

GLOSSARY

Biblical Terms & Concepts (with Scripture References)

RECONCILIATION The restoring and healing process that grows out of God’s divine act, involving the continual practice of forgiveness, repentance, and justice that transforms broken relationships, systems, and structures into the way God intends them to be. ¹ (2 Cor 5:14–21; Eph 2:11–22)

JUSTICE Rendering to every person their rights as image-bearers of God. ² (Exodus; Deut 15; 24:12-13; Lev 19; Job 31; Ezek 18; Dan 4:27; Micah 6:8; Amos 1:3-2:3; Isa 1:17; 11:4; 58; Jer 22:15,16; Ps 37:21,26; 82:2-4; 112:4-6; Matt 5-7; 11:4-5; Luke 14:12-13; James 2; 1 John 4)

INJUSTICE (UNJUST) Depriving people of their rights as image-bearers of God. (Exodus; Deut 16:19; Lev 19:15,35; Prov 11:7; 28:8; 29:27; Amos 5:11,12; 8:5,8; 1 Thess 4:6)

CORPORATE IDENTIFICATION/RESPONSIBILITY God relates with humanity covenantally as both “me” and “we,” or individually and corporately. We are shaped by, connected to, responsible for, and even encouraged to confess the sins of our theological and biological families. While it is appropriate to repent of collective sins of the broader covenant family — both past and present — this does not mean that God holds individuals guilty for the sins of others in the same way. ³ (Exodus 20:5; 34:7; Deut 5:9; Lev 26:40; Num 14:18; Ezra 9:6-16; Neh 9:25; Daniel 9:5-16; Rev 2-3)

GOSPEL The good news that God himself has come to rescue us from sin and to renew the world through the person and work of Jesus on our behalf, and to establish his kingdom through his people in the power of the Holy Spirit. (Mark 1:14-15; John 3:16; Rom 1:16-17; 6:23; 1 Cor 15:1-4; Eph 2:8-9)

ETHNICITY “Ethnicity refers to shared cultural practices, perspectives, and distinctions that set apart one group of people from another. That is, ethnicity is a shared cultural heritage. The most common characteristics distinguishing various ethnic groups are ancestry, a sense of history, language, religion, and forms of dress. Ethnic differences are not inherited; they are *learned*.” ⁴ (Matt 28:18-20; Rev 5; 7)

Extra-Biblical Terms & Concepts

RACE A Western social construct that developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to distinguish groups of people on the basis of selective physical characteristics such as skin color, facial features, and hair type. ⁵

¹ [Brenda Salter McNeil](#)

² Adapted from *Generous Justice* by Timothy Keller and *Hearing the Call* by Nicholas Wolterstorff

³ Adapted from “Why We Must Confess Corporately” by Duke Kwon in *Heal Us, Emmanuel* by Doug Serven

⁴ [Cliff Notes](#)

⁵ Adapted from *Divided by Faith* by Michael Emerson & Christian Smith, and *Bloodlines* by John Piper

RACISM “The sinful devaluation, subordination, and exclusion of God’s image-bearers on the basis of ethnicity, culture, or race. Racism is individual and systemic, behavioral and attitudinal, conscious and subconscious, explicit and implicit, active and passive.” ⁶

SYSTEMIC/STRUCTURAL RACISM “The cumulative effect of racist feelings, beliefs, and practices that become embodied and expressed in policies, rules, regulations, procedures, expectations, norms, assumptions, guidelines, plans, strategies, objectives, practices, values, standards, narratives, histories, records, and the like, which accordingly disadvantage the devalued race and privilege the valued race.” ⁷

RACIALIZED SOCIETY “A society wherein race matters profoundly for differences in life experiences, life opportunities, and social relationships . . . a society that allocates differential economic, political, social, and even psychological rewards to groups along racial lines; lines that are socially constructed.” ⁸

REPARATIONS According to the International Center for Transitional Justice, “States have a legal duty to acknowledge and address widespread or systematic human rights violations, in cases where the state caused the violations or did not seriously try to prevent them. Reparations initiatives seek to address the harms caused by these violations. They can take the form of compensating for the losses suffered, which helps overcome some of the consequences of abuse. They can also be future-oriented — providing rehabilitation and a better life to victims — and help to change the underlying causes of abuse. Reparations publicly affirm that victims are rights-holders entitled to redress.”

CULTURE A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors, and styles of communication. ⁹

SOCIOECONOMIC “Of, relating to, or involving a combination of social and economic factors.” ¹⁰

SEGREGATION “The enforced separation of different racial groups in a country, community, or establishment.” ¹¹

JIM CROW Jim Crow laws were a collection of state and local statutes (in the United States) that legalized racial segregation. ¹²

ABOLITION The act of ending or getting rid of a system, practice, or institution. Often used in reference to the termination of legal slavery.

CHATTEL SLAVERY “Chattel” is movable property, or property other than land or something tied to the land. “Chattel slavery” is slavery in which slaves were considered to be actual property that could be bought, sold, traded, or inherited. ¹³

⁶ Duke Kwon, [“What Is Racism,”](#) 2018 The Gospel & Our Cities Conference

⁷ John Piper, [“Structural Racism”](#)

⁸ *Divided by Faith*, Michael Emerson & Christian Smith

⁹ [“A Community Builder’s Toolkit”](#)

¹⁰ Dictionary definition

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² [“Jim Crow Laws”](#)

¹³ [“Chattel Slavery”](#)

CIVIL RIGHTS “The rights of citizens to political and social freedom and equality.”¹⁴

PEOPLE OF COLOR (POC) Inclusive reference for people with visibly darker skin such as African Americans, Caribbean Americans, Asian Americans, Japanese, Koreans, Pakistanis, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, Latinos/Latinas. This term may not be preferred by everyone; therefore, one should ask for preferences when possible.¹⁵

IMMIGRATION The international movement of people into a destination country of which they are not natives and where they do not possess citizenship in order to settle or reside there, especially as permanent residents or naturalized citizens, or to take up employment as a migrant worker or temporarily as a foreign worker.¹⁶

MAJORITY & MINORITY CULTURE “Every society has a dominant (majority) culture and at least one sub-dominant (minority) culture. Each of these has a corresponding cultural agenda and intra-cultural consciousness. Those in the dominant culture tend not to realize they have a culture, and those in the sub-dominant culture know very well that everybody has a culture. All in the sub-dominant culture are exposed to the dominant cultural agenda. But few in the dominant culture are even aware that there is a sub-dominant cultural agenda. Therefore, to those in the dominant culture, the concerns of the sub-dominant culture tend to be marginalized. We can define these dominant and sub-dominant cultures in terms of race, generation, gender, geography, language, etc.”¹⁷

¹⁴ Dictionary definition

¹⁵ [Brenda Salter McNeil](#)

¹⁶ [“Immigration”](#)

¹⁷ “The Sovereignty of God and Ethnic-Based Suffering” by Carl Ellis in *Suffering and the Sovereignty of God* by John Piper