

ASM, APM and AETE Statement on Race and Injustice in the United States of America

In light of recent developments in the United States and around the world, impelled by the murder of George Floyd and countless other African-Americans, we the leadership of the American Society of Missiology, the Association of Professors of Mission and the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education, representing members of diverse cultures, races and nations, express our commitment to oppose and resist the forces of evil manifested in the longstanding scourges of racism and the legacy of slavery that ravage this nation in personal, communal and systemic ways.

Standing firm in the fundamental conviction that all human beings are created in God's image (Gen 1:27), we acknowledge that the history of missionary activity and evangelistic endeavors contains the dangerous memories of the church's mixed record of living out this conviction in truth and integrity. At times, Christian missionaries and evangelists have manifested great courage and selflessness in confronting injustice, oppression and dehumanization. At other times, they have been complicit in the perpetuation of racism and other assaults on human dignity as a result of fear, silence, apathy, ignorance or explicit teachings, attitudes and behaviors.

Mindful of these realities, we, as members of professional missiological societies dedicated to the academic study and the practical advancement of God's mission in the world, commit ourselves:

To advocate for racial equity, in whatever ways that we are able, as we work in multicultural, multiracial and multinational partnerships to bring an end to racism and racial violence in whatever forms they appear;

To take responsibility for identifying and working diligently to eradicate all traces of injustice, exclusion and marginalization that may be present in the policies, practices and structures of our respective mission organizations, churches and academic institutions;

To listen to the voices that have been silenced and learn from the visions and experiences of individuals and communities affected by racism as well as its convergence with other injustices;

To confess participation in the sin of racism, in the measure that one is culpable, personally and/or institutionally, by seeking pardon from God and forgiveness from all who have suffered unjustly as a result, and providing restitution wherever possible;

To examine our own hearts as we pray with the Psalmist, "Create in me a pure heart, O God" (Ps 51:10); and

To find our hope in the Gospel of Jesus Christ in which, we believe, lies the power for authentic encounter, justice, reconciliation, renewal, and healing.