Abstract

Race and Legitimacy in Acts 17:26:
An Approach from Political Theology

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Frederick Douglass appeals to Acts 17:26 in his famous letter, “What to the slave is the Fourth of July?” Douglass intends to gain legitimacy to his argument by conjuring the beliefs of his opponents, when he says, “You profess to believe ‘that, of one blood, God made all nations of men to dwell on the face of all the earth.’” While Acts certainly relies on political theology to legitimize “men” in the face of “all nations,” this paper will concern itself with recent invocations of this form of legitimization of the human, one which is made up of different races. In particular, I want to look at the series of essays from The Gospel Coalition's Tim Keller and his treatment of race. This paper will analyze uses of Acts 17:26 in so-called “multiculturalist” discourses and Tim Keller’s work on The Gospel Coalition. Through this analysis, this paper will consider race, like Kotsko’s neoliberalism, as its own legitimizing political theology. Race legitimates all into a sameness that erases difference.
Race and Legitimacy in Acts 17:26: An Approach from Political Theology

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“From one person God created every human nation to live on the whole earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their lands.” – Acts 17:26

I. Introduction

While racial crises threaten democratic participation and access to resources globally, there has been a (neoliberal) shift to consider “race” as a category for biblical studies, despite the fraught analyses that seem anachronistic to the biblical world. However, what is missing in these

1) See for example, Eric D. Barreto, Ethnic Negotiations: The Function of Race and Ethnicity in Acts 16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); David G. Horrell, Ethnicity and Inclusion: Religion, Race, and Whiteness in Constructions of Jewish and Christian Identities (Grand Rapids, Michigan:
analyses is the way capitalism, neoliberal ideology in particular, has shaped both individual subjectivity and Western positionality in scholarly understandings of race. Race as a category remains largely uninterrogated in biblical studies, particularly in its relation to capitalist production and globalization, Early liberal definitions of race remain dominant, making it easier for neoliberal ideology to mask race’s anti-Black structuring of the world. Take as an example Wongi Park’s recent article, “Multiracial Biblical Studies,” relying on the so-called racial categories “Africana, Asian, Indigenous, Islander, Latinx, and White.” Black has been subsumed into a geographical marker “Africana,” while categories “Asian, Indigenous, Islander, [and] Latinx” are questionable as “races.”

This paper takes the stance that race is an unnecessary category for analysis, and each time race is utilized without reference to Black exclusion, the invocation of race as a possible analytic category is in essence anti-Black. Race functions to legitimate itself and its anti-Blackness both


2) Wongi Park, “Multiracial Biblical Studies,” Journal of Biblical Literature 140 (2021): 435–59. “White,” while being a racial category, is also the social location where race is produced and perpetuated at the expense of Black life specifically, as well as other forms of ‘non-white’ life.

3) Park, “Multiracial,” 445. For example, Park prefers “Africana” rather than “Black” to “denote geography” rather than skin color. In this example, we can see precisely the silencing effect. “Black” folk were physically removed from Africa (geography) for the profits of the West. It is likely that all “Black” folk (or those who experienced Black exclusion) will not identify as “Africana,” Thus the category “Africana” can easily participate in the exclusion that it aims to include. Does this not also happen with Asian? And Latinx?
in politics and in theology. This paper will take up race as a political theology using receptions of Acts 17:26 to demonstrate its legitimizing functions. Then it will turn to an interrogation of the popularity of “fluidity” in biblical studies’ discourse on race to show how “fluidity” masks the category’s anti-blackness.

When one encounters a text like Acts 17:26, it is possible now to consider the problems and violences caused by its receptions. Following Wil Gafney, I would like to first position myself in the trajectory of her womanist and #BLM inquiry.

There is a significant difference in how I teach now, after the emergence of the BLM movement, I am more intentional in talking about whiteness and white supremacist culture and ideology and the roles of these elements in the founding and shaping of the West, of America, of public and private institutions, including those in which knowledge is constructed and passed on, and of the church and its institutions.  

Taking that as a starting position, let me briefly consider the Acts 17:26 as a text and look ahead to the consequences of its theologization. From the likely subjugated social position of the diasporic text, “every human nation” refers to both the dominating nations and the subjugated nations. In its negative function, it rejects the sovereignty of the imperialists and invites solidarity among other ethnoi. As a text, prior to

its theologization, it produces no universalizing category of the “human.” Yet, the theologization and scripturalization of the text now legitimates the possibility of a universal category of human, which is taken up by Enlightenment liberals. Both Frederick Douglass and the authors of the Abolitionist Manual rely on a political theology of the universal human that suggests the possibility of the equality of races. Unfortunately, it also functions to mask the political theology of race which relies on this masking to perpetuate its ideologies. Let me explain and then demonstrate how race still functions as a political theology in contemporary discourses on race, first in Tim Keller’s recent interventions against politically conservative white supremacists, but also in Wongi Park’s recent article “Multiracial Biblical Studies.”

II. Political Theology as Method

So this paper will take up receptions of Acts 17:26 in modernity. Its \( \pi\nu \varepsilon\theta\nu\varsigma \\alpha\nu\theta\rho\pi\omicron\omicron\nu \) easily elides into “the human race” or an implication that all humans are made up of races. For example, the text does not say “all humans from all nations,” but can easily be read as “[some] humans from every ethnos.” There is no reason to translate \( \varepsilon\theta\nu\omicron\varsigma \) as “nation,” “ethnicity,” or “race.” It is actually in the move to translate it as such that we encounter the elision that masks the legitimation of race as a category. This legitimation is founded on the idea that the God of Israel created all \( \alpha\nu\theta\rho\pi\omicron\omicron\nu \), giving theological legitimacy to any of the categories of human mentioned above. Moreover all of the catego-
ries mentioned above refer to an *ordering* of human life. Thus, we encounter theological legitimization for a political (world-ordering) category of race. As such, we can trace the way race (and its slippage into nation/nation-state in some cases) organizes the world with a theological legitimacy. For this reason, it is helpful to consider political theology as a way to think through these cases.

One of the defining features of this method, according to Adam Kotsko, is that “political theology as a discipline… rejects the religious/secular binary.”\(^5\) So we are not talking about race as a biological category (it never has been), but the way in which racial politics have been theologized and racialized theologies have made its way into politics, or specifically, the way white supremacy as the primary racialized theology has shaped the global world and the means of production.

Kotsko continues, “It is this world-ordering ambition of theology, which relies on people’s convictions about how the world is and ought to be, that for me represents a more fruitful distinction between theological discourse and philosophical or scientific discourses, at least as the latter tend to be practiced in the contemporary world,”\(^6\) Thus ana-

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5) Adam Kotsko, *Neoliberalism’s Demons: On the Political Theology of Late Capital*, 1 edition (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2018), 6. “That binary conditions the way people think about theology, leading them to view it as a discourse that, in contrast with rational modes of inquiry like philosophy and science, is concerned exclusively with God, is based on faith claims as opposed to verifiable facts, and is ultimately always dogmatic and close-minded. Yet attempts to establish a qualitative distinction between theology and philosophy or science on these grounds fail completely. If discourse about God is the defining feature, then Aristotle, Descartes, and Newton must be dismissed as mere theologians. If unverifiable premises mark the difference, then Euclidean geometry is the vilest form of fundamentalism,” (6-7)
lyzing theology as a discourse can illuminate the way the world is being made and sometimes, as with liberal theologies of race, mask the way an important world is being made. “On the most fundamental level, I regard political theology as the study of systems of legitimacy, of the ways that political, social, economic, and religious orders maintain their explanatory power and justify the loyalty of their adherents.”

Liberal categories and multiple theologies (like multiculturalism) consider the equality of races possible, while this paper sees racism as the founding principle of the category of race. Race was a category developed to defend colonial extraction of resources from not Western regions, with white at the top and Black at the bottom. The U.S. context shows that ultimately race was created to differentiate Black folk from everyone else.

In this paper, I want to consider that race is its own self-legitimating

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6) Kotsko, Neoliberalism’s Demons, 7.
7) Kotsko, Neoliberalism’s Demons, 8-9. “Political theology seeks not to document the past, but to make it available as a tool to think with. It does not aim merely to interpret the present moment, but to defamiliarize it by exposing its contingency. In other words, political-theological genealogies are creative attempts to reorder our relationship with the past and present in order to reveal fresh possibilities for the future.” Also, see Thomas Lynch, Apocalyptic Political Theology: Hegel, Taubes and Malabou (London New York (N.Y.): Bloomsbury Academic, 2019); “…political theology is an investigation of the intertwined history of theological and political concepts in order to utilize those concepts to critique the world.”


order, born in the throes of modernity, colonialism, and early globalization. Rather than naming the cultural similarities of those with similar skin, race subtly, through politics and theology, names a way that the world is being made (and remade). Specifically, it names the structure of the global means of production of at least (but not only) Western commodities through the exploitation of Black folk in the U.S. and abroad as well as other non-white folk, relying on the structures left in place by Western colonization. One may ask about Asian folk or Latinx folk: is Asian a race? Is Latinx a race? The ambiguity in defining race, in answering these questions, demonstrates the way race functions as a political theology, even in the liberal theologies of early abolitionists. The indeterminacy of the question of race masks its function in the real world, which is at least to make Black subservient to white, especially in relation to the value of labor. In short, there is no possibility for the equality of races, because race is a racist category, bearing it within it already, the tools of white supremacy. The indeterminability to answer the question, what is a race (actually)?” functions to legitimate the racial hierarchy embedded in all racial categorizations. Equality, if possible, must be sought beyond the limits of race—in opposition to race.

III. Frederick Douglass and the Abolitionists

Frederick Douglass’ famous letter, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” and John G. Fee’s Anti-Slavery both rely on Acts 17:26 to make the argument that humans from all nations come from one blood
(Adam) with one father (God). The intention behind the use of Acts 17:26 is in fact to theologize “blood,” so as to affirm a universal category of human. It relies on the logic that race is related to “blood,” to skin color, and to “family.” From our perspective, it is clear that race is not directly correlated to any of these biological markers, for it is a social construct.¹⁰ Look first, at Douglass’ invocation:

You can bare your bosom to the storm of British artillery to throw off a threepenny tax on tea; and yet wring the last hard-earned farthing from the grasp of the black laborers of your country. You profess to believe “that, of one blood, God made all nations of men to dwell on the face of all the earth,” and hath commanded all men, everywhere to love one another; yet you notoriously hate, (and glory in your hatred), all men whose skins are not colored like your own.¹¹

In Douglass’ letter, race is referenced in relation to skin color. Meanwhile, “black” is cited in direct reference to the remuneration of labor. Douglass is keenly aware of the direct correlation of labor and race. Race was a category used to value labor and build a world where

¹⁰ Park, “Multiracial,” 443-444.
¹¹ Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July? (1852),” 1852, https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/coretexts/_files/resources/texts/c/1852%20Douglass%20July%204.pdf. See also Douglass’ political theology in the same document, “What, then, remains to be argued? Is it that slavery is not divine; that God did not establish it; that our doctors of divinity are mistaken? There is blasphemy in the thought. That which is inhuman, cannot be divine! Who can reason on such a proposition? They that can, may; I cannot. The time for such argument is passed,”
Africa (and other colonies) was used to produce goods for the West at a reduced rate.\(^\text{12}\) Nevertheless, Douglass is using scripture to argue for one human race from one human blood created by God. The idea is that since all humans are of one blood, then all races should be equal. The theologization of blood buttresses the liberal idea of race and perpetuates it into the future.

Consider also how John G. Fee’s *Anti-Slavery Manual* utilizes Acts 17:26 in a similar way:

> Some persons in our country, claim a right to enslave the colored man or Negro, on the assumption that he is a different race of beings from the white man; and was made to be enslaved. Such persons take the position of the Infidel, in denying the Bible, which teaches us that God hath made of ONE blood all nations of men, Acts 17:26—that we area all descendants of one father, and members of the same family.\(^\text{13}\)

In this particular intervention against U.S. slavery, Fee’s “one blood” is theologized into one family. Nevertheless, race is still signified by biological blood (a fact we now know to be false). In both quotations, the abolitionists lift up liberal ideals, while still relying on biological markers to make up a race. But when considering that racism produced the

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category of race, that anti-Blackness and colonialism are foundational to the category, the theologization of a single bloodline of humans actually masks the continued anti-Blackness and afterlives of colonialism still perpetuated by a world that has been constructed by and through racial hierarchies.

IV. Tim Keller’s Multicultural Hermeneutics

Writing after Charlottesville, pseudo-centrist pastor, Tim Keller says,

“...[T]his is a time to present the Bible’s strong and clear teachings about the sin of racism and of the idolatry of blood and country—again, full stop. In Acts 17:26, in the midst of an evangelistic lecture to secular, pagan philosophers, Paul makes the case that God created all the races “from one man,” Paul’s Greek listeners saw other races as barbarian, but against such views of racial superiority Paul makes the case that all races have the same Creator and are of one stock, Since all are made in God’s image, every human life is of infinite and equal value (Gen, 9:5–6). When Jonah puts the national interests of Israel ahead of the spiritual good of the racially “other” pagan city of Nineveh, he is roundly condemned by God (Jonah 4:1–11). One main effect of the gospel is to shatter the racial barriers that separate people (Gal, 3:28; Eph, 2:14–18), so it is an egregious sin to do anything to support those barriers, When Peter sought to do so, Paul reprimanded him for losing his grasp on the gospel (Gal, 2:14).”14)
First of all, the Bible is not strong or clear on racism, because there is little evidence that “race” (as we know it) existed as a category in the biblical world. Consider Gafney when she says, “While racism does not exist in the Hebrew Scriptures, there is vicious ethnic conflict that can function as an analogue for contemporary race-based conflict.” This is true, but as mentioned above, Keller’s reading of Scripture legitimates and indeed crystallizes race as an essential category of the universal human. In other words, all “races have the same Creator” presents race (which we know to be a social construct) as a political theology that legitimates the racialization of the world. It should come as no surprise then, when in his later treatises (4 articles published later in 2020) he criticizes critical race theory (without citing any academic critical race theorists) and Marxist interpretations of race as unchristian.

Keller’s arguments amount to one of two very white Christian strategies: 1) Jesus saved us, so why can’t we all just get along? If we only would behave like Jesus, then all races could be equal. At times Keller exhibits the second strategy of pessimism, 2) Humans are depraved and races will never be able to get along. This strategy without any historization of the category of race functions to relieve himself and white people of a very recent problem. In other words, each strategy functions to produce a racialized political theology that legitimates the in-

ternal logic to the *essence* of race, upon which the structure of the world relies.

V. Segregationists as Ultra-nationalists

Near to Keller’s argument, however, are the segregationists who have relied on the division of nation-states (another form of blood relation) to keep different races separate. Richard Davis has cited an example from 1948, where a pastor relies on divided nation-states to argue against inter-racial marriage: “This verse, by some of our leading Biblical Commentators and Theologians, is used over and over again in defense of segregation of the races, and to their interpretation I agree. The fact is, that the latter part of the verse teaches just the opposite of non-segregation and free social inter-mingling.”

This is not a far cry from Trump’s quip to U.S. Representatives to “they should go back to the broken and crime-infested places from which they came.” One of these Representatives was African-American, Ayanna Pressley, who was born in the U.S. In the segregationist ideology, different races belong to certain geographies. For them the key to racial peace is for everyone to live where they belong. (Of course, no

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consideration is given to the indigenous folk displaced by European colonization.) Moreover, Trump’s comment shows the arrogance behind the segregationist ideology, that Europe and the U.S. are the best places, unbroken and with minimal crime. This follows predictable tropes about how racialization leads to criminalization. These examples demonstrate just how easily liberal definitions of race can slide into structures of racial exclusion. Moreover, history has demonstrated that liberal definitions of race have not led to an end to racism, Only addressing anti-Blackness and decolonization can do that.

VI. Race and Biblical Studies

Since Cain Hope Felder’s *Troubling Biblical Waters*, much of race discourse in biblical studies has used Critical Race Theory (CRT) to some degree. However, not much consideration has been done to realize the entanglement of race ideology with capitalist (and modern/post-modern) ideologies. Much of this conversation relies on how much modernist discourses see race as part of the category of the human versus how the function of race discourses are used to dehumanize some for the humanization of others.\(^\text{19}\) I argue that a fluid race discourse is a symptom of capitalist ideology that masks the dehumanization (and economic exploitation) of racialized others via the category of race.

Much of the fluidity attributed to the modern category of race in CRT and biblical studies can be traced to Foucault’s lectures, *Society Must Be Defended*. Foucault thinks “that racism is born at the point when the theme of racial purity replaces that of race struggle, and when counter-history begins to be converted into a biological racism.”20) “Race struggle” for Foucault is not necessarily a struggle between Black and whites, but a formation of a group of people (usually through ethnic identity) against Imperializing forces. He uses the example of the Celts or French in relation to the Holy Roman Empire.21) Thus the self-categorization of a people into the category of race was a form of resistance. This point of race struggle is foundation for Buell’s article “God’s Own People,” the most prominent of biblical scholars arguing for a fluid category of race.22) Finally, the shift which Foucault notes is finalizes itself in the relationship between state sovereignty and racism: “…sovereignty was able to invest or take over the discourse of race struggle and reutilize it for its own strategy. State sovereignty thus becomes the imperative to protect race.”

What is important to note here is that there is a shift which takes place during the formation of the nation-state during the Enlightenment. In other words, this use of race for resistance ended with modernization, a period marked by the “necessary” exploitation of dark-skinned

21) Foucault, “Society Must Be Defended”, 76.
labor by Capital. The more slave labor was used to build modern Western nation-states, the more biological definitions of race pervaded. While some biological categories of race (Linaeus) placed the white race above other races, more “reasonable” understandings argued that humans were made up of various races. Those who argued this way were often abolitionists. But as history would have it, the abolition of slavery did not end the economic exploitation of people of color by whites. Rather, it solidified class relations in a racialized modality, by relying on the Capitalist ideology of progress (i.e., the abolition of slavery), and now on the ideology of difference. 23)

Foucault’s genealogy of race struggle is not the only one who presents binarized tensions in race discourse. There is also a modernist discourse that, following biological concepts of race (i.e., that race is a genus of human beings), views humans as made up of different races. Both self-proclaimed white supremacists and modern white liberals follow this paradigm, one believing in a hierarchy of races, the other believing all races are equal. This can be compared with the postmodern discourse of Critical Race Theory that knows the central element to the category of race is the hierarchical binarized opposition of social relations between Black and white. 24) In such a view of race, all racism is white supremacy. It is not for me to bring an end to the debate

on the definition of racism, but one must consider how these competing discourses interact. In short, the white liberal’s claim that the various races of the human ought to be equal masks the reality that they are not. Critical race theorists argue, rather, that the category of race actually perpetuates the supremacist structure embodied in the Black-white binary. The problem, then, in biblical studies is that in recovering ancient categories of race (as descendancy), the power struggle of Black and whites is omitted. Furthermore, this inquiry into the ancient category of race is done from a socio-temporal position where whites still claim and hold supremacy over Blacks and where capitalism still shapes neoliberal subjectivities.


Let us work backwards. In defending her book from critiques, namely on her use of the category of race, Buell makes two claims towards the definition of race using Paul Gilroy and Ann Stoler.25) First, quoting Gilroy, she agrees that race “is the ‘complex, unstable by-

25) Buell, "God’s Own People," 175.
product’ of racism. And second, she quotes Stoler who is giving her analysis of Foucault’s “race struggles,” saying, “The porousness we assign to the contemporary concept of race may be a fluidity fundamental to the concept itself and not a hallmark of our postmodern moment.”26) On the first point, I want to agree inasmuch as we are beginning with the modern concept of “race.” The concept of race was used to identify a superior race to justify the colonization of non-Western countries and the use of slavery to advance the economies of Western nation-states.27) As to the second point, it may not be a hallmark of “our postmodern moment,” but it is likely that, being a concept subsumed by capitalist expansion, it is a hallmark of a modern white liberalism as I have already argued above. Certainly, both CRT and white liberal definitions of race exist, but I am arguing that one exists to mask the other’s reference to material reality, the reality of white supremacy. There is no doubt that the fluidity of “race,” “ἔθνος,” “γένος,” and other such words have fluid boundaries.

In Why This New Race? Buell opts to use the words race and ethnicity interchangeably. Barreto summarizes three points of the typical scholarly conceptions of race against whom Buell is arguing.

(1) the concepts of “race” and “ethnicity” actually refer to two different notions, the former a biological claim of the objective commonality of a group of people and the second a cultural claim of group unity; (2)

26) Buell, “God’s Own People,” 175.
“race” is a modern notion infected by the eugenic ideologies which under wrote racism in the past while “ethnicity” refers to a cultural phenomenon evident throughout history; and (3) the notion of “race” in the past stoked the flames of racism and is thus an inappropriate notion today. 28)

Buell opts to use the two interchangeably, not to equate the two, but she is “provoking attention to their inexactness—both in the contemporary moment and in their relationship to ancient categories of cultural difference.” 29) She also correctly notes that ethnicity is a modern category, just like race, and does not map neatly onto ἔθνος in translation. Neither does “nation.” However, the interplay between “ethnicity” and “nation” often help give each their meaning. Both Barreto and Buell opt to use “ethnicity” more than “race,” but as Barreto notes, this is simply a “concession to common scholarly practice.” Once again, I must note, that these scholarly practices happen “in our postmodern moment,” or more importantly, “our neoliberal moment.”

The white Liberal categorization of the human into possible equal categories called “races” fits nicely into the narrative of the Western democratization of the globe. A narrative about race that argues the category is meant to exploit Blacks for the benefit of whites naturally will not sell well, since the wealth of white nations has come and continues to come from the exploitation of people of color all across the globe. Therefore, any attempt to discuss race from the vantage point of today’s

28) Barreto, Ethnic Negotiations, 30.
29) Buell, Why, 14.
moment without engaging Blackness risks weaponizing racial difference and/or “fluidity” against those most exploited. For this reason, Byron’s *Symbolic Blackness and Ethnic Difference in Early Christian Literature* is more radical in its interrogation of Early Christian forms of proto-racism, It is not so much the content of Byron’s work, but rather the disavowal of race while analyzing Blackness that opens itself to new possibilities of racial discourse with respect to Early Christian texts, including the Bible, and to a radical undermining of the power of race in white Liberal discourses.

More recently, Park’s excellent article offers already important solutions to the problem of racism in Biblical Studies. In fact, I believe his suggestions should be implemented. However, I believe his categorization of “multiracial” still keeps in place race as a political theology that shapes the world. Notably, Park notes

To define whiteness solely and exclusively in relation to biological markers, which in and of themselves have no meaning, runs the risk of perpetuating the modern myth of race. To be crystal clear, race is a social construct that has no physical, genetic, or biological basis in human blood and DNA. In point of fact, there is greater genetic variation within—rather than between—racial groups, thereby rendering any system of racial classification arbitrary… As a biological myth with innumerable religious, civic, social, and political ramifications, race is the modern paradox par excellence. It is a windy and complex mirage, a labyrinth of representations.\(^{30}\)
Yet, when he designates the opposition of whiteness he says,

I appeal to multiracial coalitions of Africana, Asian, Indigenous, Islander, Latinx, and White scholars across racial/ethnic, generational, and geographical lines who have laid the foundation for this work.31

Let us note the slippage of the “racial/ethnic” when the solution has been positioned as “multiracial biblical studies.” This is the same slippage, or uncommitting interrogation, found in the Semeia volume, They Were All Together in One Place?: Toward Minority Biblical Criticism. Some of this slippage can be due to Buell’s work mentioned above. But this slippage masks the reality of race under capitalism, the social location from which nearly all of us are doing scholarship. (China mines Africa, not the West, for its production of cell phone batteries.) Beyond this reality in scholarship, many of those other identities listed in Park’s “coalition” still perpetuate anti-blackness and benefit from the exploitation of black people’s everywhere. Until that is addressed, the violent effects of racism will continue to persist. Put another way, a multiracial coalition cannot defeat racism, and only keeps the political theology of race and its legitimacy intact. Only solidarity with black folk can ultimately undo whiteness.

VII. Conclusion

This paper looked at the way abolitionists, multiculturalists, and segregationists have activated the theology of Acts 17:26. The liberal definition of race proposes that all races could be equal at some moment in the future. This paper has argued against this definition by insisting that race is a category built for the hierarchy of people on the globe, with white Western folk on the top. It is a category made by and for white people. This paper also suggested that (a proto-)racism birthed the category of race. If this is correct, then the liberal definition of race only serves to mask race’s violences. Moreover, appeals to race in biblical studies without consideration of the neoliberal subjectivities which reproduce liberal definitions of race will likely continue to perpetuate spaces for white supremacy. Thus, this paper suggests two options for further interventions into biblical studies. First, if race is a primary consideration, one must look at the way Black thinkers (i.e. Wynter, Moten) have engaged with and moved beyond racial categories. Second, this paper looks forward to the abolition of race as a category. As such, this paper suggests that other markers of “human” are better for analysis. Decolonial studies and other localized identities should be centered, so as not to perpetuate liberal definitions of race.

Race, Political Theology, Acts of the Apostles, Blood, Nation

인종, 정치신학, 사도행전, 혈통, 민족
Bibliography


한글 초록

정치신학의 관점에서 바라 본 인종문제(행 17:26)

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더글라스(Frederick Douglas)는 자신의 유명한 편지에서 사도행전 17장 26절에 기대어 “노예들에게 독립기념일이란 무엇인가?”라고 질문한 다. 더글라스는 “당신들은 ‘인류의 모든 종속을 한 혈통으로 만드사 온 망에 살게 하셨음을 믿는다고 고백했다”라고 지적함으로써, 자신의 반대 세력들의 믿음을 인용하여 자신의 주장에 대한 정당성을 확보하고자 한 것이었다. 본 논문은 사도행전 17장 26절을 노예폐지론자, 다문화주의자, 그리고 인종분리주의자들이 어떻게 수용하였는지를 살펴본다. 이 과정에서 본 논문은, 코츠코(Adam Kotsko)의 신자유주의 이론 모델처럼, 인종문제를 정치신학적 관점에서 접근하고자 한다. 따라서 필자는 사도행전 17:26에서 인종담론은 차이점들을 지우고 모두가 동일하게 보이게 만든다는 점을 지적하고자 한다.

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