

Dear FAC family,

My heart grieves as I reflect on the several racial injustices from the past several weeks and the ensuing riots that came as a result. While these individual incidents are atrocious, they point to a much more significant problem of racism that is still present in our country. As I pray and consider the state of our country, it has brought to light what has always been evident: that we are in great need of our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ.

It's in moments such as these that I am thankful we serve not only a God of perfect love, but also a God of perfect justice who will not let injustice go unaccounted for. Scripture teaches that Jesus paid for such injustice at the cross, and when Christ returns, he returns as a judge who will call for account from those who did not repent and submit to him. Wrath and vengeance will be his (Romans 12:19) and all wrongs will be made right. That will be a glorious day!

Until that day comes, let me be perfectly clear that racism of any kind from any person or group is evil, divisive, and spiritually demonic and cannot be connected with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel of Jesus Christ teaches that all human beings have value—not based on the color of their skin, but based on the fact that they were made in the image of God.

In light of all of this, I am calling upon our church to join me in prayer for our country and community. I would ask that we pray specifically for the following items.

1. Pray for the black community who is suffering in a way that many of us will never completely understand. This community has experienced countless acts of injustice and oppression. For every incident that is caught on tape, there are multitudes that go unnoticed. We have brothers and sisters who are hurting and we need to listen. Scripture calls on us to mourn with those who mourn (Romans 12:15). Pray that this community would see justice in their lifetime rather than having to wait until the day Christ returns.

2. Pray for peace and unity in our country. Pray that we would be able to make progress on such issues without further violence and destruction. Satan thrives in chaos, which God will not stand for—our God is a God of peace. (Romans 16:17-20).

3. Pray that God would reveal sin in our own heart in these issues as we evaluate and ponder such situations individually. Psalm 139:23-24 says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" (ESV)

4. Pray for those who sit in the seat of the oppressor. Pray that God's kindness would lead them to a place of repentance (Romans 2:4). Pray that God would be glorified as he enacts the proper justice on the oppressor. 5. Pray that all believers would be advocates of those oppressed. That believers would be advocates of truth. That believers would be advocates of justice. And most importantly, that believers would be advocates of the gospel of Jesus Christ that has the power to change the hearts of mankind (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

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