



Reimagining Race?

A better conversation about racism today

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

REFLECTION

- Q. What did you first think and feel when you heard about George Floyd’s death, suffocating under the knee of a policeman sworn to protect and serve?**
- Q. If ‘belonging’ – beyond accessibility, diversity, and inclusion – is getting your voice heard at the table, then how welcoming of minority ethnicities is your community? Why?**
- Q. What does it mean to you to follow Christ in such a racially divided moment?**

Part One: Lament

LITURGY OF LAMENT

As Denis leads the liturgy, join Chine in responding with the words in bold.

How deserted lies the city
Once so full of people
How like a widow is she
Who once was great among the nations
She who was queen among the provinces
Has now become a slave

Bitterly she weeps at night
Tears on her cheeks

There is no one to comfort her
All her siblings have betrayed her
They have become her enemies

She dwells among the nations
She finds no resting place
Her foes have become her masters
Her enemies are at ease
Her children are in exile
Captives before their foe

Sinfulness is bound into a yoke
By human hands woven together
They have been hung on his neck
Bent knees have sapped his breath

This is why she weeps
And her eyes overflow with tears

She called to her allies
But they betrayed her.

Arise and cry out in the night,
As the watches of the night begin;
Pour out your heart like water
In the presence of the Lord!
Lift up your hands to him
For the lives of your children
Who faint from hunger
At every street corner.

Young and old lie together in the dust
In the dust of the streets;
Young men and women
Have fallen by the sword.

Their inheritance has been turned over to
strangers
Their homes to foreigners,
They have become fatherless
Their mothers have become widows
They must buy water to drink
And wood at a high price
Those who pursue them are at their heels
They are weary and find no rest.

Daughters have been violated in Zion
And virgins in the towns of Judah
Princes have been lynched
Hung up by their hands

The people have stopped their music
Joy is gone from their hearts
And dancing has turned to mourning.

ACCUSATION: WHAT DO YOU SEE?

As Denis leads the liturgy, join Chine in responding with the words in bold.

To crush underfoot all prisoners of the land
To deny people their rights before the Most High,
To deprive them of Justice –

Would not the Lord see such things?

Our eyes will flow unceasingly, without relief,
Until the Lord looks down from heaven and sees

When what we see truly brings grief to our souls

REFLECTION

Q. Having listened to Lusa’s poem, and watched people plea to be excused from responsibility for such racist atrocities and violence, *what do you see? How do you respond?*

CONFESSION ONE

As Denis leads the confession, join Chine in responding with the words in bold.

Let us examine our ways and test them

And let us return to the Lord.

Let us lift up our hearts and our hands

To God in heaven, and say:

‘We have sinned and rebelled

And you have not forgiven


For we are yet to repent.’

REFLECTION

Q. What, if anything, do you feel the Lord calling you to confess?

Q. What lines in the liturgy of lament and confession impact you most? Why?

Q. How might the practice of repentance, if genuinely entered, make for a better conversation?



Part Two: From the Prophets

REFLECTION

Q. What is the Lord saying to you through Chine's prophetic address?

CONFESSION TWO

As Denis leads the confession, join Chine in responding with the words in bold.

Let us examine our ways and test them

And let us return to the LORD.

Let us lift up our hearts and our hands

To God in heaven, and say:

'We have sinned and rebelled

And you have not forgiven

For we are yet to repent.

REFLECTION

Q. Where have our churches, communities, and nations failed, falling into sin or resisting responsibility for the racism in our midst?

Part Three: Hope

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

As Denis leads, join Chine in responding with the words in bold.

Remember our affliction and our wandering, the bitterness and the gall –
Our souls are downcast

Yet this we call to mind, and therefore we have hope:

Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed

For his compassions never fail.

They are new every morning; Great is your faithfulness.

We say to ourselves. 'The Lord is our portion. Therefore we will wait for him'

The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,

To the one who seeks him.

It is good to wait quietly

For the salvation of the Lord!

REFLECTION

Q. Where do you see signs of hope in your church, and on your frontline?

REFLECTION

Q. What is your prayer of lament, healing, and hope?



Part Four: Commissioning

REFLECTION

Q. What is one thing you will do in response to this talk, as an agent of reconciliation?

CONCLUDING LAMENT

As Denis leads the liturgy, join Chine in responding with the words in bold.

Arise and cry out in the night
As the watches of the night begin
Pour out your heart like water
In the presence of the Lord!
Lift up your hands to him

Thus says the Lord,
'Give careful thought to your ways
Go up into the mountains
And bring down timber and build my house
So that I may take pleasure in it and be
honoured'

From this day on, from this day
Give careful thought to the moment

When the foundation of the Lord's temple
was laid in you.
Give careful thought
For until now there was no seed in the barn
Until now the vines bore no fruit.
Consecrate yourselves
For only Spirit and Truth
Will give victory in the land.
Consecrate yourselves

Abide with us Lord Jesus
For the night is at hand and the day is past

As the night watch looks for the morning
So do we look to you O Christ