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## Are Christians racist ?

Part of the problem, that has been present for a long time, is that there are some who worship secular society more than God. Racism is present in society, but is strangely not entirely about somebody's skin colour.

Right at the very beginning of the Bible in Genesis chapter 1 at verse 27 we are told:

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.*

That fundamental concept, **that we are all created in God's image**, is then used throughout the Bible. So, for example, Jesus Christ tells us (Matthew's gospel chapter 5, verse 48):

*"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."*

Similarly St Paul writes in his letter to the Colossians in chapter 1 at verse 15 he writes of Jesus Christ:

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*

Note the word "firstborn" so we are all to follow Jesus Christ's example and way.

St Paul once again writes in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 at verse 49:

*And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.*

And St Paul writes in 2 Corinthians chapter 3 at verse 18:

*And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

So we are all made in God's image and we are all being transformed to be more and more Christ-like if we accept Christ as our Saviour and accept His work in our lives. So if we are all made in the image of God then are we all equal? Here we have to move away from our modern, politically-correct and distorted understandings of "equality". **Yes, we are all equal.** Equality is about complementarity in its meaning.

St Paul writes in 1 Corinthians at chapter 12 in the section beginning at verse 12:

*<sup>12</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For in one Spirit we were all*

*baptised into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

*<sup>14</sup> For the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup> If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? <sup>18</sup> But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup> If all were a single member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.*

*<sup>21</sup> The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." <sup>22</sup> On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> and on those parts of the body that we think less honourable we bestow the greater honour, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, <sup>24</sup> which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honour to the part that lacked it, <sup>25</sup> that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup> If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.*

*<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.*

St Paul makes this point about different capabilities and gifts, of which all are equally important in almost all his letters in the New Testament of the Bible. We are all different, but we are simultaneously all equal. For St Paul it is a fundamental Christian reality. It really doesn't matter if you feel aligned with one group or another, with one category of person or another, or with one race or another. We are all equally important.

There is no sense whatsoever in which we can look down on anyone else based upon what we often mistakenly perceive as their race, gifts, or anything else. Therefore, there is no reason for any Christian to suggest that they are better than anyone else by virtue of race, or gifts, or anything else when we are all created in the image of God.

Let's not rush to put people into categories at all which is highly unlikely to ever be the whole truth at all. Life isn't as simple as the media or political groups sometimes tell us. Let us treat every person as someone made in the image of God. Our identity is in Christ, not in our secular construct of race.

We are confronted in our society today by protests in the name of George Floyd even though his own family have made clear that they do not agree with such protests, and now BLM (Black Lives Matter) protests have jumped on the back of the widespread unrest. Yet the protests won't ever change us or the human heart. Any divisions between people will only be erased through the grace of Christ and the power of the Spirit. We have the weapons of the Holy Spirit and the body of Christ – Christians should take on the evils of racism with the power of prayer.

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