



Healing Conversations on Race *Four Key Practices from Scripture and Psychology*

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Christians today can get easily overwhelmed by the plethora of competing, fragmented ideas on racism. Using the diversity of literature within psychology, attachment theory, and emotionally focused therapy, four authors with advanced degrees in the helping professions present a model for how to have healing conversations on race.

A Model for Addressing Racial Disunity

What led to your interest in writing this book?

Veola Vazquez, Joshua Knabb, Charles Lee-Johnson, and Krystal Hays: The Christian community and the church struggle with ongoing racial disunity. As Christian scholars with diverse denominational, professional (e.g., clinical psychology, social work, ministry), and racial and ethnic backgrounds, we sought to draw upon our biblical and professional knowledge and relational experiences together to provide a foundation for healing of cross-racial relationships in individual relationships among Christians. With an unwavering commitment to guiding readers in Christlikeness and a biblical worldview, we also use proven theories and techniques from psychology literature to offer a structured, step-by-step guide for Christians of different racial and ethnic backgrounds to engage in healing conversations about race-related matters.

What is your main thesis in *Healing Conversations on Race*?

Vazquez, Knabb, Lee-Johnson, and Hays: *Healing Conversations on Race (HEAL)* is a unique approach to building unity among Christians of differing racial and ethnic backgrounds. This model and its methodologies are founded, foremost, upon the goal of helping Christians to grow in Christlikeness and apply Christlikeness to cross-racial conversations and relationships. Our goal is not to merely translate the most popular secular ideas of the day. Instead, we start with the Bible as a foundation, anchoring our approach to God's revelation of who we are, what is wrong in our world and relationships, and what is the solution. Therefore, we draw from the grand narrative of Scripture and its themes, depicting God's character, how to know him, the nature of people and sin, the person and work of Christ and the Holy Spirit, salvation, the church, and God's eschatological plan for humankind. We then utilize research-supported methods from within psychology literature to guide people in having intentional, unifying, and, ultimately, healing conversations on race.

Who did you have in mind as you were writing this book?

Vazquez, Knabb, Lee-Johnson, and Hays: This book is for Christians who are motivated to grow deeper in relationships with others from racially/ethnically different backgrounds. The book can be read individually or as part of a small group in a church or community context. The book can also be used within Christian counseling and psychotherapy as a guide to helping individuals or groups grow spiritually as they seek to develop cross-racial relationships. Finally, the book can be used as a text in college and graduate courses focused on cultural diversity.

What do you hope your book contributes to the study of cross-racial relationships?

Vazquez, Knabb, Lee-Johnson, and Hays:

- This book offers a model of race relations founded on a biblical worldview and provides a guide for applying Christlikeness to the deepening of cross-racial relationships.
- This book provides a structured and easy-to-follow model for engaging in Christ-centered, race-focused conversations, using both Scripture and psychological theory as a guide.
- This book applies research-supported psychological principles and traditional Christian practices for spiritual growth to help readers dually deepen their relationship with Christ and racially-different others.



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