

Becoming Antiracist

August/September 2021: Privilege

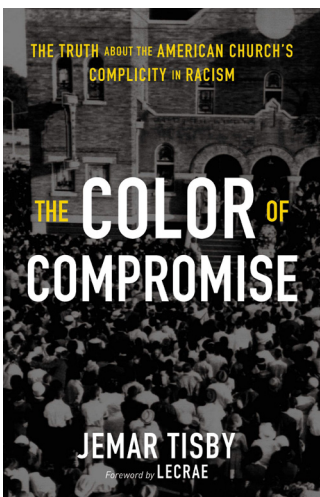
When we hear we have privilege, it is not an accusation. It is an opportunity and an invitation to use it for progress. We can use it by showing up against racism which includes dismantling institutional racism and all systems of inequity. Many of the systems of inequity started at the beginning of America and are still present in many forms today.

Scripture: “For the whole law is fulfilled in one word; you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Galatians 5:14)

History: “While most people believe the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery and involuntary servitude, the Convict Lease System spread throughout the ex-slave states soon after the Civil War. It eventually became another tool for re-enslavement after the Emancipation Proclamation. Forced labor continued until its abolishment in the 1950’s. For almost a hundred years after emancipation, southern wealth continued to be built on the backs of what amounted to a slave workforce.” *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*, Dr. Joy DeGruy, 2017



Dr. Joy DeGruy



“Southern women played a significant role in memorializing, fundraising, lobbying for, and erecting Confederate monuments and memorials. These memorials inscribed white supremacy into the landscape of public spaces across the North and South. They tended to be erected at times when the South was fighting to resist political rights for black citizens... In 1891, the south codified segregation on trains, passing laws to force black people to ride in separate rail cars. In 1896, when a case was brought before the court for a black person who refused to move to the colored section of a train, the Supreme Court legalized what became standard practice throughout the country for another 60 years: the separate but equal doctrine. The court’s decision meant they chose not to treat black people as full humans and fellow citizens... Many white Christians upheld racial segregation and defended it as a biblical mandate.” *The Color of Compromise*, Dr. Jemar Tisby, 2019

For further reading: [Peggy McIntosh: White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#) (umbc.edu)

Video: [Peggy McIntosh: How to recognize your white privilege — and use it to fight inequality](#) | TED Talk

Reflection: “We must proclaim the truth that all life is one and that we are all of us tied together. Therefore it is mandatory that we work for a society in which the least person can find refuge and refreshment...You must lay your lives on the altar of social change so that wherever you are, there the Kingdom of God is at hand.”- Howard Thurman, Commencement Address, Garrett Biblical Institute, 1943

Question: How do I have privilege other people do not have? How can I use it to help others and to fight for true equality in America? Have I avoided conversations about racism? Has my unconscious bias allowed others to be oppressed?