

The Immanuel Light *Abridged*

For the Living of These Days



In his newest book, *The Body—A Guide For Occupants*, Bill Bryson employs many tools to generate pace and lucid flow. Despite the sheer size of the subject matter (the human body) the reader does not fatigue, but eagerly starts a new chapter. I found the book to both inform and inspire.

Bryson recalls an unexpected event in the course of writing this book that came in a dissecting room at the University of Nottingham in England. He writes, “Professor and surgeon Ben Ollivere gently incised and peeled back a sliver of skin about a millimeter thick from the arm of a cadaver. It was so thin as to be translucent. ‘That,’ he said, ‘is where all your skin color is. That’s all that race is – a sliver of epidermis.’”¹ Skin color is a reaction to sunlight.

As I write, the foundations of our country shake. Racial inequality is on the minds and hearts of most Americans. Protests erupted after the indefensible death of George Floyd and soon took on a broader theme of injustice. This explains the rage. I do not react with rage to an incurable disease. We did not rage at the severe weather of early March that caused our community much hurt. The emotion is by no means an automatic reaction. The late Hannah Arendt explained, “Only when our sense of justice is offended do we react with rage.”²

My initial attempts at understanding what I was observing and reading were not particularly satisfying. Throwing a kitchen sink of explanations at the problem confuses me. The vivid images of police brutality and the fires burning in the streets of our cities are not easily

processed. Vivid images are prone to “fast thinking” or automatic solutions that require little effort. I see a picture of an angry face and I have an immediate visceral response of fear or recoil. I must work to stay in the presence of the angry individual.

I did not experience rage after the aforementioned tornados. There was nothing to prevent the storm, no neglect of responsibility or sinister machinations. No one was suspected of perpetuating conditions that led to the violent wind and lightning. However, if identifiable steps to mitigate and eradicate severe weather had not been taken, rage would have been justified. Most would have been enraged at the unnecessary suffering such neglect had caused.

When the temperature of the present crisis comes down a few degrees, the work of healing may begin. Automatic and quick solutions will not serve us well. A certain nurse explained the biological process of a wound healing. “When a wound occurs, there are two kinds of tissue that must heal, the connective tissue below the surface, and the protective tissue of the skin. If the protective tissue heals too quickly, healing of the connective tissue will not be sound, causing other problems to surface later, or worse, never surface at all.”³

I reached out to Ryan Talbert looking for resources on the larger theme of racism. Ryan recently earned his PhD from Vanderbilt’s Department of Sociology. He has spent the past several years researching racial disparities in health. He has agreed to offer a lecture for the church on his work sometime in the month of July. In this issue of the *Light* he provides us with a list for suggested reading and study.

The Weather Report

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I am convinced that the healing before our country will require the best of our hearts and minds. As people of faith, we bring to the conversation the core theological premise that every man and woman is made in the image of God. Made in the image of God, therefore, we do not judge the character of another man or woman by the color of their skin.

—Steven

¹Bryson, Bill. *The Body – A Guide For Occupants*. P.14.

²Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. P.64.

³Friedman, Edwin H. *From Generation to Generation*. P.45.

Below is a list of resources provided by Ryan Talbert.

It is a combination of books, news articles, interactive websites, and empirical research. Ryan will be happy to provide access to any document/article if requested:

Highly recommended book form primers on racism and antiracism:

How to be an Antiracist by Ibram Kendi

White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas by Ibram Kendi

Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Racial Resentment Is Killing America's Heartland by Jonathan Metzl

Important popular media articles to make sense of the current times:

“How Protest Works” <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/21/opinion/sunday/how-protest-works.html>

“The American Nightmare”

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/06/american-nightmare/612457/>

“When White Supremacists Overthrew an Elected Government”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/07/books/review/wilmingtons-lie-david-zucchini.html>

“They Was Killing Black People”

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/local/wp/2018/09/28/feature/they-was-killing-black-people/>

“How White Americans used Lynchings to Terrorize and Control Black People” <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/apr/26/lynchings-memorial-us-south-montgomery-alabama>

“The Case for Reparations”

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Online Resources

Online resource that maps every instance of a lethal police encounter in the U.S.: <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/>

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Immanuel Baptist Church

The mission of Immanuel Baptist Church is to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to deepen our love for God and others, to fully engage our neighbor, and to wholeheartedly serve those on the margins of society.

God is calling Immanuel Baptist Church to practice the radical, compassionate discipleship taught by Jesus Christ.

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Online resource that documents racial disparities in police stops: <https://openpolicing.stanford.edu/findings/>

Online resource that documents every Confederate monument on public grounds: <https://www.splcenter.org/20190201/whose-heritage-public-symbols-confederacy>

Online resource that maps residential segregation in the U.S.: <https://demographics.coopercenter.org/racial-dot-map>

Empirical Research

Empirical research showing police officers speak with significantly less respect to black Americans compared to white Americans

<https://www.pnas.org/content/114/25/6521>

Empirical research from Nashville that shows police stops perceived as unjust harm black men's health on a molecular level

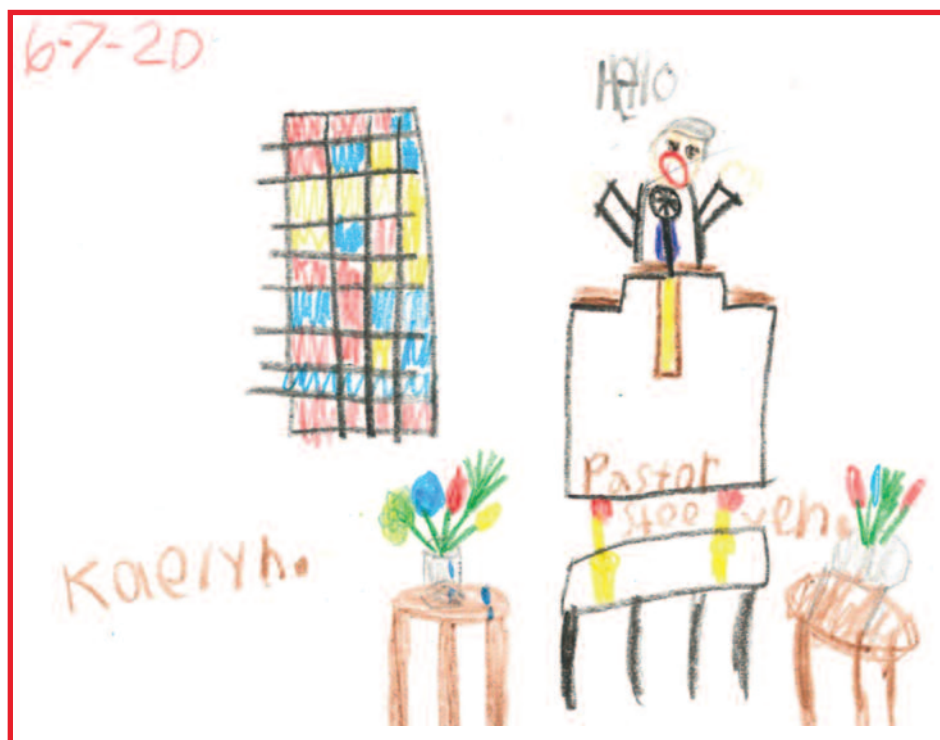
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0022146518811144>

Empirical research showing that black Americans are more likely than white Americans to be killed by police, and that police use of force is a leading cause of death of young black and Latino men.

<https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304559>

Empirical research showing that vicarious exposure to lethal police encounters when the victim is black and unarmed harms the mental health of black Americans but not of white Americans

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)31130-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)31130-9/fulltext)



The children are back on Sunday! And Kaelyn drew a picture so everyone can see what our service looked like. Nice job, Kaelyn!

Welcome, New Members!

Cliff, Mary, Jack, and Maddie

Vaughn join by letter from First Baptist Church, Nashville. Their deacon will be Abigail Reynolds.



Editor's Note: The Vaughn's joined Immanuel on March 8. Their picture was to appear in the ill-fated April Immanuel Light. **Let's give the Vaughn's a double welcome to Immanuel!**

PRAYER LIST

- Steve Tate
- Lee Ann and Kevin Craft (Lee Ann is the niece of Miriam Tate)

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The sanctuary flowers on June 14 are given by Don and Sue Lockmiller in loving memory of Bobbie Lockmiller.

The Library Is OPEN!

Books are waiting in the library to be checked out! Use the office entrance on Monday morning, 9:30-12:00 and browse the books. Be sure to sign your name on the card and leave it on the circulation desk.