

A LUTHERAN RESPONSE TO RACE, CULTURE AND ETHNICITY (RaCE) IN THE CHURCH



SESSION THREE

BIG IDEA #3:

**“TWO-KINGDOMS” THEOLOGY: WHAT
ARE ITS IMPLICATIONS WITH REGARD
TO *RaCE*?**

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In our first two weeks of the 3-week foundational portion of this series, we have some take-aways.

Much of the discussion and debate surrounding RaCE, fails because we do not have shared definitions.

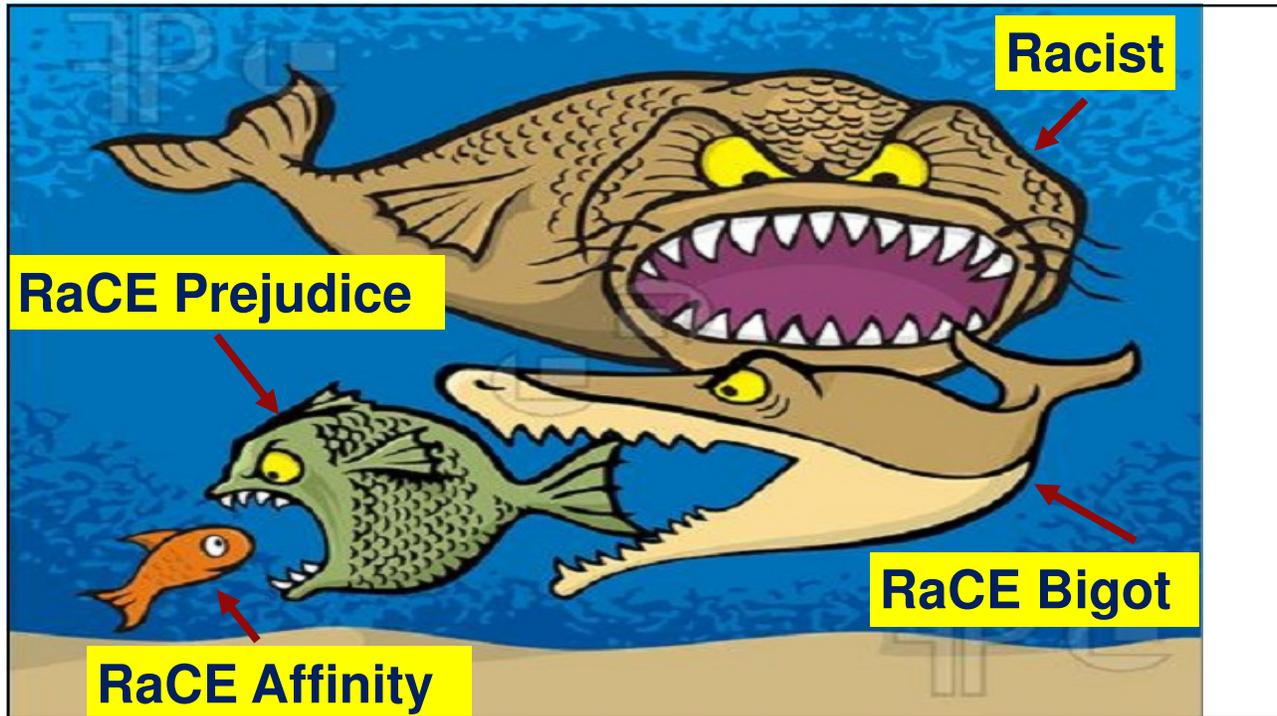
Thus, for this class, a fair, valuable and prescriptive definition of racism has been formulated.

Racism – the view and subsequent practice, that not all humans are *quantitatively, equally human. That is to say, some humans are quantitatively superior and others, subsequently inferior. This belief is essentially based on one's racial and/or ethnic properties.

*quantitative refers to amount.

With respect to the definition of *racism* we discovered how it protects associated concepts such as:

- RaCE bigot
- RaCE prejudice
- RaCE affinity



We also discovered that no matter one's view regarding the debate over whether race is a biological or social construct, or both

We also discovered that no matter one's view regarding the debate over whether race is a biological or social construct, or both - *none of those positions actually solves the tension on the matter.*

In our first session we mentioned some well-intended and notable personalities within the church attempting to deal with this matter both in the kingdom on the right and the kingdom on the left.

Unfortunately, their theological prescriptions generally have some synonymous failings. These deficiencies are remedied by Lutheran theology.

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Their error comes through a failure to thoroughly understand the two kingdoms robustly and their intended boundaries, thus, functions, by and from God. Hence, we begin today's lesson here.

The Two Kingdoms Of Divine Regulation For Human Protection, Prosperity And Perpetuity

The Two Kingdoms Of Divine Regulation For Human Protection, Prosperity And Perpetuity

THE RIGHT/SPIRITUAL
KINGDOM



The Two Kingdoms Of Divine Regulation For Human Protection, Prosperity And Perpetuity

THE RIGHT/SPIRITUAL
KINGDOM



THE LEFT/CIVIL
KINGDOM



I am only going to provide a brief argument for Luther's theological construct of the two kingdoms since we covered this in our 2015 series, you may read online at the church website, [The Practical Christian Life: Living in the Two Kingdoms](http://www.rlcnn.org/the-practical-christian-life-living-in-the-two-kingdoms/).

Here is the web address:

<http://www.rlcnn.org/the-practical-christian-life-living-in-the-two-kingdoms/>

The Book of Concord in ***Article XVI***: of political order affirms Martin Luther's presentation of God's construct of the world (taken from his message on two kinds of righteousness) as reflected in the Scriptures with the expression, "the two kingdoms" (originally formulated by Luther as "two governments"). On the left is/are the government(s) of the world and on the right, the government of God's kingdom/the spiritual kingdom, i.e. the church.

Philipp Melanchthon, a layman contemporary and collaborator with Luther, further refined this theological view of the law and gospel paradigm as a means of understanding Scripture, in stating that not only are there two kingdoms but the church should not rule civic/worldly governments and civic/worldly governments should not rule the church, specifically saying they (governments of the world) should “not have anything to do with the salvation of souls.”

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Some very important passages which reflect this division *in the age of the church*.

Left Kingdom

Romans 13:1-7 (ESV)

1 Peter 2:13-17

Right Kingdom

1 Peter 5:1-5

Acts 20:28

Ephesians 4:11-16

So clearly, the New Testament gives us not only two distinct kingdoms, a left and right or civil and spiritual, but separate objectives with proprietary protocols for those two kingdoms.

Thus, whenever someone cites a Bible passage regarding what they think a civil government is morally or ethically obliged to do, one must first ask him or herself, is that being addressed to all people or believers (*Christians, those born again by faith in Christ*)?

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Why is this question so important to ask yourself?

Question:

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What is a Biblical civil government?

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What does it look like?

Monarchy – royal authority subject to the rule of law

Autocracy –individual dictatorship or a one-party dominant system

Hegemony –military rule

Oligarchy – small group ruling

Tribal–one supreme head often with elders

Ethnonationalism – formed on the basis of shared ethnic origins

Republic – shared values usually expressed in a constitution

As we read in Romans, civil government is commissioned to:

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Collect taxes – decide the what is for the welfare of a state and use that money in that manner

Here is a passage for you to consider and is the basis for recognizing the sovereignty of nations both with respect to their boundaries and to their constituent citizenry by God's intent.

Acts 17: 24-27a: (From Paul's sermon at Mars Hill, parenthesis mine)

²⁴ the God who made the world and all things in it... ²⁶ made from one *man* every nation (ἔθνος - **ethnos**) of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ that they would seek god,

The Greek word ἔθνος (ethnos), which is translated, *nation*, in referring to πᾶν (pan) *every*, ἔθνος (ethnos) **nation**, is translated as such because most nations were formed from a shared ethnicity.

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Our use of the word *ethnic*, in English, is not quite so specific with respect to nationality, though it may be but often a shared regional heritage.

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But does the passage require a shared ethnic commonality or is it simply a matter of it being predominant thus, that is how the reference developed?

My answer is no, it would be errant to read ethnonationalism as God's preferred design rather, that while it was the predominant means by which nations developed, this is only a descriptive use, not a prescriptive one in Paul's reference.

Which brings us to these United States.

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Are we ethnonational or multi-ethnonational?

As I said, our class is not here to prescribe what sort of government and social order is best for this nation rather, to point out that when it comes to prescriptions from the Bible for governmental and social formation, there is not much in the way of dogma and a great deal of legitimate but disagreed upon, options.

We have a brief video by Dinesh D'Souza, via the Prager U series on YouTube, dealing with our multi-ethnic country.

He is an immigrant from Mumbai, Maharashtra, India, a graduate of Dartmouth and conservative political commentator and Christian teacher.



How does this video help address some of the core ***RACE*** conflict in the United States?

It is easily observed that race is not something a person is, in a vacuum; neither is culture or ethnicity. They are the native mechanism world wide by which people develop a left kingdom identity. However, people can be so tied to these things that they are unable to integrate with others or at least, live in peace among their neighbors. And frankly, sometimes it is difficult when two very contrasting cultures are placed together.

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What are some good American values?

So now to a new acronym. In the left kingdom, we have RaCE – which stands for *race, culture* and *ethnicity*, which all play a key role in the development of nations, policy and so forth. Some nations prefer a singular focus while others a more plural ethnic form with a shared national identity and value system. The Bible does not prescribe specific civil governmental forms.

Acts 17:26 - ²⁶ made from one *man* every nation (**ἔθνος** -*ethnos*) of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation.

This is a left kingdom construct. It is the habitual and common design of most nations though, as we said, it is used descriptively, not prescriptively.

The Two Kingdoms Of Divine Regulation For Human Protection, Prosperity And Perpetuity

THE LEFT/CIVIL KINGDOM

Acts: 17:26

RaCE - Many Races,
Cultures, and Ethnicities

—

So what about the kingdom on the right?
What about the church?

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I am so glad you asked.



Three very important passages:

Galatians 3:28

2 Corinthians 5:17

1 Peter 2: 9

Galatians 3:28 –there is neither Jew nor Greek,
there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither
male nor female; for you are all one in Christ
Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:17-19: **16** therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *him in this way* no longer. **17** therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new (καινός, kainos) creature (κτίσις, ktisis); the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

2 Corinthians 5:17-19: **18** now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, **19** namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

1 Peter 2: 9 - ⁹ but you are A CHOSEN RACE (γένος, genos), A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION (ἔθνος, ethnos), A PEOPLE FOR *god's* OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light;

The Two Kingdoms Of Divine Regulation For Human Protection, Prosperity And Perpetuity

THE RIGHT/SPIRITUAL
KINGDOM – THE
CHURCH

1 Peter 2:9

THE LEFT/CIVIL
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RaCE - Many Races,
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GRaCE - God's race, culture and ethnicity

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THE RIGHT/SPIRITUAL KINGDOM – THE CHURCH

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THE LEFT/CIVIL KINGDOM - GOVERNMENT

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RaCE - Many races, cultures, and ethnicities –

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THE RIGHT/SPIRITUAL KINGDOM – THE CHURCH

1 Peter 2:9

2 Corinthians 5:17

Galatians 3:28

GRaCE - God's race, culture and ethnicity

End Session Three