

Talking to Your Children About Race

Rob Corwin

I am full of grief and compassion over recent events that continue to expose deep injustices in our country. I am honestly eager to help, but it's hard to know where to begin. Let me suggest that we start in our own households with our children. Here are a few steps you can take to talk with your children:

1. Use Scripture as your starting point.¹
2. Talk about ethnicity in a way that magnifies the power and creativity of God.²
3. Be honest about the impacts of sin in our world.³
4. Talk about the need of all men for the Savior, Jesus Christ.⁴
5. When a child asks questions about race/ethnicity, don't hide differences.⁵
6. Read books that honor the image of God in ALL people, and look at the illustrations and content with care.⁶
7. Intentionally engage your children in activities that expose them to different ethnicities.⁷
8. Talk about the gospel and the Church as the plan of God to demonstrate unity and to display His wisdom.⁸

These steps are composed of two parts:

- 1) Building a biblical framework of ethnicity for your children.

Having a worldview that is defined by Scripture will help your children understand what is at the heart of these issues and why justice and mercy matter. To parent well, we need to continually learn from Scripture; this shapes our hearts, our minds, our language, and so much more. God's Word is the best way to train your children to be ambassadors of the gospel in their communities. We want to always hold before them the perfect example of Jesus Christ serving and loving all people.

¹ Brittany Salmon, "Three tips for teaching your children about racism," Resource Library, The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, last modified January 21, 2020, <https://erlc.com/resource-library>.

² Thabiti Anyabwile, "Talking to Children About Race," Blogs, The Gospel Coalition, last modified May 31, 2007, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/thabiti-anyabwile>.

³ Salmon, "Three tips for teaching your children about racism."

⁴ Anyabwile, "Talking to Children About Race."

⁵ Nefertiti Austin, "Teaching Your Child About Black History," PBS Kids for Parents, PBS, last modified February 15, 2018, <https://www.pbs.org/parents>.

⁶ Salmon, "Three tips for teaching your children about racism."

⁷ This is an essential step I added because children need to be in sports, camps, music, swim clubs, after school programs, etc. to know and love children who are different from them.

⁸ Anyabwile, "Talking to Children About Race."

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- 2) Finding ways to engage your children in these stories and teaching them to listen and show mercy.

When questions or comments are raised by your child about ethnicity, you can remind them of how the Bible celebrates ethnicity and pursues justice. Teach your children by example to be quick to listen and value others. Surround your children with other children from different backgrounds and ethnicities. Read with your children often while they are young, and make sure your books reflect your values. Read books that show variety in illustrations, tell stories of injustice, value cultures different from your own, and elevate the pursuit of love, kindness, and justice. These are all tools we can use to shape the worldview of our children.

Helpful Resources to Use with Your Children

This list represents a few resources that build a biblical framework for ethnicity and also engage your children in these stories. As you find additional resources that are a help to your family, please share them with me!

My List

Books that help build a Biblical framework:

- *God's Very Good Idea* by Trilla Newbell & Catalina Echeverri
- *The Gospel in Color* by Jarvis J. Williams & Curtis Woods
- *ColorFull: Celebrating the Colors God Gave Us* by Ms. Dorena Williamson
- *God Made Me AND You: Celebrating Design for Ethnic Diversity* by Shai Linne
- *When God Made You* by Matthew Paul Turner
- *The Tiny Truths Illustrated Bible* by Joanna Rivard

Books that engage your children in the stories

- *"More More More," Said the Baby* by Vera B Williams
- *The Other Side* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *The Skin I'm In: A First Look at Racism* by Pat Thomas
- *Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness* by Anastasia Higginbotham
- *The Stone Thrower* by Jael Ealey Richardson
- *The Undefeated* by Kwame Alexander
- *Blended* by Sharon M. Draper

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Websites with Books to Read

[Coretta Scott King Book Award Winners](#)

[Books with Characters of Color](#)

[30 Books to help you talk to your kids about racism](#)

[5 Books on Racism and the Gospel - The Gospel Coalition](#)

Web Articles for Parents

[Say Something](#)

[Group of PCA Coordinators and Presidents Issues Statement on “Heinous Killings”](#)

[Talking About Race](#)

[Talking About Race: I Am A Parent Or Caregiver](#)

[Three tips on teaching your children about racism](#)

[Talking to Children About Race](#)

[Teaching Your Child About Black History](#)