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Krista Bontrager and Monique Duson: Walking in Unity

November 16, 2024



Knight & Rose Show - Wintery Knight and Desert Rose

Wintery Knight and Desert Rose welcome Krista Bontrager and Monique Duson to discuss their new book "Walking in Unity: Biblical Answers to Questions on Race and Racism". They discuss how their friendship developed through difficult conversations about race and racism. They offer a Christ-centered perspective on the tough issues being discussed in our culture, such as historic racial injustices, system racism and the call for reparations.

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Transcript

Welcome to the Knight and Rose Show, where we discuss practical ways of living out an authentic Christian worldview. I'm Wintery Knight. And I'm Desert Rose.

Welcome, Rose. I'm excited about our guests today. We have a special show here.

I love these two sisters in the Lord. I have learned a lot from both of them. I admire both of

them.

And they have just come out with a new book on a topic that is very personal to me. So let me introduce our guests. Our guests are Monique Duson.

She is the president of the Center for Biblical Unity. She worked as a missionary in South Africa for several years. She was serving children and teachers who were impacted by drugs and violence and trauma.

She used to be an advocate for critical race theory. But over the last several years, she has seen the contradictions of CRT with the historic Christian worldview. And now she firmly believes that CRT is not the best way to achieve racial unity.

Monique has a BA from Biola University, and she's working on her Master's in Public Theology at Birmingham Theological Seminary. We also have Christa Bontrager. Christa is a fourth-generation Bible teacher.

She's also known as theology mom. She is an author, a podcaster. She was a university professor.

She homeschooled her children. She has a whole bunch of degrees in awesome stuff. And she is currently working on her Doctor of Ministry in Public Theology, also at Birmingham Theological Seminary.

And together, Christa and Monique created the Center for Biblical Unity. And I love this phrase on their website. It says, their sisterhood in the Lord is the cornerstone of this ministry.

So Christa and Monique, welcome to The Night and Rose Show. Hi, thanks for having us. Glad to be here.

All right. Your first book has just been released. It's called Walking in Unity.

I read it last weekend. Really good book. If you're listening right now, I'm going to tell you, please get this book and read it.

It is engaging. It's personal. It's theological, but not difficult in any way.

And it's practical. I wish I had had this book a few years ago. I'm so grateful to have it now.

And I really feel like it's an antidote to a lot of the false solutions, the unhelpful solutions that have been put forth in the last several years to race relations. So one of you guys just kind of introduced the book before we get started on talking about some related topics. Our book is really the history of our friendship.

It does talk a lot about our friendship, but more than that, our friendship was really a microcosm of a lot of what we were seeing from probably 2018, 2019, right through, you know,

22, 23, even today, you know, what are people believing about race relations on what is our country's heart behind, you know, our past, but also our present. How do you black and white people walk together in our country, whether or not, you know, they're believers or not. How is this conversation showing up? Kristin, I held very different views on what it meant to be human on what it meant to worship God, who is God and what impact has our nation's history really had on the relationship between blacks and whites and how should we strive for unity? And so as we, you know, wrestled through these questions, one, Kristin realized that I was upholding critical race theory, but that there actually needed to be more conversations biblically on how do we uphold the scriptures.

I also came to this understanding of like, you know, there's something different about the Christian worldview than what critical race theory offers. And as we began to just really have a lot of Bible studies and conversations and the Lord aligned other opportunities for me to have conversations with others, I personally saw that critical race theory wasn't the, you know, the way to bring about unity. And Krista, I think learned a lot and she, you can definitely say more Krista, but she learned a lot about our nation's history in regards to some of the historic problems that we have had in relation to race relations overall.

Yeah, I think the book is just the natural extension of our friendship and explaining and the struggles and the differences that we had in the beginning, and then biblically how we worked those things out. And with the hope that people will benefit not only from our story, but most of all from the theology and having a deeper understanding of scripture because our story, it was our journey, but it's not the arbiter of truth. The true authority in both of our lives was that of scripture.

And so walking in unity, it's just our attempt to try to share our story as well as what we learned from the Bible about ethnic unity. Yeah, I love that you bring everything back to scripture throughout the book and that that is clearly the foundation upon which you are building and arriving at conclusions and answers and ways forward. I think there are a lot of, I know that there are a lot of Christians out there who are embracing worldly ideas that are conflicting with the Bible, but maybe not really realizing it because it's what the culture is saying.

There's a lot in this book. Again, I'd encourage you to get it. You guys talk about kind of a history of racism, about how each of you kind of, you know, had learned history in school, but you had learned entirely different things.

And I thought that was fascinating. You talk about what racism means today, what people mean by it, what anti-racism means. I think a lot of people have heard these terms now, and you guys have talked about this on a lot of other shows.

So I want to ask a question. What does it mean to do the work of racial reconciliation? What does that mean when people say that? I think that racial reconciliation is a term that is mostly used inside Christian institutions, churches, ministries, and Christian nonprofits, and that sort of thing. It's not really a term that most people, when you go out into the world, that they're

using.

And it is a Christian, I think, idea that's well-intended of trying to bring people together, to recognize, hey, we seem very divided, and the source of our division seems to be about race. Let's work on increased understanding, increased empathy and learning, and these kinds of very noble ideas. But Monique makes the case in the book that from her perspective as a former advocate of racial reconciliation, she really thinks that many of the ideas and tenets and goals of racial reconciliation is really what the world just calls anti-racism, with some Bible verses sprinkled on the top.

So I'll let Monique speak to that. Yes. Racial reconciliation really does hold many of the components or tenets of anti-racism, anti-racism.

What is a project that's been made popular by Ibram Kendi. It does predate Ibram Kendi, but he wrote the book *How to Be an Anti-Racist*. And to be an anti-racist really is someone who was consistently and constantly advocating against racist policies and systems, racist structures within our society.

For Kendi, there is no not racist. For Kendi, everything is I am either an anti-racist and consistently being an anti-racist or I am racist. When we think of anti-racism, some of those works include recognizing whiteness when it's present, you know, and whiteness is always present in our society, I believe Kendi would say, recognizing when racism is happening, recognizing when racism attached to things like LGBTQ plus issues are happening.

For Kendi, a lot of the issues that we see outside of what we would really consider true racism or ethnic partiality being biased because of someone's ethnic heritage, skin color or culture, you know, he attaches to LGBTQ plus issues, feminist issues, body issues, looking at issues with fat studies and things like that. And so to be an anti-racist is to consistently be advocating for the minority. Looking at that inside of the church, one of the books that I have is by Christina Edmondson and Chad Brennan, *Faithful Anti-Racism*, which is to me another way to say, you know, racial reconciliation, like how are we bringing these things together? And they in this book, they really list out all of the ways that we participate in anti-racism or in racial reconciliation.

And so we need to, you know, have wisdom, apply the Bible, but we also need to stand for justice. I would immediately question what do they mean by justice? We have to understand our past, understand our present, understand racial trauma, follow examples of the early Christians. Which examples would those be is something that I would ask.

Help seek out help and help others effectively measure progress. There is a work to be done. And then, you know, you can also look at something like *Be the Bridge*.

They have 16 tips for white people. What are those tips? Things like, you know, don't take up too much metaphorical space. Allow people to wail or cuss at you or yell at you if you need to.

Remember that you're supposed to listen all the time. And so, you know, I have pieces of the book selected. I have the 16 bridge building tips pulled up if we want to go down that road.

But there's a lot of work that needs to be done. According to them, not according to me. This is the racial reconciliation view.

There are a lot of terms to be defined, too, when you know, one of the first things you said was that Kendi says, you know, recognize when whiteness is present. I'm pretty sure he doesn't mean when, you know, recognize when someone whose skin is lighter, you know, is in the room. And if that's all he meant, what would be the purpose of that? There's a lot more to that, right? What is what is like whiteness and kind of a theme I've seen over the last few years is the term whiteness is just automatically understood to be something that's bad, right? Yes.

So if we were to go back to like the 1600s, late 1600s, the term whiteness was really used then in large part due to the Virginia Slave Act. And I believe it's called the Virginia Slave Act. I could be speaking under correction, but that it was when Virginia said that, you know, if you are a white slave and you become baptized, then you can go through the process of manumission and be freed as a slave.

But if you're black, you won't be able to be baptized and then be freed. And so white people had something that black people did not have this idea of whiteness then, you know, came about. When we think of what people are talking about today in regards to whiteness, whiteness is the white Western European way of doing things.

It is things like being on time, meritocracy, marriage, having, you know, two kids or, you know, building a family. It is also a lot of our Christian holidays, the normal ways that many Westerners think about doing things. In Faithful Anti-Racism, Edmondson and Brennan conflate it or, you know, talk about it in regards to the belief in white superiority.

And so that's something that we see also outside of, you know, this book, but largely just in culture overall, you know, what is white superiority? How are we, you know, participating with white superiority today? We would at one time have said whiteness and white superiority are things like the KKK or somebody screaming out, you know, white people are just better than anyone else. But what they say is that it's white dominance. White people control the policies, activities, and dynamics in ways that primarily cater to the preference of white people.

It's white normativity. The views and practices of white people are treated as the norm or standard. The views and practices of people in other racial groups are treated as special, unusual, or dangerous.

It's white transparency, white dominance, and white normativity powerfully influence dynamics, but their effects remain invisible or unacknowledged. And so these are some of the ways that they define, you know, white superiority, which I would say is largely kind of synonymous with whiteness. I wanted to ask about this.

So in real life, most people listen to the podcast know I come from my ethnicity as West Indian Black. My parents come from the Caribbean and I'm an immigrant to the US. So I have some experience with some of these concerns at a personal level.

But I wanted to ask a question based on kind of a famous Black American. I don't know if anybody's heard of this guy. But there's the first Black naval aviator is a guy named Jesse Brown.

And his story is so interesting that there's a book about him and they just recently made a movie about him as well. He fought in the Korean War and he was, I believe he was from Alabama or Mississippi, and he experienced a lot of racism as he was going through the process of becoming a naval aviator. He didn't let that bother him because he had such a strong Christian worldview that he was fully committed to fighting communism in North Korea.

And so the more they threw milkshakes in his faces or told him he couldn't do this or whatever or said he could never be, you know, a good enough pilot or whatever, he just disregarded all that. So my question is, do you see for someone who is, you know, a non-white Christian, do you see like a conflict between trying to solve this problem by getting other people to do the work of racial reconciliation and being a Christian yourself and just doing the work of being a Christian, either personally, you know, in your private action saying, how do I apply Christianity to my life? That's going to be my priority. Or like Jesse saying, hey, I don't like communism.

It's bad for Christians to, you know, live under that system. So I'm going to go fight them doing something in the world. So how do you see that conflict between this goal of racial reconciliation, we want Christians to do that, with the other goals of saying being reconciled to God, personally, and also encouraging others to be reconciled to God? Which one should I choose? You know, which one is better? I actually don't see that as a conflict, honestly.

And I wouldn't say that we need to choose racial reconciliation anyway, because racial reconciliation is steeped in anti-racism. I believe that if we congruently live out our Christian faith and are obedient to scripture, we will, A, you know, honor the image bearer who's in front of me, whether that person is black, white, or, you know, otherwise. And as I seek to serve and honor God, I can do that by using my voice, my vote, my dollar.

I can stand on behalf of truly marginalized people, you know, and so that is, that is how I'm how I choose to live my life. I don't separate out this idea that today I'm doing all of my Christian duty, but then, you know, later today or tomorrow, I'm doing the work of anti-racism. I'm not doing the work of anti-racism.

The work that I'm doing is Ephesians four and how I treat one another. It is understanding that there is neither Jew nor Greek, and that that doesn't mean that we are all culturally the same or that we all, you know, became white or became clear, but that my, my ethnic background or your ethnic background should never be a dividing wall between us because now we are both children of God. And so yeah, I don't, I just, I don't see, for me, I don't see a conflict and I would

encourage others that as you are living obediently to the scriptures and wanting to, to seek and to serve Jesus, that our hearts aren't looking at, oh, I don't have enough time, you know, to be an anti-racist or I don't have enough time to, to do racial reconciliation, but that understanding first that when I come into Christ or you come into Christ, you know, our hearts are reconciled to God, but then that reconciles us as brothers and sisters.

And so if we are brothers and sisters, I'm not looking at you as the West Indian guy, you know, I'm looking at you as my brother or somebody else as my white sister. I'm looking at her as my sister. And so because of that, we have family rules for how we treat believers, brothers and sisters.

But I also understand, you know, how do I treat the person who may not be a believer, but it's still created in the image of God. Yeah. I just, I want to make it really clear that Monique and I are presenting in our book, *Walking in Unity*, an alternative model to racial reconciliation.

Yeah. In fact, we discourage Christians from even using the terminology or the phrase racial reconciliation because we just don't think it's biblical. We rather call our model biblical unity and it is an alternative.

We are putting it forward as a completely different path to thinking about ethnicity and ethnic unity. I don't know. Does that address your question, Wintry? Yes.

So yeah, I was trying to, present what I consider to be a really good example of somebody who is at a personal level applying Christianity to his own life and then in a public way saying, this is how my decisions are going to influence the world. And so Monique's answer is fitting in the two goals. And then your answer is making it more clear how we should think about this.

It seems to me that a lot of this definition of whiteness as well, and then separating a large percentage of the population away from it, like presenting it as a bad thing is in itself really harmful and potentially racist. Like to say that to show up on time is white. To get married before you have children is white.

That's whiteness. To raise a family is whiteness. That seems, I mean, studies show that people who get married before they have children do better anywhere in the world and in any context and people who keep their word tend to do better and build trust and unity and that sort of thing.

So to say, well, those are white values seems tremendously harmful. Yeah, I think that was much of my confusion for a significant part of the early days of our friendship together is I couldn't really understand what Monique was meaning by whiteness. And in our case, she thought that logic was white.

And so when I would talk about informal logical fallacies or apologetics or Wayne Grudem's systematic theology, she thought that all of those things were white. And I just was highly confused by this and thinking, what are you even talking about? You know, what is the page

that you can point me to in Wayne Grudem's textbook where white things are being discussed? You know, I just I don't get it. And what you have to understand is that it is a way of seeing the world.

It is a lens. And Monique approached the world with a very different sort of a lens. The concern that we have now is that many of the ideas that are called whiteness are also congruent with the historic Christian worldview.

And so our prediction is that and we already see this happening to some degree, but we've been talking about it for at least four years now, that eventually the world or the culture is going to collapse Christianity with whiteness. And so the project of getting rid of whiteness will become conflated or equal to getting rid of Christianity. And so there will be.

And then this is emerging is two Christianities. There will be the one that will be approved by the state, which is more progressive Christianity. And then there will be the one that will have to go more underground, which is historic Christianity, because our faith is simply not congruent with the foundational assumptions of the critical social theories.

Powerful. Yeah, that's a good point. You know, in looking at all of the things that are placed under whiteness.

And if you haven't seen that, you can check out the Smithsonian's infographic on what whiteness is. And what are all of the things that are listed under whiteness? It is surely coming into that Christian realm of, hey, look, we shouldn't be doing these things, especially things like Christian holidays, things that are so important to what it means to be a Christian. And so as believers, we should definitely be aware of what whiteness is being claimed to be.

Great point. I want to shift the topic a little bit and talk about kind of a hot button issue, which is reparations. WK and I are both policy people.

Public policy was my undergraduate degree and is likely to be the source of my dissertation, the subject of my dissertation. And wintery night fled his country of origin due to policies that were harming its citizens and silencing Christians. So we love to talk about policy as a way of loving our neighbor and showing how certain policies are beneficial.

Others are harmful. So I have a question. What should the descendants of African slaves receive reparations? Yeah, this is the chapter that I did in our book, *Walking in Unity*.

And I'll just say quite candidly that this was a bit of a journey for me on this issue. I came into it thinking, well, first of all, I had never heard of reparations before I met Monique. I didn't know anything about it.

I had given zero thought to it. When she first brought it up, she just had such strong conviction that reparations were owed to the descendants of slaves. And I was like, I have no idea what you're even talking about.

And so I went from confusion to a hard no and then anger to even talking about it. And then realizing in myself, wow, I have a lot of strong opinions about something that I haven't even looked into or researched. And so then I had to kind of hit the pause button on my emotions a little bit and go do some work and research the matter and think about it and trying to get a handle on what the best arguments were, what was the case that they wanted to make.

And so I think that the topic of reparations is very emotional. I think that there are some things for us to understand historically if we're going to have this conversation with somebody in an informed way. I don't think it's useful to just get emotional and say absolutely no, this is the stupidest thing I've ever heard.

I wasn't there. I shouldn't even have to talk about it. Rather, if we're going to, just like any other good apologetics issue, it helps to do some research and have some knowledge so that when you're engaging in the conversation with somebody who's advocating a different position, you can try to persuade them.

And that's the first thing that I want to tell people is don't write off your progressive friends simply because they want to talk about reparations or they think reparations are owed. Rather, look at them as any other apologetics issue if you're going to talk about the existence of God or the problem of evil, pain and suffering. You have to have some arguments.

You've got to make your case. And in order to do that, you're going to have to know some things. And I think that the first thing that it would be helpful for people to know is that it's an emotional subject for descendants of slaves for some interesting and good reasons.

One of them is that there was a field order at the end of the Civil War that General Sherman put forward and Lincoln kind of gave a preliminary approval of it in an informal way that they were going to seize property of some plantation owners, particularly in Georgia, and redistribute that land to former slaves. And this is where we get the saying 40 acres and a mule. That there was an idea of helping former slaves establish a new life.

And this would be done through giving of property and goods so that they could have something to start a new life with. Now, that field order never went through partly because of Lincoln's assassination and the succeeding President Johnson didn't go through with it. Now, I'm not convinced that that would have been the best thing to do because I do think that land seizure by the government is problematic in many cases and is a form of theft.

I am an advocate for private property rights, but we couldn't have that conversation as to whether or not that would have been lawful and just according to God's standards. But I think that that's a question to probe. But I do think it's important for people that even if you don't if you don't believe in reparations to at least understand and have empathy for why descendants of slaves feel like our government broke their promise.

This is their argument. It's a promise broken. And so unless we're just completely calloused, you

know, I think that it's worth just understanding and knowing that point.

Secondly, I think it's also important to understand that there are groups of people that our government has paid reparations to and acknowledged their participation and injustice. For example, the people who were victims of the internment camps during the Second World War. In the late 80s, our government wrote a letter of apology and enclosed a check to every person who was still alive who was a victim and put into internment camps during the Second World War.

We have paid our government has acknowledged and paid reparations to Native Americans on multiple occasions. And descendants of slaves are just making the thoughtful point. Our government was complicit in the slave trade.

They were complicit in allowing there to be laws at the highest order in our country to protect slave masters to do cruel things to slaves. And we just want an apology from the government. Now, I think that an apology for the six generations removed from the act is very late.

I think the time for that apology was probably 150 years ago. But this is again a second point that reparations advocates want is they want an apology. And it's not dissimilar in their minds to a domestic violence situation where, you know, when you're the victim of domestic violence, you just want the perpetrator to wake up one day and come to their senses and say I'm sorry and truly repent.

And so for descendants of slavery, these are the things that they want. Unfortunately, what has happened is that the conversation has really just devolved into a hashtag of write the check or cut the check. These are hashtags on social media that are for reparations advocates.

And so it's sad to me that, you know, what could be a conversation about restoring relationship has really just evolved into money. And I don't think that reparations are going to help the black community. And you can ask Monique about that if you want.

So that's my first point is educate yourself on what the major arguments are. Our country seems to have a lot of money to send to the Ukraine and to other countries. And for not always well-defined reasons.

And yet descendants of slaves are saying, hey, we still are over here waiting for an apology and you seem to have money for everything else. Why not us? Now, we can debate the shady money policies of our government. I don't agree with them.

I think that we're printing money to our detriment. And we can have all of that conversation. I'm simply trying to explain the mindset of those who are reparations advocates.

I don't know, Monique, do you want to add to anything or correct anything I've said? No, I think you've summed it up very well, especially as, you know, we do look at where money's being sent to even today and, you know, or how the illegal immigrant crisis is played out. And even

our current administration's, you know, thoughts about how we should pay for things or what we should do and offer and things like that. It does bear weight, you know, on the descendants of slaves that at no point in our current or past history has our government really felt like or thought that blacks were worthy of some type of renumeration for the atrocities that were committed against black slaves.

Now, that doesn't mean that every person who sits in government, you know, has a heart that's, you know, just bent against blacks and doesn't want to help or doesn't, you know, feel like there's any need, you know, and things like that. But, you know, it does speak something to descendants of slaves. And do I personally think that, you know, reparations will cure the ills that we're seeing in a lot of black culture? No, not at all.

It just rubs me personally the wrong way to think like, wow, you'll give, you know, money to, you know, overseas projects, you know, left and right. You'll give money to illegal immigrants left and right. But the people who built, helped build this nation, we can just continually look over.

Even though I am not a proponent of reparations, like I said, I just think that it speaks volumes. That makes sense. Krista, did you want to say something? And then I would like, I am interested in hearing from Monique, just a thought or two about why you think reparations are not the solution.

But Krista, did you have something? Yeah, just to build on that, like, let's get into why we don't think that it's a solution. I want to say biblically, the idea of restitution is a deeply biblical idea. And now I'm going to differentiate between restitution and reparations.

Restitution is the word that I'm going to use to describe the biblical principle of repayment for wrong. And so the Bible has many laws in the Old Testament about repayment, that when there is a wrong, something is owed. And if there's theft or fraud, that even if there's injury, even if it's by accident, there is something that is owed for that.

So we see this play out in the New Testament in the example of Zacchaeus. When he encounters the Messiah, one of the first things he does is he is convicted of his sin of stealing from his neighbors. And so what does he do? He wants to pay them back with interest.

Well, what is he doing there? He's just obeying the law. He's obeying the Mosaic law. He's been a Jew who's been a traitor to his people.

He's stolen from his neighbors. And he's going to now obey God's law and he's going to pay them back. And I think that restitution is a deeply biblical concept.

And what should have happened if we were going to have done things biblically was that Christian slave owners should have repented of their sins, freed their slaves, and given them some kind of materials for a new start. That would have been the biblical principle if we look in scripture. And that is God's commands for what to do when you're letting a slave go after their

service.

It's not a lifetime servitude. It was a short-term kind of contract situation. And when they go, you give them certain goods to help them start a new life.

That's what should have happened was that people should have repented from their sins and seen the dignity of their slaves and help them start over because they were righteously following the principles of scripture. That didn't happen. And so then the government became a proxy for the repayment.

And this is when we get to General Sherman's field order that the government was going to seize land from some people and redistribute that to slaves. I don't think that that was totally biblical, but it at least was acknowledging the wrong and trying to come up with some kind of repair. Now, the problem that we're in with reparations now in our current situation is that we are four to six generations removed from the offense.

The universal teaching of scripture both by overt teaching and by example, is that when there is restitution it happens. It's between the two parties, the wrongdoer and the person who has been wronged. There is no biblical precedent for repayment by children, grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, generations removed.

And this is my biblical problem with reparations is that there is having the government act as a proxy for personal responsibility is generations removed. I don't think that that falls in line with biblical justice. It seems like there are two different issues there.

The one is there are explicit passages that the sons should not pay for the sins of the fathers, etc. And then there's also the idea of the government doing what the individuals are called to do. No, you're exactly right.

That's a great summary. And so this is why we do not promote government redistribution of wealth. This is just some kind of neo-Marxist idea trying to borrow the collateral of the Christian worldview and our ideas of restitution and then piggybacking on that and making the government a proxy and making me an avatar as a white person for somebody who lived in the 1860s and making Monique an avatar for former slaves in the 1860s.

This is not a good idea. You talked a little bit in the book about some of the problems in the black community that would not that are major problems that wouldn't be solved even if reparations were to happen. I was wondering if one of you might speak to why even if there weren't all these other problems that it's not biblical to make the government a proxy and, you know, six generations removed, etc.

If somehow it were to happen, what would be the problems with it? Would it not make everything better? Because I know a lot of people who are actually saying, you know what, I will give any amount of money to make the race tensions go away. If things would just get better, take it, please. They can make those checks payable to the Center for biblical.

Click the donate button. That's great. I love it.

You know, here's the issue. And if the Lord is putting on your heart to give reparations, who am I to stop you? I am black. I do come from the descendant of a slave.

But here's the real issue. On one hand, you have guilt written whites, not necessarily guilty because they committed any wrong. But, you know, them personally, even if, you know, there might be a slave owning, you know, ancestor, nobody has owned a slave.

But you do have guilt written whites. And then you have, and this is gonna be real hard for some people to swallow. So y'all might want to edit this out later.

But you have blacks who were greedy. I'm sorry. It's not going to change anything.

The black culture has a lot of issues that need to be handled and no amount of money is going to help handle that. The only thing that will help handle that is a relationship with Jesus. Reparations isn't going to stop, you know, the poor marriage rate among the black community, among black women.

It's not going to stop abortion rates. It's not going to stop people from, you know, participating in drug deals and gangs and killing their own people. It is not going to stop these issues.

And why is it not going to stop these issues? Because we've had money. We have, and now when I say we've had money, what I'm going to say is that the people who are participating in these things are not necessarily indigent. And so if you're going to go out and fornicate and have an abortion with \$30 in your pocket, what's going to stop you from fornicating and having an abortion with \$3,000 in your pocket? It's a heart issue.

It's a mind shift issue. Many black women are educated and are having abortions. If you look statistically, they're having abortions because they don't want to interrupt their career right now because they're still in school because they have other things to do.

And so if we think about the issue of reparations, you know, I have to separate that out from like, oh, this is going to bring so much help to the black community. I don't see that as happening. You know, now do I think that there should have been something based on, you know, what we so freely as a nation and our government does for others? Well, yeah, I feel like, you know, it can put you in your feelings, like I said, and make you feel some kind of way about, you know, the government's participation with other groups.

But it's not. Look at the black community right after slavery. Before we went into Jim Crow, you had a ton of black people who were serving in government positions in leadership and things like that.

Our marriage rates were higher before the institution of the welfare state. We were on par with whites, if not exceeding white communities in many areas. You know, like there were black

doctors and black businesses.

Like we were a community that was doing well on our own. And so I can't. And that was without reparations.

That was in the middle of some of the worst racism we've seen since slavery. So how can we thrive then when we can't thrive now? Reparations isn't going to change that. So she stole my question and that was the greatest answer I could have expected.

I think, you know, what Monique was saying about, is this going to solve any problems? I think what the problem is is that Christianity offers a completely different view to money, not just to the black community, but to just everybody. Like our view of money as non-Christians is very different than the view that you get if you become a Christian. And I think what Monique was saying, you know, about that being more of the problem is kind of where I would line up.

And I was just wondering, do you guys have any sense of like seeing that and then saying to people who are facing this problem of, you know, perceived, you know, disparities? Do you see my point about saying, well, let's just recommend Christianity to people and have them order their own personal lives and their priorities in terms of work and education to kind of be ready for charity and resilience and partnering for the gospel. Does that help? Do we recommend that as Christians? Do we just say, you know, we may not get what we want from other people, but God has something for you in that area. Not prosperity gospel, but wisdom.

Yeah, absolutely. I'm saying yes and amen in my spirit to that. As we say at the end of the chapter on reparations, really just bringing it back biblically, God's call is for people to act righteously as individuals.

We don't wait around for the government to get their act together. So much of our government is very corrupt. Christians, of all people, should not be waiting around for the government to do something.

I think that the Pregnancy Resource Center network is a great example of what can happen when Christians collaborate and we don't wait for the government to overturn abortion. Rather, we start pushing back and collaborating and creating a counterculture. And so if people are struggling with guilt, we talk to these people occasionally in the South and they say, you know, I know for a fact that our family's wealth came through slavery and it bothers them.

Their conscience is bothered by this. And our answer to that is, okay, well, ask the Lord if he has anything for you to do about that. Like, you know, set up a foundation.

Maybe set up a foundation to do job training for people who are living in impoverished communities so that they can begin to have a helping hand according to God's principles of work to better themselves to get out of poverty. Maybe you want to start a school and have a situation where low-income children or children in single families don't get relegated to the horrible demonic public school system in their area. There's an alternative for that.

So if people are struggling with guilt about their wealth, then put that to good use for kingdom purposes and act righteously. Go study scripture about God's plan for human flourishing. Monique and I have a whole podcast about what is God's actual plan for human flourishing.

Not the worldly version, but what does God's word actually say about this issue? And go do that. So into that, you know, and obey the Lord most of all. Yeah, I've been making a similar point lately to people with regard to the disaster response because people are really upset about the government response to the recent disasters.

In Florida and Georgia and the Carolinas. And my husband, before he passed away, did disaster response. And he used to tell me about what a disaster government responses were every time he'd come home.

And I from a disaster and I would ask him who's doing a good job? And he would say, well, Samaritan's Purse is the best, far and away the best. And then he would name, you know, several other he would say, you know, local, local people who just really wanted to help their neighbors excellent. They were always really helpful.

And he would name some other Christian organizations who would do a great job. You know, I think that the more we become dependent on the government to fix everything and expect them to fix our problems, the more we're all going to suffer together. Oh, I think government dependence is completely unhealthy.

I don't think that that's God's plan for us. I don't think the government, I think the government should have minimal involvement in social programs. It is the government's responsibility, according to scripture, first and foremost, to execute justice, to protect the innocent, punish the guilty, and, you know, help maintain order so that the gospel can go out.

I'm not a fan of relegating all care and compassion to the government. I'm much more in favor of private citizens on the local level doing those things. And Christians above all people, I think we're, you know, there's been some powerful examples recently of churches in the Carolina spearheading the relief effort.

Absolutely, absolutely. Yep. Yeah.

And we also talk, you know, we've talked about how the scriptures give us a new mission, a new view of money, a new view of ourselves and foundationally, something that I think is absolutely critical. And if we get this wrong, I think we get the rest wrong. If we get this right, we're on the right track, and that is identity.

I just want to make the point before we close that, and you guys make the point in your book that I love how you make the distinction between creation identity that we were created in the image of God, salvation identity, you know, we're adopted as God's children and then matters of providence. That that's third. And so when we are seeing ourselves first and foremost, according to our skin color or something, anything that God does not see as our primary

identity, we are going to get into trouble.

And that's no different with this issue. I'm actually I'm leading a youth apologetics, teaching a youth apologetics group. We're going on our second year now.

And the kids and I have been talking about how when we find our identity in, for example, who we are attracted to, whether it's same sex, or opposite sex or whatever, when that's our identity, that's who we are. We we get into all sorts of problems. And so I don't know if if you want to kind of make a closing comment on this, Krista, but I do see this as absolutely foundational to walking in unity and seeing a way forward.

Yeah, I think that this is one of the key distinctives of our book. As I mentioned earlier, we're trying to put forward an alternative model to Christian anti-racism or what's sometimes called racial reconciliation. And this idea of creation identity is the idea of what's true about all humans and all times and all places and really looking at Genesis chapters one and two for that.

Then we talk about salvation identity as what is unique about us as Christians that we are once we come into God's household that we are brothers and sisters in Christ and that our unity is our starting point. It is not a destination to be achieved through works, but rather it is a starting point. And then third, matters of providence are those things that we really often have no control over.

It is what I call the time and place in which we are born according to God's sovereign will. You know, our family, ethnicity, where we're from, our culture, the nature of how we celebrate holidays and food and music and all of those things. I think that one of the key differences between our model and the racial reconciliation model is that we say matters of providence take a backseat to salvation identity.

And I think that the racial reconciliation model wants to make matters of providence either the most important thing about the human or co-equal with salvation identity in the Christian version of it. And we are very clear that we think that, and we try to make the case in the book that matters of providence take what we call a backseat or they're in second place to our salvation identity. Where it's not unimportant, where we're not saying culture isn't real or when you become a Christian, everyone is suddenly magically transported into having the same culture.

But that there are differences, but those differences ought to be secondary to what binds us together as brothers and sisters in Christ. Yeah, I love that. I love that.

And I love when you talk about the work that the anti-racist group and racial reconciliation group says we have to do versus what the Bible says about Christ having done the work. And I love your honesty and vulnerability there as well and saying, hey, this makes me nervous. Like, do people really care enough? Just start in a place, if I start in a place where Christ has done the work, like, do people care enough to love one another well, to live by boss's rules on this

podcast we call.

We refer to God as boss. He sets the rules. There's just so much in the book that I think people really can benefit from.

It is, as we've said a few times, an alternative to what just about everybody else is offering. But this is a biblical model. And I wish, again, that I had had it several years ago.

Sadly, I've lost several friends who I thought were good friends over the anti-racism kind of idea that if I didn't buy into it, then, you know, I'm cut off. And that's really sad to me. This is an excellent biblical model for relationships with people of different ethnicities.

And I hope that people really will go out, buy it, read it, share it with their friends, share it with your family, and live it out. Tell us the name of the book again. It is Walking in Unity.

Okay. So I think that's a good place for us to stop for today. Thank you very much for our two guests for coming on.

So listeners, if you enjoyed the episode, please consider helping us out by sharing this podcast with your friends, writing us a five-star review on Apple or Spotify, subscribing and commenting on YouTube, and hitting the like button wherever you listen to the podcast. We appreciate you taking the time to listen, and we'll see you again in the next one. Bye-bye.