

THE

BISHOP



Magazine

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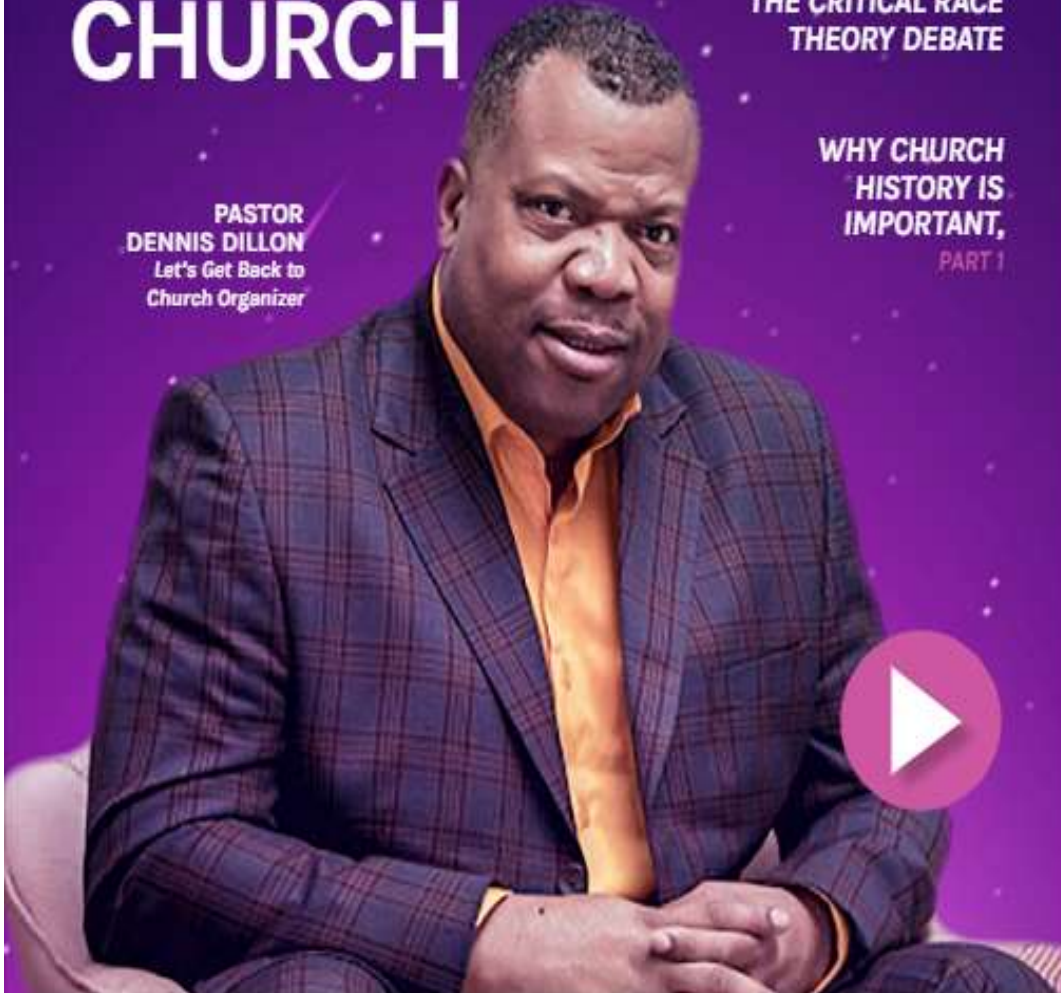
LET'S GO BACK TO CHURCH

PASTOR
DENNIS DILLON
*Let's Get Back to
Church Organizer*

THE CHURCH IN CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT DOWN
THROUGH THE AGES

CHRISTIANITY AND
THE CRITICAL RACE
THEORY DEBATE

WHY CHURCH
HISTORY IS
IMPORTANT,
PART 1



FROM THE PEN OF THE PUBLISHER STARTING THE YEAR OFF RIGHT

BY BISHOP ANDY C. LEWTER, D. MIN.



It is January 2022 and after a whirlwind year that included the country's most valiant attempts to manage the reality of the Coronavirus we are looking at what the life will look like in the coming year. Since 2020 we have worn masks, gotten vaccination shots, maintained safe distances from each other, and avoided large crowds, especially indoors. Now those of us in the faith community are exploring a variety of ways we can convince members of our congregation that it is finally safe to gather in house, in worship,

Church leaders proclaim that, as places that are closed to schools, lawfully restaurants and other social events so why would there be such hesitancy in returning to church congregations? If across the country, are taking proactive steps to insure safety and cause their congregants to feel that steps have been taken to protect them.

In this issue we feature one of the leading religious personalities in the metropolitan New York area to encourage churches to reopen their doors and return to some sense of normalcy. Pastor Dillon has assembled over 70 pastors in the New York area and you will want to read exactly what he is doing to make a difference

Other articles that are included in this issue include: Why Church History is Important and Christianity and the Critical Race Theory. These two issues have claimed much of the church's attention and there are any number of voices who are giving commentary on the subject. Because this publication is associated with the Graduate School of Episcopal Studies and The New Life School of Theology, the other articles that appear in this issue reflect some of the most recent and dynamic courses that are being offered by those institutions.

Finally, you will notice that the look and feel of this publication has changed in appearance and format. In the past this publication has used the "blog site" model for the distribution of content for this digital magazine. However, in recent months we have heard from a number of you who have expressed an interest in the more dynamic java-based page-turning format that you are seeing in this issue. Those who have commented on this format have commented on how attractive the format is and to what degree the publication feels like a traditional print publication. We are hoping that you will write us and tell us what you think. ●







LET'S GO BACK TO CHURCH

BY BISHOP ANDY C. LEWTER, D. MIN.

With churches finally feeling comfortable enough to reopen their doors, Pastor Dennis Dillon is leading a campaign amongst New York City and vicinity, pastoring churches and inviting them to reach out to their districts, restaurants and other businesses asking the time to invite people back to their place of business, the church has also invited their efforts to encourage Christians to return to their houses of worship.

Rev. Dennis Dillon is now a new face on the church scene in New York City, for years he has published the Christian Times Newspaper which is a leading publication in the business of New York City. In addition, he has been seen many times in the forefront of initiatives that have to do with social justice. And last but not least, he has been a shaker and mover in the area of economic development and as such, has presented a number of events and activities designed to network the business and general public for the growth of communities of color.





CHRISTIANITY AND THE CRITICAL RACE THEORY DEBATE

BY SERENE JONES AND FRED DAVIE

Republican legislators nationwide are waging a fierce battle to prevent educators from teaching critical race theory—and they’re being helped by conservative Christian leaders willing to intentionally misrepresent their faith for political gain.

Take the Conservative Baptist Network, a major partnership of Southern Baptists across states, which called CRT “anti-gospel” and “divisive” and incompatible with efforts to oppose racism. Meanwhile, the far-right religious Center for Renewing America claims CRT seeks to eliminate the idea that “all men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” And in a new book, theologian Dr. Voddie Baucham argues that CRT falsely creates its own version of Original Sin—racism—and gives no hope for forgiveness. Their theology proclaims antiracist education a *greater evil* than racism itself.

As ministers and leaders of a proudly progressive religious institution, we are dismayed by how people of faith are warping scripture to condemn CRT. CRT, a framework used in some legal scholarship and rarely actually taught at the grade-school level, has become a shorthand for any curriculum that attempts to grapple with the effects of racism on American history and society. The theory is not designed to create

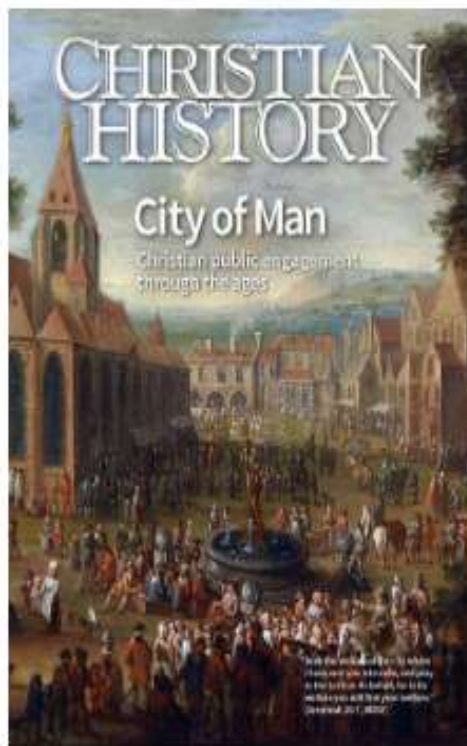


THE CHURCH IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT DOWN THROUGH THE AGES

BY CHRISTIAN HISTORY INSTITUTE

Imagine a world with no nonprofits. It is a world where the church provides generous aid, the government is justly administered, and families are healthy and thriving and supporting their members, but no other organization exists in which Christians—or anyone, actually—give aid to others, or organize to defeat injustices, or advance wise causes.

You may not realize it, but you may have Martin Luther (1483-1536) to thank for the fact that we do not actually live in that world. While medieval society did not lack for charitable and cultural organizations, Luther's insistence that all Christians are called to the vocation of serving each other sparked a new emphasis on voluntary association for the purpose of doing good.



WHY CHURCH HISTORY IS IMPORTANT, PART 1

BY STAFF WRITER



How many times have we heard people say that they never really liked history in school either because it was boring or it did not appear to have any relevance to their lives in the present. While we will admit that there have been times when the recitation of dates and events have put most audiences asleep, we must not confuse presentation with content. The fact of the matter is that any person who is serious about their faith or sees themselves as a leader in the faith community, Church History is not an item that can be ignored or discarded. We therefore are starting a four part series on why you should interested in Church History.



racial division, force us to treat any group better than another, or make white children hate themselves.

At its core, CRT—and, more generally, the inclusive education that its opponents dub CRT—simply calls upon us to acknowledge the realities and horrors of slavery and its lingering impacts on our nation. It demands that we look at ourselves, and our country, honestly and try to learn from past wrongs. This doesn't just uphold God's calls for truth; it is also a core message of our most sacred text—the Bible.

Slavery is at the heart of a crucial biblical tale: the story of Moses. The book of Exodus opens by describing a new Egyptian pharaoh who has forced the Israelites into slavery. To prevent them from becoming too powerful, he orders every newborn male to be drowned in the river. But Moses survives, and is later called on by God to free the Hebrews. Eventually, God sends

ten plagues to punish pharaoh and Moses leads his once enslaved people to freedom.

Would we say that this story undermines equality because it exposes the plight of a particular group of people? Of course not. But that's exactly what anti-CRT activists are doing.

There's another under-appreciated connection between the Old Testament and CRT: Both focus on the experiences and perspectives of those who were oppressed, not of the ones who did the oppressing. The story of Moses centers the story of the enslaved, not the enslavers; CRT studies the impact of systemic racism, not those who put those systems into place.

Now, imagine the story of Moses was removed from the Bible to avoid studying a painful past.

It sounds ridiculous, almost inconceivable. But centuries ago, that's precisely what happened.





3. APOLOGETICAL

Church History is useful in studying the Church's defense of the Faith against false religions, heresies, cults, and deviant forms of Christianity. Studying God's providence in the past is essential for believers to understand and discern God's providence in the present, to be discerning of world events, politics, issues in the church, the many evils of modern culture, the growing apostasy in the church today, and how to defend the Gospel today in the midst of so many cults, false religions, and deviant forms of Christianity. For this reason, it is vital for pastors and Christian leaders to know the place of such apologetical works in history as *The Apostolic Fathers*; *Justin Martyr's Apologies*; *Irenaeus - Against Heresies*; *Athanasius - Against the Arians*; *Augustine - The City of God*; *Anselm - Why God Became Man*; *Huldreich Zwingli - On the Defense of the Reformed Faith*; *R.A. Torrey - The Fundamentals*; *Gresham Machen - Christianity and Liberalism*; *Van Til - The Defense of the Faith*; and a thousand others. The study of Church History strengthens our faith and courage to defend Christ's name and glory in the world. See 2 Peter, Jude. ●



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Dr. Patricia Rickenbacker
Living Hope Women's Ministry
Baptist Church
3 AM and 3 PM



Pastor Leonard & Lady A Miles, Jr.
Los Angeles Ministries
4 AM and 4 PM



Pastor Gary Primm
The Gate of Restoration Church of God in Christ
5 AM and 5 PM



Pastor Jeritt Lewis
Way of Life Church of God in Christ
6 AM and 6 PM



Bishop Walter Willie
Prayer Tabernacle Church of God in Christ
7 AM and 7 PM



Bishop Andy C. Lewter
Hollywood Full Gospel Baptist Cathedral
8 AM and 8 PM



Pastor Keith Hayward
Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church
9 AM and 9 PM



Pastor Aosh Jackman
The Redeeming Rock Church
10 AM and 10 PM



Pastor Lorenzo Madlock
Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled
11 AM and 11 PM

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Now Rev. Dillon is focusing his attention on the need to mobilize communities across New York City to return to their houses of worship after almost two years of having been shut down because of the Coronavirus. "While virtual church has been a necessity for the last several months there is nothing that can replace in-person worship services" say Pastor Dillon. Toward that end Pastor Dillon has assembled nearly 70 pastors from the five boroughs of New York and Long Island to discuss the most effective ways that the church community can create a buzz in the marketplace that can benefit church attendance on the Sabbath and Sunday.

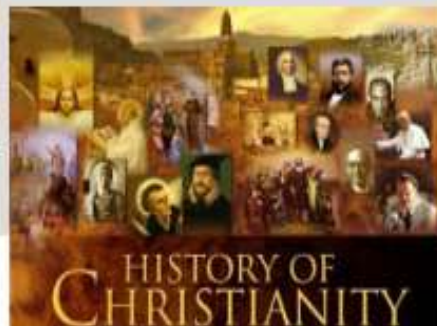
These 70 pastors have committed to making funds available so that a robust marketing campaign can be launched in New York City that will convince parishioners that it is safe and vital that they return to church. Last month on December 18th and 19th, the group designated those dates as the

launch dates for the campaign. An assortment of religious leaders from around the city have rallied to the call of Rev. Dillon and a website has been launched, <https://letsgetbacktochurch.com> as a central digital location to share information and encourage people of faith to reclaim the primacy of Saturday and Sunday as days of worship.

While the campaign has initially focused on the clarion call of pushing people back through church doors the ultimate aim of the effort is to provide a forum and platform that pastors can use to showcase their ministries and give people a hint of what they can expect when they return to church. Toward that end, plans are being made to host a regular blog site, special interviews with church leaders and the promotion of local ministries by using the assets provided by a number of IP radio and television stations that are operating in the New York area. Come o New York, lets go back to church. ●

1. HISTORICAL

Church History is of great value in that it gives Christians a knowledge and understanding of the events of history from the perspective of God's saving purposes, God's church and kingdom, the growth and progress of the Gospel in the world in fulfillment of Christ's words, and the great many events of world history that were largely determined by the spiritual forces and theological ideas in the church and the opposition that was made against it. Whether it is the Council of Nicea in 325AD or the Westminster Assembly in the 1640s, or many other events, studying Church history is an essential part of godly learning. See the Book of Acts.



2. THEOLOGICAL

Church History is of great value for studying the development of Theology and the godly instruction it brings through the knowledge of Scripture and sound doctrine. It is vital for pastors and Christian leaders to know and understand the progress and development of Theology in the Church, and role of such theological works as Athanasius - On the Incarnation of the Word; Augustine - On the Trinity; Martin Luther - On the Bondage of the Will, John Calvin's Institutes, the Reformed Confessions, John Owen - On the Work of the Holy Spirit, Francis Turretin - Institutes of Elenctic Theology; James Orr - The Progress of Dogma; Louis Berkhof - Systematic Theology; A.W. Pink - The Sovereignty of God; and many others. The study of Church History, and of course historical theology, builds our faith and knowledge of God. See Paul's Letter to the Romans.



Back in the 1800s, British missionaries made special bibles to convert and educate enslaved people. These bibles—which excluded the vast majority of a traditional bible—purposely excised any passages that could encourage enslaved people to seek freedom, including the story of Moses. These bibles, instead, offered sections that could be interpreted to support slavery. For example, they incorporated a passage from Ephesians that read, “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.”

Make no mistake: all people are equal under God. But CRT does nothing to undermine that fundamental truth. It simply acknowledges the facts: systemic racism is a pervasive part of our nation’s history, one that is worthy of serious study and tangible steps to address.

And yet, conservative policymakers are committed to preventing that reality from ever entering the classroom. And they’re not just barring CRT specifically—they’re banning broad teachings about systemic discrimination. Lawmakers in at least eight states have passed

legislation that prevents teachers from educating students about the country’s legacy of racism and discussing topics like unconscious bias. For example, Tennessee’s recently passed law prevents educators from teaching that “an individual, by virtue of the individual’s race or sex, is inherently privileged, racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or subconsciously.” Iowa’s law prohibits educators from teaching that the state or country is fundamentally or systemically racist. About 20 additional states have proposed similar legislation or are preparing to.

From an educational standpoint, it is deeply disturbing that teachers would be barred from sharing such critical subject material with the future generation of leaders. An educator’s job is to expose students to diverse viewpoints, not create a false, one-track narrative.

As Christians, anti-CRT legislation is entirely incompatible with our core religious beliefs. Our religion compels us to confront our world’s history of slavery. It demands we acknowledge the horrors of our past, so we might repent and chart a path for a better tomorrow. ●

THE CHRISTIAN AND

CRITICAL RACE THEO

Thinking Biblically About Racism in America & th



