

# The Only Solution to Racism

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this story about how I have witnessed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that alone, overcome racism. I am an American missionary who lives in Ukraine. My heart breaks, seeing the issues that my nation is facing right now. I rarely get on social media anymore, simply because I cannot stand to hear the bickering and grandstanding of people who have all of the answers and will not listen to anyone who disagrees with them in the slightest. Shortly after the death of George Floyd, I saw that many people were broadcasting the problems of our country. Many “Christians” are now supporting some social cause as the answer for institutional racism that they say exists throughout our world today.

No organization or social cause is the answer for this great problem. The root of the problem of racism is the sinful nature of mankind. The only solution is the Gospel. I tried to convey this to some of my friends online who are busy championing causes, and not the Gospel, and this is the response that I received from one professing Christian, who I grew up with: “Man, I wish the Gospel was enough.” Then this person, the daughter of an African-American woman and a white man started to talk about the issues that she has had in her life because of racism in Christianity.

Unfortunately, many who profess Christ do not seek to follow His example and hold on to previous racial sentiments, but that does not mean that true Christianity doesn’t have the answer. I, for one, am in agreement with Jesus that most of professing Christianity are not saved by Christ and will go to hell (Matthew 7).

I want to share with you a story, that I have seen unfold before my own eyes ministering in the country of Ukraine. In Ukraine there are very few black people, most of the black people here are students, studying in universities from Africa. All Ukrainians are very white. There is not the “melting pot” idea here. When Africans started coming over to Ukraine to study (starting around 20 years ago), all of my Ukrainian friends remember the first time that they saw a black person in person. I even heard stories from our time in Russia, that the first time they saw a black person they wanted to touch his skin. I have also heard the same story from American missionaries who go to Africa, just in reverse.

Ukrainians are not “racist” against black people for the most part. However, there is another group of people who they hate that have lived among the Ukrainians for a long time – gypsies, or Roma people, which is the more respectful term. (In this article I will refer to them as gypsies, but please understand that I am doing that because most people don’t know the term “Roma”. I mean absolutely no disrespect. They know that I love them.) The gypsies have a much darker skin tone than the fair-skinned Ukrainians, so they are very easy to spot. The gypsies have a very bad reputation in Ukraine, and if you call someone a gypsy, then that is like calling someone a curse word. In the eyes of the Ukrainians, gypsies are thieves, beggars, criminals who are only involved in shady practices, drug dealers, fortune tellers, and dumpster

divers. And unfortunately, this stereotype is pretty true, many gypsies are thieves, beggars, criminals, drug dealers, fortune tellers and dumpster divers. Their hygiene is not up to par with normal standards, and a Ukrainian wouldn't be caught dead conversing or spending time with a gypsy.

I say all of that to say this: In Ukraine all gypsies are stereotyped as wicked, dirty outcasts, they are hated and looked down by almost every single Ukrainian, even Christians. I, honestly have been in half a dozen European countries and have never purposely contacted a gypsy, or talked with them at all. All of this changed about a year and a half ago. I met a man in the capitol of Ukraine, Kiev, who was born and raised in a village about 60 miles from the city. God did a wonderful work in his heart, and he started to have a burden for his lost friends and relatives in the area where he was from. He asked me if I would be willing to start a village ministry and reach out to villages in a very forsaken area, not far from the Chernobyl zone. We started evangelizing his friends and relatives, and praise the Lord, several were saved!

Then he asked me if I would be willing to start evangelizing gypsies. There are a couple of villages nearby where we were working, that were almost completely full of gypsies. I agreed and we started evangelizing in those villages. Praise the Lord, that after some time, two of the gypsy families professed faith in Christ. We had a baptism a short while later where 10 were baptized, 6 Ukrainians, and 4 gypsies. They are all faithfully serving the Lord together until this day. I asked their permission this week to share their story with my American friends who are struggling with the problem of racism and they all happily agreed.

This all started with one Ukrainian man, Vasya, who God changed. He used to hate gypsies, just like all Ukrainians. When God saved him, God gave him a new heart, with new desires and pursuits (which God does for everyone, who He saves). He started to find joy in serving God and not in sin. He used to love sin and hate God, then God saved him and now he hates sin and loves God. He started seeing racism as a sin, as something that God hates. He started seeing gypsies as fellow humans created in the image of God, deserving of respect, and needing the truth of the Gospel. Then he decided that he needed to be the one who would go and tell them the truth of the Gospel!

He started loving them and caring for them. He started going into their houses and proclaiming the good news of the Gospel to them. He accepted them as equals and treated them as family. They accepted him, then they accepted his God. God saved some of them for His glory! Now they meet together twice a week and praise and serve God together.

At the very beginning of this work, when we started to gather all of the new believers together (Ukrainians and gypsies) we talked much about I Corinthians chapter 12. You see, racism is not a new thing. Racism has always been. Racism is the fruit of a fallen, depraved heart, full of sin and wickedness, and absent of God. Racism was a huge problem in early churches. In the first churches there were Jews and Gentiles (not Jews, former pagans) who were in the same church. In the first churches there were also men and women in the same church (women had virtually no rights at that time and were not considered "equals"). In the

first churches there were also free men, and slaves in the same church (I am glad we don't have to worry about that today)!

What the apostle Paul tells the church at Corinth through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is that these social structures that exist in society, do not exist inside the church (the local assembly of the saints). That is what he means in 1 Corinthians 12:13, where it says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Every member of that church was baptized and became a part of that assembly, and all together make up the body of Christ. Every member is part of the same body. Every member has the same Spirit. All members are needed. All members are important. That is what the Bible says. So even though the Jews looked down their nose at the wicked Gentiles, they were equal in the church. Even though there were slaves and free people in the church, they were completely equal. All people are equal! Racism should not exist in any church of God!

The apostle Paul tells this to the churches of Galatia, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:26-29). God has given all Christians a new nationality. We used to be "different". Now these things that divided us divide us no more! Color of skin, social status, or even sex does not play a factor in the worth of any one of God's children! What great news this is!

The Bible also teaches us that there is no such thing as "races"; this is a false human construct. Acts 17:26 says, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;" ALL the nations of men, with all of their "differences" in body types, physical features, and color of skin, are made of ONE BLOOD. We all come from one man and one woman. We are all brothers and sisters in our humanity. The idea of "races" is a humanistic idea that was used at the time of Darwin to elevate the whites above blacks. This is not a Biblical idea or concept. The Bible teaches that we are all of one blood... one race... the HUMAN race!

Since all people come from one common ancestor, one blood, and that man was made in the image of God, then all people of all races are created in the image of God (imago dei). Genesis 1:26-27 says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." After the great flood, God says to Noah, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." (Genesis 9:6). Sin did not destroy this image of God in man. Everyone, every member of the one human race, is made in the image of

God, so everyone is deserving of love and respect, and needs to hear the Gospel, which is their only hope to be forgiven for their many sins.

This is what was taught to this new group of believers, who once hated each other, but now find that they are united by Christ into His body, and all are now equal, all are deserving of love, care and respect. Now these people, who before wouldn't even look at each other, serve together in God's work! They go to each other's houses. They help each other out. They pray for one another. They all eat at the same table after services. Their kids play together. They bear each other's burdens. The Ukrainians stick up for their persecuted brethren.

In the world gypsies are hated. No one will hire them. They are forced to pick berries and pick through trash to try to make a living. Even "Christians" will not go to our services because gypsies are present, sing, preach, and praise God with Ukrainians.

What is the difference? The difference is ONLY the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel of Christ is the thing that God uses, that is foolishness to the world, to save sinners. When someone is delivered from the bondage of sin, they are translated (moved) from the kingdom of darkness to Christ's kingdom (Colossians 1:13). They are a new creation. Old things are gone away (like racism), all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17). They are created unto good works (Ephesians 2:10). With that new heart, they delight in pleasing God (Ezekiel 11:19-20).

The Bible teaches that all are sinners (Romans 3:23). There is no one good or righteous in God's eyes (Romans 3:10-18). All because of their sin, will get the punishment of eternal torment in hell (Romans 6:23). All are incapable of delivering themselves from their sin (Romans 5:6), because we are all spiritually dead in our sins (Ephesians 2:1-3). But God had mercy on sinful man! He sent Jesus, the God-man into the world to do what we could not do (John 3:16), pay for our sins (Hebrews 10:4 and 10-18). He became sin for us, even though He never sinned (2 Corinthians 5:21). He died for our sins, was buried, and rose again after 3 days and nights in the tomb, proving that He is the victor over death (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)!

The good news of the Gospel is that God will save all who believe in Him, and give them eternal life (John 3:15). True faith is accompanied by repentance (Mark 1:15). Repentance is a change of mind that results in a change of action (Acts 26:20). So, if I was a God hater and sin lover before salvation, then I am now a God lover and a sin hater. This obviously will bring about a radical transformation in one's life. I cannot be a sin lover and God lover at the same time. I must love one and hate the other (Matthew 6:24).

This is all proof of the fact that I was born again of God (1 John 4:7). Everyone must be born again (John 3:7). If you are not born again, you will not go to heaven, but be punished for your sins in hell (John 3:3 and 5). Has there every been a time in your life when you were born again? Can you point to a time when you were radically transformed by the power of God? Can you remember when the Holy Spirit drew you to Himself by showing you your sinfulness, your need of God, your need of His deliverance, and your future if you do not believe in God? Can you remember when you believed the Gospel? Can you remember your life changing; so that

you used to love your sin and hate God, and now you love God and hate sin? Can you see the results of God working in your life since your conversion where now you love Christians, love to be in church, love to read the Bible and pray and tell others about Christ?

My friend, if this has never been in your life then you are in grave danger. You must, before it is too late, turn to the God of the Bible in repentance and faith for Him to save your soul. If you are born of God (born again) you will be changed by Him. You will no longer be a racist. You will see all as members of the one human race. You will not look down at people who have a different color of skin than you. You will desire to share God's love with everyone, regardless of the fact that they look different than you.

Do you see the solution my friends? The solution is not social causes, the solution... the ONLY solution for the wicked sin of racism is the Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus Christ will take racists and change them into those that now love those who look different than them.

(The author of this article is intentionally left blank because the recognition for the miracle that God did in this group of people belongs to His God alone. Please forgive any mistakes as English is becoming his second language. Please feel free to post this freely on all platforms, the ONLY request is that the article is published in its entirety, without any additions or subtractions. Thank you! And may God be glorified!)