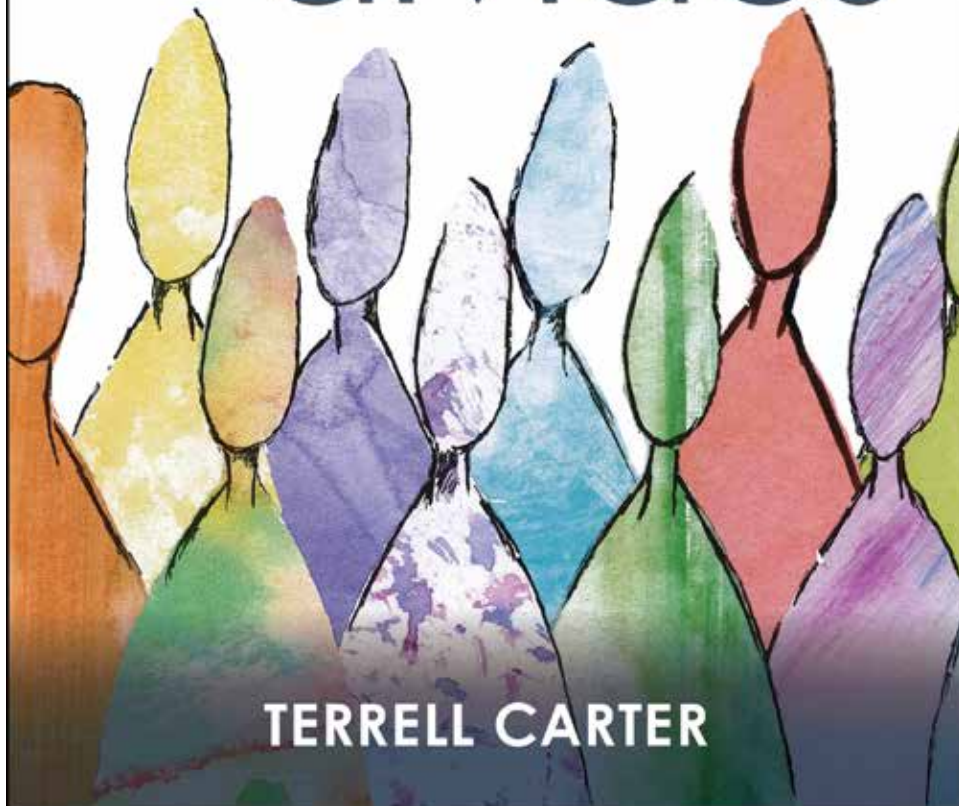


Finding Strength in Our Diversity

healing racial divides



TERRELL CARTER

COMPANION GUIDE

HEALING RACIAL DIVIDES: Finding Strength in Our Diversity Companion Guide

Hello. I appreciate you taking the time to access this study guide that accompanies the book *Healing Racial Divides: Finding Strength in Our Diversity*.

This guide has been designed to help you think more deeply about the issues introduced in the book. As I mentioned in the book, my sincere prayer is that the book, and this accompanying study guide, will help to facilitate beneficial conversation among different people groups and give them the courage and insight to communicate with people who are different from them, with the hope of bridging racial and cultural gaps.

I can imagine this guide being used as a personal resource, as well as in broader contexts, such as community meetings or congregational settings.

This guide is designed to support each of the sections found in the book:

- Introduction
- Roots of Racial Division
- The Normality of Whiteness
- Aftereffects
- Finding Common Ground

Please feel free to share your thoughts, concerns, and recommendations related to the book at terrellcarter@msn.com.

Terrell Carter, D.Min.

*Healing Racial
Divides: Finding
Strength in
Our Diversity*
Companion Guide
by Terrell Carter
(St. Louis:
Chalice Press, 2018).

INTRODUCTION

1. What is your response to the author's reasoning for writing "yet another book about race"? If more books aren't the solution, what would you suggest as better ways to address our nation's racial reconciliation concerns?
2. Should race be an issue discussed in churches? Isn't church primarily about saving people's souls and getting them to heaven?
3. Are you able to identify the "other" in your context?
4. Is the racial challenge our nation faces primarily a spiritual, racial, political, or economic problem? Why did you give that answer?
5. Why do you think people make such a big "to do" about Confederate statues? Shouldn't people be allowed to have the heroes they want without being called racists?

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ROOTS OF RACIAL DIVISION

1. When you were growing up, did you experience times when people placed you into a category based on where you lived or the type of people you were in relationship with? How did that make you feel? In what ways did that affect you and your perceptions of others?
2. How did you respond to the people who had a mental image of you that wasn't based on accurate information? What did you do change people's perceptions of you and your history?
3. In this chapter the author frequently quotes negative historical acts and beliefs. Is this valid? Is it possible to move forward with improving race relations if we continue to discuss the negative things that have happened in the past?
4. Do you agree or disagree with the author's reasons for saying that media outlets regularly apply different standards to how they report on black and white culture? Why do you agree or disagree?

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THE NORMALITY OF WHITENESS

1. Do you agree or disagree with the author's assessment of "whiteness" as the standard by which life in the United States is measured? Why do you agree or disagree?
2. If whiteness isn't the norm, what is the cultural norm for life in America? What makes you think that?
3. Do you agree with the author's comments about Manifest Destiny? What are your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing? Do you see any residual effects of Manifest Destiny in America's current culture?
4. Is it legitimate for conservative white citizens to hold their current attitudes toward immigrants when whites can be considered the original immigrants to America? What are your reasons for thinking this way?
5. Is there any difference between the slavery that was perpetuated by Africans against other Africans in Africa and the slavery perpetuated by whites against Africans in America?
6. What are your thoughts about Drs. Emerson and Smith's contentions that white evangelicals believe racism is due to individual actions and attitudes and the way to fix that problem is for more people to accept Jesus as their personal savior?

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AFTEREFFECTS

1. Is there really anything wrong with whites wanting to primarily associate with other whites, or blacks with blacks? Is it racist to feel more comfortable with people who are like you? Why do you think this?
2. Is there any validity to the concept of Group Threat Theory? Do whites really fear becoming the minority group in America? Why did you answer the way you did?
3. Was it valid for Chief Cunningham to apologize to the black community for past actions committed by law enforcement? Does an apology like that actually make a difference between the relationships of blacks and whites?
4. Is racial reconciliation worth the stress, pain, anger, and misunderstanding that will likely occur between people who participate in the process of reconciliation?
5. With all of the challenges that currently face congregations, do they really have the time or energy to add racial reconciliation to their plates?

FINDING COMMON GROUND

1. Are multiracial congregations really one of the best ways to address racial concerns within the Christian community? If they are not, what would you suggest as a more appropriate alternative?
2. Should an individual's personal level of spiritual maturity be measured by how open they are to being in relationship with people from other races, or should it be measured by other things outlined in the Bible, such as feeding the hungry and visiting the sick?
3. Is it fair to bring up supposed sins of one people group without bringing up equally atrocious sins of another people group?
4. What are your thoughts on arguments for practicing/thinking about colorblindness? Is it possible to be colorblind? What are the good things about this practice? What are the negative things about this practice?
5. What are the opportunities available for cross-cultural interactions within your local congregation? What challenges may come with those opportunities? What actions would you suggest a congregation consider if they are considering working towards cross-cultural initiatives?

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