

## Daily Devotional, May 30, 2020

### “One Blood”, (Acts 17:26, NKJV)

*“And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings” (Acts 17:26)*

The recent ugly and criminal events in Minnesota have brought the issue of race to the forefront once again. The response of the church must be to redouble our efforts towards the conversion of souls by faith in Jesus Christ. That is the only lasting solution that will bring peace. Splitting people up into various groups based on color or anything else will serve only to divide and not unite. How did we get here? And what should the response be of the Christians and the churches?

Historically, racism in America has largely been along the lines of skin color. It had its origins in the African slave trade. Both Europeans and Africans were complicit in taking human beings captive and selling them across the Atlantic. Under the Law of Moses, such a thing to the extent that kidnapping was involved, was punishable by death (**Exodus 21:16**).

Theologically, American slavery was defended on the basis of two things. First, slavery is found in the Bible, and there is no law in it outlawing the practice entirely. This is true, but I would argue that God was simply responding to the evil propensities of men, and that it was His permissive will but not His perfect will. Men enslaving other men is an affront to the dignity inherent in the creation of all men and women (**Genesis 1:26-27**). Likewise, divorce and polygamy are acknowledged in the Bible, but they are a violation of God’s perfect will of one man-one woman marriage (**Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-8**). Second, it was argued that Africans were descendants of Ham and Canaan, and were therefore cursed by God to be servants (**Genesis 9:18-27**). While some of Ham’s descendants did migrate to Africa, the specific son upon whom the curse fell was Canaan. And Canaan settled in the land which God later gave to Israel. They were not even Africans! This shows how important it is for Bible students to learn the Word of God, study it, and cut it straight. The fact of the matter is that the descendants of Canaan were Canaanites, and were later subjugated by Israel in Joshua and King David’s days. So the prophecy has been fulfilled already in history, and has no legitimate application to American history.

It is high time that we realize two basic Bible truths. First, all people have equal access to salvation spiritually through Christ Jesus (**Galatians 3:28-29**). This teaches us the high intrinsic value of every soul, for Christ’s blood was shed for all peoples (**1 John 2:2**). The second Bible truth is found in our text, **Acts 17:26**. *“And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.”* There is one human race. We are all descendants of Adam and Noah. There are

therefore no distinctions based on color or ethnicity, with regard to the value of each person.

What should the church do? Sadly, we have predominantly “white” churches, “black” churches, “Spanish” churches, and so forth. And so it ever shall be, just as we will always have the poor among us. The Bible answer for the church is simple. Preach the gospel and seek to live out the Great Commission before and to all people. Respect others, and do not encourage people to think of themselves as victims of injustice, even though we do not deny that injustices do occur as a result of man’s sinful condition, and that they should be dealt with justly and lawfully. Instead, may we all think of ourselves as recipients of divine love, grace, and mercy inestimable! And teach all others the same. When we preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ first and foremost, and not the social justice gospels, the church shall have greater effect in the world for Christ. Social justice has its place, but it cannot be achieved without the conversion of the human heart through the hearing and believing in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I pray that this devotional gives us all both information and a solid Bible perspective on these matters that we can take out into the world as we witness Christ, and conduct ourselves in these difficult days.