

OF ONE BLOOD

Acts 17:26

“I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races, that I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race.” (Abraham Lincoln, Lincoln-Douglas Debates: Fourth Debate, September 18th, 1858) Which racist United States political leader expressed these reprehensible sentiments? Most are surprised to learn that it was their champion, Abraham Lincoln. Racism is a deplorable part of the history of these United States, and, more importantly, of the Church of Jesus Christ.

There has always been animosity between people groups. For example, Saint John tells us that “the Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.” (John 4:9) There are many conflicts between peoples chronicled in both sacred and secular history, but these are conflicts between nations, or, in some cases, ethnic groups, but not races as that term is understood today. In fact, the modern concept of race is nowhere to be found in Scripture. So-called ‘scientific racism,’ however, came with the advent of Darwinism. The late Stephen J. Gould, one of the most important modern exponents of the theory of evolution wrote, “Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1850, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory.” (Stephen J. Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*, 1977, 127-8) Evolutionary theory has been used to explain the observable differences between the civilized and the uncivilized peoples of the world in terms of different stages of evolutionary development. In his book, *The Descent of Man*, Charles Darwin wrote that the disparity between the races was a result of evolution, and that the superior races would inevitably exterminate of the inferior: “At some future period, “ he wrote, “not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes, as Prof. Schaaffhausen has remarked, will no doubt be exterminated. The break will then be rendered wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilized state, as we may hope, than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as the baboon, instead of as at the present between the negro or Australian and the gorilla.” (Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*)

In his book, *Hitler's Ethic: The Nazi Pursuit of Evolutionary Progress*, Doctor Richard Weikart has documented that Adolph Hitler embraced the theory of evolution, and applied it with ruthless and calculated consistency. Weikart writes, “Darwinism by itself did not produce the Holocaust but without Darwinism, especially in its social Darwinist and eugenics permutations, neither Hitler nor his Nazi followers would have had the necessary scientific underpinnings to convince themselves and their collaborators that one of the world's greatest atrocities was really morally praiseworthy. Darwinism - or at least some naturalistic interpretation of Darwinism - succeeded in turning morality on its head.” (page 233) The Nazi purges, responsible for the murders of millions of people, were the *reductio ad absurdum* of the theory of evolution. Unfortunately, many continue to hold to the theory, and with religious devotion, in spite of its entailment of genocide. Fortunately, however, they resist the implications.

The Christian view is very different from the evolutionary one. On the third day of Creation, God made vegetation for the land. “And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.” (Genesis 1:11) Here a very important principle was established. One might misunderstand the the English here. When God said, “Let the

earth bring forth,” He did not mean “Allow the earth to bring forth . . .” Rather, He gave a command, as when He said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. So, when He says, “Let the earth bring forth,” He is commanding the earth to produce. Furthermore, He commanded the earth to bring forth vegetation after their kinds. This means that God is ordering the production of vegetation, and establishing the genetic limits of that production. So, Bermuda grass seeds propagate Bermuda grass, rosemary seeds propagate the rosemary herb, and apple seeds propagate apples. It is true, man has created fruit hybrids, but, in the state of nature, vegetation can only propagate according to kind, because God has established its limitations.

On the fifth day, God said, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.” (Genesis 1:20) Here God creates the creatures of the waters and creatures of the air. As with the vegetation, so with the creatures: they are able to reproduce only according to kind. “And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was good.*” (Genesis 1:21)

So it was on the sixth day, when God created the land animals. “And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.” (Genesis 1:24) It was on that day that God also created man.

With these commands, God established certain biological limits for reproduction. Everything reproduces according to its own kind. It is obvious, then, that in God’s created order, living things can only reproduce according to their own kinds. In other words, if a male creature and a female creature can procreate, then they are the same kind. This is significant because it allows us easily to identify mankind.

On the sixth day, God said, God created man, and He ordered the man and the woman to procreate and fill the earth with offspring. “So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:27-28) This means that we can easily identify an individual as human: if one can reproduce with a human, then he, or she, is human. This is crucial, for some people deny that other people are human. Dylan Roof, the Charleston church shooter, believes black people and white people to be different kinds. In his manifesto, he wrote, “A horse and a donkey can breed and make a mule, but they are still two completely different animals. Just because we can breed with the other races doesnt [sic] make us the same.”

In the time of the apostolic Church, the Greeks believed themselves superior in every way to the barbarians. Saint Paul, on Mars’ Hill, attacked this superior attitude of the Greeks, telling them that God “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth. (Acts 17:26) In his presentation of the Christian view of things, he was careful to assert the unity of the human race. There was one original man, Adam, and from him God has descended every person who has ever lived, and every one of them is a sinner in need of redemption.

By the time of Noah, mankind had become so wicked, that God destroyed the world with a flood. With the ark, God saved only Noah, and seven of his family. (2 Peter 2:5) Eight people embarked, and eight people disembarked: Noah and his wife, their three sons, and their wives. This means that all people descend from Adam, and all people descend from Noah. This is the traditional Christian view of monogenism. All people descend from a common ancestor.

Some time after the Great Flood, the various peoples, who had one language, refused to move out across the earth, as God had commanded them, and they began to build a tower to fix their position. So, God confused their language in order to prevent them from co-operating with each other. By this means, God caused the various peoples to be scattered. (Genesis 11) Here some Christians have grievously erred. Doctor Marshall

Neal, when dean of the School of Religion at Bob Jones University, wrote a tract titled, "Race Relations," in which he leaped to the conclusion that, when God confused the languages at Babel, He also, by fiat, created the races. While Neal's tract was not an argument for racism per se, it was an argument for racial segregation. According to Scripture, however, God did scatter the people so that they would fill the earth, but he certainly did not forbid them from fraternizing any more than He forbade them from learning a second language. The fact of the matter is that God did not create the races directly, by fiat. Rather, the various peoples, who had been one people before Babel, were after divided. The result of this separation, Christian scientists explain, was the expression in people of previously unexpressed biological traits. This is the origin of the different types of people. Each person's body contains the genetic information to produce different biological traits. For example, recently a story made the rounds in the news of a man and woman who conceived twins, one black, the other, white. This is not an isolated case.

After the Dispersion, God called Abraham and made of him a great nation, the nation of Israel. Israel was to be a peculiar, that is, a special people. They were God's people, and they were distinguished by male circumcision and kosher. (Leviticus 11:44, 45; Deuteronomy 14:2) God forbade the Israelites to be married to people of other nations. (Deuteronomy 7:3; Ezra 9) Here, again, some Christians err. They reflexively think that the word 'nation' denotes the modern concept of race, and this reflex comes from a racist sentiment. God forbade His people, Israel, from intermingling with, or intermarrying with, pagan nations, but He did so in order to maintain religious, not racial purity. God's concern was with defection, not miscegenation.

The special status of the Jewish people led many of them to believe in their moral superiority over other peoples, and this in spite of the fact that many of them were themselves unrighteous. Saint Paul wrote to the Church at Rome, "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, And knowest *his* will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written." (Romans 2:17-24) If we Christians think we are morally superior to others, we must be sure that we are. We must make sure that we have taken the logs out of our eyes, so that we might see clearly to take the specks out of the eyes of others. We Christians must take care not to be too proud of ourselves. It is true, we are God's people, "and not sinners of the Gentiles." (Galatians 2:15) Nevertheless, as we consider the sinner, we must also remember those famous words, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

The word 'prejudice' is so overused in our time, that it has lost its true meaning. It has become synonymous with 'racism.' However, the word means refers to a judgment rendered before the evidence is seen. In the matter of race, it means to be opposed to someone of another race, merely because he is of that race. This is a great sin. Saint James warned of favoring the rich over the poor, but the principle applies to the matter at hand. "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons." (James 2:1) That is, you cannot have Christian faith and prejudice. We must not have prejudice, but rather we must love all people because they are God's creatures, made in His image. The apostle tells us, "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." (James 2:8, 9) Martin Luther King hoped for a time when people would be judged not "by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." God Himself is certainly no respecter of persons. As Saint Peter told the Gentiles, "Of a truth I

perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” (Acts 10:34)

Facts do not speak for themselves. They must be interpreted. It is a matter of fact that some people groups, even in modern times, have been very primitive and savage when compared with others. But how shall we interpret this fact? According to the classic theory of evolution, the primitive races have simply been in a lower stage of biological evolution than the advanced races, and it was inevitable that the superior races would eliminate the inferior ones. According to the Christian religion, however, the primitive and savage peoples have been such because they were in moral and intellectual darkness, sin having degraded them, but it is inevitable that they be illumined by the light of the gospel. Racists see everything in terms of race, and not grace. Christians, the reverse. Saint Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth, “For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?” (1 Corinthians 4:7)

Fortunately, as scientists learn more about God’s creation, the Scriptures’ teaching about the unity of the human race is vindicated. Furthermore, the implications of the theory of evolution for race are so horrific, that many who hold to the theory have rejected those implications. The arbitrary modern classifications of race are breaking down. It has become difficult for government agencies to classify people in official documents. The United States 2010 Census Form, Question 9, identifies five races: White, Black, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Pacific Islander. But what about those who are of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? What about those who are Lebanese, or Egyptian? On the matter of ‘race,’ Creationists and Evolutionists have reached a consensus: there is no such things as ‘race’ in the modern sense. It is a myth. So, whatever their differences, Creationist Ken Ham and Evolutionist Bill Nye agree with each other that there is no such thing as ‘race’ as it has been understood in modern times. From the Christian point of view, there is but one race of men: the human race. Every man is made in the image of God, and we ought to treat him that way.

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. *Amen.*