



WHAT CAN WE DO?

As individuals and communities seeking to grow as allies and advocates, we are invited into a deeper journey...one that calls us beyond words into prayerful reflection, intentional action, and a closer alignment with God's heart. This journey is rooted in the deep wellsprings of African American history, spirituality, and the life of Jesus, drawing us into greater union with God as we stand with the marginalized, acknowledge the weight of systemic injustice, and allow Christ's love and justice to transform us.

Here are some practical steps to help us faithfully walk this path with open hearts and daily intention:

1. **Make Space for Lament** – Recognize and honor the grief and exhaustion carried by the Black community. Lament is a sacred act that invites truth-telling and healing. As Cory Leak shares, *"We are living in a country that doesn't love us, and every day of our lives is emotionally taxing. We carry ancestral trauma in our bodies and the daily emotional tax of continually looking over our shoulder for anti-Black aggressions."*
2. **Explore Your Own Family History** – Understanding our own story helps us reckon with history. Consider taking a DNA test or researching your genealogy. As Jaya Saxena notes, "Learning your history is forced reckoning, asking you to consider whose stories you carry with you and which ones you want to carry forward."
3. **Support Black Churches and Nonprofits** – If you have the financial means, consider allocating resources from your budget as a tangible way to support and invest in Black-led ministries and organizations.
4. **Integrate Anti-Racism Education** – Teach courses and engage in discussions on dismantling racial and caste-based hierarchies in church settings, such as new members' classes or sermon series (e.g., Sermon on the Mount, Elephant in the Room, Table Talks, Courageous Conversations).

5. **Build Bridges Through Fellowship** – Cultivate meaningful relationships across racial and cultural lines by collaborating with other churches and youth groups. Share meals and create intentional spaces for discussing justice.
6. **Engage with Diverse Voices** – Read, listen to, and learn from non-white authors, speakers, theologians, poets, artists, and creatives who offer wisdom and insight into faith and justice.
7. **Have Courageous Conversations in Family Spaces** – When confronted with racist remarks from relatives, respond with truth and love. These conversations, though difficult, can be transformative.
8. **Stand in Solidarity** – If called and able, show up physically in spaces of protest, bearing witness to injustice and advocating for change alongside Black communities.
9. **Seek Mentorship Beyond Your Own Racial Identity** – Be intentional about learning from Black leaders, pastors, and mentors...not as a symbolic gesture but as a genuine step toward spiritual and communal growth.
10. **Remain Present in Challenging Spaces** – Instead of retreating to places of comfort, lean into communities that need sustained presence and engagement. Healing-centered practices help cultivate long-term transformation.
11. **Advocate for Accountability in Leadership** – Use your voice to call for transparency and justice in policing, education, healthcare, and housing policies. Sign petitions, write letters, and engage with local leaders to push for systemic change.
12. **Speak Publicly Against Racism** – Rather than reaching out privately to Black friends with concern, take a stand on your platforms. When faced with pushback, hold firm to truth and love.
13. **Embrace Discomfort as a Path to Growth** – Ask yourself, “What is the next brave and right thing to do?” Trust that transformation happens one courageous step at a time.
14. **Reevaluate Educational Choices** – Consider the impact of school systems on racial inequity. Reflect on what arises within you when confronted with the realities of systemic oppression in education.
15. **Acknowledge and Leverage Privilege for Good** – Recognize white or light-skinned privilege and use it to create access and opportunities for Black individuals and communities.
16. **Speak Truth to Power** – Be willing to challenge unjust systems, even when it means risking financial or social security. Trust in God’s provision.
17. **Commit Time and Presence to Advocacy** – Engage with local justice organizations, attend meetings, and be willing to invest your own time and body in the work of equity and reconciliation.

18. **Cultivate Meaningful, Lasting Relationships** – Move beyond one-time encounters and invest in ongoing friendships across racial lines. Transformation happens in the context of authentic community.

19. **Learn from Thought Leaders in Racial Healing** – Engage with voices like Robin DiAngelo and Resmaa Menakem. Listen to their conversation on racial repair:

<https://onbeing.org/programs/robin-diangelo-and-resmaa-menakem-towards-a-framework-for-repair/#audio>

Remember, this journey is not about checking off a list but about continual transformation. As you reflect on these steps, consider who you can invite to walk alongside you. May we each respond to God's call with humility, courage, and a love that bears witness to the justice and mercy of Christ.

LIVING OUT JESUS' SERVICE IN COMMUNITY

When individuals or communities seek to understand liberation in spiritual formation, we are stepping into the sacred work of drawing all humanity into the reality and union of God. We invite you to view this journey through the lens of African American spirituality and the ethics and life of Jesus, where we are called to embody love, justice, and compassion (Matthew 5-7). Reggie Williams' Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Black Jesus offers guidance on this path, urging us to stand with the marginalized while acknowledging deep injustices in our world. Walking this narrow path of transformation leads to deeper union with God and one another. Here are practical ways to live faithfully into this journey:

Standing with the Marginalized

- **Walking with the Homeless:** Engage beyond handouts by building relationships, learning stories, and connecting people to resources.
- **Supporting Immigrant & Refugee Families:** Offer assistance with paperwork, language learning, or community integration.
- **Economic Support & Fair Hiring:** Promote diverse hiring, supplier diversity, financial literacy programs, and wage equity.

Advocating for Justice

- **Racial & Economic Justice:** Attend city council meetings, support policy changes, and challenge systemic inequities.
- **Justice-Focused Education & Media:** Advocate for fair school policies, discuss racism with children, and support diverse creators.
- **Faith & Civic Engagement:** Vote for justice-oriented policies, write to representatives, and support grassroots movements.

Faith in Action

- **Praying for Justice & Mercy:** Incorporate Micah 6:8 and Luke 4:18 into personal and communal prayers.
- **Spiritual Freedom Conversations:** Explore Jesus' mission of liberation and how it applies to physical, emotional, and societal freedom.
- **Liberation through Service:** Partner with ministries focused on justice, support formerly incarcerated individuals, and address food insecurity.
- **Hosting Justice Conversations:** Gather neighbors or church members to discuss ways to tangibly live out justice and mercy.

A FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL REFLECTION

Incarnational Humility: The Ethics of Presence

In a world where power often seems to define worth, Jesus chose to enter it humbly...born in a small, overlooked town, among the poor, and without the safety nets of status or influence. His life was not shaped by wealth or empire but by the deep presence of God, offering grace and liberation to those who needed it most. His life is a profound invitation for us to stand with the marginalized and to resist the forces that dehumanize. As we follow in His footsteps, we are called to embody His liberating presence, seeing the dignity of all people, especially those whom society overlooks.

Ethical Call:

- (1) Honor the dignity of the overlooked and marginalized.
- (2) Resist systems that dehumanize or exploit.
- (3) Embody God's presence where suffering and injustice persist.

Scripture: John 1:14, Philippians 2:5-8, Micah 6:8

Proclaiming Good News: The Ethics of Justice and Liberation

Jesus spoke a powerful message of liberation...offering hope to the poor, healing to the broken, and freedom to the oppressed. He didn't come as a neutral figure but as one actively involved in the restoration of all things. In His mission, we see a call to be advocates for those crushed under the weight of injustice, to speak truth boldly, and to ensure that the voices of the poor and disenfranchised are heard. We are invited to be part of a kingdom that not only promises justice but embodies it.

Ethical Call:

- (1) Advocate for the oppressed and those suffering under unjust systems.
- (2) Prioritize the well-being of the poor and disenfranchised.
- (3) Be truth-tellers who expose injustice and call for righteousness.

Scripture: Isaiah 58:6-10, Matthew 25:31-46, Amos 5:24.

Love as the Greatest Commandment: The Ethics of Relationship

At the heart of Jesus' message is love...the love that binds everything together, that heals wounds, and that reconciles brokenness. Jesus calls us to live out this love in tangible ways...not as a passive feeling, but as an active force for healing and justice. This love invites us to pursue justice through relationship...loving others as we love ourselves, and in so doing, seeking the good of our neighbors, both near and far.

Ethical Call:

- (1) Pursue love as the highest form of justice.
- (2) Cultivate radical hospitality and reconciliation.
- (3) Love not just in word, but in action and truth.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-12, Matthew 22:34-40, I John 3:16-18, Romans 13:8-10, Matthew 5:43-48

The Kingdom Way: The Ethics of Transformation

Discipleship in Jesus' way is about transformation, a radical reorientation of our hearts, minds, and actions. It calls us to move away from the corrupt systems of power and to embrace the ways of the Kingdom...ways marked by humility, sacrifice, and love. As we follow Jesus, we are shaped and reshaped by His presence, becoming more like Him in our thoughts, words, and deeds. This is not a journey of personal gain, but one of self-giving love and radical justice.

Ethical Call:

- (1) Live in ongoing transformation, reflecting Christ's character.
- (2) Resist conformity to unjust and corrupt systems.
- (3) Engage in spiritual practices that shape a just and merciful heart.

Scripture: Galatians 2:20, Colossians 3:12-14, Matthew 7:24-27, II Corinthians 3:17-18, John 14:16,26, Romans 12:1-2

Loving Ourselves: The Ethics of Self-Reflection & Healing

Before we can fully love others and advocate for justice, we must first love ourselves...not in a way that promotes pride or self-importance, but through the deep, humble recognition of God's love for us. This love calls us to reflect on our own brokenness, mistakes, unchecked desires, and need for grace. We carry our burdens to God, acknowledging where we've fallen short, and allow His mercy to heal and transform us. As we reflect on our brokenness and seek forgiveness, we are reminded of the power of repentance...not as a shame-filled act, but as a sacred process of returning to God, trusting in His unwavering grace. This humility enables us to extend that same grace to others, especially those whom we may be tempted to judge or overlook. It is through this process of self-love, self-reflection, and healing that we find the strength to carry the burdens of others, advocate for justice, and actively participate in the restoration of broken systems.

Ethical Call:

- (1)** Recognize and accept the depths of your own need for God's mercy.
- (2)** Practice self-compassion, knowing that you are loved and redeemed by God's grace.
- (3)** Take responsibility for your wrongdoings and offer repentance, so you can better walk alongside others in justice and healing.

Scripture: Psalm 139:23-24, 1 John 1:9, Matthew 7:3-5, Romans 8:1-2

Endurance in Suffering: The Ethics of Faithfulness

Following Jesus isn't always easy. It means standing firm in the face of suffering, holding fast to our faith in the midst of challenges. Jesus, who knows our struggles intimately, assures us that even in our weakest moments, His strength is made perfect. He calls us to remain faithful, not to the powers of this world, but to the Kingdom that endures forever. In solidarity with the oppressed, we find our strength in Christ alone.

Ethical Call:

- (1)** Stand firm in the face of suffering and opposition.
- (2)** Offer solidarity to the persecuted and oppressed.
- (3)** Find strength in Christ, not in worldly security.

Scripture: II Corinthians 12:9-10, Hebrews 12:1-3, James 1:2-4,

The Shepherd's Call: The Ethics of Following Jesus

Jesus, our Good Shepherd, continues to lead us today with love, truth, and justice. He calls us to follow Him, not in power or triumph, but in humility, peacemaking, and self-giving love. As we walk with Him, we are called to restore brokenness, heal divisions, and embody the justice and mercy that He offers to the world. In doing so, we bear witness to a Kingdom that is both already here and still to come...a Kingdom of peace, restoration, and liberation.

A key part of following Jesus is the call to live in beloved community...united not by our individual differences but by our shared union with Christ. As members of the body of Christ, we are bound together by His love, each of us playing a unique role in the work of His Kingdom. This unity in God is not just about harmony, but about actively supporting one another, sharing each other's burdens, and working together for the good life as Jesus defines it: a life of justice, mercy, and righteousness.

In the beloved community, we find strength, accountability, and deep connection...reminding us that no one is called to walk this journey alone. Through our union with Christ, we are drawn into a deeper unity with one another, a unity that transcends worldly divisions and reflects the heart of God. This call to community is essential to living out the full message of Jesus, for we are made complete in Him as we love one another and pursue the good life that He has set before us.

Ethical Call:

- (1)** Embrace the unity we have in Christ, recognizing the inherent dignity of every member of the body.
- (2)** Walk together in love, bearing one another's burdens, and offering mutual support and encouragement.
- (3)** Seek peace and reconciliation within the community, fostering an environment where the good life in Christ can flourish.

Scripture: John 17:20-23, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Galatians 6:2, Acts 2:42-47

Note: To gain deeper insight into this topic, explore Redeemer City to City's resources for further reflection and study ([Faith and Work Immersion: An Intermediate Faith & Work Course](#)).