

Yeshua

MISHPACHAH

A NEWSLETTER TO THE FAMILY OF JESUS FROM RESTORATION MINISTRIES

The Hebraic family is not simply an individual or private matter. Rather, it is an institution in which the whole community has a stake. Thus, the Hebrew word "mishpachah," meaning family, not only refers to parents and children, but to the whole extended family worldwide in the body of "Yeshua"— our Jesus.

Dear Friends,

One of the awful effects of bitterness is racism. It is a sinister hatred of others that has destroyed millions of people. There is a problem for the followers of Jesus.

Racism

People tell us that the level of racism is about the same both inside and outside the Church. This should not be! We would like to propose that racism is the *absence* of God's *agape* (sacrificial, unconditional) love in the lives of His people. It is the result of our stubborn unwillingness to humbly appropriate His grace to love.

Contrary to the media portrayal that racism has to do specifically with race, racism is a demonic spirit manifesting itself in many ways. It is the force behind sarcasm and name-calling, and in the prejudice of one person subjugating, belittling, or ignoring another. It is displayed in the narrow-mindedness and judgmental attitudes created by the doctrinal differences that divide the Church today.

It is manifested through sexism, bigotry, and injustice. It can be recognized when a husband subjugates his family under a false assumption about his

authority.

Racism agitates the husband who fails to be considerate of his wife as God's Word demands (see 1 Pet. 3:7). It is seen in the bitter attitude of children who sit in judgment of their parents and fail to honor them. During our 10 years at the retreat center, we saw that bitterness toward fathers was Satan's trap for a majority of God's children. True to His Word, God made sure nothing went well for those who were bitter (see Eph. 6:1-3).

Racism is identified in the self-gratifying father who pursues his own achievements and pleasures, but fails to obey God's command to "*bring up [his] children in the training and instruction of the Lord.*" By not obeying God, this man nullifies his children's importance to him. They withdraw from him in exasperation (see Eph. 6:4).

Racism appears in the businessman whose desire for greed and power wounds and corrupts his employees. Racism emerges in the church leader who thinks too highly of his position, failing to grasp the humble servanthood Christ requires of shepherds toward the flocks entrusted to their care (see Matt. 23:8-11).

This is a trustworthy saying:

Equipping the Church to Go Back for its Future

"You cannot follow Jesus and be controlled by the spirit of racism. You cannot eat at the table of the Lord and the table of demons." (See 1 Cor. 10:21,22.)

The demonic spirit of racism is behind the incredible intolerance that is now manifesting itself so powerfully in the US. Even many Christian and politically conservative radio and TV talk show hosts demean those with whom they differ. This spirit was behind the rise of Nazism in the 1920's in Germany. It is a spirit powerful enough to have seduced an entire educated, "Christian" society. The spirit of racism empowered the Nazi weapons of intolerance: slander, demeaning insults, rationalized violence. Through intolerance the Nazis convinced others to accept their point of view....and millions died!

In the Christian community racism is found wherever a counterfeit gospel is accepted. The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls for us to empty ourselves of all we are, and to receive by faith through grace the nature of Jesus Christ. Our entry into the family of God begins with our humility to see our own depravity brought about by our sins. Only then can we fully appreciate our Lord's sacrifice on our

behalf. The true Gospel never² I continue to re-member his integrity and kindness, and trust that I can help others by his example.

Several years later, following my third deployment to Vietnam, I was assigned as Equal Opportunity Officer at a command that had a serious discrimination problem. God was kind enough to use me to help undo the tension.

Confrontations with Racism

My first encounter with blatant racism came in a movie theater when I was 14 years old. As I walked into the men's room, three white boys were beating up a black boy. As I stepped in to fight on his behalf, the three ran away. Thus I met Charlie Wright, who was to be my best friend throughout high school.

The next occurrence came when I entered Aviation Officer Candidate School in Pensacola, Florida. The Marine drill instructor assigned to our battalion hated two types of people, "Yankees and Polaks". I was a Polish kid from Connecticut. His brutal treatment of me and his influence on the rest of the men in my battalion caused me to be beaten up in the showers on several occasions. I thought of dropping out many times, but no one in my family had ever "flunked out" of the military. Halfway through my four months of OCS, God had me encounter a Marine Major who had received the Congressional Medal of Honor in Vietnam. In a most amazing way the Lord led Major Pless to investigate my treatment at the hands of the drill instructor. The Major appeared at my discharge hearing and saved my career. Ten days later Major Pless was killed in a motor cycle accident.

Every human being discriminates. When you order a strawberry sundae instead of peach, you are discriminating. It doesn't necessarily mean you hate peach, you just prefer strawberry. You discriminate in your selection of clothes, movies, friends. Discrimination becomes *prejudicial* when your choice of a particular person or group causes you to take a negative stance toward whomever you didn't choose. God's people become captives to the spirit of racism when they are prejudiced toward someone who doesn't believe the same way as they do, or who fails in some other criterion of acceptance they have established. When your privilege to discriminate becomes prejudicial, you become one of the people Paul warns Timothy about: "...that they will come to their senses and escape from the **trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will**" (2 Tim. 2:26).

Why Did We Write about Racism?

Two weeks ago I had a vivid dream: A close friend and I were asked by God to involve ourselves in stopping a race riot that was going to occur in

Atlanta in the near future. God wanted to use us in some way to bring reconciliation among His people. My friend got distracted and the riot occurred, bringing great destruction. After the riots ended, God used my friend and me to bring healing among His people.

Racism in the Early Church

The Pharisees at the time of Jesus epitomized religious racism. The Pharisees looked down on all who were not like them. Jesus didn't have a lot of good things to say about them: "*Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are....Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have **neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness.** You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former*" (Matt. 23:13,15,23). The Pharisees judged everyone by standards of correct behavior. Our God wants *right hearts* lovingly concerned with mercy, justice, and faithfulness to His Word.

Many are unaware that the early Church was confronted by racism. Only their *agape* love enabled them to avoid this trap.

In the early Church there were³ Aramaic-speaking and Greek-speaking Jews: *"In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food."* How did God's people solve the problem? *"So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.' This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip..."*(Acts 6:1-5).

This same Philip, one of the Greek-speaking Jews, was instrumental in bringing the Gospel to the Samaritans, who were despised by the Jews as a mixed breed of people. *"Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there"* (Acts 8:4,5). The presence of the Holy Spirit caused the Hebraic Jews to affirm God's *agape* love for all people: *"When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit"* (Acts 8:14,15). Wherever the Holy Spirit dwells, the fruit He brings

is *agape* love - a love which esteems others above ourselves (see Phil. 2:3).

In our last letter we asked you to test yourselves: Is the *agape* love of God present in your life? If God's people in the US who are called by His name would humble themselves and ask Him to fill them with His Spirit to give them hearts that would love as He would, we could avert the destruction that is coming. Jesus warned the religious establishment of His day that they had neglected justice and the love of God (see Lk. 11:42). Is the Lord accusing the US Church of this today? Jesus warned that there would be a time when *"because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold"* (Matt. 24:12). Has the fulfillment of this warning come on the US?

David Wilkerson's Feb. newsletter came today. The title is, *"The Death of Compassion."* Remember that *agape* love is a compassionate, benevolent love, sometimes translated as "charity." Wilkerson writes, "compassion is not just pity or sympathy. It is more than being moved to tears or stirred up emotionally—more than speaking out about the evil behind such crimes. Compassion means pity and mercy accom-

panied by a desire to help change things. Truly compassionate feelings move us to do something!...God wants every one of us to be part of his compassionate heart to the world. So present yourself to the Lord to be used. He will open the doors for you. Then you will truly know his heart of compassion!" One dear friend defined compassion as *"with passion."*

Will God's People Pray?

When we were in Israel a few years ago, prophecies were given about the US: A holocaust against the Jews and followers of Jesus will come that will surpass the one in Europe 50 years ago. Before you pray, repent. Repent of your heart's unlovingness toward your spouse, your children, your boss, your neighbors, others in your faith community. First cleanse yourself, then pray (see James 5:16). The Bible tells us that God relents in answer to humble repentance. He hears the righteous prayers of His people. Political action will not save us. Our deliverance has to come from the King of Kings. The problem is too big for anyone else to handle.

Our love,

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