify racism within their local community based on lived experience. Participants responded primarily to an awareness of the Black experience in their community and the frequency of their interracial interaction within the community.

Table 1 Pre-Intervention Scores for Test Group and Control Group

	Test	Control
Individual	471	706
Church	114	163
Community	133	202

The test group scored 471 in the individual context, compared to 706 for the control group. This finding indicates that the test group participants had lower levels of racial awareness at the individual level before the intervention. For the church context, the test group scored 114, compared to 163 for the control group. Before the intervention, the test group participants also had lower levels of racial awareness at the church level. Lastly, the test group scored 133 in the community context, compared to 202 for the control group. Thus, before the intervention, the test group participants had lower levels of racial awareness at the community level.

Table 2 Pre-Intervention Scores for Test Group and Control Group (Black Participants)

	Black Test	Black Control
Individual	335	424
Church	77	94
Community	94	111

The test and control group scores by Black participants follow the overall test and control group trends. The Black test group scored 335 in the individual context, compared to 424 for the Black control group. This finding indicates that the Black test group participants had lower levels of racial awareness at the individual level prior to the intervention. For the church context, the Black test group scored 77, compared to 94 for the Black control group. Before the intervention, the Black test group participants also had lower levels of racial awareness at the church level. Lastly, the Black test group scored 94 in the community context, compared to 111 for the Black control group. Thus, before the intervention, the Black test group participants had lower levels of racial awareness at the community level.

Table 3 Pre-Intervention Scores for Test Group and Control Group (white Participants)

	White Test	White Control
Individual	136	282
Church	37	69
Community	39	91

The test and control group scores by white participants also follow the overall test and control group trends. The white test group scored 136 in the individual context, compared to 282 for the white control group. This finding indicates that the white test group participants had lower levels of racial awareness at the individual level prior to the intervention. For the church context, the white test group scored 37, compared to 69 for the white control group. Before the intervention, the white test group participants also had lower levels of racial awareness at the church level. Lastly, the white test group scored 39 in the community context, compared to 91 for the white control group. Thus, before the intervention, the white test group participants had lower levels of racial awareness at the community level.

A related analysis of the demographic variables in the pre-intervention dataset based on the participant's race uncovered several relationships, affirming the researcher's racial history equation. The five dependent variables producing relational findings based on race ("Black" and "white") were:

Racial interaction at church

Black job search experience

How often do you interact with persons of different racial backgrounds in your church?

In general, do you think Black people have as good a chance as whites in your community to get any kind of job for which they are qualified?

Black housing experience

In general, do you think that Black people have as good a chance as whites in your community to get any housing they can afford?

Black employment experience

What is your impression of the way Black people in your local community are treated in the following situation: on the job or at work?

Racial interaction in the community

How often do you interact with persons of different racial backgrounds in your local community?

The findings for racial interaction at church (a measure of church context) indicate that white participants tend to have higher values for this question with a mean of 4.5, compared to Black participants with a mean of 3.0.⁴

The remaining four items reside within the community section of the pre-survey, and findings suggest a disparity in identifying the community's racial history. There is a strong relationship between Black job search experience and race. All Black participants (100%) responded "Not as good a chance as whites," whereas 50% of white participants responded "As good (or better) chance as whites" and 50% responded "Not as good a chance as whites."

Black housing experience demonstrates a negative correlation: 100% of Black participants responded, "Not as good a chance as whites," and white participants responded 66.7% "As good (or better) chance as whites" and 33.3% "Not as good a chance as whites."

⁴ At the surface level, the results suggest that white participants are more racially aware within the local church context. An alternative deduction implies that Black people attend or join (integrate or assimilate into) predominately white congregations more frequently than white people attend or join (integrate or assimilate into) predominately Black congregations. See Chapter One for Kendi's (Black and white) dueling consciousness detailing assimilationist and segregationist tendencies between both races.

There is a similar relationship between Black employment experience and race: 81.8% of Black participants responded, "Treated less fairly," and white participants responded 80%, "Treated the same as whites."

Finally, there is a relationship between racial interaction in the community and race: 54.5% of Black participants responded "Frequently," and 45.5% scored "Occasionally," while white participants responded 66.7% "Very frequently" and 33.3% "Frequently."⁵

The Montgomery, Alabama, riverboat brawl occurred during the pre-survey collection phase.⁶ The event received national media attention the weekend before the seminar started, spotlighting Montgomery's racial history. The racially charged and nationally covered event suggested heightened racial tensions leading into the first LUVÉ Talk session.

Journal Response Findings

For this five-week intervention, pastors engaged in dialogue primarily with the host pastor's anamnestic experience of racism along with theological and biblical concepts presented by the researcher-facilitator, guided by each week's designated focus (racial history context, personal, church, and community racial history). The final week

⁵ At the surface level, the results suggest that white participants are more racially aware within the local community context. An alternative deduction implies that Black people visit or live in (integrate or assimilate into) predominantly white communities more frequently than white people attend or join (integrate or assimilate into) Black communities. See Chapter One for Kendi's (Black and white) dueling consciousness, which details both races' assimilationist and segregationist tendencies.

⁶ See Alta Spells et al., "Fourth person charged in connection with brawl at Montgomery riverfront dock," *CNN*, accessed October 20, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/09/us/montgomery-boat-dock-fight-what-we-know/index.html>; and Nicquel Terry Ellis and Chandelis Duster, "Alabama brawl turns spotlight on Montgomery's racial history," *CNN*, accessed October 20, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/08/us/montgomery-riverfront-brawl-history-reaj/index.html> for details on Alabama's shared racial history.

of the seminar entailed pastors sharing their anamnestic experiences of racism, focusing on unity in racial history. After each LUVÉ Talk session, pastors submitted reflective journal responses of their shared anamnestic experience based on the intervention's three diagnostic questions.⁷

Pastors' digital journals provided insights into the significance of each session's ability for participants to identify and confront racism. The researcher analyzed journal responses for synergistic concepts across all sessions and diagnostic questions to identify a shared racial history pattern. The following consists of primary findings from the six pastors' journaling responses who attended the LUVÉ Talk seminar sessions of the intervention.⁸

Finding One: Pastors identify race and racism through inclusive and exclusive language

Pastors demonstrated the ability to identify racism after reflecting on each seminar session's LUVÉ Talk on racial history via responses to diagnostic Question 1: "What do you see—and hear?" The researcher identified five significant themes used by pastors when identifying racism: 1) Racism, 2) Race, 3) Exclusive language, 4) Inclusive language, and 5) Systemic structures.

Racism.

Racism signals pastors' direct references to the term "racism." All six pastors who submitted journals mentioned racism. Person One journaled, "I see racism (in the media) regarding how blacks are treated by law enforcement; prison sentencing (e.g., blacks are

⁷ Six of the seven pastors participating in the intervention submitted journal responses.

⁸ The researcher applied multiple coding methods to the journal responses to provide multiple views using NVivo, descriptive, and process coding.

subjected to life prison sentences for marijuana possession, yet other races receive ‘lesser’ sentences for murder.)”

Race.

All six pastors who submitted journals mentioned race. Race captures direct references to the term “race” and responses about race (via racial qualifiers), signaling the pastor’s ability to have a crucial conversation about the hopes, complexities, and trauma of racial injustice (racism). Person Six stated, “I see an honest effort by all the participants to communicate with one another concerning the question of race.”

Exclusive language.

All six pastors who submitted journals utilized exclusive language. Pastors often utilized exclusive language to identify and describe their racial history experiences via in/out-group descriptors. Person Six wrote, “Racism is a very complex phenomenon that [affect] both the oppressed and the oppressor.”

Inclusive language.

All six pastors who submitted journals utilized inclusive language. Pastors utilized inclusive language to identify and describe their racial history experiences via in-group descriptors. Person Seven implied a shared responsibility in identifying racism by averring, “Although we have made strides in many areas, we are yet struggling with the accuracy of the recorded history of black people’s contributions.”

Systemic structures.

Finally, systemic structures represent pastors calling out organizations, institutions, and structures (e.g., cultures and society) that perpetuate racism. All six

pastors who submitted journals identified systemic structures. Person Five wrote, “It is clear that the structural racism of the past not only continues to impact the present, there is still the effect of structural racism. David French recently defined structural racism as ‘when non-racist persons for non-racist reasons perpetuate a system designed by racists for racist purposes.’ I hope that is right in that it gives the benefit of the doubt to present office holders; and, the effects in churches and on families and Black persons is the same. So what can we do to change the system and to make appropriate redress?”⁹

Finding Two: Pastors confront racism theologically through Christian ethics, personal accountability, and inquiry

Pastors also confronted racism after reflecting over each LUVE Talk on racial history in response to diagnostic Question 2: “What do you wonder—or perhaps wrestle with?” Pastors’ responses using the term “wonder” suggested a positive confrontation with racism, while the term “wrestle” or “struggle” supported a negative connotation in confrontation. The researcher identified four significant themes pastors used when confronting racism: 1) Asking questions, 2) Theology, 3) Christian ethics, and 4) Personal accountability.

Asking questions.

Asking questions denoted pastors’ use of interrogatives to confront racism. Five of the six pastors who submitted journals asked questions to confront racism. Person Five pondered several confrontational inquiries, “How much have we changed? What can I do

⁹ David French, "The NFL Has a 'Good Ol' Boy' Problem," *The Atlantic*, accessed November 5, 2023, <https://newsletters.theatlantic.com/the-third-rail/61fc2e3b6c908600204d373a/nfl-brian-flores-discrimination/>.

within my own community to call out racism where it quietly lies?” and “What practical steps can we take in my church to address the structural issues which plague Houston?”

Prompted by overhearing the host pastor’s experience with racism, Person One journaled:

Dr. Lucas’ experience makes one “wonder” ... what can we as a body of believer’s do to change the trajectory of the “church” (as we know it) Question - Why is ‘Sunday’ the MOST segregated day of the week?? (e.g., few congregations are blended/mixed race)! On any given Sunday, each congregations’ parishioners are typically of the same race/ethnicity.

Person Four confronted the creative tension necessary for change while contemplating, “If Christians can’t stand up and fight this battle of racism together, how are we demonstrating our Love for God and love for people?”

Person Two demonstrated the ability to leverage questions in confronting racism beyond the seminar into a specific contemporary ministry setting by stating,

Since this LUVÉ talk, I have learned of racial strife within the city I am now ministering in. However, these discoveries (KKK headquarters in the 80s to discriminatory practices on brown voters in more recent history) have been made online. I believe I can better understand the broader story by intentionally asking questions of black and brown neighbors who have been here longer.

Theology.

Participants also used theology (God-talk) through theological reflection to refute racism. Five of the six pastors who submitted journals utilized theology to confront racism. For example, Person Two confronted racism by reflecting on J. Deotis Roberts’s contextualized Black biblical hermeneutical concern, “Does God care?” presented during the seminar’s first session, writing, “In coming to scripture, both white and black Christians are settled on the existence of God. I suspect that both groups/congregations

are asking the question “Does God care?” in light of their own circumstances.”¹⁰ Person Two indicated a progression in theological confrontation via God and race the following week by stating, “One theme that resonated with me through hearing the personal stories of others alongside Deuteronomy 6 was how much God cares. The more I understand how deeply God cares for others with different experiences than me, the more I am drawn to care too.” A couple of weeks later, Person Two considered the biblical concept of discipleship, discussed during the LUVE Talk session, in combatting racism by journaling:

As Jesus shines the light on false discipleship (about rules/technicalities) vs. true discipleship (about relationships) in Matthew 22:34-40, I realize that not everyone who heard his great commandment followed it. However, some did and I can too. When I and others focus on loving others through right relationships with one another and God, the kingdom of God can break through little by little.

Person Four addressed the context of the Black church concerning theology in writing, “LUVE talk challenges the equality of the black church’s theology that it has a place in American History or Christendom.” Following up on the LUVE Talk session about discipleship, Person Four showed signs of positive (or hopeful) confrontation by stating, “The Theological and biblical concepts we engaged with in class, out of Matthew 22:34-40 The Great Commandment, provide hope in Christendom that we can overcome hate with love.” Referencing the biblical mandate of being a witness to overcome racism, Person Four wrote, “The church should be on display, revealing to the world that God’s transforming love can bridge communities. I believe what Jesus said, ‘By this, all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another’ (John 13:35).” In the seminar’s final week, Person Four challenges racism through identification as sin, a

¹⁰ Person Two alludes to Finding Four’s racial history equation.

correlation (and project basic assumption) presented during LUVE Talk, by journaling “It [racism] is a constant reminder that sin will forever impact this world until Jesus returns.”

Christian ethics.

Christian ethics captured pastors’ employing biblical actions, attitudes, and behaviors to confront racism. All six pastors who submitted journals utilized Christian ethics to confront racism. Person Seven wrote, “I wrestle with the silence of white evangelicals who pretend that racism is an irrelevant subject to be discussed and eradicated.”

Person Two invoked Christian ethics to combat racism in averring, “As a minister of the gospel.... I believe that any sin concealed and not confessed of is impossible if to take responsibility for and repent of.” After exposure to Frederick Douglass’s confrontation with racism during a LUVE Talk session, Person Two journaled, “Hearing Frederick Douglass’s thought on Christianity proper vs. the Christianity of this land has captured my mind this week. While those two categories were framed out by Douglass long ago, I can still see how the distinctions concerning the Christianity of this land fall short of what Christianity originally [meant].”

Personal accountability.

Finally, pastors addressed the issue of personal accountability and racism (of self and others). All six pastors who submitted journals mentioned personal accountability to confront racism. Person Five wrote, “I wonder what my role is in leading my church to see and address the wounds of the past (and present).” Person Six journaled, “I wrestle with the possibility that racism might cause me to be judgmental of others because I am suspicious of the possibility that some innocent person may be a racist.” The following

week, Person Six conveyed, “It is now possible for me to take more ownership on my part in the healing process as it relates to race.”

Finding Three: Pastors find hope in a shared racial history through cultivating relationships using LUVÉ Talk as a model

Pastors engaged in pastoral imagination to consider the future of race relations after reflecting on each LUVÉ Talk on racial history in response to diagnostic Question 3: “What is now possible in light of this LUVÉ talk on racial history?” The researcher identified three significant themes used by pastors when imagining a future shared racial history: 1) Hope, 2) Relationships, and 3) LUVÉ Talk.

Hope.

Pastors expressed hope (explicitly and implicitly) in the possibilities of making progress (moving forward with actionable steps) in the face of racism (via racial justice). Five of the six pastors who submitted journals mentioned hope. Person Five journaled, “I think our group is getting more comfortable sharing our experiences to one another. My hope is that we continue to share and learn.”

Person Two wrote, “The longer I sit and the more I listen, however, it makes me think about what I might have to offer in my daily life in ministry as a small part of the solution going forward. Perhaps the same could be true of others willing to sit around tables with the LUVÉ talk format.”

Person Six stated, “There is a possibility for personal progress and healing in the area of race relations.”

Relationships.

Pastors emphasized the role of relationships as a solution (a source of hope) to racism (a concept presented during LUVE Talk via Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice). Five of the six pastors who submitted journals mentioned relationships. Person Five stated, "I think we planted the seeds of relationship that will allow deeper conversations as the process unfolds. My hope is that the relationships formed around the table lead to concrete action that none of us yet anticipate."

Person Four journaled,

I have a diverse group of acquaintances I associate myself with from time to time. I haven't taken that step to discuss race relations with them. Yes, we set in meetings to discuss what happened to George Floyd, but nothing came out of those meetings outside of silence and prayers to do better in connecting. LUVE talk has opened my eyes to reach across the aisle to have those meaningful discussions on Black history and to see it as American history.

LUVE talk.

Finally, Pastors frequently referenced LUVE Talk's biblical and theological racial history conversations as aides in combating racism (including LUVE Talk's advocacy of having honest, open, and transparent conversations regarding race). Five of the six pastors who submitted journals mentioned LUVE Talk. Person Four wrote,

Perspective. I think my view has grown in light of LUVE talk. It is possible to love people with a different perspective than you might have. Even though racism may be in the fabric, I'm learning to hear a person's perspective because of our diverse backgrounds. They might be focusing on a position of government and the church versus the effects it has directly on people, especially people of color.

In the following and final session, Person Four articulated, "The model displayed by the facilitator in our LUVE talk was helpful in our conversation about bridging the gap in racial history and relationships. In light of this conversation, I think Awareness,

Relationship, and Commitment is a great model for connecting small groups from diverse backgrounds.”

Person Five stated,

My largest carry away, other than an appreciation for the other participants in the cohort, is the LUVÉ model itself. I think we can use this model for structured conversations designed to build relationships between [my] members and members of a partner Black church. I believe (ARC) that relationships will precede both Awareness and Commitment for White Christians. LUVÉ is a healthy and effective model for sharing and learning about racial history.

Person Six journaled, “A template with possibilities has been developed.”

Finding Four: Pastors’ social location and contextualized experiences yield a different concern

Pastors varied journal responses regarding the impact of racism based on their unique social location (e.g., geographical, cultural, psychological, and theological)¹¹ and contextualized experiences (personal, church, community) affirmed the researcher’s racial history equation: $Sl+Ce=C$.¹² Pastors articulated the consequences and context of a shared (contemporary) racial history after reflecting on each LUVÉ Talk on racial history while responding to the three diagnostic questions. The researcher identified racial trauma as the theme for pastors’ articulation of the impact of racism. All six pastors who submitted journals wrote about racial trauma. Racial trauma represents the distributing experiences and side effects of racism (a shared racial history) embodied through the lived experiences of the host pastor, cohort, and others. The researcher observed three sub-themes prevalent in the pastors’ weekly journal responses indicating the impact of

¹¹ See Chapter One for definitions of geographical, cultural, psychological, and theological locations.

¹² See Chapter Three—The Field for reference.

racial trauma encountered during the LUVE Talk sessions: 1) Host pastor's experience, 2) Cohort pastor's experience, and 3) Current personal experience.¹³ All six pastors who submitted journals wrote about all three sub-themes. In addition, the research recognized unity as the central theme, conveying the impact of LUVE Talk sessions on the possibilities of moving beyond racial trauma towards racial justice via confronting racism.¹⁴ Five of the six pastors who submitted journals mentioned unity.

Week 1: Racial history context.

LUVE Talk Session One emphasized context and the role of context in racial history awareness.¹⁵ Pastors listened to the host pastor's experience with racism, overhearing a racial history contextualized by social location.¹⁶ Pastors asked clarifying questions to understand the host pastor's context and validated a shared racial history by reflecting on Scripture (Exodus 12:1-14, 17) and theology (Black biblical hermeneutics). Pastor's journal responses highlighted the impact of racial trauma via the racial history equation: $SH + Ce = C$. The researcher identified forty snippets from pastors' journal responses categorized as racial trauma. The snippet distribution is disproportionately in

¹³ LUVE Talk Week #5 focused on the cohort sharing its experiences with racism, generating most snippets classified accordingly. A snippet is a discrete unit of data (quote) derived by the researcher from coding, memoing, and diagramming each pastor's journaling responses. The snippets are categorized and associated with a particular theme based on meaning.

¹⁴ LUVE Talk Week #5 focused on racial history unity, generating most snippets classified accordingly.

¹⁵ As Rev. Dr. Ralph D. West Sr., Pastor and Founder of Brookhollow Baptist Church, articulates, "a text without a context is a con."

¹⁶ Rev. Curtis Lucas', LUVE Talk Seminar host pastor, unique social location entailed: 1) A Greater Houston area, specifically Richmond, TX, geographical location; 2) An African American cultural location; 3) A psychological location of Black as his preferred racial identity; and 4) A Baptist theological location, receiving his MDiv from Baylor University's Truett Seminary in Waco, TX.

favor of a Euro American cultural location (seventeen African American and twenty-three Euro American snippets).

Pastors referenced the impact of exposure to the host pastor's contextualized experiences. Person Five wrote, "I was saddened to hear that Mt. Carmel MBC had been burned down twice in the 1960s for teaching the poll test."

Pastors described encounters with current personal experiences (including overhearing others) of racism. Person Two stated, "The current events in education with DeSantis show a new way for some to evade the trouble with their past. It's strange to see some who wanted to remember their heritage before deprive others of their own. But this way says, 'Let's just forget about the whole thing' or 'Let's frame this in a more positive light.'"

In response to diagnostic Question 2's topic of confronting racism, Person One journaled, "Not sure how to respond to this question???" The inability to conceptualize a response to confrontation lends itself to the magnitude of racial trauma experienced within the cohort's shared racial history.

Week 2: Personal racial history.

LUVE Talk Session Two focused on personal racial history and the role of remembrance in racial history awareness. Again, pastors listened to the host pastor's experience with racism, contextualized by social location. Pastors asked clarifying questions and validated a shared racial history by reflecting on the *Shema* in Deuteronomy and Black theology. Once again, pastors' journal responses highlighted the impact of racial trauma via the racial history equation: $Sl+Ce=C$. The researcher identified twenty-four snippets from pastors' journal responses categorized as racial

trauma. The snippet distribution is disproportionately in favor of an African American cultural location (sixteen African American and eight Euro American snippets).

Reflecting on the host pastor's experience, Person Four wrote:

In our segment with Pastor Lucas, I saw a man whose core was challenged at the height of racial discrimination in stages of his life from elementary to corporate America. His experience in oil and gas revealed our current plight in America. As African Americans or blacks, we must be just as educated and work even harder to meet this country's status quo.

In response to diagnostic Question 1's query of identifying racism, Person Five recalled the host pastor's experience by averring, "The pain of racism in school and work. I think it was especially pernicious to have teachers telling Curtis that he could not make an 'A' in the class. And the lies at the Nevada test site and being set up to fail at the oil company—that both efforts failed does not lessen their impact."

Considering current personal experiences (and overhearing others) while responding to diagnostic Question 3's prompt for possibilities, Person Two stated:

The more I understand how deeply God cares for others with different experiences than me, the more I am drawn to care too. Seeing that others stories and interpretations have this power, it makes me want to be more intentional about inviting and including such voices in the church and places where I have ... influence so they might hear and experience such things too.

Week 3: Church racial history.

LUVe Talk Session Three explored church racial history via the role of ecclesial tradition in remembrance, leading to racial history awareness. Pastors listened to the host pastor's church experiences with racism and praxis of the Great Commandment during the initial twelve months of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁷ Pastors asked clarifying

¹⁷ Rev. Curtis Lucas is the pastor of Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church in Richmond, TX, in a community known as Mud Alley.

questions to understand the host pastor's church context and validated a shared racial history by reflecting on 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 and Black church tradition. Pastor's journal responses continued to display the impact of racial trauma via the racial history equation: $Sl+Ce=C$. The researcher identified twenty-one snippets from pastors' journal responses categorized as racial trauma. The snippet distribution is disproportionately in favor of a Euro American cultural location (eight African American and thirteen Euro American snippets).

Referencing the host pastor's church experience, Person One stated, "Dr. Lucas provided a detailed account of his church[']s racial history. However, I did not experience ANY of these 'racial issues', growing up in ... The North." Person Two responded:

While learning about the history of the host church in conjunction with Mud Alley, I was encouraged to see how the church historically has been "in the heart of the community with a heart for the community." The boldness in leadership the pastor had to take to bring about more implications for God's kingdom in his community was an inspiring encouragement to be a bold witness within my own church and community.

Pointing to current personal experiences with racism, Person Five wrote, "Again, the present effect of structural racism, seen in infrastructure (streets, drainage, the lack of bridges), continues to shape Richmond and Houston." Person Five then inquired about practical steps to confront Greater Houston's structural issues.

Week 4: Community racial history.

LUVe Talk Session Four explored community racial history and remembering's role in raising racial history awareness through teaching and preaching that clarifies "Who is my neighbor?" Pastors listened to the host pastor's church community experiences with racism and praxis of the Great Commandment during the last twelve

months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pastors asked clarifying questions to understand the host pastor's church community context and validated a shared racial history by reflecting on the Great Commandment and Black religious experience. Pastors' journal responses persisted in portraying the impact of racial trauma via the racial history equation: $Sl+Ce=C$. The researcher identified fifteen snippets from pastors' journal responses categorized as racial trauma. The snippet distribution is significantly disproportionate to favor an African American cultural location (twelve African American and three Euro American snippets).

Gleaning from the host pastor's church experience, Person One wrote, "Based on Dr. Lucas's racial history (community), it is CLEAR that racism was rampant in this community!! As previously stated, I grew up in the North. Though not oblivious to racism, I did not experience the issues this community faced!"

In contrast, Person Six found synergy with the host pastor's experience, conveying, "I see a snapshot of a part of my past life lived in the [J]im [C]row south. I hear similar stories to my own or events that could have been lived by myself."

Reflecting on current personal experiences (and concerns) while responding to diagnostic Question 2's confrontation with racism, Person Four journaled, "The struggle I'm faced with is how long certain communities keep looking over racism with blinded eyes."

Week 5: Racial history unity.

LUVe Talk Session Five concluded by focusing on racial history unity and story's role in aiding in racial history unity. Pastors shared and listened to one another's experiences with racism. Pastors asked one another questions to understand the context

and validated a shared racial history by reflecting on Genesis 1:26-27 and the *imago Dei*. Pastor's journal responses continued highlighting the impact of racial trauma via the racial history equation: $SI+Ce=C$. The researcher identified forty-six snippets from pastors' journal responses categorized as racial trauma. The snippet distribution is reasonably proportionate across the cohort's cultural location (twenty-six African American and twenty Euro American snippets).

Pastors communicated the impact of being exposed to cohort pastors' contextualized experiences (a shared racial history). Person Two journaled, "As one fellow participant articulated, many churches (both white and black) develop an inward focus and institutionalized mentality. This keeps them from being able to adapt to, build relationships with others, and work with others. I wonder what sort of experiences I can offer for those within my church who are stuck in this mentality to progress out of it."

Reflecting on the cohort's experiences, Person Six discovered that racial unity is not without its challenges, declaring, "There is a desire to address racial unity from many people; however, the how seems to be a big problem."

Person Five spotlighted shared concerns based on similar contextualized locations by journaling, "Whereas the first three sessions were guided primarily by Pastor Curtis's experiences, in this session virtually everyone shared an experience of overt racism, many focused on state power racism either from the police or from the state taking or devaluing property owned by black families or churches."

Person Four also commented on the racial trauma pervasive in the cohort's shared experiences nuanced by psychological location (race) when declaring:

I heard in our final session that black people's experiences in America are generally the same. Instead, it is experienced early or later in life, and the

experiences typically reflect a systemic structure. I heard that the black experience is like nothing else in America. I also heard from our Caucasian brothers that they never had any of the experiences that black people face daily.

Finally, pastors referenced unity as an on-ramp possibility to embrace a shared racial history shaped by social location and contextualized experiences. Person One wrote, “Unity in the body of Christ is sorely lacking, in terms of racial ethnicity” and “I seek to develop/be a part of the development of a plan of action to ‘reverse’ ‘correct’ the lack of unity in the Body of Christ (racially).”

Person Six stated, “I wonder how racial unity can be addressed by the church in light of our long standing policy of segregation.”

Echoing the heartbeat of the final LUVE Talk session and intervention in response to diagnostic Question 1’s query of identifying racism, Person Two articulated, “The need for all of us as God[’s] image bearers to be unified and put back together relationally as the Lord originally intended (Gen. 1:26-28).”

Word Cloud Analysis

Word clouds are optimal for visualizing the frequency (and thus magnitude) of words appearing in a text (e.g., a transcribed speech or typographical journal).¹⁸ The word cloud’s visual depiction enabled the researcher to analyze connections made between LUVE Talk concepts communicated and the pastors’ shared anamnestic reception (as an indicator of racial history awareness) by analyzing the weekly journaling responses by session. Word cloud analysis provided a visual representation of the racial

¹⁸ For frequencies and magnitudes as propositions for categorizing data, see John Lofland et al., *Analyzing Social Settings*. See Chapter Three–Data Analysis for word cloud definition.

history equation, where each word cloud's picture depicted different (shared) concerns based on social location and the specific context of each session.

The researcher used the significant themes developed from qualitative data analysis (coding, memoing, and diagramming) for categorizing terms occurring four or more times.¹⁹ The following are findings from each LUVÉ Talk session representing the frequency and magnitude of thematic connection for the top words utilized by pastors in response to the three LUVÉ Talk diagnostic questions addressing the identification, confrontation, and possibilities of a shared racial history.

Racial history context.

Figure One points to six words occurring four times or greater (in order of frequency) for Session One's focus on racial history context: *racism* (6), *see* (5), *God* (4), *way* (4), *white* (4), and *others* (4). When connecting the top words to the theme of identifying *racism* (pastors' strongest thematic connection based on word frequency), pastors' shared anamnesis suggested *see*[ing] race and *racism* more clearly through exclusive qualifiers (*white* and *others*). The thematic connection to confronting *racism* pointed to a shared anamnesis leaning on *God* as the primary means of confrontation. Finally, the theme of possibilities is connected with the term *way* to indicate direction. Pastors sought a better *way* to move beyond *racism* to a shared racial history.

¹⁹ See Lofland et al., *Analyzing Social Settings*, 144-167. The researcher chose the number of words in consideration of Lofland's eight propositions for categorizing data. Specifically, the researcher chose four words or more based on frequency (occurrences of key words) and magnitude (depicting overall intensity) to support the validity of the initial coding, memoing, and diagramming analysis that identified major interpretive themes expressed by the pastors. See Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 221. Sensing favors a multi-method approach to enhance the validity of qualitative data findings. See Bockmuehl, "Wright's Paul," 63. Oxford's Markus Bockmuehl utilized word cloud analysis to demonstrate the major interpretive themes of N.T. Wright's *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*.

Personal racial history.

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with the term *more* to indicate an increase or growth. Pastors desired progress beyond *racism* to a shared racial *history*.



Figure 2 Key Words Occurring Four Times or More for LUVU Talk Session 2 (Personal Racial History)

Church racial history.

Figure Three points to six words occurring four times or greater (in order of frequency) for Session Three's focus on church racial history: *Church* (6), *racial* (6), *history* (6), *community* (5), *better* (4), and *race* (4). The thematic connection to identifying racism (pastors' strongest thematic connection) with pastors' shared anamnesis suggested a continuing *racial* identification via *race* within the local *church* and *community*. The connection to confronting racism led to a shared anamnesis of confronting racism through the lens of a shared *racial history*. Finally, the thematic possibilities connection with the term *better* indicated growth opportunities and

theme of possibilities connected with the term *love*, declaring *love* (a key concept presented during Session Four via the Great Commandment) as a viable means of progressing beyond *racism* to a shared racial history.

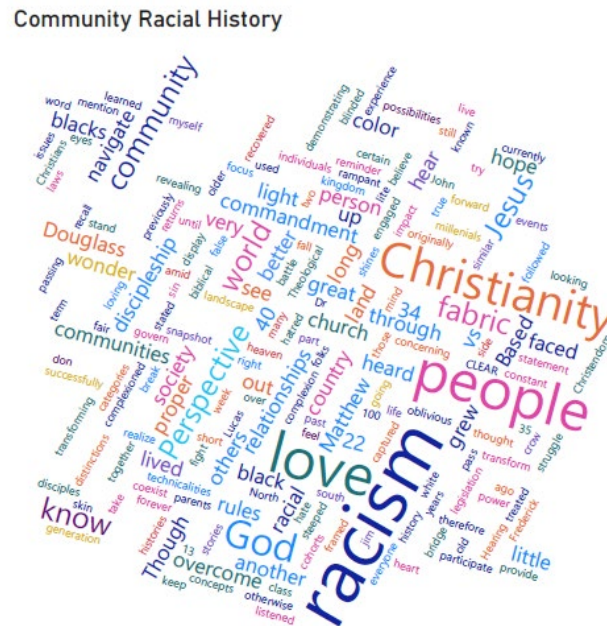


Figure 4 Key Words Occurring Four Times or More for LUVE Talk Session 4 (Community Racial History)

Racial history unity.

Figure Five displays thirteen words occurring four times or greater (in order of frequency) for Session Five's focus on racial history unity: *Black* (6), *experience(d/s)* (10),²⁰ *people* (8), *racism* (7), *racial* (6), *relationships* (5), *model* (5), *wonder* (4), *history* (4), *system* (4), *church* (4), *unity* (4), and *white* (4). The connection to identifying *racism* (pastors' strongest thematic connection) concerning pastors' shared anamnesis suggested

²⁰ The researcher combined case endings of *experience*, *experiences*, and *experienced* to represent one word for analysis purposes.

Post-Intervention Survey Findings

The three-part survey of individual, church, and community questions correlates with the primary racial history contexts engaged during the LUVE Talk seminar: individual, church, and community racial history. The survey responses provide an indicator of the ability of participants to identify and confront racism.²¹ The comprehensive dataset collected from participants' survey responses is in Appendix F for the control group and Appendix G for the test group.

Individual Context

The intervention focused on pastors' individual racial history by uncovering its multilayered context through the host pastor's experiences with racism. The individual context had the most variables and, subsequently, the greatest potential for change.²² As expected, the test group showed more change than the control group on individual context responses, with an increase of twenty-four points (a mean increase of 3.43) for the test group and sixteen points (a mean increase of 1.60) for the control group. Considering the test group's smaller sample size, the significant increase indicates LUVE Talk's ability to assist pastors in identifying and confronting racism more clearly regarding personal racial history. While the majority of survey questions experienced an increased score for the test group,²³ the response to identifying systemic structures in the

²¹ A participant's change in response to a non-demographic question indicates an identifiable encounter or confrontation (positive or negative) with racism.

²² Race, economics, gender, political affiliation, geography, and culture were all social location variables in the individual context. Theological location maintained high continuity via a Texas Baptist positioning.

²³ For the test group, Questions 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 16, measuring awareness, all experienced an increase in scores as expected. Question 13 remained the same but was near the top of its ceiling from the pre-survey at a mean of 4.29 (maximum scale of 5).

need for affirmative action in higher education had the largest mean increase of 0.71 points, contrasting the control group mean increase of 0.10 points:

Affirmative action in higher education	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Because of past and present discrimination, it is sometimes necessary for colleges and universities to reserve openings for racial ethnic students.
--	--

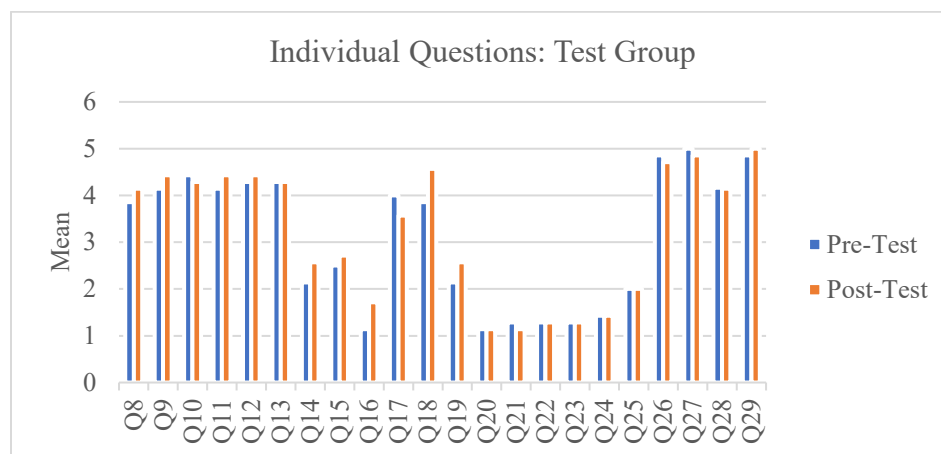
The increase demonstrated the ability of participants to see systemic structures’ of racism.

Domestic interracial interaction experienced the most significant mean decrease of -0.43 points for the test group—from twenty-eight to twenty-five points:

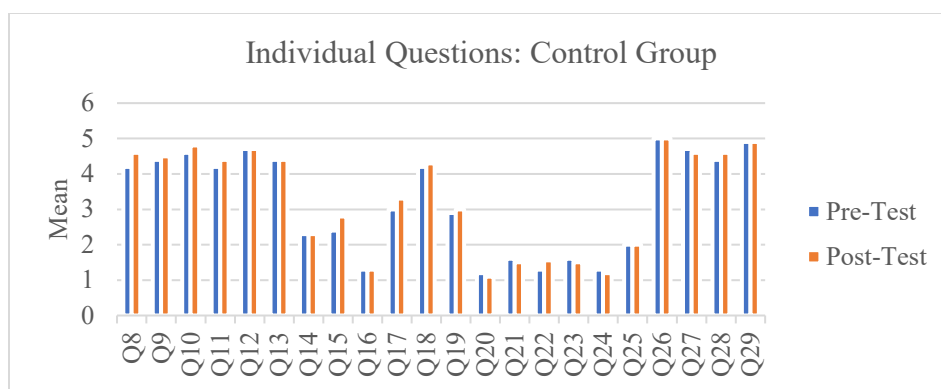
Domestic interracial interaction	How often do you interact with persons of different racial backgrounds in your own home?
----------------------------------	--

This finding is expected and suggests the boundaries of awareness-based LUVE Talks in moving the needle on commitment, requiring solid social ties or relationships.²⁴

Tables 4 and 5 Graphs Comparing Test and Control Groups (Individual-Level Questions)



²⁴ The scoring for domestic interracial interaction is consistent with Tisby’s ARC of Racial Justice, where the next steps beyond awareness entail relationship building which leads to commitment.



Feedback from Participants Regarding Individual Context

Pastors demonstrated the most significant ability to identify and confront racism in an individual context through shared anamnesis. The responses to the three open-ended questions (see Appendix G) followed. Person Two stressed the importance of a commitment to awareness and relationships for racial justice in writing:

While historical research through books, articles and documentaries can provide some education on racism, listening to personal firsthand accounts and experiences of other black men and women who live in similar context shows how sneaky racism is and can be embedded in less reported aspects of life.... When people groups are not committed to be aware and in relationship with other people groups, they will fail to have mercy and work towards justice for one another.

Person Three showed an increased personal ability to identify racism more clearly via enhanced perception by conveying:

I would say my perception of White America has shifted just a little. This means that sometimes, understanding the situation may not be racist because of one's background and experience. This does not mean that racism is not at the core, but they may not be aware of it because they have never had to think of someone else's group outside of their own.

Person Six "learned that Blacks and Whites are affected by racism." Person Seven increased reflexivity, leading to seeing, hearing, and confronting racism by stating, "I

have continued to be opened to being wrong about my perceptions about others' views on racism from their narrative. Don't judge until you know their stories."

Church Context

The intervention focused on the pastors' church racial history by exploring the host pastor's church encounters with racism. The church context demonstrated less volatility for both groups than the individual context, with the test group decrease of five points (a mean decrease of -0.71) and the control group increased by eleven points (a mean increase of 1.10).²⁵ The test group's response to church-led racial justice had the largest mean increase of 0.71 points – from twenty-nine to thirty-four points:

Church-led racial justice	Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Churches should be at the forefront of our society's efforts against racism.
---------------------------	---

This finding validates the impact of LUVE talk on participants confronting racism more clearly within the local church.

For the racial interaction at church, the test group's mean decrease of -0.29 points – from twenty-six to twenty-four points is expected:²⁶

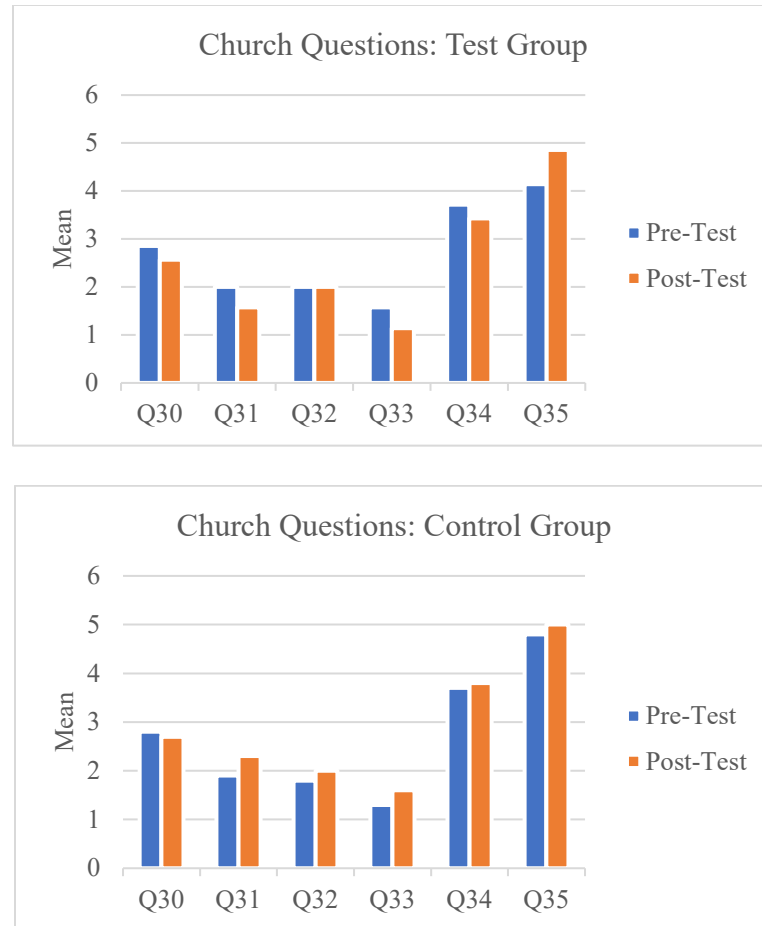
²⁵ Questions 30-33 entailed participants' consideration "in the last two years." Scores for Questions 30, 31, and 33 decreased for the test group, while the score for Question 32 remained the same. The researcher suggests three plausible scenarios for the church context decline: 1) The two-year time duration utilized by the question prevented measuring change for the five-week intervention, 2) Pre-survey findings were overstated by participants due to recollection, or 3) The participants provided accurate responses, implying the five-week intervention eclipsed the two-year threshold for the participants more favorable pre-survey responses. For the control group, considering the Riverboat Brawl's impact on racial history awareness may correlate to an increase in relational racial awareness activity (Questions 31-35) over five weeks, minus education (Question 30).

²⁶ The boundaries of awareness-based LUVE Talks in moving the needle on commitment, requiring solid social ties or relationships indicated for domestic interracial interaction, are magnified for racial interaction in the church. The heightened racial tensions caused by the Riverboat Brawl combine with the pre-survey findings of the race trend that Black churches are less racially diverse. The trend implies that other races are less likely to visit or join a Black church. Therefore, a decrease in interracial interaction for the test group, which is mainly Black, is expected: three Black participants' responses decreased by one point.

Racial interaction at church How often do you interact with persons of different racial backgrounds in your church?

This finding highlights the relational (activism) aspect for most church context questions, relating to steps two and three of Tisby’s ARC of Racial Justice.²⁷

Tables 6 and 7 Graphs Comparing Test and Control Groups (Church-Level Questions)



Feedback from Participants Regarding Church Context

In response to the three open-ended questions (see Appendix G), pastors modeled the ability to identify and confront racism in the local church context through shared

²⁷ For the test group, considering the Riverboat Brawl’s impact on church-based race relations may correlate to decreased relational activity over five weeks.

anamnesis. Person Three expressed an increased ability to identify racism within institutional structures (the local church) in responding, “We suffer from cultural institutionalization. Both black and white congregations have become adapted worshipping in a particular environment.”

Person Five identified and confronted racism within the local church while recommending LUVE Talk as a helpful aid by articulating, “The LUVE model for dialogue is a tool my congregation can use to help white congregants develop relationships with Black brothers and sisters and so become Aware of the ongoing racism around us.”

Community Context

The intervention focused on the pastors’ church community racial history by exploring the host pastor’s church community experiences with racism. In conjunction with the pre-survey findings of theological and psychological (race-correlated) alignment, the community context demonstrated the least potential for change and the fewest social location variables for volatility.²⁸ As expected, the test and control groups scored the slightest change in the community context responses, with the test group decreasing by two points (a mean decrease of -0.29) and the control group increasing by three points (a mean increase of 0.30).²⁹

²⁸ Though the most diverse city in the United States, Greater Houston communities continue to demonstrate homogenization along social location: race (psychological location), economics, political affiliation, geography, and cultural locations.

²⁹ When considering the Riverboat Brawl’s impact on racial history awareness, the contrasting direction of change suggests the intervention’s impact on the test group.

The expected decrease by the test group affirms LUVE Talk's impact on participants to identify and confront racism more clearly as most of the community questions were inverted:³⁰

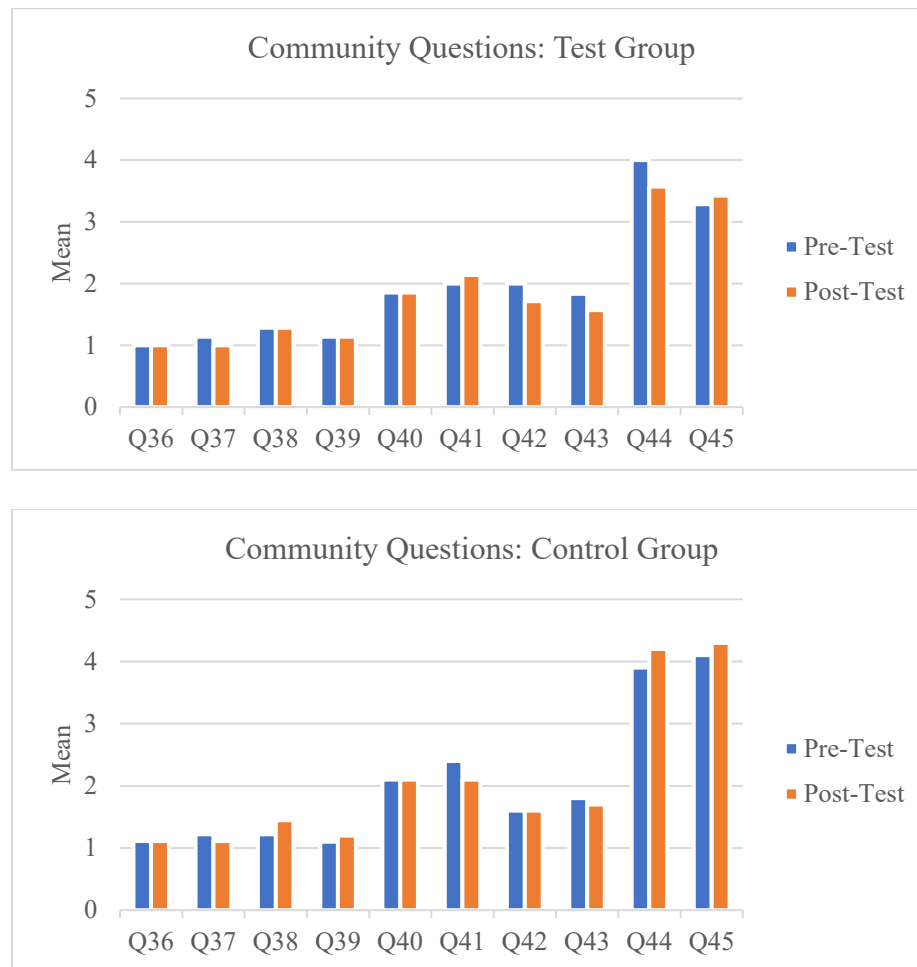
Black experience in community	Compared to whites, how do you feel Black people are treated in your community?
Black job search experience	In general, do you think Black people have as good a chance as whites in your community to get any kind of job for which they are qualified?
Black children education in community	In general, do you think Black children have as good a chance as white children in your community to get a good education?
Black housing experience	In general, do you think that Black people have as good a chance as whites in your community to get any housing they can afford?
Black employment experience	What is your impression of the way Black people in your local community are treated in the following situation: on the job or at work?
Black experience with police	What is your impression of the way Blacks in your local community are treated in the following situation: in dealings with the police?
Black experience in local courts	What is your impression of the way Black people in your local community are treated in the following situation: in local courts of law?

An overall decrease occurred for the test group, reflecting that whites came to see Black people as treated less favorably than whites in their community. In contrast to the overall

³⁰ The researcher anticipated a decrease in inverted questions to indicate the intervention's efficacy.

increasing change of the control group, this is a notable finding indicating test group participants' increase in racial history awareness within a community context.

Tables 8 and 9 Graphs Comparing Test and Control Groups (Community-Level Questions)



Feedback from Participants Regarding Community Context

Pastor Five's feedback to the open-ended questions (see Appendix G) demonstrates an ability to identify and confront racism in the local community through shared anamnesis. As Person Five wrote, "The group's racial history was a powerful reminder of the ongoing effects of racism (both personal and structural) in Houston.... I

believe Relationships and Awareness will lead to Commitments to change the community.”

Summary of Survey Findings

The project’s survey findings indicated increased racial history awareness for pastors participating in the five-week intervention. The test group demonstrated a higher level of racial awareness at the individual level compared to the control group. Moreover, the test group showed a higher level of racial awareness at the community level compared to the control group. In contrast, the control group measured a higher level of racial awareness at the church level compared to the test group.

In addition, the open-ended feedback questions confirmed the test group pastors’ ability to identify and confront racism through shared anamnesis. An aggregated view of the post-survey results for the test and control groups overall and by race paints a broader picture of the project’s impact on racial history awareness.

Table 10 Summary Table of Survey Data (All Participants)

	Test		Change	Control		Change
	Time 1	Time 2		Time 1	Time 2	
Individual	471	495	24	706	722	16
Church	114	109	-5	163	174	11
Community	133	131	-2	202	205	3

The table affirms synergy in change for racial history awareness for the test group. The test group experienced a twenty-four-point increase in the individual context, compared to a sixteen-point increase for the control group. This finding indicates that the test group participants had a higher level of racial awareness at the individual level after the intervention. Also, the test group measured a two-point decrease in the community

context, compared to a three-point increase for the control group. Thus, after the intervention, the test group participants had higher levels of racial awareness at the community level.³¹ The directional change for the test group points to pastors' increased ability to identify and confront racism within the individual and community contexts with a shared concern of racial history unity via LUVE Talk. Moreover, pastors' feedback concerning their experiences with the project authenticated the efficacy of the intervention. However, for the church context, the test group had a five-point decrease compared to an eleven-point increase for the control group. After the intervention, the test group participants had lower levels of racial awareness at the church level.

Person Seven conveyed the benefit of LUVE Talk's interracial shared anamnesis format promoting honest, open, and transparent conversations, writing:

I learned that we all bring various levels of personal experiences to the discussion of racism. The value of listening to each other's testimony was certainly an asset to the discussions. I also learned the value of having a mixed group at the table who were willing to openly and honestly discuss the things they did not understand about the other's experiences. This allowed room for authentic discussions to take place in the group.

Person Four favored adopting LUVE Talk's format for future racial history conversations and interracial relationship development, stating, "This experience has challenged me to look at my racial history. Although I know some of my family's racial journey, I'm more eager to learn more. For relationships and conversations, I'm challenged to use LUVE Talk format of Awareness, Relationship, and Commitment in small, diverse groups to apply what's been learned."

³¹ The researcher anticipated a decrease in the test group's score due to the inverted questions, indicating the intervention's efficacy.

Person Two endorsed LUVE Talk as a theological and biblical tool to engage in shared racial history dialogue, averring, “Intentional LUVE talks with people from different backgrounds and perspectives are a true practice of James 1:19-20.”

Lastly, Person Five commended LUVE Talk’s five-week facilitation of crucial conversations (healthy conflict) to move in the direction of racial justice, stating, “I think you were right to ask for 5 sessions because nothing replaces time together to build a trusting space for people to (1) share their own experiences and (2) risk saying something that might be conflictual. We are not going to change the world without healthy conflict.”

Tables 11 and 12 Summary Table of Survey Data (Black and white participants)

	Black Test		Change	Black Control		Change
	Time 1	Time 2		Time 1	Time 2	
Individual	335	353	18	424	436	12
Church	77	72	-5	94	99	5
Community	94	92	-2	111	114	3

	White Test		Change	White Control		Change
	Time 1	Time 2		Time 1	Time 2	
Individual	136	142	6	282	286	4
Church	37	37	0	69	75	6
Community	39	39	0	91	91	0

Viewing the post-survey aggregated results for the test and control groups through the psychological location of race affirms the racial history equation embedded within a Greater Houston shared racial history. While both racial groups (test and control) follow the patterns of the overall test and control survey results, the trends move along the rails of race.

Conclusion

This project demonstrated the influence of LUVE Talk, utilizing a mixed-method research approach, increasing the ability of African American and Euro American pastors to identify and confront racism within individual, church, and community contexts. The racial history equation served as a guide to inspect the nuances of racial history experiences and responses from participants based on unique social locations (geographical, cultural, psychological, and theological) and contextualized experiences (personal, church, and community) resulting in different concerns (captured in journal and survey responses) influenced by the ubiquitous psychological location of race. A shared biblical and theological anamnesis predicated on leaning into crucial conversations with honesty, openness, and transparency created a safe space for pastors to see, hear, wonder, wrestle, and imagine the possibilities of a Greater Houston community embracing a shared racial history, beyond the impact of racism, with a mantra of unity. Qualitative and quantitative data findings indicate growth in racial history awareness, particularly in the individual context of personal racial history.

CHAPTER FIVE

Evaluation and Significance of the Project

Introduction

This project aimed to determine the efficacy of “A LUVE Talk on Racial History” to increase the racial history awareness of Greater Houston African and Euro American pastors, resulting in seeing, hearing, and confronting racism more clearly.¹ The research question guided the project:

How does participation in a five-week shared anamnestic cohort-based seminar program, “A LUVE Talk on Racial History,” influence the ability of African American (Black) and Euro American (white) pastors to identify and confront racism?

Each LUVE Talk session required pastors to 1) Listen to lived experiences of racism in a specific context (individual, church, community);² 2) Ask clarifying questions to understand the context; 3) Validate a shared racial history by reflecting on Scripture and (Black) theology; and 4) Evaluate the session via journal responses to the diagnostic questions.

The three diagnostic questions used for each LUVE Talk session consisted of:

What do you see—and hear?

What do you wonder—or perhaps wrestle with?

What is now possible in light of this LUVE Talk on racial history?

¹ “A LUVE Talk on Racial History” or LUVE Talk.

² Sessions One, Two, Three, and Four began with listening to the host pastor’s experiences of racism; Session Five began with members of the test group sharing their experiences of racism.

Summary of Findings

Through a mixed-methods research approach, the project demonstrated an increase in pastors' ability to identify and confront specific instances of racism more clearly.³ The project's survey findings show an increase in racial history awareness for the test group in the individual and community contexts at a higher rate than the control group. Moreover, the journal responses indicate the test group's increase in racial history awareness across all three contexts (individual, church, and community). The quantitative and qualitative findings, combined with the survey's significant increase in racial history awareness for the individual context, point to the project's success.

In each LUVE Talk seminar session, pastors affirmed the racial history equation, yielding different concerns across contexts based on an individual (unique) social location, unveiling the tension in interracial relationships necessitating confrontation to move forward in commitment to racial justice. The LUVE Talk session format design, promoting interracial crucial conversations via a shared biblical and theological anamnesis of a shared racial history (through the lens of an African American pastor and the Black church), enabled leaning into the racial tension to broaden individual perspectives while sowing the cultivating seeds of interracial relationships needed to increase racial history awareness. Moreover, the fellowship at the table, provided by the host pastor, after each session, enabled participants to progress in Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice stages of awareness and relationships, laying the groundwork (foundation) for a commitment to racial justice and the embodiment of the Great Commandment. Pastors

³ See Chapter Four–Journal Response and Post-Intervention Survey Findings.

conveyed that LUVÉ Talk provided them with tools for growing in racial history awareness and interracial relationships, fostering the possibilities of unity.⁴

Biblical and Theological Significance

The project demonstrated the potential to create (shared and individual) contemporary racial history awareness for Greater Houston Euro and African American pastors in their individual, church, and community contexts (by overhearing and evaluating a local African American pastor's experience with racism). The exploration of Black biblical hermeneutics, Black church tradition, Black theology, and the Black religious experience facilitated enlightenment on the contextual dynamics of anamnesis. Black biblical hermeneutics pointed to the Passover in Exodus as an essential element of remembrance. Black theology called attention to the *Shema* in Deuteronomy, governing perpetual remembrance through a living church tradition. Black church tradition identified the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians as a continual embodiment of racial history solidarity and a public worship witness of remembrance. Black religious experience and the Great Commandment stirred up the memory of the Old Testament providing orthodoxy and orthopraxy for neighborly Christian ethics.⁵ God's story of creation in Genesis 1 served as the source of a shared (racial) history, unity, and identity made in the *imago Dei*.

⁴ Seminar participants identified the interracial cohort, theological and biblical considerations, and crucial conversations seasoned with honesty, openness, and transparency as assets for increasing racial history awareness in their context. As the weeks progressed, seminar participants moved from forming, storming, and norming to performing at a high level of awareness, collegiality, and group (racial history) accountability.

⁵ Specifically, the *Shema* in Deuteronomy 6:5 and the Golden Rule in Leviticus 19:18.

Practical Significance

As a leader of Covenant Community XD, a faith-based nonprofit in Greater Houston, the mission is to empower, equip, and encourage collective imagination to create thriving communities through a common unity. The LUVE Talk project may serve as a model for engaging Euro and African American pastors in collaborative networks for racial history awareness. The goal is to facilitate additional cohort-based seminars for pastors, churches, and denominational organizations throughout Greater Houston, creating racial history awareness for identifying and confronting racism. Afterward, the next step entails cultivating interracial pastoral networks to mobilize the church for collaborative racial justice projects in underserved communities.

Furthermore, the project exposed participants to Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice framework, which offers a practical approach to confronting racism.⁶ Awareness (the head) entails developing familiarization with racist strategies to confront them proficiently via knowledge, information, and data. How might LUVE Talk participants do this? Pastors received several resources to facilitate continued growth in a shared racial history awareness: 1) A racial autobiography guide, 2) A church racial history guide, and 3) A community racial history guide.⁷ Relationships (the heart) involve cultivating authentic relationships with people of different backgrounds, racial groups, and ethnicities. How might LUVE Talk participants do this? Using the crucial conversation skills exercised during LUVE Talk,⁸ pastors can enter meaningful and

⁶ Tisby subscribes to measuring racial justice impact by actions and (personal) transformation.

⁷ See Appendix C for guides (handouts).

⁸ Including the remembrance that relationships move at the speed of trust.

covenantal relationships across racial lines with mutual respect and equal regard.

Commitment (the hand) admonishes a resolve to dismantle racist structures, laws, and policies via social activism. How might LUVE Talk participants do this? Pastors have the potential to address Greater Houston's racial disparities by partnering on the journey toward racial justice. A commitment to collaborative interracial ministry partnerships can make a difference in individual, church, and community contexts through the praxis of the Great Commandment—loving God, self, and our neighbor.

Broader Significance

Racial history is not exclusive to Texas Baptist-affiliated pastors in Greater Houston. The knowledge gleaned from this project may benefit other denominations, communities, cities, states, faith-based organizations, laity, and staff striving to engage local churches across racial lines with an awareness of racial history to facilitate identifying and confronting racism with the end goal of racial justice. While the project limits itself to personal, church, and community racial history awareness, cultivating interracial clergy networks and commitment to racial justice invites a plethora of race-related ministry contexts for pursuing a LUVE Talk (e.g., politics, poverty, sexism, classism, institutional organizational management, and structures, including higher education).

Further Research

Since the LUVE Talk project intentionally focused on racial history awareness, the first stage of Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice, a potential and perhaps logical next step is the research of practical ways to promote interracial relationships that lead to racial justice commitment. Based on the post-survey results and participants' feedback,

additional research opportunities focusing exclusively on church and community contexts exist. Both the church and community parts of the surveys demonstrated greater homogeneity and less volatility in racial history awareness increases compared to the individual context.⁹ Person Five suggested the development of a church LUVE Talk, partnering Black and white churches (either by existing relationship or within geographical proximity) via a small group cohort model to increase racial history awareness.

While providing a high-level overview of this project, Dr. Ralph D. West Sr. pointed out the absence of research capturing the oral (racial) history of the Greater Houston Black church.¹⁰ This project recorded a small portion of racial history for the host pastor, Rev. Curtis Lucas, Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church, and the Mud Alley community to facilitate personal experiential encounters with racial history. However, contemporary African American living legends, historic Black churches, and communities whose stories warrant preservation remain to enhance the comprehension of a Greater Houston shared racial history.

Moreover, the project looked at Greater Houston Euro and African American pastors' anamnesis, informed by the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Duke University's Global Health Institute states, "Most people are likely to experience an extreme pandemic

⁹ Out of the three plausible scenarios presented in Chapter Four—Church Context for the post-intervention survey results, modifying the time-based church context questions is within the researcher's control. It may prove prudent to edit the church context questions for both surveys to enhance the measurement of results.

¹⁰ Senior Pastor and Founder of Brookhollow Baptist Church, Houston, TX.

like COVID-19 in their lifetime.”¹¹ Dr. Gabriel Katul estimates a COVID-like pandemic will occur within the next fifty-nine years.¹² Early response and building local and global surveillance capacity are vital keys for counteracting the inevitability of future pandemics. Further research on a shared COVID-19 racial history may provide insights into building Greater Houston area churches’ capacity for surveillance of racism, racial history awareness, and anamnesis during future pandemics, enabling an early anamnestic, praxis-based response of creative fidelity to Scripture.¹³

Conclusion

Racial history awareness, the first leg of the journey towards racial justice, requires engaging in the creative tension of real-life questions, as conveyed by Person Six’s inquiry, “Is there real hope for significant change?” Still, the hope for Greater Houston racial justice resides in the local church’s orthodoxy and orthopraxy of the Great Commandment. As Person Five articulates, “I heard hope that the Church should be—and in places is—the antidote to racism.”

The five-week seminar, A LUVE Talk on Racial History, laid the foundation for a shared racial history in Greater Houston, empowering and encouraging pastors to move

¹¹ Michael Penn, “Statistics Say Large Pandemics Are More Likely Than We Thought,” *Duke | Global Health Institute*, accessed April 28, 2023, <https://globalhealth.duke.edu/news/statistics-say-large-pandemics-are-more-likely-we-thought>.

¹² Gabriel Katul, Ph.D., the Theodore S. Coile Distinguished Professor of Hydrology and Micrometeorology at Duke.

¹³ Recognizing the impact of the recent COVID-19 pandemic on contemporary anamnesis, the seminar explored several questions relating to the host pastor’s anamnestic praxis of Scripture during the pandemic; see African American pastor’s post during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic concerning foreign and domestic missions for evidence of racial tension: Lawrence Aker, Twitter post, June 23, 2020, 11:06 a.m. <https://twitter.com/preachingtoday/status/1275460109825499136?t=qFK8M89-56rF9hrpzPbeKw&s=09>.

forward in solidarity as the Lord's remembrancers in individual, church, and community contexts. The project beckoned the remembrance of a shared identity, made in God's image, and a mutual purpose of fidelity declared by the Creator.

Scripture is an intentional contextualized project of anamnesis. The writers of Scripture wrote out of their remembrance. For the Greater Houston faith community to actualize its heavenly hope, may it overhear an anamnestic living tradition recited by the apostle Paul, requiring perpetual remembrance:

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26, NRSV)

Remembering is more than merely mental recall. The Lord's Supper mandates remembering the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and in so doing, the body of Christ can be re-membered.¹⁴ The bread of life symbolizes taking Christ's life to live within—to live as Christ lived. Let the Greater Houston faith community eat the bread together. The cup of blessing is the blood of Christ shed on Calvary for atonement and redemption, spread over the doorposts and lintel of every Christ follower's life. Let the Greater Houston faith community take and drink from the cup together.

As the Lord's remembrancers, may the local church actualize Christ's life (individually and corporately) as living witnesses. May the faith community remember that what it does for the least of these, it, in turn, does for the Lord. Finally, may the

¹⁴ See Arthurs, *Preaching as Reminding*. Re-membered: unified—made whole—put back together again.

Greater Houston faith community be remembrancers and doers of the Lord's Word, not forgetful hearers. In Jesus' name. Amen.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Video with Host Pastor

- I. Greetings, Gratitude, and Prayer
- II. Intervention Project Overview
 - a. Review the project's purpose and scope.
- III. Instructions/Expectations for the Video
 - a. Convey the role of the host pastor.
 - b. Convey the approximate length of the video.
 - c. Request permission to utilize the video for the intervention project.
- IV. Questions for Host Pastor
 - a. Part 1: Background
 - i. Education and Ministry Experience
 - 1. Please state your age.
 - 2. Please provide a summary of your educational background and ministry experience.
 - 3. Did you encounter racism along this journey? If so, in what way? When?
 - 4. What is your current ministry position status?
 - ii. Geographic Location
 - 1. Where were you born? How long did you live there?
 - 2. Where were you raised as a child? How long did you live there?
 - 3. Where do you live now? For how long?
 - iii. Psychological Location
 - 1. Black, African American, Negro, American: Do you have a preference when referring to yourself? Why?
 - 2. Black, African American, Negro, American: Do you have a preference when referring to your community? Why?
 - iv. Cultural Location
 - 1. What are some of your most cherished (living) traditions of the Black church? Why?
 - 2. What are some of your most cherished (living) traditions of your church? Why?

3. Has your church encountered racism in its history? If so, in what way? When?
 4. Has your church's community encountered racism in its history? If so, in what way? When?
 - v. Theological Location
 1. Do you consider yourself a Christian? Why?
 2. Briefly tell me about your salvation story. (How did you come to know Christ?)
 3. Briefly tell me how you envision living out the Great Commandment's charge of loving God, self, and neighbor.
- b. Part 2: Race Relations Assessment
- i. Cultural Location
 1. What is your assessment of the progress of Black and white relations in America today?
 2. What is your assessment of the state of Black and white America?
 - ii. Psychological Location
 1. What are the struggles you continue to face today?
 2. What are the struggles your community faces?
 3. What are the struggles Black America faces?
 - iii. Theological Location
 1. What is needed to overcome the struggles you face?
 2. What is needed to overcome the struggles your community faces?
 3. What is needed to overcome the struggles Black America faces?
- c. Part 3: COVID-19 Praxis of the Great Commandment Assessment
- i. When remembering the first twelve months of COVID-19 and deciding to hold online vs. in-person church services (or cancel services altogether)...
 1. based on your interpretation of the Great Commandment to love God, self, and neighbor...
 - a. What do you see—and hear?
 - b. What do you wonder—or perhaps wrestle with?
 - c. What do you believe is possible now moving forward?
 - ii. When remembering the COVID-19 pandemic and deciding whether to promote vaccination for the congregation, in light of your church's history...
 1. based on your interpretation of the Great Commandment to love God, self, and neighbor...

- a. What do you see—and hear?
 - b. What do you wonder—or perhaps wrestle with?
 - c. What do you believe is possible now moving forward?
- iii. When remembering the last twelve months of COVID-19 and deciding whether to require masks for in-person worship services, in light of your community’s history...
 - 1. based on your interpretation of the Great Commandment to love God, self, and neighbor...
 - a. What do you see—and hear?
 - b. What do you wonder—or perhaps wrestle with?
 - c. What do you believe is possible now moving forward?

APPENDIX B

Video Release Form

I hereby grant to <Researcher's Name> the right to reproduce, use, exhibit, display, broadcast, distribute and create derivative works of doctoral of ministry study-related video interviews of the undersigned person for use in connection with the activities of the study or for promoting, publicizing or explaining the study or its activities. This grant includes, without limitation, the right to publish such images in the study's dissertation, seminar, and public relations/promotional materials, such as marketing and publication. These video interviews may appear in any of the wide variety of formats and media now available to the study, and that may be available in the future, including but not limited to print, broadcast, videotape, CD-ROM and electronic/online media.

All video interviews recorded are without compensation to me (the undersigned). All electronic or non-electronic negatives, positives, and prints are owned by <Researcher's Name>.

I hereby acknowledge that I am 18 years of age or older and have read and understand the terms of this release.

Name (printed) _____

Signature _____

Address _____

Date _____

APPENDIX C

Outline/Manuscript/Handouts of A LUVE Talk on Racial History Seminar

Week #1: Racial History Context

Outline

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. Introductions and Five-Week Cohort Overview
- III. Session #1 Overview
- IV. Listen: Host Pastor's Context
- V. Understand: Q&A
- VI. Validate: Biblical and Theological Concepts
 - a. Contextual Theology (the role of context)
 - b. Exodus 12:1-14, 17 (the Passover)
 - c. Ontological Question
 - d. Black Biblical Hermeneutics
- VII. Evaluate: Diagnostic Questions
- VIII. Application: Racial Identity Development
- IX. Wrap-Up
- X. Closing Prayer (by a participant)

Manuscript

A detailed manuscript follows, outlining the role and responsibilities of the facilitator, host pastor, and participants for Session #1 (Week #1). The session consists of six timed segments and a wrap-up segment.

Setup (*Facilitator*)

- Print Handouts
- Prep Host Pastor's Session #1 Video (for Segment #2)
- Test A/V

First Segment (20 minutes)

- Welcome and Opening Prayer (*Host Pastor*)
- Preliminaries (*Facilitator*)
 - **Introduction:** Name, Church, Area of Houston, Position/Role
 - ***Host Pastor's Introduction***
 - Thank you, <Host Pastor>, for your hospitality, generosity, and willingness to serve as our seminar host.
 - ***Facilitator's Introduction***
 - ***Participants' Introductions***

- **Seminar Overview**
 - Five-week exploration of (our shared) racial history beginning from an African American perspective, specifically the racial history of our host pastor.
- **Goal**
 - To realize our desires for personal, congregational, and community transformation by embodying the Great Commandment to facilitate seeing, hearing, and confronting racism more clearly.
- **A LUVE Talk Weekly Focus (Context, Personal, Church, Community, Unity)**
 - ***Listening:*** Specific instances of the Host Pastor's racial history (contextualized experiences)
 - ***Understanding:*** Host Pastor's lived experience by asking clarifying questions
 - ***Validating:*** Lived experience through examining Scripture and theology
 - ***Evaluating:*** Session through reflection (based on our contextualized lens of racial history)
 - ***Application:*** An opportunity to dig deeper into our racial history
 - ***Online journaling:*** Record our reflections after each session
- **Session #1 Overview**
 - ***Focus: A LUVE Talk emphasizing Context***
 - The role of context in racial history awareness
 - **Rev. Dr. Ralph D. West, Sr.:** "A text without context is a con."
 - ***Application: Racial Identity Development***
 - Determining our stage of Racial Identity Development
- **House Rules for A LUVE Talk**
 - ***HOT Communication***
 - Honest-Open-Transparent
 - ***Confidentiality***
 - Creating a safe space through confidentiality
 - ***Grace:***
 - Conversations seasoned with grace
 - It is probably inevitable that each one of us will feel uncomfortable at some point and time over the next five weeks.
 - When this happens, let us agree now to **PICK LUVE Talk**.
- **PICK LUVE Talk:**
 - Being fully **present** during our sessions (requesting phones on silent mode)
 - Being **intentional** about expanding our racial history awareness
 - Being **committed** to leaning into crucial conversations on race:
 - Emotions are high and stakes are high with opposing views.
 - Being **kind** to one another
 - Give each other the benefit of the doubt of positive intent.
- **Scheduled Break**
 - Session midpoint

- 5 minutes
- **Food and Fellowship**
 - Host Pastor instructions.
- **Restroom**
 - Host Pastor instructions.
- **Water**
 - Host Pastor instructions.

Second Segment (20 minutes)

- Listen (*Host Pastor*)
 - Facilitator:
 - Earlier this summer I had the privilege of sitting down with <Host Pastor> to explore his racial history.
 - I invite you to listen to a portion of that experience.
 - **Host Pastor's Context:** Session #1 Video (12 minutes)
 - *Play Host Video #1*
 - **Specific Racial History Instance:** Summary of thoughts (5 minutes)
 - Facilitator:
 - <Host Pastor>, thank you once again for the HOT conversation.
 - Is there a closing remark or thought you feel compelled to add to the video presentation?

Third Segment (15 minutes)

- Understand (*Host Pastor + Participants*)
 - **Host Pastor Q&A:**
 - Facilitator:
 - Now is the time to ask <Host Pastor> any clarifying questions regarding his experience.

Break (5 minutes)

- Facilitator:
 - Announce break
 - Prep Racial Identity Development Video (for Segment #6)
 - Take attendance

Fourth Segment (20 minutes)

- Validate: Theological and Biblical Concepts (*Facilitator*)
 - **Racial History and Context**
 - ***The role of context:***
 - Define racism? (ask participants)
 - Our varied definitions of racism point to its polyvalent and elusive nature.

- ***Seminar definition of racism:***
 - A social and power construct predicated on race, embedded in the fabric of American society, Greater Houston area culture, including the local church.
 - Since culture is a means of identity, race and racism serve as the raw materials of our culture and society.
- ***Characteristics of racism:***
 - Ubiquitous nature:
 - It is in the air we breathe.
 - Influences laws, ideas, identity, and the power of human flourishing
 - Constantly adapting to an ever evolving and changing social, economic, political, ethnic, and historical landscape
- ***Problem of racism:***
 - A sin, contradicting the Great Commandment, the Christian ethic to love God, self, and neighbor
- **Racial History's Contextualized Experience**
 - ***Racial History is a contextualized construct influenced by locations (like an onion with multiple layers), predicated on our...***
 - Geographical location:
 - Where we were raised and live
 - Psychological location:
 - Our racial identity: how we see ourselves as white, black, brown, etc.
 - Cultural location:
 - Our cultural heritage and history
 - Theological location:
 - Our **God-Talk:** how we think about God, talk about God, and live out our faith
 - Including the location of our theological education
- **Racial History Distinctives in an African American (Black) Church Context**
 - "A LUVE Talk on Racial History" aims to explore Racial History through the lens of the African American Church Context
 - Based on the assumption that Greater Houston area Black Baptist churches, while not monolithic, do have a historical center whose roots reside in the soil of Africa (via African Traditional Religion).
 - The significance of the Black Church's connection to African Traditional Religion is echoed by J. Deotis Roberts—considered one of the fathers of Black Theology—extending James Cone's Black Theology of liberation to include reconciliation.
 - ***Ontological Question***
 - In *Africentric Christianity*, Roberts quotes a young seminarian from the Deep South in his systematic theology class:
 - "I came from a small town down South. All I have known is suffering, poverty, and deprivation from the most brutish form of racism. My people share my experience. We are victims of racism at its

worse. My call to ministry emerged out of this setting. I am here to study the Christian faith in order to comfort and deliver my people. I do not need to *prove* that God *exists*. I already *know* this. What I really want to know is ‘Does God care?’”¹

- Roberts points out a Black Church Racial History Distinctive:
 - Wrestling with the question “Does God Care?” As opposed to “Does God Exist?”
- According to Thomas C. Oden’s *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*, Christianity arrives at the doorstep of Africa and African Tradition Religion long before it makes its way to the Western world.
- Meaning enslaved Africans in the Americas would already know that God does exist.
- The question they are deliberating, based on their disposition of occupation, oppression, and marginalization is “Does God care?”
- Brining front and center the equation:
 - *Racial history+our Contextualized social locations yield a different concern.*
- **Black Experience**
 - We are defining Roberts, his student, and our fellow cohort members who were born in America and are descendants of Africans who were enslaved in America as African Americans (or Black)
 - We will define this unique way of seeing, hearing, and interacting with the world as the Black experience.
- **Black Biblical Hermeneutics**
 - Why does this matter regarding racial history?
 - The *Black Experience* serves as a lens for interpreting Scripture, it is the centrifugal point of reference.
 - When relating the black biblical hermeneutic to the collective African consciousness, Roberts claims, “to understand the mindset of black believers is to enter into their use of Scripture and its meaning.”²
- **Black Ecclesial Interpretation**
 - Esau McCaulley, Associate Professor of NT at Wheaton College, and author of *Reading While Black* uses the term...
 - *Black Ecclesiastical Interpretation* to describe the practice of Bible reading and scriptural interpretation in the Black Church.

¹ Roberts, *Africentric Christianity*, 17.

² Ibid., 49. Roberts advocates a Black biblical hermeneutic of particularity (a concern for spiritual and physical liberation from [racial] oppression) and universality (a concern for solidarity with humanity).

- **Per McCaulley**, “*My claim then is that Black biblical interpretation has been and can be...*”
 1. Unapologetically *canonical* and *theological*.
 2. Socially located, in that it clearly arises out of the particular *context* of Black Americans.
 3. Willing to *listen* to the ways in which the Scriptures themselves respond to and redirect Black issues and concerns.
 4. Willing to exercise *patience* with the text trusting that a careful and sympathetic reading of the text brings a blessing.
 5. Willing to listen to and enter into dialogue with Black and white critiques of the Bible in the hopes of achieving a better reading of the text.”³
- **Exodus 12:1-14, 17 (Passover)**
 - Equipped with these theological concepts, let us examine Exodus 12:1-14, 17, a scriptural passage residing at the heart of the black biblical hermeneutic and the contemporary black experience.
 - *Read Exodus 12:1-14, 17 (Participant)*
 - Insights
 - This passage and chapter begin with Moses’s account of God’s monologue with Moses and Aaron, the pastors and leaders of the faith community, and their role of availability to listen and understand God’s divine directives.
 - The success of Israel’s deliverance depends on the faith leaders’ courageous obedience.
 - God intentionally and meticulously articulates the protocol and procedures for Israel’s pending exodus out of bondage.
 - God unveils the motivations behind his actions of justice and deliverance by branding the event as the Passover: meaning **compassion**.
 - Passover–“have compassion on—to suffer with—to get under the skin of another in order to identify with,” “to protect”:
 - Answering the ontological question of the **Black Experience**: Does God Care?
 - Moses and Aaron are to tell the people to remember this day of their holistic divine deliverance.
 - This instruction is both an individual and communal expectation - a perpetual intergenerational ordinance of celebratory remembrance.
 - This is Yahweh’s “**Do this in remembrance of me.**”

³ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 21.

- Elements of the Passover
 - Sacrificial lamb – symbolizes the forgiveness of sins, foreshadowing Christ as the Passover lamb without sin.
 - Blood on the doorpost and lintel of the house – indicate blood must be shed as without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin (the price for sin is death—*a life for life*).
 - Unleavened bread (bread of affliction) – provides a sense of urgency and immediacy with no time to wait for the yeast to rise.
 - Bitter herbs – signal the horrendous outcries of the people in slavery being heard by God (affirming the existence and reality of the temporal minor keys of bondage, affliction, and persecution in life).
 - Attire (tunic tucked in, sandals on feet, staff in hand) – stresses the necessity of advanced preparation (in the present) as a demonstration of faith in what God has promised to do in the future.
- Canonical Context
 - You may recall from chapter one that Israel’s current predicament is the result of a lack of remembrance.
 - Pharaoh and the people of Egypt suffer from a bad case of amnesia (God’s deliverance during the famine through Joseph, an ancestor of Israel).
 - Later in Exodus, we witness the danger of Israel, the faith community, forgetting its divine deliverance, claiming they had it better off while being enslaved in Egypt.
- Application
 - Like Israel, we too are in danger of forgetting our divine holistic (spiritual and physical) deliverance.
 - Recent claims have been made that slavery was beneficial for the enslaved—showing the danger of amnesia from the seat of power and control in our society.
 - Today, there are forces at play promoting amnesia of the bitter herbs of our Racial History, much less a shared remembrance.
 - Our practice of racial history remembrance involves a theocentric reflection of God’s activity in human history, drawing attention to our God encounters to calibrate our worldview and perspective with the power to transform our awareness of a shared racial history.
 - For African Americans, remembrance is embedded in the black biblical hermeneutic, rehearsed in black preaching, teaching, and even in singing (“Mary Don’t You Weep” and “Exodus” by Donald Lawrence and Le’Andra Johnson).

Fifth Segment (20 minutes)

- Evaluate (*Participants*)
 - **Response:**
 - Facilitator:
 - What questions, insights, and/or applications come to mind that you would like to share?

Sixth Segment (15 minutes)

- Application (*Facilitator*)
 - **Racial Identity Development:**
 - Today, we've listened to <Host Pastors'> racial history experience...
 - We've asked clarifying questions for understanding...
 - We've even set out to validate it through a black biblical hermeneutical lens rooted in the Exodus...
 - It's time to apply these insights to our unique context by identifying our stage of *Racial Identity Development*
 - Let's begin with listening to Jemar Tisby's explanation of *Racial Identity Development*, author of *How to Fight Racism* and *The Color of Compromise*.
 - **How to Fight Racism Video Study Session #3 Video (00:00–06:47 minutes)**
 - *Play:*
 - <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/howtofightracism/500303569?autoplay=1>
 - [Distribute Handout]
 - While Tisby described the *Minority Racial Identity Development Model*, there is also a *Majority Model* in your handouts.
 - You can find the six stages and their descriptions in the first column of the table on pages 3-7.
 - Identifying our stage of *Racial Identity Development* is an exercise of remembrance.
 - It requires remembering the roads of racial history we have traveled to get here.
 - Take a few moments to review the handout and locate your stage of racial identity development.

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

- Wrap-Up (*Facilitator*)
 - **Closing Remarks**
 - Thank the hospitable host pastor and participants.
 - Participants' remarks
 - Host Pastor's remarks
 - **Next Steps**
 - Identify Racial Identity Development
 - Complete Session #1 Online Journal Entry by <deadline> (in your email box)

- **Next Session**
 - Provide date and time.
- Closing Prayer (*Participant*)

Total Estimated Time: 120 minutes / 2 hours

Handouts

Racial/Cultural Identity-Development Minority Model⁴

Stages of Minority Development Model	Attitude toward Self	Attitude toward Others of the Same Minority	Attitude toward Others of a Different Minority	Attitude toward Dominant Group
Stage 1—Conformity	Self-depreciating or neutral due to low race salience	Group-depreciating or neutral due to low race salience	Discriminatory or neutral	Group-appreciating
Stage 2—Dissonance and appreciating	Conflict between self-depreciating and group-appreciating	Conflict between group-depreciating views of minority hierarchy and feelings of shared experience	Conflict between dominant-held and group-depreciating	Conflict between group-appreciating and group-depreciating
Stage 3—Resistance and immersion	Self-appreciating	Group-appreciating experiences and feelings of culturocentrism	Conflict between feelings of empathy for other minority	Group-depreciating
Stage 4—Introspection	Concern with basis of self-appreciation	Concern with nature of unequivocal appreciation	Concern with ethnocentric basis for judging others	Concern with the basis of group depreciation
Stage 5—Integrative Awareness	Self-appreciating	Group-appreciating	Group-appreciating	Selective appreciation

Source: From Donald R. Atkinson, George Morten, and Derald Wing Sue, *Counseling American Minorities: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, 5th ed. Copyright © 1998. Wm. C. Brown Publishers, Dubuque, IA. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

Racial/Cultural Identity-Development Majority Model

See working document of anti-racism resources: <https://esuc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Scaffolding-AntiRacism.pdf>

⁴ Excerpt from Derald Wing Sue, Mikal N. Rasheed, and Janice Matthews Rasheed, “Racial/Cultural Minority Identity Development,” in *Multicultural Social Work Practice: A Contemporary-Based Approach to Diversity and Social Justice*, accessed June 20, 2023, https://www.lgbtqihealtheducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Racial_Cultural-Minority-Identity-Development.pdf.

Week #2: Personal Racial History

Outline

- I. Opening Prayer (by a participant)
- II. Session #1 Recap
 - a. Questions
 - b. Review Racial Identity Development
- III. Session #2 Overview
- IV. Listen: Host Pastor's Racial Autobiography
- V. Understand: Q&A
- VI. Validate: Biblical and Theological Concepts
 - a. Anamnesis (the role of remembrance)
 - i. Anamnesis vs. Amnesia
 - b. Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 12 (*Shema*)
 - c. Black Theology
- VII. Evaluate: Response
- VIII. Application: Racial Autobiography
- IX. Wrap-Up
- X. Closing Prayer (by a participant)

Manuscript

A detailed manuscript follows, outlining the role and responsibilities of the facilitator, host pastor, and participants for Session #2 (Week #2). The session consists of six timed segments and a wrap-up segment.

Setup (*Facilitator*)

- Print Handouts
- Prep Host Pastor's Session #2 Video (for Segment #2)
- Test A/V

First Segment (20 minutes)

- Opening Prayer (*Participant*)
- Preliminaries (*Facilitator*)
 - **Thank You**
 - Host Pastor for his hospitality and generosity.
 - Participants for their support and willingness to participate.
 - **House Rules for A LUVE Talk**
 - ***HOT Communication***
 - Honest-Open-Transparent
 - ***Confidentiality***
 - Creating a safe space
 - ***Grace:***
 - Conversations seasoned with grace
 - It is probably inevitable that every one of us will feel uncomfortable at some point and time over the next five weeks.
 - When this happens, let us agree now to **PICK LUVE Talk**.

- **PICK LUVE Talk:**
 - Being fully **present** during our sessions
 - Being **intentional** about expanding our racial history awareness
 - Being **committed** to leaning into crucial conversations on race
 - Emotions are high and stakes are high with opposing views
 - Being **kind** to one another
 - Giving each other the benefit of the doubt of positive intent
- **Scheduled Break**
 - Session midpoint
 - 5 minutes
- **Food and Fellowship**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **Restroom**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **Water**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **LUVE Talk Session #1 Recap:**
 - Last week, we listened to <Host Pastor's> experience with racism.
 - We overheard a racial history contextualized by his geographical, cultural, psychological, and theological locations.
 - We asked clarifying questions to understand his context.
 - We validated our shared racial history by reflecting on scripture and theology, specifically a black biblical hermeneutical lens, where the Passover in Exodus is an essential element of remembrance.
 - ***Racial History Equation***
 - That led us to a rich discussion highlighting the racial history equation:
 - *Our Social Location*⁵+*Our Contextualized Experience*⁶ yields a *Different Concern*.
 - ***Does God Care?***
 - ***Exodus 12:1-14, 17***
 - Using Exodus 12:1-14, 17 as a point of reference, a connection was suggested between Roberts's question: "**Does God care?**" and God labeling his actions of justice and deliverance as the Passover (or compassion).
 - And indirectly a question was raised:
 - Might the text suggest that Israel, the people, were doubting God's concern and compassion for their occupation, oppression, and marginalization?
 - If so, then the concerns of Israel addressed by God's compassion-in-action serve as an on-ramp for a

⁵ Tiffany L. Brown et al., "Inclusion and Diversity Committee Report: What's Your Social Location?" *National Council on Family Relations*, accessed on August 17, 2023, <https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-report/spring-2019/inclusion-and-diversity-social-location>. Social location combines gender, race, social class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical location.

⁶ Influenced by geographical, psychological, cultural, and theological locations.

black biblical hermeneutic conditioned by a history of enslavement.

- **Session #1 Q&A:**
 - Are there any (additional) questions concerning last week?
 - Great...now it's time to take the next step in our racial history awareness journey.
- **Session #2 Overview**
 - ***Focus: A LUVE Talk emphasizing (our) personal racial history***
 - The role of personal remembrance in racial history awareness
 - ***Application (Dig Deeper): Racial Autobiography***
 - Developing our Racial Autobiography

Second Segment (20 minutes)

- Listen (*Host Pastor*)
 - Facilitator:
 - Let's listen to another portion of <Host Pastor's> racial history.
 - **Host Pastor's Context:** Session #2 Video (12 minutes)
 - *Play Host Video #2*
 - **Specific Racial History Instance:** Summary of thoughts (5 minutes)
 - Facilitator:
 - <Host Pastor> is there a specific racial history instance you feel led to elaborate on with the group?

Third Segment (15 minutes)

- Understand (*Host Pastor + Participants*)
 - **Host Pastor Q&A:**
 - Facilitator:
 - Now it's time to ask <Host Pastor> any clarifying questions concerning his experience.

Break (5 minutes)

- Facilitator:
 - Announce break
 - Prep Racial Autobiography Video (for Segment #6)
 - Take attendance

Fourth Segment (20 minutes)

- Validate: Theological and Biblical Concepts (*Facilitator*)
 - As we seek to validate our shared racial history through theological and biblical concepts, we'll look at ...
 - **Anamnesis vs. Amnesia: The Role of Remembrance**
 - ***Seminar definition of anamnesis:***
 - A theological term for **remembrance**
 - ***Seminar definition of amnesia:***

- Forgetting
 - **Remember What?**
 - History
- **What is History?**
 - In *The Present and the Past: A Study of Anamnesis*, Richard Ginn defines history as ...
 - **The Past** (2 Categories)
 - Known History
 - Fragments of historical information that have survived⁷
 - Unknown History
 - Totality of past history⁸
 - **The Present**
 - Impacted by the past
 - And might I suggest a third category?
 - **The Future**
 - The impact of the past on the present not yet fully realized:
 - Eschaton
 - Promised Land
 - **Subjective**
 - Quoting historian Kevin Gannon in *How to Fight Racism*: “But the idea of an objective version of history-telling from which all others are deviant, is an absurdity. There is no objectivity in History. The very act of selecting a topic, for example, is privileging certain facts-making them ‘historical’—over others.”⁹
- **History**
 - **Limitations**
 - Our definition of history points to its limitations.
 - All remembering has subjectivity and finite human limitations: applicable to the Past, Present, and Future
 - **Remember What in History?**
 - But what are we to remember in history?
 - To remember God’s presence (who he is) and work (what he has done for us) in the past and future, enabling staying power in the present.
 - To remember our theocentric identity and purpose as humanity—to love God, self, and neighbor.
 - Since we live in a Greater Houston area racialized society—a society predicated on race and racism, remembering history includes our racial history.

⁷ Ginn, *The Present and the Past*, 37.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 69.

- And to address racism in the present, we must understand the complexities of our past.¹⁰
- **Remember How?**
 - So, how do we do that?
 - By remembering **contextually** and **theologically** via a practical/pastoral theology that starts with a “**theoretical or practical concern**.”¹¹
 - Pattison and Woodward in *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* claim, “No group or individual has the monopoly on how, where, or when practical theology should be done, or on who should be ‘allowed’ to undertake it.”¹²
 - Translation: No one religion, denomination, or race has a monopoly on religion or theology (encompassing our shared racial history).
 - Per Esau McCaulley, all theology is socially located, as everyone reads Scripture from their location.
 - Even Scripture serves as contextualized locations of remembrance.
 - Ex: Each writer of the synoptic Gospels provides a contextualized account of Jesus’s life and ministry based on the specific concerns of their community.
- **Living Tradition**
 - Remembering or **anamnesis** occurs through **living tradition**: through preaching, teaching, singing, signs, ordinances, symbols, and stories.
 - Remembering through **living tradition** embodies the past to shed light on the present.
- **Racial History Distinctive in an African American (Black) Church Context**
 - James Baldwin claims “For history, as nearly no one seems to know, is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do.”¹³
 - Based on Richard Ginn, what we think we know about our history via historical writing is only a shadow of the past, as living tradition, not history, is the vehicle to remembrance.
 - If we desire to get a greater glimpse of unknown history, we must engage with and within a living tradition.

¹⁰ Ibid., 81.

¹¹ Woodward and Pattison, “An Introduction to Pastoral and Practical Theology in Historical Perspective,” 12.

¹² Ibid., 12.

¹³ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 63.

- Stressing the importance of exploring African American (Black) Church living tradition through black theology to fill in vital missing pieces of the American Church racial history puzzle.
 - **Black Theology**
 - In reality, *every* theology comes with a qualifier, a situational concern.
 - Black theology, liberation theology, white evangelical theology, black Baptist Greater Houston area theology, etc.
 - Meaning, **Black theology** is a contextual theology, promoting the situational concern of black humanity.
 - In *Living Stones in the Household of God*, Linda Thomas, professor of theology and anthropology at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, states:
 - “*Theology* is critical reflection about the God-human relationship, and *anthropology* is rational inquiry into and understanding of human beings and culture. **Black theology** then is critical reflection about the relationship between black humanity and God in culture.”¹⁴
 - James Cone describes the situational concern of enslaved Africans in America:
 - “Black slaves’ hope was based on their faith in God’s promise to ‘protect the needy’ and to ‘defend the poor.’ Just as God delivered the Hebrew children from Egyptian bondage and raised Jesus from the dead, so God will also deliver African slaves from American slavery and will ‘soon’ bestow upon them the gift of eternal life. That was why they sang:
 - Soon-a-will be done with the trouble of this world...
 - Going home to live with God.”¹⁵
 - According to Roberts, Black theology is a theological reflection on the black religious experience considering the black revolution with an end goal of liberation and reconciliation.¹⁶
 - **Black Ecclesial Theology**
 - Esau McCaulley, uses the term ...
 - *Black Ecclesiastical Theology* to describe black theology as a relevant word, providing hope for today—with a track record of social justice, identity/dignity, and a vision for a multiethnic community.
- **Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 12 (*Shema*)**

¹⁴ Thomas, “Introduction,” vii.

¹⁵ Cone, “Calling the Oppressors to Account,” 5.

¹⁶ Roberts, *Black Religion, Black Theology*.

- Equipped with these theological concepts, let us examine Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 12, an anamnestic scriptural passage, known as the *Shema* (meaning “hear”), stirring up the collective memory of Israel to not forget their theocentric past encompassing bondage and deliverance to facilitate change in their thoughts and behaviors.
 - Insights
 - In chapter five, Moses introduces the Ten Commandments to a new generation of Israelites about to cross over into the Promised Land, stressing **God’s covenant is not just with their ancestors, but also with them.**
 - Now in chapter six Moses is on a divine assignment to deliver God’s instructions to the people as God’s (and Israel’s) mediator.
 - He preaches this iconic sermon on the Great Commandment to the faith community with a word of remembrance—remember your past, in the present, to secure your future.
 - Remembrance is tied to loving God and hearing the words (statutes and ordinances) of God.
 - God grants Israel the green light to live in the Promised Land, in the presence of God, and be blessed.
 - Shema (Hear)
 - Let’s take a brief look at what Israel is supposed to hear ...
 - God’s sovereignty deserves Israel’s complete devotion and loyalty (**vv. 4-5**).
 - Devoted to the one God, Yahweh, and God alone (v. 4)
 - Loving him with all their heart, soul, and might (strength) (v. 5)
 - God’s words (command) deserve Israel’s (holistic) remembrance (**vv. 6-9**).
 - Keep them internally (in their hearts) (v. 6)
 - Share them relationally (with their children—posterity) (v. 7)
 - Talk about them geographically (in their home and away from home) (v. 7)
 - Talk about them continually (when they go to sleep and when they awake) (v. 7)
 - Wear them (on their hand and head) as a symbol of God’s faithfulness (v. 8)
 - Engrave them on their home (doorpost) and city gates as a reminder of God’s compassion (and deliverance) (v. 9)
 - It was the same location, the doorpost, of the home where the sacrificial lamb’s blood was placed as a sign of God’s faithfulness.

- P.S. Don't forget.... God calls for (Israel's) perpetual remembrance of his divine deliverance (v. 12) [**Theme from Exodus 12**]
 - Israel did not save themselves but by the grace of God. [*Countering the mindset of pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps.*]
- Canonical Context
 - The Book of Deuteronomy serves as a contractual agreement, a covenant, initiated by God with Israel predicated on their **remembrance**.
 - God dictates the terms of a blessed relationship with Him.
 - When the Israelites arrive to the Promised Land, they are charged not to forget God's compassion, faithfulness, and Great Commandment—to hear, to listen, to love the Lord their God through perpetual worship, to love the Lord their God through perpetual obedience.
 - In essence, Israel is charged with remembering their theocentric history.
 - Notably, loving God also requires passing on Israel's theocentric history to their children.
- Application
 - As mentioned in Session 1, like Israel, we too are in danger of forgetting our theocentric history and its call to listen—a history that is intertwined with (the bitter herbs of) our racial history—charging us and our children to remember God's compassion, track record of faithfulness, and our expected response of obedience.
 - And our shared racial history includes American slavery.
 - Slavery is not just our ancestors' history or even African American history; **slavery is American history**.

Fifth Segment (20 minutes)

- Evaluate (*Participants*)
 - **Response:**
 - Facilitator:
 - Do you believe black theology has legitimacy as a practical and contextual (pastoral) theology? Why?
 - When you listen to the Great Commandment while considering your personal racial history, what do you hear?
 - Our living traditions of signs, ordinances, symbols, and stories can serve as practical tools for our remembrance fueling our faithful obedience to love the LORD internally, outwardly, relationally, geographically, and continually.

- What personal traditions or practices do you embrace to *Shema–Hear*?

Sixth Segment (15 minutes)

- Application (*Facilitator*)
 - **Racial Autobiography:**
 - To dig deeper into our racial history context, let's listen to Jemar Tisby, author of *How to Fight Racism* and *The Color of Compromise*, discuss developing a *Racial Autobiography*
 - **How to Fight Racism Video Study Session #3 Video (09:44 – 12:35 minutes)**
 - *Play:*
 - <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/howtofightracism/500303569?autoplay=1>
 - [Distribute Handout]
 - The handout provides a list of questions to aid in developing a racial autobiography.
 - Tisby also provides recommendations for having race talks with our children:
 - 1) First, teach ourselves about race
 - 2) Push through our fears
 - 3) Have ongoing race talks
 - 4) Start now and consider using the ARC of Racial Justice categories
 - 5) Use real life (visual) examples and experiences.
 - Ex: A box of crayons to emphasize the value of variety.

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

- Wrap-Up (*Facilitator*)
 - **LUVE Talk Session Summary:**
 - Today, we've listened to <Host Pastor> racial history experience ...
 - We've asked clarifying questions for understanding ...
 - We've even set out to validate our shared racial history through theology and Scripture ...
 - We evaluated our contextualized experience by responding to black theology and the call of the Shema in Deuteronomy ...
 - Finally, we explored going deeper into understanding our racial history through developing our *Racial Autobiography*.
 - **Closing Remarks**
 - Thank the host pastor and participants.
 - Participants' remarks
 - Host Pastor's remarks
 - **Next Steps**
 - Complete Session #2 Online Journal Entry by <deadline> (in your email box)
 - (Optional) If you desire to go deeper:
 - Develop Racial Autobiography

- **Next Session**
 - Provide date and time.
- Closing Prayer (*Participant*)

Total Estimated Time: 120 minutes / 2 hours

Handout

Racial Autobiography Questions¹⁷

Studying our racial history provides a window into the context of our culture and how we view the world around us. The stories we choose to remember shape who we are, our racial history, and our racial identity development. Please answer the following questions to begin developing your racial autobiography.

1. What is my earliest memory of race?
2. Have I had any negative experiences associated with my racial identity or that of someone else?
3. When did I start growing racially conscious?
4. From whom or in what period of life did I learn the most about race and diversity?
5. Can I describe the different stages of racial identity development I've gone through and what made me aware of each?
6. What concerns me about my racial past?
7. What encourages me about my racial past?
8. Why do I "do" racial justice? What is its purpose for me?

¹⁷ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 53.

Week #3: Church Racial History

Outline

- I. Opening Prayer (by a participant)
- II. Session #2 Recap
 - a. Questions
 - b. Review Racial Autobiography
- III. Session #3 Overview
- IV. Listen: Host Pastor's Church Racial History
- V. Understand: Q&A
- VI. Validate: Biblical and Theological Concepts
 - a. Anamnesis (the role of ecclesial [living] tradition)
 - b. 1 Corinthians 11:17-26 (**23-26** – Communion/The Lord's Supper)
 - c. Black Religion (Church Tradition)
- VII. Evaluate: Response
- VIII. Application:
 - a. Host Church Context (Talk/Tour)
 - b. Local Church Racial History
- IX. Wrap-Up
- X. Closing Prayer (by a participant)

Manuscript

A detailed manuscript follows, outlining the role and responsibilities of the facilitator, host pastor, and participants for Session #3 (Week #3). The session consists of six timed segments and a wrap-up segment.

Setup (*Facilitator*)

- Confirm Host Pastor is prepared for Church Talk/Tour in Segment Six.
- Print Handouts
- Prep Host Pastor's Session #3 Video (for Segment #2)
- Test A/V

First Segment (20 minutes)

- Opening Prayer (*Participant*)
- Preliminaries (*Facilitator*)
 - **Thank You**
 - Host Pastor for hospitality and generosity.
 - Participants for their continued support and willingness to participate.
 - **House Rules for A LUVE Talk**
 - ***HOT Communication***
 - Honest-Open-Transparent
 - ***Confidentiality***
 - Creating a safe space
 - ***Grace:***

- Conversations seasoned with grace
- It is probably inevitable that every one of us will feel uncomfortable at some point and time over the next five weeks.
- When this happens, let us agree now to **PICK LUVE Talk**.
- **PICK LUVE Talk:**
 - Being fully **present** during our sessions
 - Being **intentional** about expanding our racial history awareness
 - Being **committed** to leaning into crucial conversations on race
 - Emotions are high and stakes are high with opposing views.
 - Being **kind** to one another
 - Giving each other the benefit of the doubt of positive intent
- **Scheduled Break**
 - Session midpoint
 - 5 minutes
- **Food and Fellowship**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **Restroom**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **Water**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **LUVE Talk Session #2 Recap:**
 - Last week, we listened to <Host Pastor's> personal experience with racism.
 - Once again, we overheard a racial history contextualized by his geographical, cultural, psychological, and theological locations.
 - We asked clarifying questions to understand his context.
 - We validated our shared racial history by reflecting on scripture and theology, specifically a black theology, where the call of the *Shema* in Deuteronomy governs our perpetual remembrance.
 - ***Racial History Equation***
 - That led us, once again, to a discussion highlighting the racial history equation:
 - *Our Social Location*¹⁸+*Our Contextualized Experience*¹⁹ yields a Different Concern.
 - ***Anamnesis***
 - When considering the role of ***anamnesis*** or remembrance
 - We affirmed that the remembrance of history (the past, present, and future) has its limitations and subjectivity.
 - In our quest to remember our theocentric history that informs our identity, we acknowledged the inevitable inclusion of our shared Greater Houston area racial history.

¹⁸ Tiffany L. Brown et al., "Inclusion and Diversity Committee Report." Social location combines gender, race, social class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical location.

¹⁹ Influenced by geographical, psychological, cultural, and theological locations.

- In response to the limitations of history, we promoted the necessity of remembrance via living tradition that embodies the past to shed light on the present.
- We also recognized the importance of engaging living tradition contextually and theologically, leading us to revisit **Black theology**.
- **Black Theology**
 - When considering black theology as a bona-fide theology:
 - We affirmed its place as a contextual theology for promoting the situational concerns of black humanity.
 - We considered Esau McCaulley's reference to *Black Ecclesiastical Theology* as a relevant word, providing hope for today—with a track record of social justice, identity, dignity, and a vision for a multiethnic community.
- **Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 12 (Shema)**
 - Using Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 12 as a point of reference, a connection was suggested between God's command for Israel and their children to hear and remember their theocentric history of divine deliverance with our contemporary charge to remember and teach our children about God's compassion and track record of faithfulness while remembering the bitter herbs of our shared racial history, American slavery.
- **Session #2 Q&A:**
 - Are there any (additional) questions concerning last week?
 - Great ... now it's time to (buckle up and) continue our racial history awareness journey.
- **Session #3 Overview**
 - **Focus: A LUVE Talk emphasizing (our) church racial history**
 - The role of ecclesial tradition in remembrance (leading to racial history awareness)
 - **Application (Dig Deeper): Church Racial History**
 - Developing our Church Racial History

Second Segment (20 minutes)

- Listen (*Host Pastor*)
 - Facilitator:
 - Let's listen to a portion of <Host Pastor> church racial history along with the impact of COVID-19.
 - **Host Pastor's Church Context:** Session #3 Video (12 minutes)
 - *Play Host Video #3*
 - **Specific Racial History Instance:** Summary of thoughts (5 minutes)
 - Facilitator:
 - <Host Pastor> is there a specific church racial history instance you feel led to elaborate on with the group?

- Did COVID-19 have an impact on your relationship with white pastors and/or majority white clergy networks in the Greater Houston area? If so, how?

Third Segment (15 minutes)

- Understand (*Host Pastor+Participants*)
 - **Host Pastor Q&A:**
 - Facilitator:
 - Now it's time to ask <Host Pastor> any clarifying questions concerning his experience.

Break (5 minutes)

- Facilitator:
 - Announce break
 - Take attendance

Fourth Segment (20 minutes)

- Validate: Theological and Biblical Concepts (*Facilitator*)
 - As we seek to validate our shared racial history through theological and biblical concepts, we'll look at ...
 - **Religion and Race in America (Emerson)**
 - In *Divided by Faith*, Emerson and Smith conduct historical analysis on race relations and examine the structural role of American religion to arrive at their conclusion of evangelicalism in black-white relations.
 - While American religion is the panacea for racialization, structurally, it perpetuates a racialized society.
 - **Racialized Society:**
 - Emerson defines **Racialized Society** as...
 - "a society wherein race matters profoundly for life experiences, life chances, and social relationships."²⁰
 - Instead of our theophany governing our identity, in a racialized society, race and skin color seek to confiscate this divinely occupied position.
 - The Euro American viewpoint is given a position of privilege as the normalized experience in our shared racial history, despite it being only one layer in our multi layered contextualized story.
 - Resulting in the African American experience being regulated to the margins.
 - Emerson points to the white Evangelical tendency of promoting being color blind with the belief that **race problems are primarily outside the church.**

²⁰ Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 154.

- This results in making the choice not to see or to forget race and our shared racial history while maintaining majority racialized norms.
- **Cultural toolkit:**
 - Per Emerson, our cultural toolkits vary by race, shaped by their historical and social context for interpreting reality.
- **White Evangelical Cultural Toolkit:**
 - Quoting Emerson: “The racially important cultural tools in the white evangelical tool kit are ‘**accountable freewill individualism**,’ ‘**relationalism**’ (attaching central importance to interpersonal relationships), and **antistructuralism** (inability to perceive or unwillingness to accept social structured influences).”²¹
 - While white evangelicals desire racial harmony and equality, Emerson and Smith claim the approach to reconciliation exasperates the matter.
 - How? Per Emerson and Smith, white evangelicals developed a theology of racial reconciliation focused on the individual, while ignoring social sins (i.e., racism) requiring societal, institutional, and cultural reconciliation.
 - Emerson and Smith state, “One consequence of thoroughgoing evangelical individualism is a tendency to be ahistorical, to not grasp fully how history has an influence on the present. A variation of the other-group-is-to-blame position was to express frustration with people trying to reference the past to account for today.”²² [The need for anamnesis.]
- **Isolation from Racial Pluralism:**
 - Emerson and Smith also raise the issue of isolation from racial pluralism.
 - Most white respondents lived in a 90% white world, desensitizing them to the race problem sociologically.
 - The lack of exposure to Black Americans’ experiences led to group loyalty for matters of race and racial inequality.
- **Racial History Puzzle Pieces (Oden)**
 - So, what are we missing in this conversation on our shared church racial history?
 - The racial history and contributions of the African American (Black) Church rooted in an African context.
 - **Our Connection with Early African Christianity:**
 - Over two thousand years of Christianity in early Egyptian Christianity, remembering Egypt is in Africa.²³

²¹ Ibid., 76. Bold added for emphasis.

²² Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 81.

²³ Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*, 24. Per Oden, “The Egyptian Christians have steadily resided in the Nile Valley for almost two thousand years. Could it be said that Bantu oral traditions

- ***Our Connection with African Traditional Religion:***
 - Elements of pre-Christian traditional African religion is embedded in the works of Origen, Athanasius, and Pachomius (e.g., spiritual ascent and eternal life motifs from ancient Pharaonic religion).²⁴
 - The African American (Black) Church's connection with this living tradition places an emphasis on remembrance via the role of the sage.
- ***The Role of the Sage: (Kenyatta Gilbert)***
 - In *The Journey and Promise of African American Preaching*, Kenyatta Gilbert picks up on the influence of the sage for the Black Church in black preaching.
 - Gilbert defines the transformative **Sagely Voice** as an
 - “Active practice of hope”—keeper of the community's oral tradition of singing and storytelling; mediating biblical wisdom and melancholy hope.
 - Gilbert calls out the similarity between the African American preacher and the African prophet (*muntu*) known for their rhetoric (*nommo*).
 - Leading to the slave preacher's trivocal role as seer, pastor, and messianic figure while engaging the congregation in a dialogue of remembrance regarding its corporate Christian witness.
 - Quoting Gilbert, “In the act of proclamation the preacher as sage reminds believers of their commitments as redeemed persons who have declared allegiance to the crucified and risen sage—Jesus the Christ.”²⁵
- **Black Church Anamnesis (Religion)**
 - ***The role of Black Church Tradition***
 - As we explore Black Church Anamnesis, we recall from last week that preaching is only one method of remembrance through living tradition: teaching, singing, signs, ordinances, symbols, and stories are additional ways living tradition embodies the past to shed light on the present.
 - By examining the role of Black Church Tradition in remembrance, we will pull back another layer of our shared racial (religious) history.
 - ***Black Ecclesial Tradition***
 - Esau McCaulley describes three Black Church Traditions in *Reading While Black* and added a fourth during his lecture at

(only arrived in parts of the south within the last few centuries) are more an expression of African traditional religion than Egyptian Christianity?”

²⁴ Ibid., 65-66.

²⁵ Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*, 62.

Baylor University's Truett Seminary *Racism in the White Church 2023* conference:

- Revolutionary/nationalist
- Reformist/transformist
- Conformist
- Pentecostal
- He uses the term ...
- ***Black Ecclesiastical Tradition*** to describe the common tendencies in reformist/transformist, paralleling his definition of the *Black Ecclesial Hermeneutic*:
 - Socially located
 - Theological
 - Canonical
 - Patience (not rejecting the authority of Scripture)
 - Double apologetic (via encounters with Black secularists and white progressives)
- **Racial History Distinctives in an African American (Black) Church Context**
 - In *What We Love About the Black Church*, Bill Crouch and Joel Gregory share testimonials, anamnestic accounts, of African American church distinctives rooted in Scripture.
 - Their primary focus is enhancing the white church's awareness, education, and appreciation of the Black church while simultaneously providing the Black church an olive branch for reconciliation.
 - While not an exhaustive list, let's look at thirteen distinctives, beginning with ...
 - ***Black Preaching***
 - **Black preaching** derives from the black experience in America.
 - ***Encouragement***
 - **Encouragement** is the source of black hope, built on mutual trust, respect, grace, and compassion.
 - ***Laughter and Light***
 - **Laughter and light** serve simultaneously as a balm in Gilead and the joy of fellowship.
 - ***Pastoral Mentorship***
 - Hands-on **pastoral mentorship** for sons and daughters in the ministry is a timeless tradition.
 - ***Freedom of Expression***
 - **Freedom of expression** is a hallmark of the Black church experience, worship (preaching, praying, and praising) led by and in the Spirit.
 - ***Respecting the Elders***
 - **Respecting the elders** beyond death originates in the African tradition. [echoing Roberts and Oden]
 - ***Power of Touch***
 - The **power of touch** provides a sense of belonging.
 - ***The First Lady***

- **The First Lady** of the church is regarded with high esteem in the Black church as the model of womanhood.
- **Hospitality**
 - **Hospitality** is a core component of the African American experience, considered a congregational affair.
- **Gratitude**
 - **Gratitude** is a way of life for a people with an oppressed past.
- **Empowerment**
 - **Empowerment** fuels the praxis of the Black church's holistic (economic, spiritual, political, and spiritual) ministry disposition and lay leadership model; where quoting Roberts, "Justice and love cannot be separated."²⁶ [**serving as a divine hendiadys**]
- **Praise and Respect**
 - **Praise and respect** embody the ongoing individual and communal affirmation, spanning the sacred and secular horizons as a way of life.
- **Jesusology**
 - **Jesusology** points to a high Christology.
 - Reflecting on Dr. Gardner C. Taylor's preaching, Gregory articulates it is a continual call to a deeper and more profound commitment to Christ and the social gospel.²⁷
- **Black Baptist Church Tradition**
 - In *A History of Black Baptists*, Leroy Fitts documents the rich tradition of Black Baptists and their contributions to American Christianity.
 - He explores the adaptation of European and white American Baptist traditions to meet Black Americans' **psychological, sociological, and political** landscape.²⁸
 - According to Fitts, the exodus of Black Baptists from white churches occurs due to segregation, discrimination, and the theological epiphany of Black Baptist preachers.
 - Facing the impediment of white anthropology as the standard for quality education in America, **the Black church serves as a counter-racist movement for Black America's contextualized (Christian and secular) education.**

²⁶ Crouch and Gregory, *What We Love About the Black Church*, 108.

²⁷ Crouch and Gregory, *What We Love About the Black Church*, 2. For Black Christians, discipleship and the social gospel are a hendiadys, inseparable—a by-product of anamnesis.

²⁸ Fitts, *A History of Black Baptists*. Fitts traces the Baptist tradition from its European background, developing from Anabaptist, to its genesis in North America, calling out its track record of accommodation to American slavery, leading to the expansion of Black Baptists via Black preachers on plantations, and concludes with observations of contemporary religious, social, and political trends of Black Baptist life.

- Fitts conveys a Black Baptist tradition of a liberating sociopolitical praxis based on the life of Jesus predating Walter Rauschenbusch.
- **1 Corinthians 11:17-26 (23-26–Communion)**
 - Equipped with these theological concepts, let us examine one of two Baptist ordinances in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, an anamnestic scriptural passage, the **Lord's Supper (Communion)**, an ordinance instituted by Jesus through ceremony and symbol that continually stirs local (Baptist) community churches' memory.
 - Insights
 - In ch. 10, Paul, the apostle, and spiritual father of the Corinthian church, provides warnings and instructions regarding the believer's freedom in Christ.
 - Now in ch. 11, Paul aims to relay instructions on public worship.
 - Prior to our pericope, Paul addresses the church's practice of discrimination (via blatant abuse and misrepresentation) at the Lord's Supper during the *agape* feast.
 - Instead of it being a time of *koinonia* – unity and fellowship as the body of Christ – in the remembrance of Christ, it is a time of drunken revelry and oppression of the poor.
 - The church's practices express contempt for the body of Christ and Paul will have none of it.
 - This sets the stage for Paul to provide instructions for proper protocol, practice, and remembrance of the Lord's Supper – an ordinance given by Christ for the followers of Christ.
 - The Lord's Supper (Communion)
 - Let's take a brief look at what proper remembrance should look like ...
 - **Paul stresses the Lord's expectations of a remembering church (vv. 23-25)** [Themes from Exodus 12 and Deuteronomy 6]
 - **V. 23** starts by contrasting the unethical abusive behavior of the Corinthian church members at the Lord's Supper with the authorized protocol and procedure for practicing the Lord's Supper.
 - Paul mentions the bread, triggering their remembrance of Passover via the festival of Unleavened Bread.
 - **Remember the (ironic) betrayal of Christ (v. 23)**
 - Ironically just as Jesus was betrayed by Judas on the night of the festival of Unleavened Bread, so too is the church betraying Jesus in their unholy disposition causing division.
 - **Remember the body of Christ (v. 24)**

- **V. 24** triggers the church's memory of Christ's crucifixion, symbolizing the Passover's sacrificial lamb (whose body was broken on the night of Israel's deliverance).
 - Paul now quotes the authoritative words of Jesus, making the connection between the bread and Jesus's body.
 - "Do this in remembrance of me."
 - Just like the Day of Remembrance (**Passover**), Jesus calls his disciples to perpetual celebratory remembrance of his compassion and the temporal bitter herbs of his Passion on their behalf during his crucifixion.
 - **Remember the blood of Christ (v. 25)**
 - **V. 25** continues stirring up the church's memory of their deliverance by the cup (of blessing), symbolizing the blood of Christ shed on Calvary for their salvific deliverance.
 - Paul, once again, quotes the words of Jesus, and the command for perpetual remembrance of his blood serving as the covering over the spiritual doorposts and lintels of their lives.
 - "Do this in remembrance of me."
 - Not only has Christ paid the price for the penalty of their sins, but he has also satisfied the stipulations of a new agreement or covenant between God and the church (as the body and bride of Christ)
 - **Paul stresses the significance of a remembering church**
 - **V. 26** sets the expectation for the church's continual declaration to promote the death, Messianic reign, and ethical life of Christ in their walk and witness until he comes again.
 - The church is now a new human community, destined with a new identity in the kingdom of God.
 - They are cojoined as the body of Christ in perpetual remembrance of the ministry of Christ through the signs and symbols (the bread and the cup) of *koinonia* that takes place during fellowship at the table in a worthily and orderly manner.
- Canonical Context
 - First Corinthians serves as the director's cut of Paul's missionary and pastoral concerns for a local faith community wrestling with embodying the

- Christian faith while struggling to overcome the influence of unethical practices in Corinth.
- Per Richard Ginn, the meaning of *anamnesis* (or remembrance) is governed by context and must confer with the Johannine and Synoptic traditions of the **Passover** and the **Last Supper**.
 - The eucharist reminds the church of Jesus's *Passion* (suffering and endurance), his love demonstrated on the cross.
 - The church didn't save itself, just like Israel didn't it save itself.
 - Because of Jesus's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, the church is now a new community with a new identity, living under a new covenant of God's grace, mercy, and unconditional love.
 - Paul seeks to aid the local congregation to learn the call sign of true *spirituality*, where *koinonia* (a caring and sharing community where everybody is somebody), remembrance, and the love of Christ serve as the hallmarks for spiritual maturity.
 - Application
 - We are all indebted to Christ's *Passion* and compassion.
 - Christ charges us to remember that we did not and cannot save ourselves.
 - The Lord instructs the faith community to remember the details of its deliverance as a means of public worship.
 - Remaining vigilante for Christ's presence to manifest itself on the scene.
 - Remembering it is the Lord who fights and defeats our foes.
 - It is the Lord who breaks the chains of (spiritual and physical) bondage in our lives and the community.
 - It is Jesus who calls us to celebrate his compassionate deliverance.
 - Echoing Yahweh's call in *Exodus 12* and *Deuteronomy 6*, it is the Lord who calls us to perpetual remembrance.
 - And it is a call for the church community to exercise its **social responsibility to live as Christ has lived**, informing our contemporary Christian ethics and *shared racial history* as a public witness.

Fifth Segment (20 minutes)

- Evaluate (*Participants*)

- **Response:**
 - Facilitator:
 - Do you consider yourself an evangelical?²⁹ Why?
 - Do you agree with Emerson and Smith's assessment of the issue of race for white evangelicals? Why?
 - What is a Black church tradition that you embrace? Why?
 - When you practice the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, what do you see and hear?
 - Did COVID-19 create tensions in race relations for you, your church, or theological community? If so, how?

Sixth Segment (15 minutes)

- Application (*Facilitator+Host Pastor*)
 - **Host Church Context (Talk/Tour):**
 - Facilitator:
 - Let's listen to <Host Pastor> to inform our racial history awareness through the context of this church.
 - Feel free to ask <Host Pastor> any questions you have along the way.
 - Host Pastor: Elaborate on the host church's racial history. [See Church Racial History Guide handout]
 - **Church Racial History:**
 - Facilitator:
 - <Host Pastor>, thank you for providing further context for your church.
 - Please look at the activities in the *Church Racial History Guide* to dig deeper into your church's racial history context. [Review Guide]

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

- Wrap-Up (*Facilitator*)
 - **LUVE Talk Session Summary:**
 - Today, we've listened to <Host Pastor's> church racial history experience ...
 - We've asked clarifying questions for understanding ...
 - We've even set out to validate our shared racial history through theology and Scripture ...
 - We evaluated our contextualized experience by responding to black church tradition and Christ's call of remembrance via the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians ...
 - Finally, we journeyed into the racial history context of the <Host Pastor's> church and explored going deeper into understanding our

²⁹ Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*. Evangelical characteristics align with David Bebbington's *Quadrilateral*: Biblicism (authority of Scripture), Crucicentrism (theology starts at the cross with Jesus), Conversionism (personal conversion via evangelism), and Activism (engaged orthodoxy with society and culture, including race relations).

church racial history context through the *Church Racial History Guide*.

- **Closing Remarks**
 - Thank the host pastor and participants.
 - Participants' remarks
 - Host Pastor's remarks
- **Next Steps**
 - Complete Session #3 Online Journal Entry by <deadline> (in your email box)
 - I encourage you to explore your *racial autobiography* and *church's racial history* to grow in your racial history awareness by remembering the roads of racial history we have traveled to get here.
- **Next Session**
 - Provide date and time.
- Closing Prayer (*Participant*)

Total Estimated Time: 120 minutes / 2 hours

Handout

Church Racial History Guidelines³⁰

Studying our church's racial history provides a window into the context of our religious culture. The stories of the people we honor through remembrance shape who we are, our racial history, and our racial identity development. Please use the instructions below to develop your church's racial history.

1. Look up the racial history of names:
 - Buildings, rooms, committees, programs, scholarships, plaques
2. Look up the racial history of church celebrations and special days.
3. Look up the racial history of church monuments, plaques, and symbols of significance.
4. Look up the racial history of the church's historical markers.

³⁰ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 53.

Week #4: Community Racial History

Outline

- I. Opening Prayer (by a participant)
- II. Session #3 Recap
 - a. Questions
 - b. Review Church Racial History Guide
- III. Session #4 Overview
- IV. Listen: Host Pastor's Community Racial History
- V. Understand: Q&A
- VI. Validate: Biblical and Theological Concepts
 - a. Matthew 22:34-40 (The Great Commandment)
 - b. Anamnesis (the role of teaching and preaching)
 - c. Black Religious Experience
- VII. Evaluate: Response
- VIII. Application:
 - a. Host Community Context (Talk/Tour)
 - b. Local Community Racial History
- IX. Wrap-Up
- X. Closing Prayer (by a participant)

Manuscript

Setup (*Facilitator*)

- Confirm Host Pastor is prepared for Community Talk/Tour in Segment Six.
- Print Handouts
- Prep Host Pastor's Session #4 Video (for Segment #2)
- Test A/V

First Segment (20 minutes)

- Opening Prayer (*Participant*)
- Preliminaries (*Facilitator*)
 - **Thank You**
 - Host Pastor for his hospitality and generosity
 - Participants for their continued support and willingness to participate
 - **House Rules for A LUVE Talk**
 - ***HOT Communication***
 - Honest-Open-Transparent
 - ***Confidentiality***
 - Creating a safe space
 - ***Grace:***
 - Conversations seasoned with grace
 - It is probably inevitable that every one of us will feel uncomfortable at some point and time over the next five weeks.
 - When this happens, let us agree now to **PICK LUVE Talk**.
 - **PICK LUVE Talk:**

- Being fully **present** during our sessions
- Being **intentional** about expanding our racial history awareness
- Being **committed** to leaning into crucial conversations on race
 - Emotions are high and stakes are high with opposing views
- Being **kind** to one another
 - Giving each other the benefit of the doubt of positive intent
- **Scheduled Break**
 - Session midpoint
 - 5 minutes
- **Food and Fellowship**
 - Host Pastor instructions.
- **Restroom**
 - Host Pastor instructions.
- **Water**
 - Host Pastor instructions.
- **LUVE Talk Session #3 Recap:**
 - Last week, we listened to <Host Pastor's> church experience with racism.
 - Once again, we overheard a racial history contextualized by geographical, cultural, psychological, and theological locations.
 - We asked clarifying questions to understand his context.
 - We validated our shared racial history by reflecting on Scripture and theology, specifically Black church tradition, where the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians governs our perpetual remembrance in public worship. [Paralleling *Exodus 12* and the *Shema* in *Deuteronomy 6* to hear internally, outwardly, relationally, geographically, and continually.]
 - **Racial History Equation**
 - Again, our discussion highlighting the racial history equation:
 - *Our Social Location*³¹ + *Our Contextualized Experience*³² yields a Different Concern.
 - **Anamnesis**
 - When considering the role of ecclesial tradition in **anamnesis** or remembrance
 - We considered the impact of a **Racialized Society** on religion and race in America, regulating the Black church tradition to the margins.
 - We explored the role of our cultural toolkits for expanding our racial history awareness, specifically the white evangelical cultural toolkit of **accountable freewill individualism, relationalism, and antistructuralism.**

³¹ Tiffany L. Brown et al., "Inclusion and Diversity Committee Report." Social location combines gender, race, social class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical location.

³² Influenced by geographical, psychological, cultural, and theological locations.

- We observed the trend of white evangelicals' isolation from racial pluralism, leading to a lack of exposure to Black Americans' experiences.
 - ***Black Church (Tradition) Anamnesis***
 - This set the stage for our excavation of the missing pieces to our shared church racial history puzzle.
 - When considering our connection with early African Christianity and African Traditional Religion, we identified the significance of the **sage** to perpetually remind the church of its theocentric history via Christ's deliverance.
 - We considered Esau McCaulley's reference to *Black Ecclesiastical Tradition* to describe the reformist/transformist Black church living tradition.
 - And we viewed thirteen Black church living traditions motivated by allegiance to a crucified and risen Christ, serving as perpetual reminders of the church's embodiment of a redemptive past in route to the **Promised Land**.
 - ***1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (Communion)***
 - Using **1 Corinthians 11:23-26** as a point of reference, a connection was suggested between Christ's directive for the faith community's remembrance of its salvific deliverance as an expression of public worship and our social responsibility to live as Christ has lived, informing our contemporary Christian ethics and ***shared racial history*** as a public witness.
- **Session #3 Q&A:**
 - Are there any (additional) questions concerning last week?
 - Great...now it's time to continue our racial history awareness journey.
 - **Session #4 Overview**
 - ***Focus: A LUVE Talk emphasizing (our) community racial history***
 - The role of teaching and preaching in remembrance (leading to racial history awareness)
 - ***Application (Dig Deeper): Community Racial History***
 - Look at developing our Community Racial History

Second Segment (20 minutes)

- Listen (*Host Pastor*)
 - Facilitator:
 - Let's listen to another portion of <Host Pastor's> racial history with a focus on the church 's community and the impact of COVID-19.
 - **Host Pastor's Church Context:** Session #4 Video (12 minutes)
 - *Play Host Video #4*
 - **Specific Racial History Instance:** Summary of thoughts (5 minutes)
 - <Host Pastor> is there a specific racial history instance of the church's community you feel led to elaborate on with the group?

- Did COVID-19 have an impact on this community's relationship with the white community? If so, how?

Third Segment (15 minutes)

- Understand (*Host Pastor + Participants*)
 - **Host Pastor Q&A:**
 - Facilitator:
 - Now it's time to ask <Host Pastor> any clarifying questions concerning his experience.

Break (5 minutes)

- Facilitator:
 - Announce break
 - Take attendance

Fourth Segment (20 minutes)

- Validate: Theological and Biblical Concepts (*Facilitator*)
 - As we seek to validate our shared racial history through biblical and theological concepts, we'll look at...
 - **Matthew 22:34-40 (The Great Commandment)**
 - Let's begin with the **Great Commandment**, an anamnestic scriptural passage, where Jesus's teaching on discipleship stirs up the memory of the Old Testament, specifically the *Shema* and the *Golden Rule*, to inform kingdom-based community ethics. [Read Matthew 22:34-40]
 - Insights
 - Our pericope occurs between Jesus's fourth discourse (18:1-35) pertaining to the community of the Messiah and his fifth discourse (24:1-25:46) at the Mount of Olives (or Olivet) foretelling the destruction of the Temple.
 - In this section, Jesus shines the light on false discipleship by clarifying the goal of true discipleship (love for God, self, and neighbor).
 - Jesus is providing instructions to his disciples on what faithful discipleship looks like (**instructions for imitating and following Christ**).
 - Our immediate text occurs after Jesus silences the Sadducees regarding the resurrection and before silencing the Pharisees regarding the identity of the Messiah.
 - The significance lies in the emphasis on a loving relationship with God and people, a concept missed by both the Sadducees and Pharisees in their quest for legalistic holiness without a genuine relationship with God, the Messiah (his Son), or Israel (his chosen people).

- The Great Commandment
 - Let's take a brief look at Matthew's contextualized account of Jesus's teachings to address a question being pondered in the faith community: **What's the key to faithful discipleship?**
 - Matthew uses a story about and the words of Jesus to emphasize **living a life that pleases God** is not based on rules nor technicalities, rather on relationships.
 - Faithful discipleship entails **avoiding shameful motivations and unethical behaviors (vv. 34-36)**
 - These verses provide a picture of religious and ethical motivations gone awry.
 - Though on the surface the religious leaders' actions and speech may appear pious and sincere, ulterior motives predicated on grasping God's glory and honor at the expense of humanity is at play.
 - Ironically, the Pharisees are coming to the defense of the Sadducees when hearing that Jesus, their common enemy, is responsible for silencing the Sadducees.
 - The passive verb in v. 34 "they gathered together" tips off the Pharisees' impromptu gathering is under the influence of the ultimate enemy, deceiver, and destroyer, Satan—the evil one, the very one Jesus instructs the disciples to pray for deliverance from in the model prayer of Matthew 6:13.
 - **(vv. 35-36)** The lawyer (an expert in the law) attempts to test Jesus, the law giver, with a question about the law ... setting the stage for Jesus's response.
 - In v. 35 the lawyer's attempt to challenge Jesus is an offense within itself, as he and the Pharisees claim to be Jesus's social equal (equality with God is not something even Jesus himself chose to aspire to via *kenosis*—when Jesus, the Word, became flesh and dwelt among us).
 - In v. 36 a challenge is made to undermine the honor of Jesus.
 - While "teacher" is a term of respect and endearment traditionally (cf. 23:10), the

lawyer uses the term irreverently and mockingly as his covert motive is to shame the teacher by showing that the student knows more.

- Faithful discipleship entails **loving God, self, and neighbor (vv. 37-39)**
 - These verses provide a contrasting picture of proper religious and ethical motivations rooted in a loving relationship with God and humanity as evidenced in God's Word.
 - Jesus's speech and prescribed actions revolve around love for God and neighbor (without compromise or middle ground). His response to the lawyer's honor/shame challenge provides an answer in equal measure and ups the ante.
 - The lawyer asks for a great commandment; Jesus responds with the two greatest commandments along with providing clarity to the "heavy" and "light" ones in vv. 37-40.
 - **(v. 37)** Jesus begins with a familiar commandment describing how to love God: Deuteronomy 6:5, signaling the remembrance of the *Shema* and a willingness of martyrdom for the glory, public honor, of God.
 - Contrastingly, the lawyer and the Pharisees' thoughts are only directed towards shaming God to diminish his glory in the quest to elevate their own honor in the court of public opinion—they seek to acquire God's glory **via illegal possession**.
 - In v. 39 Jesus describes how to love self and neighbor.
 - **The Golden Rule** takeaway ... Model your love for others in the same way that you love yourself.
- **Christ charges us to prioritize our relationship with God and humanity (above all else) for his glory (v. 40)** [Theme from **Genesis 1** as God's representatives].
 - While Jesus is not abolishing the law, he is clarifying the order of significance and focus of primary importance for the Pharisees'

hermeneutics and homiletics (as up to this point they have been **guilty of legal malpractice**).

- And it is this gross neglect that the lawyer and Pharisees are found guilty of committing in their attempt to hush mouth Jesus.
- Ironically, they too join the tight-lipped Sadducees with an inability to trip up the lawgiver with an impromptu exam over the law.
- Jesus essentially indicts the lawyer and the Pharisees based on the greatest two commandments as they are guilty of taking an offensive posture against God and their neighbor.
- Jesus's ability (as the authoritative Teacher) to end the ongoing rabbinic debate over the categorization of light and heavy commands is something not even the lawyer nor the Pharisees were competent to do.
- His response shames the lawyer and the Pharisees, thus rightfully taking away their honor for God's glory. (Cf. v. 46)

- Canonical Context

- Matthew's remembrance of the Great Commandment parallels the synoptic "*seen together*" accounts found in **Mark 12:28-34** and **Luke 10:25-28** with a focus on the good news (*euangelion*) of Jesus.
- He's writing to a mixed congregation of Jewish and Gentile disciples, desiring to survive and thrive in an honor-shame culture predicated on loyalty to the **Temple** (symbolizing the presence of God) and the **Torah** (symbolizing the words and track record of God).
- The Matthean congregation is caught in the crossfire of the Pharisees and Sadducees' power struggle for earthly glory, as rivals in the Sanhedrin—functioning as the Supreme Court and legislative body of ancient Israel.
- Our text serves as Jesus's rebuttal to the earlier questions by the Pharisees and Sadducees designed to trap or trip up Jesus.

- And now the Pharisees take another swing at Jesus concerning the greatest commandment in the Mosaic Law.
 - **The Great Commandment serves as calibration for our canonical context.**
 - If the entire Law and the Prophets hinge upon the Great Commandment, then so does the book and the canon of Scripture as a whole.
- Application
 - Jesus provides a guide for Matthew's readers and us to interpret the Scriptures based on the **double love commandment**.
 - **Jesus moves us to an introspective legal examination by reflecting on our faith and practice of Scripture.**
 - **Are we allowing the lighter things to overshadow the heavier and weightier things of Scripture?**
 - We can attempt to hide behind commandments, rules, and regulations, but they provide no justification when we fall short of loving God, ourselves, and others **by not treating them with compassion**.
 - When we subscribe to Jesus's 3-Point Plan for faithful discipleship, it prevents us from practicing a life of false discipleship: being influenced by Satan (the evil one), society, and the ubiquitous presence of racism that results in bringing shame to the faith community, the King, and His kingdom.
 - When we subscribe to Jesus's 3-Point Plan for faithful discipleship, we are empowered and influenced to live in *koinonia* (a caring and sharing community) by the Spirit, bringing honor to Christ and the church via our corporate witness.
 - We embrace our identity as faithful followers of Christ: seeing, hearing, and confronting racism more clearly as we prioritize relationships with God and our neighbor in life through the lens or guiding principles of Christ.
 - And just in case we find ourselves raising the question **"Who is my neighbor?"** and **"Where are they?"** like the lawyer in Luke's account of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus makes it clear that our neighbor is any and every one that comes across our path.
 - Including people in our neighborhood and the **Greater Houston community**.
- **Black (Religious) Experience**

- Since our focus is on racial history experiences, specifically through the lens of the African American (Black) community, let us begin with the **Black Religious Experience**.
- **Frederick Douglass:**
 - “What I have said respecting and against religion, I mean strictly to apply to the slaveholding religion of this land, and with no possible reference to Christianity proper; for, between the Christianity of this land, and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible difference.... I love the pure, peaceable, and impartial Christianity of Christ: I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land.”³³
- **Racialized Society:**
 - Long before Emerson and Smith published *Divided by Faith*, Douglass called out America’s **Racialized Society**.
 - Defined by Emerson and Smith as ...
 - “a society wherein race matters profoundly for life experiences, life chances, and social relationships.”³⁴
- **Racism:**
 - The **Black Religious Experience** is shaped by racism.
 - According to Bryan Massingale in *Looking Back, Moving Forward ...*
 - **Racism** is a culture of deformity that shapes our perceptions of meaning, value, and identity based on skin-color differences.
 - Massingale: “If cultures inform our visible social institutions, policies, and practices, then we can understand racism as a culture—a culture of malformation.”³⁵
 - Massingale: “Racism is a soul sickness.”³⁶
 - According to J. Alfred Smith Sr.
 - **Racism** is a state of moral blindness.
- **White Supremacy:**
 - The **Black Religious Experience**, shaped by racism, also clashes with **white supremacy**.
 - According to Tisby, **white supremacy** is “the belief or assumption that white people and their culture are inherently superior to other people and cultures.”³⁷

³³ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 16.

³⁴ Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 154.

³⁵ Massingale, “Race and Reconciliation,” 141.

³⁶ Ibid., 154. Contra Kendi’s diagnosis of racism as the byproduct of powerful self-interest.

³⁷ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 11. See Kendi’s color racist idea and cultural racist idea.

▪ **The Question of Power (dynamics):**

- In *Let's Do Theology*, Laurie Green, a retired British Anglican Bishop whose contextual theology was influenced by **Black Theology** while in New York during the Civil Rights Movement, teases out the inevitable interpersonal and intercultural power dynamic interrogative: **“How should we deal with power?”**³⁸
- Green: “God is the all-powerful one, and yet, unlike us, uses that power only in the cause of love. I have, therefore, come to believe with all my heart that to wrestle with the question of power is to wrestle with the character of God.”
- Like Jacob wrestling with God in **Genesis 32:23-32**, the **Black Religious Experience** “wrestl[es] with questions of power, authority, and blessing.”³⁹

▪ **Black Experience:**

- So, what do we mean by the **Black Experience**?
- It's a contextualized-localized-cultural encounter of being, seeing, hearing, and living life through a dissonance lens rooted in African ancestry and consciousness.
- In Gregory and Crouch's *What We Love About the Black Church*, Dr. Gardner C. Taylor explains the Black preacher via the **Black Experience** in America: “Blacks are enough of a **part** of the total culture to understand it. Yet, they are enough **apart** from the total culture to see it from the side, from another angle. It is the experience of having one foot in the larger culture and one foot out of the larger culture that gives the unique angle of vision to the black preacher.”⁴⁰
- Based on J. Deotis Roberts's assessment in *Black Religion, Black Theology*, the **Black Experience** offers a vital perspective to Christian social ethics, due to its unique experience of unmerited sufferings at the hand of humanity.⁴¹

- **Capitalism:**

- While not an exhaustive list, the **Black Experience** is co-mingled with **Capitalism**.
- **American Capitalism:**
 - In *Divided by Faith*, Emerson and Smith's research claims the contemporary white evangelical perspective supports **laissez-faire capitalism**; America is a meritocracy, resulting in a just economic inequality.
- **The Underclass:**

³⁸ Green, *Let's Do Theology*, 12.

³⁹ Ibid., 16 n9.

⁴⁰ Crouch and Gregory, *What We Love About the Black Church*, 1-2. See Bakhtin's chronotope and Newbiggin's plausibility structure for contextualized-localized-cultural frameworks.

⁴¹ Roberts, *Black Religion, Black Theology*, Ch 4.

- Keri Day speaks up for **The Underclass** in *Unfinished Business*, a term used to describe those unable to produce in society, “commonly experience[ing] chronic, persisting experiences of economic and cultural invisibility and powerlessness.”⁴²
- Per Day, “Class does matter” when considering the impact of class discrimination.⁴³
- ***The New Jane Crow:***
 - Day also spotlights the precarious position of African American women living in **The New Jane Crow**:
 - A co-op between systemic structures and the prison system targeting Black women’s involvement in the labor market, reproductive capacities, and cultural capital.⁴⁴
 - She stresses the need for Black Churches, based on a track record of ecclesial involvement [see Roberts], to address the racist welfare system, “the new Jane Crow.”⁴⁵
- ***Racial Capitalism:***
 - Kendi claims that racism and capitalism are a hendiadys: “Capitalism, in producing racial injustices and inequities between race-classes, is essentially racist; racism, in also producing economic injustices and inequities between race-classes, is essentially capitalist.”⁴⁶
- **Greater Houston Black Experience:**
 - Now, let’s dive deeper into the **Greater Houston Black Experience**.
 - ***Understanding Houston:***
 - According to a poverty and social mobility in Houston study published by **Understanding Houston**, a collaborative led by the Greater Houston Community Foundation, race, poverty, and the systemic factors of social mobility continue to play a role in limiting participation in the Houston economy.⁴⁷

⁴² Day, *Unfinished Business*, 9. Per Day, class standing is based on a person’s ability to produce in society.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 78. Believing racism is the systemic undercurrent for poor Black women, but not the only current, Day conveys the need for Black churches to address the racist welfare system.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 12. For Day, while racism is the undercurrent, it’s not the only current.

⁴⁶ Kendi, *How to be an Antiracist*, 181. Like bacon and eggs, racism and capitalism go hand-in-hand.

⁴⁷ Understanding Houston, “Poverty and Social Mobility in Houston,” accessed September 1, 2023, https://www.understandinghouston.org/topic/economic-opportunity/poverty-social-mobility#growing_inequality. Study potentially published in 2019.

- **Poverty:**
 - Within the counties of **Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery**, **1-in-5** Black and Hispanic residents live in poverty⁴⁸
 - **1 out of 3** single-parent households live at or below the poverty line.
- **ALICE Households:**
 - **1 out of 4** working families in ALICE Household (ALICE–**asset limited, income constrained, and employed**) struggle to make ends meet in these three counties alone.⁴⁹
- **Racial Capitalism in Fort Bend County:**
 - The average Black child from a low-income family in **Fort Bend County** earns a household income of **\$27,000** in adulthood, compared to **\$44,000** for a White child.⁵⁰
- **Racial Capitalism in Montgomery County:**
 - A Black child from a low-income family raised in **Montgomery County** earns a household income of **\$25,000** in adulthood, compared to a White child making **\$39,000**.⁵¹
- **Greater Houston Racial Disparities:**
 - As we witness these racial disparities, if we choose not to pass down our shared racial history, including **the bitter herbs**, to our children through remembrance, prompted by loving our neighbor in **The Great Commandment** and the *Shema* in **Deuteronomy 6**, we are destined to repeat them.

Fifth Segment (20 minutes)

- Evaluate (*Participants*)
 - **Response:**
 - Facilitator:
 - When you remember the Great Commandment, what do you see and hear?
 - Tisby defines **Racism** as a race-based system of oppression.⁵² Kendi uses **Racism** to refer to structures (power, policy, and ideas) and **Racist** to refer to an individual, idea, or policy.⁵³

⁴⁸ Ibid. See Percent of Population Living in Poverty by Race/Ethnicity graph.

⁴⁹ Ibid. See Percent of ALICE Households graph.

⁵⁰ Ibid. Show Household Income for Black Children of Low-Income Parents graph. If we neglect passing down our racial history to our children, we are destined to repeat it (cf. Deuteronomy 6).

⁵¹ Understanding Houston, “Poverty and Social Mobility in Houston.” Show Household Income for White Children of Low-Income Parents graph. If we neglect passing down our racial history to our children, we are destined to repeat it (cf. Deut 6).

⁵² Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 4.

⁵³ According to Kendi, racist and antiracist activity defines what we are in the moment, not who we are (as a fixed identity). This leads to his claim that people of color can be racist, based on their racist

- What is your definition of **Racism** and **Racist**?
- Who or what can be **Racist**?
- Can Black people be **Racist**?
- Did COVID-19 create tensions in race relations for your community and/or your church's community? If so, how?

Sixth Segment (15 minutes)

- Application (*Facilitator+Host Pastor*)
 - **Host Church Community Context (Talk/Tour):**
 - Facilitator:
 - Let's listen to <Host Pastor> to inform our racial history awareness through the context of this community.
 - Feel free to ask <Host Pastor> any questions you have along the journey.
 - Host Pastor: Elaborate on the host church community's racial history. [See Community Racial History Guide handout]
 - **Community Racial History:**
 - Facilitator:
 - <Host Pastor>, thank you for providing greater context for this local community.
 - Please look at the activities in the *Community Racial History Guide* to dig deeper into your church community's racial history context. [**Review Guide**]

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

- Wrap-Up (*Facilitator*)
 - **LUVE Talk Session Summary:**
 - Today, we've listened to <Host Pastor's> church community's racial history experience ...
 - We've asked clarifying questions for understanding ...
 - We've even set out to validate our shared racial history through theology and Scripture ...
 - We evaluated our contextualized experience by responding to the Great Commandment's directive to love God, self, and neighbor in **Matthew 22** and explored the context of our neighbor via the **Black Religious Experience** ...
 - Finally, we took a deeper dive into the context of <Host Pastor's> church community and reviewed the *Community Racial History Guide*, a tool to enhance understanding of our church community's racial history context ...
 - **Closing Remarks**
 - Thank the host pastor and participants.

ideas that prevents a person from seeing others as fully human while also preventing others from being fully human socially (seeing all humanity as extended family) and politically (advocating for the human rights of humanity). See Roberts's extended family and human flourishing emphasis.

- Participants' remarks
- Host Pastor's remarks
- **Next Steps**
 - Complete Session #4 Online Journal Entry by <deadline> (in your email box)
 - I encourage you to explore your *racial* autobiography, *church's racial history*, and *community racial history* to grow in your racial history awareness.
- **Final Session**
 - Provide date and time.
 - We'll allocate a portion of our time to listen to a few minutes of your racial autobiography, church racial history, or community racial history, as you feel led to share.
- Closing Prayer (*Participant*)

Total Estimated Time: 120 minutes / 2 hours

Handout

Community Racial History Guidelines⁵⁴

Studying our community's racial history provides a window into the context of our societal culture. The stories of the people our community honors through remembrance shape society, our racial history, and our racial identity development. Please use the instructions below to develop your community's racial history.

1. Look up the racial history of names:
 - Buildings, parks, street signs, neighborhoods, rivers, counties, and cities
2. Look up the racial history of community celebrations and special days.
3. Look up the racial history of community monuments and symbols of significance.
4. Look up the racial history of the community's historical markers.
5. Find out who your state honors in the National Statuary Hall Collection
 - Visit website: <https://www.aoc.gov/capitol-hill/national-statuary-hall-collection/nsh-location>.
6. Learn about the original inhabitants of your community
 - Visit website to lookup via address or zip code: <https://native-land.ca/>.
 - a. Who were they?
 - b. Where are they now?
 - c. Name and history of the tribe or nation?
 - d. What language did they speak?
 - e. What treaties or wars led to their displacement?
 - f. What is the state of the tribe in present day?

⁵⁴ Tisby, *How to Fight Racism*, 53.

Week #5: Racial History Unity

Outline

- I. Opening Prayer (by a participant)
- II. Session #4 Recap
 - a. Questions
 - b. Review Community Racial History Guide
- III. Session #5 Overview
- IV. Listen: Participants' Racial History
- V. Understand: Q&A
- VI. Validate: Biblical and Theological Concepts
 - a. Genesis 1:26-27 (*Imago Dei*)
 - b. Anamnesis (the role of story)
 - c. Black Biblical Hermeneutic
 - d. Unity (Confronting Racism)
- VII. Evaluate: Response
- VIII. Application:
 - a. Communion
- IX. Wrap-Up
- X. Closing Prayer (by a participant)

Manuscript

A detailed manuscript follows, outlining the role and responsibilities of the facilitator, host pastor, and participants for Session #5 (Week #5). The session consists of six timed segments and a wrap-up segment.

Setup (15 minutes)

- Confirm elements for the Lord's Supper in Segment Six.
- Test A/V

First Segment (20 minutes)

- Opening Prayer (*Participant*)
- Preliminaries (*Facilitator*)
 - **Thank You**
 - Host Pastor for his hospitality and generosity
 - Participants for their continued support and willingness to participate
 - **House Rules for A LUVE Talk**
 - ***HOT Communication***
 - Honest-Open-Transparent
 - ***Confidentiality***
 - Creating a safe space
 - ***Grace:***
 - Conversations seasoned with grace
 - It is probably inevitable that every one of us will feel uncomfortable at some point and time over the next five weeks.
 - When this happens, let us agree now to **PICK LUVE Talk**.
 - **PICK LUVE Talk:**
 - Being fully **present** during our sessions

- Being **intentional** about expanding our racial history awareness
- Being **committed** to leaning into crucial conversations on race
 - Emotions are high and stakes are high with opposing views.
- Being **kind** to one another
 - Giving each other the benefit of the doubt of positive intent
- **Scheduled Break**
 - Session midpoint
 - 5 minutes
- **Food and Fellowship**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **Restroom**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **Water**
 - Host Pastor instructions
- **LUVE Talk Session #4 Recap:**
 - Last week, we listened to <Host Pastor's> church community experience with racism.
 - Again, we overheard a racial history contextualized by geographical, cultural, psychological, and theological locations.
 - We asked clarifying questions to understand his context.
 - We validated our shared racial history by reflecting on scripture and theology, specifically the **Black Religious Experience** and the **Great Commandment** to love God, self, and neighbor, where Jesus's teaching on discipleship stirs up the memory of the Old Testament. [Specifically, the *Shema* in *Deuteronomy 6:5* and the *Golden Rule* in *Leviticus 19:18*.]
 - **Racial History Equation**
 - Again, our discussion highlighted the racial history equation:
 - *Our Social Location*⁵⁵+*Our Contextualized Experience*⁵⁶ yields a *Different Concern*
 - **Matthew 22:34-40 (The Great Commandment)**
 - Using **Matthew 22:34-40** as a point of reference, a connection was suggested between the lawyer's question in Luke's Parable of the Good Samaritan, "**Who is my neighbor?**" and the **Black Religious Experience**, since our neighbor includes any and every one that comes across our path, including people in our neighborhood and the Greater Houston Community. Like the **Lord's Supper** in **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**, Christ speaks to the priority of our social responsibility, encompassing our contemporary Christian ethics and *shared racial history* serving as a public witness.
 - **Black (Religious) Experience**
 - Validating our neighbors in a **Racialized Society** through the lens of the African American (Black) community, led us

⁵⁵ Tiffany L. Brown et al., "Inclusion and Diversity Committee Report." Social location combines gender, race, social class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical location.

⁵⁶ Influenced by geographical, psychological, cultural, and theological locations.

to consider the impact of **Racism, white Supremacy, and The Question of Power** in relation to the **Black Religious Experience**.

- **Black Experience**

- This set the stage for investigating **the Black Experience**, defined as a contextualized-localized-cultural encounter of being, seeing, hearing, and living life through a dissonance lens rooted in African ancestry and consciousness.

- **Capitalism**

- When considering the **Black Experience's** connection to **Capitalism**, we witnessed critiques of **American Capitalism's** infringement on the **Great Commandment** via:
 - Emerson's claim of contemporary white evangelical support of **laissez-faire capitalism**, positing America as a meritocracy, resulting in a just economic inequality.
 - Keri Day's diagnoses of **The Underclass** and **The New Jane Crow** pointed out the impact of class discrimination and the contemporary welfare system's exploitation of African American women.
 - Kendi indicted American capitalism as **Racial Capitalism**, predicated on the belief that capitalism and racism, are a hendiadys.

- **Greater Houston Black Experience**

- We concluded by observing how race, poverty, and the systemic factors of social mobility continue to play a role in limiting participation in the Houston economy.
- An emphasis was made on the importance of passing down our *shared racial history*, including **the bitter herbs**, to our children through *remembrance*, prompted by loving our neighbor in **The Great Commandment** and the **Shema** in **Deuteronomy 6**, to alter our current course of perpetuating the racial disparities of our *shared racial history*.

- **Session #4 Q&A:**

- Are there any (additional) questions concerning last week?
- Great...now it's time to continue our racial history awareness journey.

- **Session #5 Overview**

- **Focus: A LUVE Talk emphasizing (our) racial history and unity**
 - The role of story to aid in racial history unity
- **Application (Dig Deeper): Communion**
 - Exploring ways to confront racism and celebrating the Lord's Supper as a public witness

Second Segment (20 minutes)

- Listen (*Facilitator+Participants*)
 - Facilitator:
 - In our final session, let's take some time to hear a specific racial history instance you feel led to share with the group.

- Consider your *racial autobiography*, *church racial history*, or *church community's racial history*.
- Let's aim for 2-3 minutes per person to afford time for others to share their story.
- Please jot down questions for discussion during our Q&A.

Third Segment (15 minutes)

- Understand (*Facilitator+Participants*)
 - **Participants Q&A:**
 - Facilitator:
 - Thank you for sharing with the group.
 - Now it's time to ask any clarifying questions concerning our shared experiences.

Break (5 minutes)

- Facilitator:
 - Announce break
 - Take attendance
 - Prep for Communion

Fourth Segment (20 minutes)

- Validate: Theological and Biblical Concepts (*Facilitator*)
 - As we seek to validate our shared racial history through biblical and theological concepts, we'll go back to a topic discussed at the beginning of our seminar in Session #1...
 - ***Black Biblical Hermeneutics***
 - Why does this matter regarding racial history?
 - Racial history is about identity, dignity, and destiny.
 - And since human history is steeped in limitations and subjectivity, so too is a racial history rooted in a racialized society dictating a race-class based identity.
 - In *Looking Back, Moving Forward*, Stephen Breck Reid, Professor of Christian Scriptures at Truett Seminary and Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and Belonging at Baylor University, offers a theocentric alternative to humanity's identity via a **Black Biblical Hermeneutic** that seeks God's *creational intent* for living together in unity.
 - And the first step is acknowledging that Scripture is the Word of God by God.⁵⁷
 - **Genesis 1:26-27 (*Imago Dei*)**
 - Equipped with this theological concept, let us examine **Genesis 1:26-27**, based on remembrance of God's creational intent story, emphasizing the importance and value of all humanity made in the image and according to the likeness of God. **[Read Genesis 1:26-28]**
 - Insights
 - Our text occurs in the first movement of Genesis (the story of creation—"in the beginning") prior to the details of humanity's story (captured in the story of Adam and Eve)

⁵⁷ Aligning with Bebbington's *Quadrilateral* of biblicism.

- **It sets the tone for the rest of the book, OT, NT, and humanity.**
 - God is the creator of all things: humanity, the earth, the heavens, and all other living things.
 - God's cosmic sovereignty is on display as **"Who is like the Lord?" Nobody!**
- *Imago Dei*
 - Let's take a closer look at God's account of human history penned by Moses after the Exodus.
 - **(Sovereign) Plan: God's Creation Story**
 - We begin with God's *Sovereign Plan*.
 - Israel's God, Elohim—the Creator of the universe, has a deliberate plan for humanity that demonstrates his sovereignty.
 - **(Sovereign) Pattern: *Imago Dei***
 - Next, we witness the *Divine Pattern*.
 - In **v. 26** God conveys his intentionality for the blueprint of humanity (in his image and according to his likeness—as royal representatives of the Divine)
 - Signifying God's compassion and desired relational state **with** humanity as the climax of the Creator's creation.
 - **(Sovereign) Purpose: Stewardship**
 - We then move to God's purpose of *Stewardship*.
 - **(V. 26)** God conveys his will for the divine destiny of humanity (the grace gift of dominion over all **non-human** creation above, below, and on the earth)
 - Signifying God's desired relational state **for** humanity with the rest of the Creator's creation.
 - **(Sovereign) Activity: Trustworthy**
 - Finally, we witness the Creator's *Trustworthy Activity*.
 - In **v. 27** God follows through on his plan for the pattern and purpose of (a diverse) humanity.
 - God can be trusted to deliver on his Word (his promises).
 - And God cares for all humanity equally (both male and female).
 - Because Israel's God, Elohim, executed his divine plan for the creation of humanity, Israel can take comfort, refuge, and find hope in their God, delivering on his Abrahamic covenant of the Promised Land.

- Israel's God is greater than any other god, and their creation story provides the faith community with its theological, anthropological, sociological, and psychological identity.
- Canonical Context
 - **Genesis 1** sets the stage and foundation for understanding human history (**the beginning**).
 - The story of humanity's creation is told:
 - Created by God in his image and according to his likeness.
 - God's purpose for human beings is revealed:
 - Human surviving and thriving.
 - The divine contextual design of humanity is communicated:
 - Male and female.
 - The relationship of humanity with creation is explained:
 - To have Godlike authority, to steward the earth, sky, and waters.
 - Genesis answers the ontological questions of humanity.
 - **A contextualized (male and female) being and knowing contrasting all other living creatures.**
 - Genesis answers the teleological question of humanity.
 - **The blessing of a unified purpose of stewardship and procreation.**
- Application
 - Humanity is created according to the plan, pattern, and purpose of its compassionate Creator, not predicated on skin color, or race, or ethnicity.
 - God endows humanity with authority and a purpose:
 - Dominion over his *nonhuman* creation
 - Prosperity through procreation (via a man and a woman)
 - The Christianity community is charged with treating people based on God's evaluation, because how we treat people matters to God.
 - Racism is a violation of God's divine plan for his human creation (made in the *imago Dei*).
- **Unity in Mutual Purpose**
 - **Now What?**
 - Now that these past five weeks have become a part of our shared racial history, where do we go from here? How do we move forward in unity?
 - **Imago Dei**
 - God's *creational intent* establishes our mutual purpose, based on our shared identity, being made in the image of God.

- We are all representatives of God, charged with stewarding well our relationships with his creation for the purpose of surviving and thriving in *koinonia*, a caring and sharing *Greater Houston community* where everybody is somebody.
- **Racial History Equation**
 - We acknowledge that the **Racial History Equation** yields different concerns.
 - But instead of dismissing those concerns, we lean into increasing our Racial History Awareness through having **LUVÉ Talks...**
 - Listening to these different concerns through conversations that seek to understand the unique context through clarifying questions, that affirms the validity of these concerns, and evaluates ways to address them informed by theology and scripture (cf. **Acts 6:1-7**).
- **The Lord's Remembrancers**
 - In *Preaching as Reminding*, Jeffery D. Arthurs' outlines nine vital things *reminding* does to its listeners:⁵⁸
 - (1) "**Prompts thankfulness**"
 - (2) "**Raises hope**"
 - (3) "**Prompts repentance**"
 - (4) "**Fosters humility**"
 - (5) "**Helps believers walk wisely**"
 - (6) "**Warns of unbelief and disobedience**"
 - (7) "**Encourages belief and obedience**"
 - (8) "**Prompts mercy**"
 - (9) "**Forms individual and community identity**"
- **Priest, Prophet, and Sage**
 - Unity necessitates living out our mutual purpose as priest, prophet, and Sage, as **The Lord's Remembrancers** ...
 - Where our Christian ethics are governed by ...
 - God's *creational intent* ...
 - Our memory of the Exodus ...
 - Listening to the **Shema's** reminder to pass down our *shared Racial History* to our children ...
 - Practicing table fellowship in our public worship and witness via *the Lord's Supper* where we are reminded to live as Christ has lived ...
 - Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, taking care of the widow and the oppressed in the community (cf. Matthew 25:31-46 The Sheep and the Goats).
 - Unity calls for our continual remembrance that we are indeed our brother's and sister's keeper (cf. **Genesis 4:1-9; Romans 14:13-23**).
 - Hearing the words of Jesus in **John 13:34-35**: "A new command I give you. Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

⁵⁸ Arthurs, *Preaching as Reminding*, 7-8.

- ***Evangelicalism (Bebbington's Quadrilateral)***
 - Unity in mutual purpose entails building on the early Church's framework of evangelicalism, captured via Bebbington's *Quadrilateral*, by broadening our shared convictions of (social) activism.⁵⁹
 - McCaulley provides a working definition where activism is "the expression and demonstration of the gospel in missionary and social reform efforts."⁶⁰
- **Unity in Mutual Purpose (Cont.)**
 - ***Koinonia***
 - We do this work faithfully with expectation and anticipation of living in a Greater Houston community of *koinonia*, in the present and at the return of Christ, because we represent a loving God who specializes in manufacturing masterpieces out of what appears as lifeless (dead) and hopeless situations.
 - ***Confronting Racism***
 - Unity in mutual purpose calls for confronting our common enemy, racism, waging war in our personal, congregational, and community contexts.
 - So, let's look at a contemporary ecclesial approach.
- **ARC of Racial Justice**
 - Tisby's ARC of Racial Justice, seen as a continual journey, provides a practical approach to confronting racism.
 - He subscribes to measuring impact by actions and (personal) transformation.
 - ***Awareness***
 - **Awareness (the head)** entails developing familiarization with racist strategies to confront them proficiently via knowledge, information, and data.
 - **How might we do this?**
 - By continuing to grow in our shared racial history awareness through developing our ...
 - *Racial Autobiography*
 - *Church Racial History* (by involving our congregation via interviews)
 - *Church Community Racial History* (by involving residents in the community via interviews)
 - **Why?**
 - Because if we know better, we can do better.
 - And as the **Lord's remembrancers**, pastors and leaders in the local community, we can't lead where we don't go.
 - ***Relationships***

⁵⁹ Bruce Hindmarsh, "What Is Evangelicalism?" *Christianity Today*, accessed September 9, 2023, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2018/march-web-only/what-is-evangelicalism.html>.

⁶⁰ McCaulley, *Reading While Black*, 10.

- **Relationships (the heart)** involve cultivating authentic relationships with people of different backgrounds, racial groups, and ethnicities.
- **How might we do this?**
 - By entering meaningful and **covenantal** relationships across racial lines with mutual respect and equal regard
 - Establishing a planned frequency for continuing our **LUVE Talks** and fellowship while developing trust
- Remembering that “relationships move at the speed of trust”
- **Commitment**
 - **Commitment (the hand)** admonishes a resolve to dismantle racist structures, laws, and policies via **social activism**.
 - **How might we do this?**
 - By committing to collaborative interracial ministry partnerships to make a difference in our individual, church, and community contexts through praxis of the **Great Commandment** - loving God, self, and our neighbor
 - Addressing Greater Houston racial disparities by partnering on the journey towards racial justice
 - **Why does this matter?**
 - As we examined last week, race continues to play a role in social mobility for the Black community, impacting the Greater Houston area faith community’s public witness.

Fifth Segment (20 minutes)

- Evaluate (*Participants*)
 - **Response:**
 - Facilitator:
 - What is your assessment of Tisby’s *ARC of Racial Justice* as a framework for Greater Houston area racial justice?
 - How do you feel about an interracial ministry partnership to inspire positive change within our Greater Houston community?

Sixth Segment (15 minutes)

- Application (*Facilitator*)
 - **The Lord’s Supper:**
 - Now that these past five weeks have become a part of our shared racial history, let us move forward in solidarity, as the *Lord’s remembrancers* in our individual, church, and community contexts.
 - Beckoning the remembrance of our shared identity, made in the image of God and our mutual purpose of fidelity declared by our Creator.
 - Scripture is an intentional contextualized project of *anamnesis* or *remembrance*.
 - The writers of Scripture wrote out of their remembrance, for us to remember our heavenly hope requires perpetual remembrance.
 - **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**
 - Quoting the apostle Paul [*Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*]

- ***The Lord's Supper***
 - **Remembering** is more than merely mental recall.
 - Through remembering the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ during the **Lord's Supper**, we the body, can be **Re-membered**.
 - ***Re-membered***
 - Unified—made whole—put back together again.
 - ***[Partaking of The Lord's Supper]***
 - The bread of life, symbolic of taking the life of Christ to live in us—to live as Christ lived, let us eat the bread together.
 - The cup of blessing, the blood of Christ shed on Calvary for our atonement and redemption, spread over the doorposts and lintel of our lives, let us take and drink from the cup together.
 - ***[Prayer]***
 - Lord as your remembrancers help us to actualize your life as living witnesses.
 - Holy Spirit empower us to be faithful followers of Christ, loving God with all our being and loving our neighbors with no less love than we love ourselves.
 - Bring back to remembrance your track record of faithfulness and deliverance on our behalf.
 - Prompt us to share your acts of compassion, justice, and deliverance in our homes with our children, in our churches with our members, and in our communities with our neighbors.
 - Embolden us Lord to play a role in addressing the racial injustice and inequities in our communities, knowing that we are all precious in your sight, made in your image and given a common purpose as your earthly representatives.
 - Remind us Lord, that what we do for the least of these, we in turn do for you.
 - Finally, help us to be remembers and doers of your word and not forgetful hearers. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen!
- **Racial History Unity:**
 - As we close out our final session, let's take a moment to share a racial history insight we've gleaned during our time together.
 - How have our LUVe Talks informed awareness of your *racial autobiography, church racial history, and/or church community's racial history*?

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

- Wrap-Up (*Facilitator*)
 - **LUVe Talk Session Summary:**
 - Today, we've listened to one another's racial history experiences ...
 - We've asked clarifying questions for understanding ...
 - Once again, we set out to validate our shared racial history through theology and Scripture ...
 - We considered our contextualized experiences through God's story of creation in **Genesis 1** as the source of our **shared history, unity, and identity**, being made in the *imago Dei* ...

- Finally, *we evaluated partnering together in ministry to address Greater Houston racial disparities*, we took part in **The Lord's Supper**, and shared our racial history insights, as a sign of our **racial history solidarity** and **public witness** ...
- **Closing Remarks**
 - Thank the host pastor and participants
 - Participants' remarks
 - Host Pastor's remarks
- **Next Steps**
 - Complete Session #5 Online Journal Entry by <deadline> (in your email box)
 - I encourage you to continue exploring your *racial autobiography*, *church's racial history*, and *community racial history* to grow in your racial history awareness, remembering it is a lifelong journey.
- Closing Prayer (*Participant*)

Total Estimated Time: 120 minutes / 2 hours

APPENDIX D

Intervention Survey¹

Part I: Individual

1) What is the highest level of formal education you have attained besides your theological or Christian education training?

- 1) Less than high school
- 2) Completed high school
- 3) Some college
- 4) College graduate
- 5) Some graduate work
- 6) Graduate degree

2) What is your sex?

- 1) Female
- 2) Male

3) What is your present marital status?

- 1) Married
- 2) Not married

¹ Pre- and post-survey contained questions to identify data of participants for matching survey responses: First and Last Name, Phone number, Email address. Pre-survey included Questions 1-7 to collect participant's demographic data and zip code of participant's church to enable validation of geographical location.

4) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, Independent, Republican, or other?

- 1) Democrat
- 2) Independent
- 3) Republican
- 4) Natural Law or other

5) Which of the following labels best describes you?

- 1) White
- 2) Black
- 3) Asian
- 4) Hispanic
- 5) Indian or some other race
- 6) Multiple races

6) What is your present age?

- 1) Less than 40
- 2) 40-49
- 3) 50-64
- 4) 65+

7) Which of these categories best describes your total family income from all sources, before taxes, during 2022? (If you live alone, or with non-relatives, answer in terms of your own personal income.)

- 1) Less than \$20,000
- 2) \$20,000-49,999
- 3) \$50,000-99,999
- 4) \$100,000 or more

8) How would you rate yourself in the following area? I am aware of racism because I study history.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

9) How would you rate yourself in the following area? I am aware of racism because I explore my own personal racial history.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

10) How would you rate yourself in the following area? I am aware of racism because I read the Bible to understand what God says about the dignity of humanity.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

11) How would you rate yourself in the following area? I am aware of a Black or African American biblical interpretation of the Bible.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

12) How would you rate yourself in the following area? I am aware of the Black or African American church tradition.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

13) How would you rate yourself in the following area? I am aware of Black theology.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

14) In the past few years, do you think conditions for Black people have improved, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?

- 1) Improved
- 2) Gotten worse
- 3) Stayed about the same

15) How would you rate the state of relations between whites and racial ethnic persons in the U.S. these days?

- 1) Very bad
- 2) Somewhat bad
- 3) Neither bad nor good
- 4) Somewhat good
- 5) Very good

16) In the last two years, have you personally been in a class, workshop, or other formal and anti-racism training?

1) No

2) Yes

17) How often do you interact with persons of different racial backgrounds in your own home?

1) Never

2) Rarely

3) Occasionally

4) Frequently

5) Very frequently

18) Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Because of past and present discrimination, it is sometimes necessary for colleges and universities to reserve openings for racial ethnic students.

1) Strongly disagree

2) Disagree

3) Uncertain

4) Agree

5) Strongly agree

19) Which of the following terms best describes your current stand on theological issues?

1) Very conservative

2) Conservative

3) Moderate

4) Liberal

5) Very Liberal

20) In the last two years, have you personally written a letter to a public official expressing your views on racial justice?

1) No

2) Yes

21) In the last two years, have you personally given money to an organization concerned with racial justice?

1) No

2) Yes

22) In the last two years, have you personally joined an organization concerned with racial justice?

1) No

2) Yes

23) In the last two years, have you personally participated in a demonstration to support the civil rights of racial ethnic persons?

1) No

2) Yes

24) In the last two years, have you personally volunteered time to work for an organization or group working for racial justice?

1) No

2) Yes

25) Do you believe that some or all of the Bible was inspired by God?

1) No

2) Yes

26) [IF YES TO Q25] How much of what the Bible contains do you believe was inspired by God?

- 1) Only a very small amount
- 2) Some of it
- 3) Most of it
- 4) Almost all of it
- 5) All of it

27) Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: The only absolute truth for humanity is in Jesus Christ.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

28) Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: Only followers of Jesus Christ can be saved.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

29) Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is important to share my faith with other people.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain

- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

Part II: Church

30) In the last two years, how often has your congregation heard a sermon preached on racism or racial justice issues?

- 1) Never
- 2) Once or twice
- 3) 3-5 times
- 4) 6 or more times

31) In the last two years, how often has your congregation held a study group, school church class, or other educational program on racism and racial justice?

- 1) Never
- 2) Once or twice
- 3) 3-5 times
- 4) 6 or more times

32) In the last two years, how often has your congregation had a guest preacher whose racial ethnic identity differs from the majority of the members in your congregation?

- 1) Never
- 2) Once or twice
- 3) 3-5 times
- 4) 6 or more times

33) In the last two years, how often has your congregation worshipped jointly with another congregation whose members are mostly of a different racial ethnic background than most members in your congregation?

- 1) Never
- 2) Once or twice

- 3) 3-5 times
- 4) 6 or more times

34) How often do you interact with persons of different racial backgrounds in your church?

- 1) Never
- 2) Rarely
- 3) Occasionally
- 4) Frequently
- 5) Very frequently

35) Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Churches should be at the forefront of our society's efforts against racism.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Uncertain
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

Part III: Community

36) Compared to whites, how do you feel Black people are treated in your community?

- 1) Not as well as whites
- 2) The same as or better than whites

37) In general, do you think Black people have as good a chance as whites in your community to get any kind of job for which they are qualified?

- 1) Not as good a chance as whites
- 2) As good (or better) a chance as whites

38) In general, do you think Black children have as good a chance as white children in your community to get a good education?

- 1) Not as good a chance as white children
- 2) As good (or better) a chance as white children

39) In general, do you think that Black people have as good a chance as whites in your community to get any housing they can afford?

- 1) Not as good a chance as whites
- 2) As good (or better) a chance as whites

40) What sort of neighborhood would you prefer to live in?

- 1) Mostly white
- 2) Mixed half and half
- 3) Mostly non-white

41) What is your impression of the way Black people in your local community are treated in the following situation: on the job or at work?

- 1) Treated much less fairly
- 2) Treated less fairly
- 3) Treated the same as whites
- 4) Treated better than whites

42) What is your impression of the way Blacks in your local community are treated in the following situation: in dealings with the police?

- 1) Treated much less fairly
- 2) Treated less fairly
- 3) Treated the same as whites
- 4) Treated better than whites

43) What is your impression of the way Black people in your local community are treated in the following situation: in local courts of law?

- 1) Treated much less fairly
- 2) Treated less fairly
- 3) Treated the same as whites
- 4) Treated better than whites

44) How often do you interact with persons of different racial backgrounds in your local community?

- 1) Never
- 2) Rarely
- 3) Occasionally
- 4) Frequently
- 5) Very frequently

45) How often do you interact with persons of different racial backgrounds in other social settings?

- 1) Never
- 2) Rarely
- 3) Occasionally
- 4) Frequently
- 5) Very frequently

APPENDIX E

Post-Survey Reflection and Discussion Questions

- I. What did you learn from your experience in this group?
- II. How have you found yourself incorporating any learned racial history in your relationships and conversations?
- III. What are your comments or feedback about the experience?

APPENDIX F

Control Survey Responses

	Individual																													Church					Community										
	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Subtotal	Q30	Q31	Q32	Q33	Q34	Q35	Subtotal	Q36	Q37	Q38	Q39	Q40	Q41	Q42	Q43	Q44	Q45	Subtotal	Total			
Participant	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	Subtotal	30	31	32	33	34	35	Subtotal	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	Subtotal	Total			
Control 01	3	4	2	2	4	4	3	2	1	4	4	3	1	1	1	2	2	2	5	5	4	5	64	2	1	2	2	2	5	14	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	2	4	19	97			
Control 02	2	4	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	5	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	5	4	4	4	66	3	2	3	1	5	4	18	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	5	4	22	106			
Control 03	4	5	5	5	5	5	2	2	3	5	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	5	4	5	78	4	3	1	1	2	5	16	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	4	5	21	115				
Control 04	5	4	5	4	4	4	2	4	1	4	4	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	5	5	4	5	69	2	2	1	1	5	5	16	1	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	5	5	25	110			
Control 05	4	4	5	5	5	5	2	3	1	5	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	5	4	4	5	70	3	1	2	1	3	5	15	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	18	103				
Control 06	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	1	1	2	5	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	5	5	5	5	72	4	4	1	1	3	5	18	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	4	17	107			
Control 07	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	2	3	4	4	2	1	2	1	1	2	5	5	5	5	76	3	1	2	2	4	5	17	2	2	2	1	3	3	2	2	4	4	25	118			
Control 08	5	4	5	4	5	4	2	2	1	2	4	4	1	2	1	1	1	2	5	5	5	5	70	2	1	1	1	1	4	13			1	2	2	2	2	3	4	16	99				
Control 09	4	4	5	4	5	4	2	2	1	3	5	3	1	2	2	2	1	2	5	4	4	5	70	3	3	1	1	5	5	18	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	4	5	20	108			
Control 10	5	5	5	4	5	4	2	2	1	3	5	3	1	2	2	2	1	2	5	4	4	5	71	2	1	4	2	4	5	18	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	4	3	19	108			
Mean	4.20	4.40	4.60	4.20	4.70	4.40	2.30	2.40	1.30	3.00	4.20	2.90	1.20	1.60	1.30	1.60	1.30	2.00	5.00	4.70	4.40	4.90	70.60	2.80	1.90	1.80	1.30	3.70	4.80	16.30	1.11	1.22	1.22	1.10	2.10	2.40	1.60	1.80	3.90	4.10	20.20	107.10			
Total	42	44	46	42	47	44	23	24	13	30	42	29	12	16	13	16	13	20	50	47	44	49	706	28	19	18	13	37	48	163	10	11	11	11	21	24	16	18	39	41	202	1071			

	Individual																								Church					Community										Total	Change		
	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Subtotal	Q30	Q31	Q32	Q33	Q34	Q35	Subtotal	Q36	Q37	Q38	Q39	Q40	Q41	Q42	Q43	Q44			Q45	Subtotal
Participant	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Subtotal	Q30	Q31	Q32	Q33	Q34	Q35	Subtotal	Q36	Q37	Q38	Q39	Q40	Q41	Q42	Q43	Q44	Q45	Subtotal	Total	Change
Control 01	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	1	3	1	3	1	1		1	1	2	5	5	5	5	64	3	1	2	2	3	5	16	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	3	16	96	-1
Control 02	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	2	5	4	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	5	4	4	68	2	2	3	1	5	5	18	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	5	5	25	111	5	
Control 03	5	5	4	5	5	5	2	2	1	3	5	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	4	4	76	3	3	1	1	2	5	15	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	5	5	22	113	-2
Control 04	5	3	5	4	4	4	2	4	1	3	4	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	5	5	4	67	2	2	1	1	5	16	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	5	5	25	108	-2		
Control 05	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	1	2	5	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	5	5	5	78	3	2	2	1	2	5	15	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	3	15	108	5	
Control 06	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	2	1	4	5	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	5	5	5	76	3	4	1	2	4	5	19	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	4	4	20	115	8	
Control 07	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	2	5	4	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	5	5	78	3	3	2	3	3	5	21	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	5	5	23	122	4	
Control 08	4	4	5	5	5	4	2	2	1	2	5	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	5	5	5	70	2	2	2	2	3	5	16	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	4	19	105	6	
Control 09	4	5	5	4	5	4	2	2	1	3	5	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	5	5	5	72	3	3	1	1	5	5	18	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	5	5	22	112	4	
Control 10	5	5	5	4	5	5	2	2	2	3	5	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	5	5	4	73	3	2	4	2	4	5	20	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	4	4	18	111	3	
Mean	4.60	4.50	4.80	4.40	4.70	4.40	2.30	2.80	1.30	3.30	4.30	3.00	1.10	1.50	1.56	1.50	1.20	2.00	5.00	4.60	4.60	4.90	72.20	2.70	2.30	2.00	1.60	3.80	5.00	17.40	1.11	1.11	1.44	1.20	2.10	1.60	1.70	4.20	4.30	20.50	110.10	3.00	
Total	46	45	48	44	47	44	23	28	13	33	43	30	11	15	14	15	12	20	50	46	46	49	722	27	23	20	16	38	50	174	10	10	13	12	21	16	17	42	43	205	1101		
Mean Change	0.40	0.10	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.30	0.10	0.10	-0.10	-0.10	-0.10	0.26	-0.10	-0.10	0.00	0.00	-0.10	0.20	0.00	1.60	-0.10	0.40	0.20	0.30	0.10	0.20	1.10	0.00	-0.11	0.22	0.10	0.00	-0.30	0.00	-0.10	0.30	0.20	0.30	3.00	
Total Change	4	1	2	2	0	0	4	0	3	1	1	-1	-1	-1	1	-1	-1	0	0	-1	2	0	16	-1	4	2	3	1	2	11	0	-1	2	1	0	-3	0	-1	3	2	3	30	

APPENDIX G

Test Survey Responses

	Individual																													Church							Community							
Participant	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Subtotal	Q30	Q31	Q32	Q33	Q34	Q35	Subtotal	Q36	Q37	Q38	Q39	Q40	Q41	Q42	Q43	Q44	Q45	Subtotal	Total		
Person 1	4	4	5	4	4	4	2	2	1	4	4	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	5	5	1	5	64	3	2	4	2	4	4	5	20	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	4	4	20	104	
Person 2	4	3	4	3	3	4	1	2	1	5	4	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	4	5	5	63	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	16	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	5	4	23	102			
Person 3	4	4	5	5	5	4	3	3	1	3	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	5	5		4	65	2	2	1	2	4	4	15	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	4	3	16	96		
Person 4	4	5	5	4	5	5	3		1	5	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	5	5	5	71	4	2	1	1	4	5	17	1	1	2	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	21	109			
Person 5	4	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	5	5	73	4	3	3	2	4	5	21	1	1	1	1	2		2		5	3	16	110			
Person 6	2	4	2	4	4	4	2	2	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	5	5	5	59	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	9	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	18	86		
Person 7	5	4	5	5	5	5	1	4	2	4	4	3	1	2	2	1	2	2	5	5	4	76	3	2	2	1	1	3	5	16	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	4	3	19	111		
Mean	3.86	4.14	4.43	4.14	4.29	4.29	2.14	2.50	1.14	4.00	3.86	2.14	1.14	1.29	1.29	1.29	1.43	2.00	4.86	5.00	4.17	4.86	67.29	2.86	2.00	2.00	1.57	3.71	4.14	16.29	1.00	1.14	1.29	1.14	1.86	2.00	2.00	1.83	4.00	3.29	19.00	102.57		
Total	27	29	31	29	30	30	15	15	8	28	27	15	8	9	9	9	10	14	34	35	25	34	471	20	14	14	11	26	29	114	7	8	9	8	13	12	14	11	28	23	133	718		

Participant	Individual																													Church					Community					Total	Change			
	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Subtotal	Q30	Q31	Q32	Q33	Q34	Q35	Subtotal	Q36	Q37	Q38	Q39	Q40	Q41	Q42	Q43	Q44			Q45	Subtotal	
Person 1	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	3	4	4	1	1	2	1	1	2	5	5	1	5	65	2	1	3	2	3	5	16	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	3	4	17	98	-6	
Person 2	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	5	4	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	4	5	4	5	69	2	2	3	1	4	4	16	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	4	4	20	105	3	
Person 3	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	4	2	3	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	5	5	5	5	75	2	1	2	1	4	5	15	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	4	4	18	108	12	
Person 4	4	4	5	5	4	4	2	3	2	5	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	5	5	5	5	72	3	2	1	1	3	5	15	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	19	106	-3		
Person 5	5	4	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	3	5	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	5	5	5	5	73	4	3	3	1	5	5	21	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	4	3	19	113	3	
Person 6	2	5	2	4	4	5	4	3	2	1	3	5	2	1	2	1	2	2	5	5	5	5	67	2	1	1	1	1	2	5	12	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	2	15	94	8
Person 7	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	2	3	4	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	4	4	4	5	74	3	1	1	1	3	5	14	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	4	4	23	111	0		
Mean	4.14	4.43	4.29	4.43	4.43	4.29	2.57	2.71	1.71	3.57	4.57	2.57	1.14	1.14	1.29	1.29	1.43	2.00	4.71	4.86	4.14	5.00	70.71	2.57	1.57	2.00	1.14	3.43	4.86	15.57	1.00	1.00	1.29	1.14	1.86	2.14	1.71	1.57	3.57	3.43	18.71	105.00	2.43	
Total	29	31	30	31	31	30	18	19	12	25	32	18	8	8	9	9	10	14	33	34	29	35	495	18	11	14	8	24	34	109	7	7	9	8	13	15	12	11	25	24	131	735		
Mean Change	0.29	0.29	-0.14	0.29	0.14	0.00	0.43	0.21	0.57	-0.43	0.71	0.43	0.00	-0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.14	-0.14	-0.02	0.14	3.43	-0.29	-0.43	0.00	-0.43	-0.29	0.71	-0.71	0.00	-0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14	-0.29	-0.26	-0.43	0.14	-0.29	2.43		
Total Change	2	2	-1	2	1	0	3	4	4	-3	5	3	0	-1	0	0	0	0	-1	-1	4	1	24	-2	-3	0	-3	-2	5	-5	0	-1	0	0	0	3	-2	0	-3	1	-2	17		

Participant	What did you learn from your experience in this group?	How have you found yourself incorporating any learned racial history in your relationships and conversations?	What are your comments or feedback about the experience?
Person 1	<p>(1) There is still much work to be done in the area of racism</p> <p>(2) Geographic location determines “outcomes”; “exposure” etc... to racism</p> <p>(3) The need for collaboration amongst racially different church communities</p> <p>(4) The need for collaboration amongst racially diverse communities (at large)</p> <p>(5) Relationships move at the speed of “trust”</p>	<p>It brings (back) to mind, there have been subtle changes over the years. However, in the grand scheme of things, CONVERSATIONS among folks / friends who do NOT look like me....NEED a LOT of work!!!</p>	<p>The participation in this cohort was amazing; eye opening etc. I am honored to have been a participant.</p>
Person 2	<p>While historical research through books, articles and documentaries can provide some education on racism, listening to personal firsthand accounts and experiences of other black men and women who live in similar context shows how sneaky racism is and can be embedded in less reported aspects of life. In most instances, I also found myself agreeing with black brothers and sisters on events and issues that they viewed as racist. However, some saw the response that particular white churches had during Covid to not mask and refuse to hold in person meetings as racist. While I led my predominantly white church to abide by health guidelines, I don't think the white churches who did not originally did so out of racism. They did so due to feeling like the government was infringing upon their rights to gather and worship. Nonetheless, when Covid caused more havoc in the black community, there were certainly many white churches that failed to care for this reality. It is a case in point which seems to underscore Tisby's Arc of Racial Justice. When people groups are not committed to be aware and in relationship with other people groups, they will fail to have mercy and work towards justice for one another.</p>	<p>Yes, I have. When conversations with family, friends and church members say something that lacks awareness to the plight of black and brown friends, I have been interjecting an alternative perspective.</p>	<p>Intentional LUV talks with people from different backgrounds and perspectives are a true practice of James 1:19-20. It is a strong, biblical model for problems that require solutions, and will thrive with mature Christian leadership. This experience certainly offered a mature Christian leader who was deeply aware of modern suffering with Christ-centered solutions.</p>

Person 3	<p>We suffer from cultural institutionalization. Both black and white congregations have become adapted worshipping in a particular environment.</p>	<p>Most definitely, however, there is a wall of partition between the black church, white church and Hispanic church. That wall should be torn down. After all, God looks at the churches as “One Man”, having one heart, one soul and one Spirit.</p>	<p>I had an exceptional experience sharing information with other pastors of various ethnic groups. It was a tremendous experience.</p>
Person 4	<p>I would say my perception of White America has shifted just a little. This means that sometimes, understanding the situation may not be racist because of one’s background and experience. This does not mean that racism is not at the core, but they may not be aware of it because they have never had to think of someone else’s group outside of their own.</p>	<p>This experience has challenged me to look at my racial history. Although I know some of my family’s racial journey, I’m more eager to learn more. For relationships and conversations, I’m challenged to use LUVÉ Talk format of Awareness, Relationship, and Commitment in small, diverse groups to apply what’s been learned.</p>	<p>This was a wonderful experience for me. I was honored to be invited into the group and enjoyed every minute of the segments, theological and biblical concepts, and the group’s deep conversation on racial history.</p>
Person 5	<p>The group’s racial history was a powerful reminder of the ongoing effects of racism (both personal and structural) in Houston. The LUVÉ model for dialogue is a tool my congregation can use to help white congregants develop Relationships with Black brothers and sisters and so become Aware of the ongoing racism around us. I believe Relationships and Awareness will lead to Commitments to change the community.</p>	<p>I have been involved in fighting racism for a long time. I have learned to ask people to tell me their own racial histories and to listen with a believing heart.</p>	<p>You did an excellent job on organization and preparation that yielded a genuinely positive experience. I think you were right to ask for 5 sessions because nothing replaces time together to build a trusting space for people to (1) share their own experiences and (2) risk saying something that might be conflictual. We are not going to change the world without healthy conflict.</p>
Person 6	<p>I learned that Blacks and Whites are affected by racism.</p>	<p>My learned racial history is almost a constant when it comes to my relationships and conversations.</p>	<p>After living in a system that is filled with racism any experience that I might encounter will barely move the needle.</p>
Person 7	<p>I learned that we all bring various levels of personal experiences to the discussion of racism. The value of listening to each other’s testimony was certainly an asset to the discussions. I also learned the value of having a mixed group at the table who were willing to openly and honestly discuss the things they did not understand about the other’s experiences. This allowed room for authentic discussions to take place in the group.</p>	<p>I have continued to be opened to being wrong about my perceptions about others views on racism from their narrative. Don’t judge until you know their stories.</p>	<p>It was a good experience to be a part of. I hope that there is some kind of follow-up after the success and graduation of the Doctoral Candidate.</p>

APPENDIX H

Institutional Review Board Determination Letter



INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD – PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION OF NON-HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH

Principal Investigator: Arbra Bailey
Study Title: A LUVE Talk on Racial History
IRB Reference #: 2079003

Date of Determination: July 14, 2023

The above referenced research project has been determined to not meet the definition of human subject research under the purview of the IRB according to federal regulations at 45 CFR 46.102(e) & (l). Specifically, the sample size is insufficient to generate generalizable findings.

The following documents were reviewed:

- Non-Human Subjects Research Determination Form, submitted on 07/14/2023

This determination is based on the protocol and/or materials submitted. If the research is modified, you must contact this office to determine whether your modified research meets the definition of human subject research.

If you have any questions, please contact the office at (254) 710-3708 or IRB@baylor.edu

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Deborah L. Holland'.

Deborah L. Holland, JD, MPH, CHRC, CHPC
Assistant Vice Provost for Research, Research Compliance

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