

Reparations

Discussion Guide



Welcome to the journey!

Thank you and bless you for getting this far in your journey with this very difficult conversation about reparations and white supremacy.

This sheet is intended to help you approach this journey in some sort of communal practice. Ideally you can find a few other people to meet with a few times as you progress through the book. You are invited to read through this book in a prayerful, spiritual conversation with God. Of course, you are welcome to attend to the academics, but our conviction is that the history of white supremacy in America is a spiritual sickness. The gift of this book and the podcast series is an opportunity for you to review and rehearse both the history of white supremacy, the necessity of repentance, and how you can contribute to the repair, the healing, the hope, and love before us in and through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our focus question:

How can this book, Reparations, allow me to cultivate the like-minded consciousness of Jesus who emptied and humbled himself and became obedient to death on a cross?

How to proceed:

- #1 Buy the book from a black owned bookstore.
- #2 Form a group. Keep it small so you can have more freedom to share.
- #3 Decide how many times you can meet together as you work through the book and listen to the podcast. See the back of this page for recommendations.
- #4 Review the 'covenant of presence' before your first meeting. Then when you do meet, affirm together how you will collaborate together to ensure this is a healthy, God-focused journey.

Covenant of Presence

FULLY PRESENT - I choose to be **fully present** to myself and welcoming to others.

LISTEN GENEROUSLY - I choose to create space for others to speak before I make an effort to be heard myself.

SHARE MY STORY - I believe that sharing my story will help me learn more about myself and God, and I believe that my story may even inspire others to learn more about themselves.

Covenant of Presence

WE COME AS EQUALS - We choose **not to compare** ourselves to each other, and we actively look for ways to think of others more highly than ourselves (Phil 2:3).

NO ADDED PRESSURE, TO “SHARE OR DIE” - **You determine** the extent to which you want to participate.

NO FIXING - We choose to **listen** and to only offer advice when asked for it.

AVOID JUDGMENT - We choose **not to judge** each other with our words, actions or even in our hearts.

RETURN TO WONDER AND GRATITUDE - If I find myself becoming judgmental or even cynical, I chose to remember the amazing gift it is to be in this important conversation.

RECOMMENDED FORMATS:

Minimum: meet twice, once after everyone has read through chapter one and listened to a few podcast episode. Then meet at the end of the reading.

Modest: three or four meetings. Allow your first meeting to be a settling in, more orientation on what you are getting yourselves into. Then allow the final meeting to be focused on a call to action, “how can I...” or “how can we be involved in the repair work.

In-Depth: eight meetings, one for the introduction and for each of the seven chapters.

Meeting Suggestions

Plan for meetings to be **90 to 120 minutes** in length.

Begin with **prayer** of intercession and repentance. Take a few minutes of silence to allow each participant enough time to open her heart and mind to God’s love, truth, and presence. The point here is to encourage and sustain a prayerful, listening posture, listening to yourself, each other, and God. If the conversation hits especially difficult moments, please consider returning to this silence and prayer.

Take turns having each person share two sentences, paragraphs, or even a page or two if the size of the group and time allows. Ideally each person will have at least five minutes to share allowing another five minutes for the group to respond.

What to share:

- A.** each participant shares one section of the book that confuses, frustrates, or even makes you scared and angry.
- B.** The presenter will also share another part of the book that enlivens and nourishes faith stirring hope.
- C.** Finally, the presenter will conclude her sharing by returning to our focus question: ***how has this book helped me to cultivate the like-minded consciousness of Jesus who emptied and humbled himself and became obedient to death on a cross?***

As you move deeper into the book into the second half after chapter four, you might make the focus question even more specific: ***how is this book helping me become more like Jesus in specific ways that repair the damage done by white supremacy?***

A Prayer of Howard Thurman

*Open unto me, light for my darkness.
Open unto me, courage for my fear.
Open unto me, hope for my despair.
Open unto me, peace for my turmoil.
Open unto me, joy for my sorrow.
Open unto me, strength for my weakness.*

*Open unto me, wisdom for my confession.
Open unto me, forgiveness for my sins.
Open unto me, love for my hates.
Open unto me, thy Self for my self.
Lord, Lord, open unto me! Amen.*