



IN HIS STEPS MINISTRIES

“LIVING RIGHT IN A WORLD GONE WRONG”

For the past 25 years, In His Steps has served the Canton community and beyond with the purpose of reconciling people to God and to each other. **We believe that the power and love of Christ helps us to live beyond hatred and racism.** The gospel message that speaks to the reconciliation of man to God and to each other is the heartbeat of this ministry. The recent injustices have left the country and the church divided and grasping for answers. This has prompted the staff at IHS to first seek comfort from God in mourning these losses, and then to seek wisdom in how to speak on an issue that has run rampant in our nation for too long.

When asked what thoughts these injustices had brought about, Reverend Bacon says, “This reminded me and other Christian brothers and sisters that there is a great divide in our country, and in many cases it’s along racial lines. There’s an undercurrent in our society that’s causing great unrest with the realities of racism. Everything is not “all good” yet, and we need to be aware of that so that we can, **as followers of Christ, represent Him well in the midst of this.**”

The Bacons’ passion for racial reconciliation began long before In His Steps was an established ministry. Reverend Bacon balanced experiencing racism as a teenager, college student and as an adult. Listening and learning from mentors and authors like Dolphus Weary, John Perkins, Tony Evans, Bill Parnell and others impacted Reverend Bacon to think through some of the concepts behind Biblical racial reconciliation from a biblical perspective. **“God used my circumstances to deepen my burden, and it was there that He solidified my calling to**

TRACING HIS STEPS

Newsletter June 2020

begin a ministry for racial reconciliation, a desire to see Christian whites, blacks, Asians, etc., understand, accept, and embrace one another, but to also recognize our distinctions,” says Reverend Bacon.

The question is often asked, “why is racial reconciliation needed today?” We at In His Steps believe racism is very much still prevalent in our world and in the church, in both overt and subtle ways, and we define racism as one racial group maintaining a prideful attitude of

“WE ARE ONE IN CHRIST”

Gal. 3:26-28



“WE ARE DISTINCT MEMBERS”

I Cor. 12:12-14

superiority to another racial group. It seeks to dominate, isolate, or eliminate people from that racial group. We know that any type of sin, including that of racism and pride, won’t cease until the Lord comes back and makes everything new.

Within all of this unrest, our message has not changed. Reverend Bacon states, “Just as I was concerned with racial reconciliation and racism before this happened, I’m still concerned with it now. Just as I preached all unrighteousness is sin, that’s still my message. Just as I taught Biblical oneness, I’m still teaching that there is no more Jew or Gentile in Christ Jesus.” **We urge fellow Christians to take God’s word as the final authority on matters of race relations, as we also know society and our culture doesn’t have the answer.** Let us not act as if Scripture is silent on such issues. The

Word of God is profitable and instructs us on what is right and what is not right. (II Tim. 3:16-17) **“I believe the church has the answers to this question of ‘where do we go from here?’** We are at a crossroads just as we were many years ago and I hope this time around we make the right decisions according to Scripture.” We pray that the church will not get caught up in division, aimless debates, or forget we are called to proclaim truth (John 17:17) and demonstrate God’s love across racial barriers (John 13:34-35; I John 2:16-18). We are to be the salt and light in a world gone

wrong. Denouncing racism and exemplifying God’s love across racial barriers is sometimes uncomfortable and met with resistance, but **our highest call as Christians is to love God first and love neighbor second; to stand for what is just in our communities to show love and mercy to those who are need of it, and to walk humbly with the God who is leading us deeper into sanctification.**

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.” (John 17:20-21)

PRAISE & PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God for His continued faithfulness.
- Pray for God’s wisdom for IHS as we navigate the new normal for ministry.
- Pray that summer enrichment students will work hard on their weekly material.
- Pray for Christin Howard recovery from a basketball injury on Sunday, June 21, 2020.
- Pray that IHS will continue to be instrument of biblical reconciliation.

THE BIBLE IS NOT SILENT ON BIBLICAL ONENESS!

Based on 3 Fundamentals

- 1) *All people share biological oneness (Gen. 1:26; Acts 17:26; Rom. 5:12).*
- 2) *All share special worth and dignity (Gen. 1:26, 27; 5:3).*
- 3) *All believers share spiritual unity (Gal. 3:28; I Cor. 12:13).*

Based on the Creation (Dr. Joe Martin)

- Unity was established by God in Creation.
- The persons of the Godhead were working in harmony in Creation and the two in God's image were in harmony with each other.
- The unity and cooperation with God and each other were to reflect the unity and cooperation in the Godhead.
- *Sin destroyed this harmony, alienating them from God, from each other, from the rest of Creation.*
- God's salvation reverses the effects on sin, restoring fellowship with God and each other.

Based on Koinonia in the Trinity (Dr. Ray Easley)

- The Three Dwell in Perfect Fellowship: *Koinonia = "Fellowship, a close mutual relationship, participation, sharing in partnership."*
- The Three Dwell in Perfect Harmony: *perichoresis = "the unceasing movement*

of shared love, cyclical movement, interchange, reciprocity; the round dance of love."

– Perichoresis: "Genuine acceptance removes fear and hiding and creates freedom to know and be known. In this freedom arises a fellowship and sharing so honest and open and real that persons involved dwell in one another. *There is union without loss of individual identity. When one weeps, the other tastes salt.* It is only in the Triune relationship of Father, Son and Spirit that personal relationship of this order exists and the early church used the word "perichoresis" to describe it. (Dr. Baxter Kruger, www.perichoresis.org)

Based on Christ's Sacrificial Death on the Cross (Eph. 2:14-19)

- Christ made both one.
- Christ broke down the dividing wall.
- Christ established peace between us.
- Christ created one new man/the church.
- Christ incorporated all into one body.
- Through Christ all believers have access to the Father.
- Through Christ all believers are fellow citizens.
- Through Christ all believers are members of God's household.

We must guard our unity. (Eph. 4:3)

MINISTRY UPDATES

STAY AT HOME SUMMER ENRICHMENT

As In His Steps entered the summer months with COVID-19 still a concern, we began looking for alternative ways to run our Summer Enrichment program. After much prayer from the program's director and coordinator, Mrs. Carolyn Bacon and Ms. Jasmine Thompson, **the Lord directed our paths to develop the Stay at Home Summer Enrichment program.**

This program is currently serving 15 students from 2nd grade to 10th grade. Every Monday for 5 weeks this summer, Mrs. Bacon and Ms. Jasmine are dropping off packets focused on Bible study, Reading and Math skills, as well as a memory verse for the week focused on salvation. The students will be given the opportunity to recite the memory verse the following week for a prize, and the packets will be picked up by Mrs. Bacon and Ms. Jasmine to check for progress and where additional help is needed.

HONORING HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES

To celebrate the graduating athletes class of 2020, Sports Director Christin Howard decided to give out gift baskets to all of the senior athletes at Canton High School. He says, "we wanted to give them something to remember us by and to show our appreciation for all their hard work." The baskets were filled with items for college such as dryer sheets and laundry detergent, as well as fun things like snacks, gatorade, and a gift card. **To encourage them, the baskets also included a Bible, salvation tract, and a personal letter from Christin.** "We hope that this placed more seeds in their lives and that it's another changing point for them. We believe that this resembles the love Christ shows us everyday in giving us gifts and blessings." We look forward to seeing where these young men and women go in life, and we ask you to pray over them with us as they enter into college or the work force!

THE BIBLE AND RACISM

7 - RESPONSES EVERY CHRISTIAN HEART NEEDS TO HAVE TOWARDS "RACISM"

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1. **GRIEF:** Grieve with one another and for one another. Weep with and rejoice with one another (Rom. 12:15).
2. **HATRED FOR FAVORITISM:** Scripture speaks against favoritism, pride and arrogance (James 2:8-10; Acts 10:34; Rom. 12:5).
3. **HUMILITY:** When we think we know all the answers, we can only have arguments, not conversations. (James 3:18; Phil. 2:5-8).
4. **REPENTANCE FOR RACISM:** We must be brave and humble enough to submit our perspectives and biases before God and let the Holy Spirit guide us and change us (Ps. 139: 23, 24).
5. **RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE:** Race discrimination is another form of disrespect for human life, just like human trafficking, abortion, euthanasia, etc. (Gen. 1:26, 27).
6. **COMMITMENT TO UNITY:** Jesus' dying request for his followers was their complete love and unity (Eph. 4:1-3; Gal. 3:28; John 17:21-23).
7. **COURAGE TO ACT:** It takes faith and determination to consider a long-standing position and change it (II Tim. 1:7).

Definition of Racism:

The attitude on the part of one racial group that is superior to another race and attempts to segregate, eliminate or dominate the others.

RACISM IS SIN:

- *Violates (Gen. 1:26)*
- *Violates (Eph. 4:1-2)*
- *Violates (Rom. 12:3)*
- *Violates (Matt. 22:37, 39)*
- *Violates (James 2:9)*
- *Violates (Phil. 2:5-8)*
- *Violates (Acts 10:28, 34, 35)*