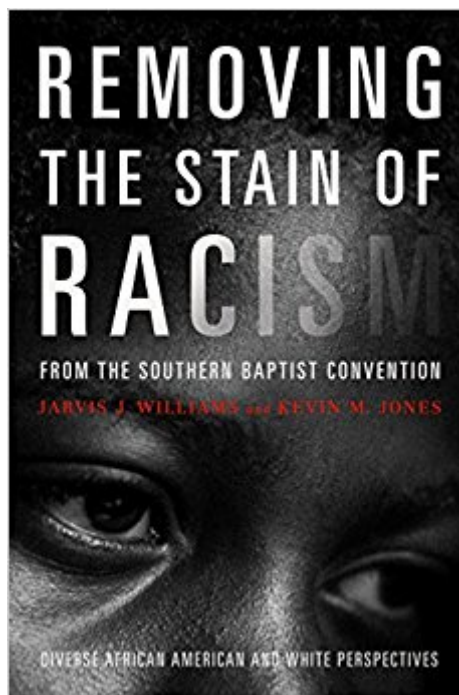


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Removing The Stain Of Racism From The Southern Baptist Convention: Diverse African American And White Perspectives



Synopsis

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has a historical stain. The SBC once affirmed slavery and openly opposed and condemned abolitionists. Even though the convention repented of this sin publicly, a profound divide between the white majority and the black and brown minority still exists for many churches. This stain is more than historical fact; it prohibits Southern Baptist churches from embracing the one new man in Christ promised in Ephesians 2:11–22 and from participating in the new song of the saints from every tongue, tribe, people, and nation in Revelation 5:9. The glorious gospel of Jesus Christ commands all his followers to do our part in removing racism from our midst. Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention is a powerful and practical call to sacrifice, humility, and perseverance—along with a relentless commitment to Christian unity—for the sake of the gospel and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

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Customer Reviews

“Contributors to this work can seldom avoid referencing their personal stories, evidencing the extent to which the book reveals the souls of the authors. Rest assured, the chapters will also touch the souls of the readers. Southern Baptists have needed this book for a long time.”
—Paul H. Chitwood, Kentucky Baptist Convention

“Removing the Stain of Racism is not only essential reading for all who are committed to racial reconciliation in the SBC, but is a call to genuine repentance and gospel-centered living for Christ-followers everywhere. Readers should reflect with care, doing so with an open Bible along

with a prepared heart, recognizing the need for continued faithfulness, further illumination, and enhanced understanding.

•David S. Dockery, Trinity International University/Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
“A true gift to the church—whether Southern Baptist or any other branch of the Christian faith—this is a must read for those serious about removing the deep stain of racism.”

•Michael O. Emerson, North Park University
“Though the focus is on the SBC, the writers bring this voice to the church of Jesus Christ in general. I applaud the expertise and courage of each contributor.”

•Bruce L. Fields, Trinity International University/Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
“Yes, racism is alive and at work in the SBC. But so is Jesus. This work deals honestly with the former and points us all to the hope inherent in the latter. Southern Baptists of every shade ought to take up and read!”

•Steven Harris, The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention
“Williams and Jones offer gospel-saturated biblical insights on how we can see Christ purge not only our convention but his global bride from every sinful implication of racism.”

•D.A. Horton, Reach Fellowship, North Long Beach, CA
“As a pastor in a multi-ethnic community and as a parent in a multi-racial household, my prayer is that God will use this book in such a way that a far more wondrous kaleidoscope of colors and cultures will mark the future of the SBC.”

•Timothy Paul Jones, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
“This book makes a clarion call to contemporary Southern Baptist Christians and evangelical churches in America to transcend the barriers of race, ethnicity, ideology, and cultural traditions for the sake of Christ, for the sake of the gospel, and for the sake of the lost—to the majestic glory and fame of the eternal and immortal Triune God.”

•Celucien L. Joseph, Indian River State College
“It is heartening to see a volume like this one, which is brimming with judicious reflections and compelling exhortations on how we can break down the—dividing walls of hostility—, that still separate Baptists.”

•Thomas S. Kidd, Baylor University
“This honest, unveiling confrontation of the SBC’s past is the foundation needed to bring about meaningful change in the present, and establish a renewed SBC in the future.”

•Alex Medina, Vox Media
“The Southern Baptist Convention of the year 2050 will be truly multiethnic, or it will be dead. Which of these two paths is chosen will depend on how much gospel courage this generation will have, and on how much we believe the inerrant Bible we preach. May God use *Removing the Stain* to help us!”

•Russell D. Moore, The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention
“This powerful book

is written for Southern Baptists, but should be read by all American believers. . . . Its great strength is to root the hope of racial reconciliation in the promise of the gospel.

—Mark Noll, University of Notre Dame

“The aim of this book isn’t lament, but lasting change. But the pathway to lasting change is paved with stones of discomfort that come from honest dialogue. I’m eager to see how the Lord uses this in the life of pastors, churches, and this denomination.”

—John Onwuchekwa, Cornerstone Church, Atlanta, GA

“May this timely book encourage all believers toward such humility and courage that this generation might see the beauty of Jesus among us.”

—Ray Ortlund, Immanuel, Nashville, TN

“The volume is a compass to assist us in finding our way from the labyrinth of iniquity in which many of our founders languished, and in which all too many still remain. If you care, read this book. If you do not care, there is yet time to repent.”

—Paige Patterson, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

“May many inside and outside of the SBC read this team’s work and so strive to help move their congregations toward the removal of remaining spots, blind spots, and blemishes related to racism, for the sake of Christ’s glory in all the earth.”

—Eric C. Redmond, Moody Bible Institute

“If you want to be a part of the much-needed change for the better in the Southern Baptist Convention, I encourage you to read this book, and, by God’s grace and in his strength, join in the work to remove this stain.”

—Juan R. Sanchez, High Pointe Baptist Church, Austin, TX

“This collection seeks to lance the boil of racism and drain its unhealthy and sinister content instead of simply providing a band aid for a wound that will not heal on its own.”

—Robert Smith Jr., Beeson Divinity School/ Samford University

“This book will shine as a lamp of reconciliation for generations to come and gives other Christian denominations, fellowships, and institutions an example to follow.”

—Jemar Tisby, Reformed African American Network

“I highly doubt readers will walk away from this book the same. When it comes to racial harmony the authors are bold, passionate, winsome, and gospel-centered.”

—Cam Triggs, Grace Alive, Orlando, FL

“Written with the force and weight reminiscent of Soong-Chan Rah’s *The Next Evangelicalism*, this book should not only be read by pastors and leaders, but should be studied and used as a reference by churches and other gospel movements in their own particular pursuits of racial reconciliation.”

—Darryl Williamson, Living Faith Bible Fellowship, Tampa, FL

“This book is practically and intellectually indispensable

for Baptists, and Christians from every denomination, as we face up to our individual and corporate responsibilities toward one another. — John D. Wilsey, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Kevin M. Jones is associate dean of academic innovation and an assistant professor of teacher education at Boyce College in Louisville, KY. Jarvis J. Williams is associate professor of New Testament interpretation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY and author of numerous books and articles.

Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention is all at once a needed, insightful, heartbreaking, and hopeful book that every Southern Baptist should read. Every SBC member needs to engage the biblical and historical teachings and exhortations laid out from the foreword to the appendices. All of the contributors expertly explain and address their points, with Jarvis J. Williams' chapter still managing to stand out in scholarship, argumentation, and obvious passion to see God glorified through racial reconciliation in the SBC. If you're a pastor, I encourage you to go through whatever proper channels you need to make room in your church budget to buy at least one copy for every household represented in the congregation you serve. May God use this book to bring about major strides in racial reconciliation in the SBC!

Awesome insights. I Love the diversity of contributors.

The release of "Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention," co-edited by Southern Seminary professor Jarvis J. Williams and Boyce College professor Kevin M. Jones, marks an encouraging sign in our denomination's overdue progress. Consider the significance of the book being published by official SBC imprint B&H, whose former name was "Broadman and Holman." Prompted by SBTTS President R. Albert Mohler Jr.'s acknowledgement of "the stain of racism" in his spring 2015 convocation address, Williams and Jones gathered eight additional African-American leaders and three white SBC statesmen to offer insight on improving racial unity in the denomination in areas ranging from preaching, leadership, education, and publishing. "The Southern Baptist Convention has a big, dark, historical stain on it: racism," Williams and Jones write in the preface. "The gospel of

Jesus Christ requires and demands all Southern Baptists to do their parts to erase this stain from the SBC -- or at least to make the stain less apparent. This act requires a relentless obedience to Christian unity. The opening contribution by Mohler reflects on how the SBC was "conceived in sin" because of its founders' support of slavery and a heresy of racial superiority. "Diversity is not an accident or a problem; it is a sign of God's providence and promise," he writes. "If the church gets it wrong, it is not just getting race and ethnic difference wrong. It is getting the gospel wrong." Boyce College Dean Matthew J. Hall follows Mohler's contribution by examining the historical causes of the stain of racism due to the racial hierarchy and hypocrisy of white Baptist leaders through the founding of America, the Civil War, and the Civil Rights movement. Hall contends today's Baptists should "allow the ghosts of our racists forebears to haunt us" to be reminded of the abiding susceptibility to pride and hatred. The heart of the book rests in Williams' lengthy chapter on a biblical vision of racial unity in the SBC. A New Testament professor at SBTS, Williams surveys racial issues in the early church and analyzes how the Scripture offers a model for racial reconciliation, as the gospel has both vertical and horizontal implications. The book also features stellar contributions from Kevin L. Smith on addressing racial unity from the pulpit, Mark A. Croston Sr. on the importance of denominational leadership to hire minorities, and Kevin M. Jones on improving Christian education to include more ethnically diverse reading and curriculum. "Removing the Stain" is an historic achievement, not merely for its presence and symbolism, but because applying its wisdom could alter the future of the SBC.

Jarvis Williams and Kevin Jones have given the Church -- particularly the Southern Baptists in this case (though certainly not limited to them) -- a real gift in their new book, *Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention: Diverse African American and White Perspectives* from B&H Publishers. I really can't speak too highly of this book, of the various essays that compose it, and of the resources for local congregations (and even Christian colleges) in opening the dialog about racism in the Body and how we can remove its stain from the Bride of Christ's clothing. The Southern Baptist Convention (like the Methodists) have a history wrapped in that sinful garb of racism. It was given birth through confrontations in the Church over the place of slavery. The SBC certainly confessed of that sin in 1995, but nothing much has been done by way of the hard work of reconciliation since that confession. That's precisely why Williams and Jones have given us this

collection. Removing the Stain of Racism contains a number of essays in conversation with one another -- "Diverse African American and White" authors -- that help to develop the book's overall point: That Paul's vision in Ephesians 2.11-12 cannot be realized until we Christians do this hard work of racial reconciliation. Some of those voices are more important than others, I think: Jarvis Williams' and Terry Davis' chapters really cannot be missed! But its hopeful "Postscript" says it all: This stain can be removed. There are some closing resources to this book -- the sample syllabus is a must for college religion profs! -- that make it a valuable resource in a number of contexts. Don't miss this book! It's a hard read, but its prophetic call cannot be ignored: The hard work of racial reconciliation still lies in front of the Church. _____ I received a free copy of this book from B&H Publishing in exchange for my honest review here.

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