

Doing Justice *p. 16*

A Lament: We Look for Justice and Find None

By Paul Lessard, p. 19

1. What was your first response when you heard the news of George Floyd's death?
2. In a previous role working at a university, Paul Lessard realized he had to use his authority to get a grade changed because the registrar's office did not recognize the authority of a student service adviser. When have you needed someone in authority to step in to accomplish what you should have had the authority to do yourself?
3. Lessard calls for people to speak up and advocate against racism in every form. What does speaking up look like for you?

The Word that Haunts

By Cecilia Williams, p. 21

1. What is the "word that haunts" that the title of this article is referencing? What does this word mean to you?
2. Cecilia Williams says she forced herself to watch the video of George Floyd's death. Did you watch that video? Why or why not?
3. What part of this article is the most memorable for you?

Where You Go I Will Go

By Greg Yee, p. 23

1. Greg Yee says he is both proud and frustrated with the Covenant in the area of racial righteousness. What are your feelings about racial righteousness in your church and in the Covenant?

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Covenant Companion discussion starters for groups and personal reflection.

2. Yee uses the story of Ruth and Naomi to describe what being a family looks like. What do you think makes “Ruth-ian” solidarity so expensive?
3. In what ways can pastors serve as prophets and shepherds amidst the racial tensions of our communities today?

A Light unto Our Path

By Dominique Gilliard, p. 25

1. Dominique Gilliard’s studies in history and theology have led him to pursue racial righteousness. How has your education informed your views on justice?
2. Why is remembrance so important to the practice of lament?
3. What Scriptures would you refer to in support of your beliefs about racial justice?

An Equal Opposite Reaction

By Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom and David W. Swanson, p. 28

1. Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom and David Swanson provide four common obstacles in the journey to racial righteousness. How does the first obstacle, “the culture of niceness,” harm antiracism?
2. Clifton-Soderstrom and Swanson say that accountability to people of color is a new concept for white people. How do your own experiences prove or disprove that statement?
3. If racial righteousness is not a ministry or a program but our identity in Christ, as stated in the article, what action is required of us?

The Silence of Our Friends

By Gregory Mesimore, p. 30

1. What was the racial demographic of the schools you attended up through high school?

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2. How does silence make someone complicit when it comes to racism?
3. What part of Gregory Mesimore's vulnerable confession about his past complacency makes you most uncomfortable?

Active Duty

By Dana Bowman, p. 32

1. Dana Bowman wrestled through several reasons for not participating in a march until she finally landed on feeling ashamed. What have you wrestled with regarding your own participation in racial justice initiatives?
2. Bowman's friend James acted as a helpful resource to her in sorting through racial understanding. Who have you gone to most often to process racial issues?
3. The article says, "To seek Jesus is to love him and love others." Is this a simple or complicated statement?

Monumental Changes

By Ramelia Williams, p. 35

1. What statues exist in your hometown?
2. Ramelia Williams says, "Images, monuments, memorials, and statues tell the story of a people." What is the difference between the story of the altar built from the 12 stones in the Jordan River and the story of the altars of Baal that Gideon tore down?
3. What would you identify as pros and cons of the removal of these depictions of our American history?

Training for Dependence

By Tyler Johnson, p. 40

What Tae Kwon Do can teach us about discipleship

1. Tyler Johnson originally signed up for Tae Kwon Do as an easy college credit. What PE courses do you remember most from high school or college?
2. Mathein Pathein translates to “to learn is to suffer.” What have you recently learned that required a measure of suffering?
3. How does “muscle memory” help us in a spiritual sense?

Interrupted

By Hannah Hawkinson, p. 44

Believing the unbelievable in our midst

1. The beginning quote by Dietrich Bonhoeffer is as relevant now as it was when he wrote it 80 years ago. Does it ring more true for you in your personal life or in a ministry context?
2. What did you know about Rhoda before reading this article?
3. Hannah Hawkinson draws a parallel between Rhoda and the women at the empty tomb. Why might it be easier for her to “believe the good news without seeing any physical proof” than the disciples in this story?
4. Where do you see yourself in this story—as the “little one” who is overlooked or the disciple who disregards news from an unlikely source?

The Noteworthy Ordinary

By Mike Guerrero, p.39

How an everyday encounter turned a school intersection into holy ground

1. How did you get to school when you were a child? What interactions did you have with neighbors or classmates in that daily window of time?
2. What in your life gives the appearance of “nothing particularly noteworthy” that is actually quite remarkable?
3. Mike Guerrero’s wife was caught unprepared for the deep need of the mother who approached her at the corner. How can you relate to his wife’s experience?
4. How does Exodus 3:2-3 relate to the story of this crossing guard?

To Confront Racism, First Look at What Is in Your Hand

By Jelani Greenidge, p. 52

“The thing in your hand that looks useless, that’s what I will use to bring about your deliverance.”

1. What did you know about Lady Antebellum changing their name before this column? What other organizations are you aware of that have changed their name for racial purposes?
2. Do you agree that bands and other organizations with racial connotations to their names should change as an act of solidarity?
3. How does the Scripture passage from Exodus 4 relate to the Lady Antebellum story?
4. Jelani Greenidge wonders if keeping their name and using it to teach a different story would have been a better alternative. Can you think of any other possible solutions to the problem?