

Church, the below resources are primarily collated by Acts 29 (one of our church planting networks and trusted source). It includes many of the books that our pastors and members have personally read and grown from. We have also added a few internal to the list. There are other helpful books on these topics, and the below resources do not contain all that needs to be said. You, and I, and other faithful Christians will find areas of disagreement within these resources. Every one of them is helpful in our conversation and our personal growth in Christ as we seek conformity to Jesus and the gospel in the areas of race, justice, restoration, and renewal.

We've highlighted some "Introductory Suggestions" that give a general and helpful first step into the theological and practical framework in the ongoing discussion.

Introductory Suggestions (from The Well)

Article- [American Racism, We've Got So Very Far to Go](#), David French

Blog Post- [Reflections on Black Lives Matter](#), Carl Ellis

Article- [Structural Racism](#), John Piper

A29 Statement: <https://www.acts29.com/a-call-to-justice-restoration-and-renewal/>

Pastoral Panel Discussion: https://www.acts29.com/race_reconciliation/

Book- [Oneness Embraced](#), Tony Evans (introductory theological and historic perspective)

Book- [Free at Last?](#) Carl Ellis (introductory theological and historic perspective)

Book- [Just Mercy](#), Bryan Stephenson (helpful look at current injustice and inequality)

Book- [Woke Church](#) Eric Mason (summary voice to and practical steps for the church)

Book- [Divided by Faith](#) Christian Smith (brief history of race in the Evangelical church)

Book- [White Awake](#) Daniel Hill (helpful book towards self-reflection)

Theological Foundations

Oneness Embraced

Oneness Embraced, begins by building a biblical foundation for understanding ethnicity and conflict, recounts the history of the Black Church, and casts vision for unity that is possible through Christ and in His Kingdom.

One Blood

We are living in historic times. Not since the civil rights movement of the 60s has our country been this vigorously engaged in the reconciliation conversation. There is a great opportunity right now for culture to change, to be a more perfect union. However, it cannot be done without the church, because the faith of the people is more powerful than any law government can enact.

Woke Church

Dr. Eric Mason gives a call to action and gives a practical look at what the Church can do in four parts: Be Aware, Be Willing to Acknowledge, Be Accountable, Be Active.

The Color of Compromise

The Color of Compromise by Jemar Tisby is a powerful starting point that calls the Church to reflect the beauty of the Christ-centered unity of the NT, with a clear-eyed look at the history of how the church has contributed to division in our history.

On the Block

If you are a pastor trying to mobilize your church, or a Christian trying to live with purpose, this theology of missions from Pastor Doug Logan will help. It will inspire you to do what matters, take steps of faith, and watch God work.

Divided by Faith

What keeps us so divided in the blood-bought Church of Jesus Christ? Emerson and Smith researched just that and wrote the book that is the standard for understanding the divide. This book has become the standard for understanding the racial divides in the American Church.

Free at Last?: The Gospel in the African American Experience

Has Dr. King's dream been/ realized? Carl Ellis offers an in-depth assessment of the state of African American freedom and dignity within American culture today.

Doctrine and Race

Mary Beth Swetnam Mathews wrote a history of doctrinal and racial divides that illuminates the multifaceted reality of the development of the black church. This is compelling, illuminating, tough but a needed perspective.

United: Captured by God's Vision for Diversity

We all could benefit by Trillia Newbell's joy and passion. This is a great look at God's heart for ALL people.

Dream with Me

Dr. John Perkins is a Civil Rights leader. This one is an inspiring call to look to the vision of unity and reconciliation, to dream of a future reality that can feel all too distant. cf. (added by The Well) Prophetic Lament by Soong-Chan-Rah.

One New Man

Dr. Jarvis Williams helps reset our categories from being overtly culturally shaped to thinking more biblically. All people, the human race from every ethnicity, are distinguished biblically as in Adam or in Christ.

The Faithful Preacher

An introduction to African American preaching by Thabiti Anyabwile. This book is as educational as it is devotional and introduces the ministries of Lemuel Haynes, Daniel A. Payne, and Francis J. Grimke.

Meditations on Preaching

Francis Grimke was the son of a slave and a slave owner. He became a Princeton Seminary grad and pastored 15th St Presbyterian Church right in the heart of DC, whose brilliant reflections and writing continue to have an impact.

Plain Theology for Plain People

Charles Octavius Boothe was a church planter, starting Dexter Ave Baptist in Montgomery, later MLK's church. This is a go-to resource for simple, clear theological truth.

Rediscipling the White Church

Many white Christians are waking up to the fact that something is wrong, but that's where they get stuck. David Swanson makes the case that discipleship, not merely diversity, is the core problem that must be addressed.

History & Culture

Letters to a Birmingham Jail

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" is a must-read. This edition includes reflections from other pastors in our theological stream. "I hope the church as a whole will meet the challenge of this decisive hour. But even if the church does not come to the aid of justice, I have no despair about the future... the eternal will of God is embodied in our echoing demands."

Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Image of God

The Civil Rights movement was a theologically driven movement. A helpful look at how Dr King's theology led him to the pursuit of justice.

How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind

Historical Christian belief was shaped by African Christians, from doctrine, to exegesis of the text, to universities, Christianity has deep roots in Africa.

The Souls of Black Folk

WEB DuBois was the first African American to achieve a doctorate at Harvard. His seminal work in sociology exposes the painful duality that so many experience and the systems that have shaped the realities that we still see now.

The Mis-Education of the Negro

“If you can control a man’s thinking you do not have to worry about his action. When you determine what a man shall think you do not have to concern yourself about what he will do.” Carter Woodson’s classic gives insight into how thinking has been shaped over generations.

Sketches of a Slave Life

Rev. Peter Randolph’s autobiographical works give powerful portraits of slave religion. He was freed and relocated from Virginia to Boston, where he was a pastor and abolitionist.

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass is a brilliant communicator with a pointed and prophetic voice and powerful experience that expose our shared history.

Exclusion and Embrace

Miroslav Volf is brilliant on exposing the condition and propensity within each of us to “otherize” people in his powerful book. Because this is not based on research in the American context, it can help to cast deeper human issues that are reflected in our history while cutting through language that may have baggage for individual readers.

Stamped from the Beginning

Ibram X. Kendi delivers a history of how racist ideas were created, spread, and deeply rooted in American history.

Current Issues

The Whitewashing of Christianity

Forthcoming in October 2020 from Jerome Gay, Jr.

Root Shock

Gentrification is a complicated issue that gets too quickly polarized and politicized. This book is a helpful look at the consequences of displacement.

The New Jim Crow

“Mass incarceration is, metaphorically, the New Jim Crow and that all those who care about social justice should fully commit themselves to dismantling this new racial caste system.” See also- *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson (stories of redemption in unjust convictions)

When Work Disappears

Place matters. Systemic issues are real. Dr. William Julius Wilson’s research is helpful in showing the devastating impact of inequality for all people.

With Justice for All: A Strategy for Community Development

A challenge from Dr. John Perkins that, "Either justice will come through us [the church], or it will not come at all." cf. (Added by the Well)- *Let Justice Roll Down* by Perkins.

White Guilt

Through his articulate analysis and engrossing recollections of the last half-century of American race relations, Steele calls for a new culture of personal responsibility, a commitment to principles that can fill the moral void created by white guilt.

Insider Outsider

"It is impossible to do theology devoid of cultural lenses and expressions. Like an American unaware of their own accent, most whites are unaware of the ethnic theological accent they carry." *Insider Outsider* bears witness to the true stories that often go untold—stories that will startle, enlighten, and herald a brighter way forward for all seeking belonging in the family of God.