



A Statement from Christian Ethicists Without Borders on White Supremacy and Racism

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The following statement was signed by over 780 concerned Christian ethicists and theologians. For a full and updated list of signatories, please see [:click here](#).

August 14, 2017

As followers of Jesus Christ and as Christian ethicists representing a range of denominations and schools of thought, we stand in resolute agreement in firmly condemning racist, anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, and neo-Nazi ideology as a sin against God that divides the human family created in God's image.

In January of 2017, white nationalist groups emboldened by the 2016 election planned an armed march against the Jews of Whitefish, Montana. On August 11th and 12th, hundreds of armed neo-Nazis marched in Charlottesville, Virginia. As we mourn the deaths of 32-year old counter-protester Heather Heyer and state troopers H. Jay Cullen and Berke Bates from this most recent incident, we unequivocally denounce racist speech and actions against people of any race, religion, or national origin.

White supremacy and racism deny the dignity of each human being revealed through the Incarnation. The evil of white supremacy and racism must be brought face-to-face before the figure of Jesus Christ, who cannot be confined to any one culture or nationality. Through faith we proclaim that God the Creator is the origin of all human persons. In the words of Frederick Douglass, "Between the Christianity of this land and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible difference."

The greatest commandments, as Jesus taught and exemplified, are to love God and to love our neighbor as ourselves; and so as children of God, and sisters and brothers to all, we hold the following:

- **We reject** racism and anti-Semitism, which are radical evils that Christianity must actively resist.
- **We reject** the sinful white supremacy at the heart of the "Alt Right" movement as Christian heresy.
- **We reject** the idolatrous notion of a national god. God cannot be reduced to "America's god."
- **We reject** the "America First" doctrine, which is a pernicious and idolatrous error. It foolishly asks Americans to replace the worship of God with the worship of the nation, poisons both our religious traditions and virtuous American patriotism, and isolates this country from the community of nations. Such nationalism erodes our civic and religious life, and fuels xenophobic and racist attacks against immigrants and religious minorities, including our Jewish and Muslim neighbors.
- **We confess** that all human beings possess God-given dignity and are members of one human family, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or country of origin.
- **We proclaim** that the gospel of Jesus Christ has social and political implications. Those

who claim salvation in Jesus Christ, therefore, must publicly name evil, actively resist it, and demonstrate a world of harmony and justice in the midst of racial, religious and indeed all forms of human diversity.

Therefore, we call upon leaders of every Christian denomination, especially pastors, to condemn white supremacy, white nationalism, and racism.

We also humbly call upon all Christians, whose baptismal waters are thicker than blood, to resist this evil by committing themselves to:

- Contemplate and respect the image of God imprinted on each human being.
- Work across religious traditions to reflect on the ways we have been complicit in upholding and benefiting from the sins of racism and white supremacy.
- Pray for the strength and courage to stand emphatically against racism, white supremacy, and nationalism in all its forms.
- Participate in acts of peaceful protest, including rallies, marches, and at times, even civil disobedience. Do not remain passive bystanders in the face of the heresies of racism, white supremacy, and white nationalism.
- Engage in political action to oppose structural racism.

We will bring the best of our traditions to an ecclesial and societal examination of conscience where rhetoric and acts of hatred against particular groups can be publicly named as grave sins and injustices.

Finally, as ethicists, we commit—through our teaching, writing, and service—to the ongoing, hard work of building bridges and restoring wholeness where racist and xenophobic ideologies have brought brokenness and pain.

(If you are a Christian ethicist or teach Christian ethics and wish to add your name, please email Tobias Winright at tobias.winright@slu.edu or Matthew Tapie at matthew.tapie@saintleo.edu or Anna Floerke Scheid at scheida@duq.edu or MT Dávila at mtdavila@ants.edu with your name, highest degree, title, and institution. Institutions are named for identification purposes only and this does not necessarily represent their support of this statement, although we hope they do, too.)

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