

STATEMENT ON RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE:
A CALL TO END RACIAL VIOLENCE

"The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

I. INTRODUCTION OF ONERACE MOVEMENT

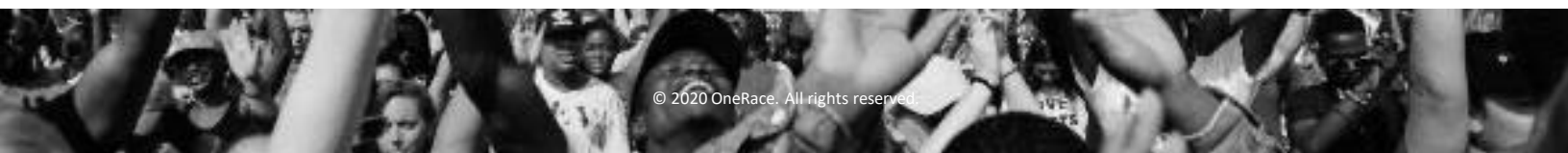
A. A Brief Introduction to Our Movement: Our movement is dedicated to teaching our city to love, regardless of color, class, and culture. We believe racism and white-supremacy are rooted in sin, that can only be addressed through the grace of God transforming the human heart. Unto that end, we have raised up a movement around 4 pillars of personal and cultural transformation to grow the Church in the values of unity, reconciliation, passionate love for God, and one another. These 4 pillars are a movement rooted in prayer, going deep in relationships, growing through education & critical conversations. By doing so, we can move forward and enact biblical justice. We launched this movement officially on August 25, 2017 shortly after the events of Charlottesville. In 2018, we hosted 30+ prayer gatherings petitioning God for reconciliation and revival in the Church culminating in 25,000 people and hundreds of Pastors gathering on top of Stone Mountain to stand against racism. [The Atlanta Covenant](#) was committed there for the first time. Since then, we have continued to grow our movement hosting now over 52 prayer & worship meetings, educational conferences, and gathering with thousands of participants across denominational, cultural, and racial lines. Today, we want to recall the covenant that many of us first made at the top of Stone Mountain, to stand against racism in every form and to speak out and take action in every place we encounter it. With unity & clarity, that is the purpose of our meeting here today

II. AFFIRMATION OF OUR SHARED VALUES

A. Atlanta Covenant: In this covenant, we declare several core beliefs of the scriptures that uniquely qualify the Church to lead in this time of racial discord. We need to emphasize these truths and base the practice of our faith on them. Where the church has believed and practiced these things, we have succeeded in leading well. Where we have drifted from them, we have failed in our role as the conscience of our nation and drifted into silence and complicity with racism.

B. Imago Dei: We believe all people are made in the image and likeness of God. In all of creation, there is only one entity - the human race - that is created in the image of God. As image bearers of the divine, every human being is endowed with inestimable worth and value. We therefore commit to publicly and privately declare that all people are made in the image and likeness of God, through preaching and practice, affirming the dignity and value of every person regardless of race, culture, or gender.

C. Brokenness of Humanity & The Remedy of the Gospel: We also believe all humans (though created in God's image) are broken because of sin, and that racism, hatred, bigotry, and violence are sins inherent to all fallen humanity. However, we have hope that through the death and resurrection of Jesus we are afforded forgiveness of sin and the power for lasting transformation. There is no power other than the power inherent in the cross of Christ that can change the human heart, destroy historic racial divisions, and bring unity and peace. We commit to faithfully proclaim this gospel of Jesus Christ, which espouses the values of **righteousness and justice for all people**, the reconciliation of God and man, and the reconciliation of man, one to another.



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- D. Oneness of the Church:** Lastly, we believe that our identity as brothers and sisters united together in Christ across cultures, genders, and denominations, as expressed in the Word of God, supersedes any public, private, or personal ideology, race, gender, religion, political affiliation, culture, or creed. Our highest allegiance is an allegiance to God, and that allegiance demands love and sacrificial care for our fellow man.
- E. Responsibility of the Church:** We believe where we as the Church have failed to uphold these truths, we have let down society, one another, and God Himself. For these failures in belief and practice we want to say we are sorry. We re-commit to living out these values in a way that glorifies our Creator.

III. CONDEMNATION OF RACIAL VIOLENCE AGAINST PEOPLE OF COLOR

- A. Lament the historical context:** Let's go back and consider that from August of 1619, when the first Africans arrived at the Jamestown colony until mid-June of 1865, when news of the Emancipation Proclamation reached the south, approximately 12.5 million African image-bearers were traded and subjected to slavery. This was a span of 246 years of terrorism. 246 years of families being destroyed. 246 years of dehumanization. These 246 years of this 400-year narrative is roughly 61% of slave trade/colonial history/American history. Following this period, another 100 years (1865-1965) of Reconstruction, 3/5th a man, segregation/separate but equal, and the Civil Rights Movement ensued, amounting to 25% of this 400-year narrative. We have only lived with the possibility of equal rights for the last 54 years, a mere 13.5% of this shared history. Therefore, 86.5% of our collective history in this nation is steeped in racial terror, division, and pain.
- B. We mourn with those who mourn:** In light of the gravity of such history, we are not surprised at the recent events of racial violence across our nation, but nonetheless we are heartbroken. We are here today to declare the church in Atlanta is mourning with those who mourn (Romans 12:15), our heart goes out to the families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, who each died prematurely and violently. To their families, we want you to know that the church in Atlanta is praying for you, and we want to state plainly that in memory of your loved ones *we can and must do better as a nation*. As the moral and spiritual leaders of tens of thousands, we are gathered here today to say we are committed to doing the work of racial healing and civic reformation together.

IV. CALL TO ACTION FOR THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY & CIVIC AUTHORITIES

- A. The Christian Community must engage this issue spiritually & civically:** This engagement must begin with understanding the deep history of racism in our nation, then owning that history as our collective spiritual responsibility, and then engaging in our spheres of influence constructively to change the story for future generations. We must KNOW, OWN, and CHANGE the story. We all have varying degrees of power, position, and privilege. In following the example of our Savior as described in Philippians 2:3, we must count others as more important than ourselves, exercising our power, position, and privilege for the betterment of those not like us.
- B. For our Civic Leaders:** We are calling on the law creators, law interpreters, and law enforcers in the state of Georgia to put fresh eyes on the current statutes, and to work to ensure that the laws are written and enforced in ways that are equitable towards all. When legislation and enforcement enables one segment of the population to feel safe and another segment of the population to feel endangered, changes are necessary. We are calling on our elected representatives to make such changes, and for law enforcement at every level to act expeditiously against racially motivated crimes.
- C. Get Engaged:** Sign [The Atlanta Covenant](#). Make a covenant to stand against racism in every form, never again allowing it to gain a foothold within our spheres of influence. We are also calling believers to work to end racially motivated acts of violence by **voting** in local elections for candidates that uphold our values of equity and dignity toward all races, to serve in our communities across racial lines, and to speak up and participate in nonviolent protest whenever we see injustice that demands our attention.
- D. March On Atlanta:** Join us on June 19, 2020 as we March On Atlanta to ask God, the church, and our civic leaders to make a change, so there will be no more Ahmaud Arbery's, Breonna Taylors, or George Floyds. **Additional Resources:** We want to make available to the media a study, "Where do we go from Here" produced by Barna Research, a free PDF can be downloaded at https://www.barna.com/wd/wgfh/?utm_source=OneRace&utm_medium=download-link&utm_campaign=OneRace_download-resource-wd/wgfh