ANOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON RACE, JUSTICE, AND DIVERSITY

The resources in this document come from a wide variety of perspectives—Christian and non-Christian, academic and practical. Some of the authors operate from a worldview that may not align with a Christian worldview, and at points, stands in opposition to it. These resources reflect a critical journey to read widely, listen to diverse voices, empathize with people of different backgrounds and experiences, and grow in my own understanding and leadership. Resources marked with an asterisk (*) are resources that I have flagged as more controversial and “advanced,” that is, these are resources that should be read a little further along in the process, once you have a more rooted, biblical understanding of race, justice, and diversity.

Academic Resources


This book examines the preaching style of Gardner Taylor and his ability to speak effectively to white churches and congregations. This book also contains a succinct and fair critique of black liberation theology. Recommended for preachers.


An academic book which is a case-study of a white-majority church starting a multisite campus in a downtown, urban context. Sheds light on the inauthenticity of tokenism.


This academic work analyzes multiethnic churches. The primary finding is that multiethnic churches are only as multiethnic as the white Christians in the church allows it to be. There is great resistance among white congregants to embrace becoming a truly diverse church.


This academic work examines why many churches fail to engage in racial reconciliation. White Christians approach race with a toolbox—individualism (start with your heart), relationships (become friends with the other), and antistructuralism (racism does not exist in systems, but individuals). Black Christians, however, view American culture as a racialized society that has systems which need reformed. For these reasons, Black and White Christians do not see eye-to-eye.


This book was an analysis of 2010 census data and made projections of what the future of America is heading towards—one that is minority-majority and increasingly multiethnic.

A book on Christian cultural engagement. A pretty academic work (written by a lawyer and focuses on a lot of legal cases and their interpretations); however, strong application points and a much-needed message for today.


Sanneh looks at how Christianity originated and spread. His key insight is that the Bible was culturally “unlocked” from its inception. Jesus, an Aramaic-speaking Jew, had all his words recorded in Greek in the New Testament. This subtle thing means that no culture has a claim on Christ; all have access to him.


The global center of Christianity is moving southward. Rah paints a picture of what the future of Christianity looks like and why this is good news for the world.

American Life and the Black Experience


This work of sociology looks at the inner city of Philadelphia and the origins of the unwritten rules that govern the “streets.”


Coates writes about his experience on being black in America. The book is written as a series of letters from father to son. A helpful read to take the first step.


A highly recommended work. Dr. Ellis traces the history of African American thought and how the biblical narratives connect to the Black experience.


A book aimed at giving urban churches practical ways to do ministry in an urban setting. The big idea is contact ministry, being “on the block” and getting to know those immediately around you.


Loritts retells his experience as a Black Christian pastor in white-majority evangelical spaces. A lot to learn here. Recommended for those in ministry.

*Mason pulls no punches as he discusses the state of American Christianity. He argues for how to combat racism, pursue reconciliation, and work for justice. Ligon Duncan writes a heartfelt foreword.*


*Perkins, a civil rights advocate, reflects on his life and offers a challenge to Christians to persist in the work of racial justice.*


*Stevenson, founder of Equal Justice Initiative, talks about the problems of racial injustice and policing. Moving narrative which builds empathy.*


*Robinson has a diverse background, and she uses the exodus narrative to both tell her story and convey principles she has learned from the minority experience.*


*Tisby examines the roots of American racism and how it grew unaddressed in the American church. Contains some practical applications at the end. Tisby has received criticism from many in the PCA, but his history and story-telling are eye-opening.*


*A memoir of a Latino Christian who grew up without a father and influenced by rap culture. Provides insight into fatherhood and the importance of family structures and healing in broken homes.*

**Christian Ministry**


*An accessible guide on how to respond to objections to Christianity that are common among those in the African American community. Quick read.*


*This book is an examination of power and how Christians ought to steward it. Chapters, 6, 8, and 10 are insightful to understanding the Black church tradition. Also contains a helpful excursus on Philemon.*

This book utilizes a 2x2 grid that gives a framework for flourishing: flourishing, suffering, withdrawal, and exploiting. Those who flourish “descend to the dead,” entering into spaces of suffering to lift up those being exploited. This speaks to the difficulty of reconciliation. Flourishing is to possess authority and vulnerability and to take on more vulnerability to serve the hurting.


This course connects apologetics and the African American community, focusing on core concerns and providing a history of the development of African American thought, as well as why “traditional” apologetics often doesn’t connect.


This book provides some practical steps on engaging in works of justice in the church’s particular community. Pretty generic action points.


A Puerto Rican pastor ministering in East Harlem, he retells his story and how the church can make an impact when it invests in a community and stays in place.


An exposition of Philemon with a focus on reconciliation. Short and practical.


An assessment of the Black church experience in the UK. Contains both historical data and practical applications for churches.


The main idea in this book is what if familiarity did not breed contempt, but love? This book contains pastoral reflections on being invested in the community and loving place.


Rah looks at biblical lament, its value, and its place in the process of racial reconciliation.

Swanson, David W. *Rediscipling the White Church: From Cheap Diversity to True Solidarity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020.


This book looks at ways to introduce more diversity into corporate worship. Contains many good ideas and gives helpful tips on how to implement change.

**Contemporary Sources**


Periodical podcast covering current events from a Black, Christian perspective. Good resource for getting a quick pulse on the culture.


Periodical podcast covering current events from a female, Black, Christian perspective. Good resource for getting a quick pulse on the culture.


A collection of essays on how to engage culture and be a faithful witness for Christ.


Newbell’s aim is to help the reader see the beauty of unity (not uniformity) and how churches should be in the business of reconciliation, as it is near to God’s heart. Practical and accessible.


A book on friendship that isn’t cheesy. Chapter 14 on befriending the other race is pertinent to this bibliography.


Wear worked during Obama’s first term. As a Christian Democrat, he explains parts of the democratic platform (which in our era of identity politics) in a helpful way, allowing those of the other party to find common ground on important issues.
**Historical Sources**

Douglass, Frederick. “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?”
https://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/what-to-the-slave-is-the-fourth-of-july/

_A historical address by Frederick Douglass, exposing the hypocrisy of American Christians and the racist systems it protects._

King, Jr., Martin Luther. “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.”

_A must-read essay from the civil rights movement that still has moral force today._

Lewis John, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell. _March._ Marietta, GA: Top Shelf Production, 2016.

_A series of graphic novels retelling the story of the civil rights movement._

**Leadership**


_This book, primarily on change and leadership, contains a lesson for those who want to enact large-scale change: your ability to grow is limited to the extent you are willing to endure pain. This may explain why many white churches do not pursue genuine racial reconciliation—they may find the cost too high._


_This book is a collection of essays from minority pastors on how to build better bridges and incorporate their perspectives._


_This book looks at a Christian approach to power. Chapter 5 is an interview with John Perkins, a Christian and a civil rights activist. This chapter is worth a read._


_Irwyn’s book moves from the doctrine of God and the divine attribute of beauty to paint a picture of what the Church can be as a beautiful, diverse community. Highly recommend._


_A leadership book in the vein of Patrick Lencioni that helps white churches identify what to look for in a diverse hire. His categories can be seen as simplistic, but a helpful framework for those starting from square one._

*Pei, an Asian-American, writes about how minorities navigate Christian churches and organizations. Helpful for those in majority culture to identify their blind spots.*

**PCA Resources**

Kwon, Duke. “Speaking the Truth in Love.” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejNaO_ec_Uk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejNaO_ec_Uk)

*A sermon—primarily for black Christians—on how to engage their white brothers and sisters. Also contains ideas for “ecclesial reparations,” that is, ways to imagine a way forward for our brown believers in the PCA.*


*The denominational report on race, ethnicity, and reconciliation, containing history and action steps. A must read.*
The author suggests that the types of words and terminology used to describe race and diversity are important because these communicate much about people’s attitudes. Those who are in power often approve of this language, which, as a result, influences the ways in which people think. "Diversity and Leadership: The Color of Leadership" by Alire, Camila A. (2001) discusses the need to increase the number of minorities in library leadership, the types of situations that they are likely to encounter and how to further empower themselves.

We argue that the racial discrimination at issue flows in significant part from implicit biases concerning race, criminality, and violence, which do not fit comfortably within the picture of racial bias advanced by the courts. The case for abolition, we contend, rests on Black Americans as a class (not merely those who interact with the criminal justice system as capital defendants or as murder victims) being subject to such bias and thereby not being accorded equal status under the law. Capital Punishment in Applied Ethics.

The annotated bibliography is organized alphabetically by author. Each annotation summarizes the major points of each article, highlights the distinctive contribution made by each piece, and, on occasion, flags limitations or problems in the work. A list of additional readings follows the annotated bibliography. This list contains five sections:
1. conceptual work on race, ethnicity, and racism;
2. classic EJ publications;
3. recent EJ literature reviews;
4. special journal issues on EJ or related topics; and
5. recent publications not summarized in the essay.

Works Cited
Bullard, Rob