

The Color of Compromise

Week 6 | Chapter 6

I. Prayer

II. Reflection

How have you seen or experienced the Bible being used to promote behavior and injustice that is against God's idea of the flourishing of all people?

What are the consequences when Scripture isn't used to promote justice and equity?

Reflect on Proverbs 28:5 and Psalm 89:14.

III. The Church, the Klan, the Lost Cause

Book Reflections:

Tisby states his main argument early – that “the end of the Civil War did not bring an end to the battle for black equality.” (p. 88). One question is why was racial hierarchy so important to maintain? How does Tisby explore that?

There is a continued sharp critique of Christians in the South in particular in this chapter. Tisby says, “Throughout this period many American Christians sought to take freedom away from black people, and they frequently invoked their faith to justify the injustice.” (p. 89). What examples does he give? Why, after losing the war, do you believe white Christians responded in this way?

The “lost cause” is a mythological idea that the American South during the time of enslavement was a good and unified experience. Have you encountered that narrative before? Where have you seen evidence of it?

What was most shocking as you read about the enforcement of Jim Crow laws? Why? See p. 103ff.

The act of lynching was meant to be brutal and terrifying – and as Tisby highlights, it was. What do you think this practice meant to accomplish? Why did Christians tolerate or participate in it?

What are the long term consequences of the “lost cause” taking root within Christianity?

How does the use, or misuse, of Christian imagery affect you? Consider a word like “Redemption” and the use the KKK had for it. Or the “Biblical” initiation found on p. 101.

Given the strong intersection of politics and religion, at what point does faith compel us to do something about injustice? What does silence cost? See p. 109.

On p. 94-5, Tisby will mention a “Civil Religion” that White supremacy corrupted out of Christianity. How do we see that today?

IV. Reflection

Does white supremacy exist in the church today? What would be examples of its presence? What would it mean to de-center (but not *neglect*) white expressions, norms and voices in the American church to create a more diverse and equitable church? Is that a possibility, or does the church continue in ethnic conclaves?

Read 1 John 3:10

What does it mean to be a follower of God? How does that inform an approach to racial justice?

Read Romans 12:9

Presumably, the Klan would have read this as part of their initiation – how does it serve us, and how can it be twisted? What does it mean to resist evil and cling to what is good?

How does that influence your approach to racial justice?

White Supremacy is built on the belief that one class of people is inherently more valuable and important than other marginalized groups. What are some examples of Jesus’ words that refute this idea and give us a better vision of humanity?