

Lord, Make Us One

Prayers Toward Racial Healing



Fires of racial tension have been ignited in our nation. Hurt, fear, anger, suspicion, disappointment, pain, misunderstanding, and judgment surface in our relationships with people of different races. Many people express struggles that have marked their lives for years; others are uncertain of how to respond.

But the common cry within the Church and much of society is for change, healing, and a way forward.

What if the Church committed herself to 31 days of concerted prayer, seeking God to bring healing, restoring—and yes, even revival and spiritual awakening—to our nation? That would be a way forward that brings glory to God and hope to those who are hurting and in despair.

Niko Peele and Jonathan Graf invited prayer leaders from around the country to write prayers for racial healing that are steeped in God's Word. Peele and Graf have edited and compiled the book, titled *Make Us One*, to release this fall.

In this article we feature a sample of prayers that you can begin praying now. As you pray, invite God to do a radical work by using the Church to bring racial reconciliation through the power of Jesus Christ. Pray that God will use a

season of concerted prayer to ignite new fires that consume our nation with love for God and for each other.

Forgive Us, Restore Us

Our loving heavenly Father, we come to You in the most powerful name of Jesus. We worship and praise You with every breath that is within us. We desperately seek You during this chaotic time. Our nation is in a spiritually war-torn state. Please cleanse us, forgive us, revive us, transform us, heal us! We cry out to You to intervene and heal our minds and hearts from any hatred, hurt, pain, confusion, or misunderstandings.

Search the depths of our souls and reveal anything contrary to Your Word that hinders the process of healing needed in our nation. Remove any pride and blind spots that keep us from accepting each other and being united in the body of Christ and our country.

Forgive us for the sin of racism—an age-old strategy and lie of the enemy that makes us feel or think we are better, more important, more valuable, or superior than someone who looks different from ourselves in color, ethnicity, nationality, wealth, or culture.

Forgive America for the part it played in slavery and racism in our country's formation. This issue continues to plague us.

Help us to be patient with one another and to listen and learn from our differences. Help us to show empathy toward others even if we don't understand or agree with their point of view.

Father, restore to us a holy reverence and fear of God and a fresh revelation and understanding of Your Word, which declares we are all created from one blood and are all made in Your image after Your likeness. Penetrate our hearts so deeply with this truth that we can celebrate the truth that we are

all part of the same human race, regardless of our background or the color of our skin. Saturate us with Your love so that we may embrace our calling as reconcilers and healers.

We expect to see a great spiritual awakening because we know Your eyes are on the righteous and Your ears are attentive to our prayers. We realize it is not by our own might nor by our own power, but it is by your Holy Spirit that this battle will be won! You are the Warrior; the Lord is Your name. Thank You for leading us and hearing our prayer. In Jesus' name, amen.

(Genesis 1:26; Acts 17:28; Acts 17:26; 1 Peter 3:12; Zechariah 4:6; Exodus 15:3)

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Move Me Closer

Father, Jesus said that nation would rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. But that would be just the beginning of the birth pains. The subject of race is one of the most discussed topics in our culture today. Racism is one of the most basic and deadly problems in history—and it is increasing in power.

However, we know the Church is called to be different. Father, You call us to “move closer” to You and to one another. This problem of racism only changes if we change—from up close. It's easy to judge what we don't understand, but everything changes when we move closer to one another. We seek Your forgiveness:

- Father, forgive us for thinking that some races are better than others.
- Father, forgive us for thinking there is something

better in us than in others.

- Father, forgive us for showing favoritism when we are all undeserving of Your mercy and grace.
- Father, forgive us for our pride, feeling sufficient in ourselves, believing that we don't need God or anyone else.
- Father, forgive us for judging based on externals.
- Father, forgive us for our insecurity, for being afraid of those who are different and those we can't control.
- Father, forgive us for not being a house of prayer for all nations, for every race.
- Father, forgive us for partnering with Satan, the accuser of the brethren, rather than partnering with Your Son, the Lord Jesus, who lives to intercede for us.
- Father, forgive us for separating ourselves from one another.

Father, help us learn to "listen" to one another. May we "move closer" to You and to one another. In the name of Jesus, amen.

(Matthew 24:7–8; Hebrews 7:25)

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Jesus, Awaken Me with Light

Father, Your Word tells us that You are our light and salvation. I, along with my brothers and sisters, acknowledge that, more than ever, we need Your light to shine in the darkness of the culture that threatens to overtake our nation, our churches, our neighborhoods, our homes, and our hearts. You are our only source of redemption and healing.

We proclaim Jesus is the light of the world. Help us to see all people, in all their array of colors and diversity, as manifestations of Your light, for we are all created in Your

image and are sacred in Your sight. Shine Your light in our hearts, dispelling any place of prejudice. With boldness and courage, we ask You to change us any way You want.

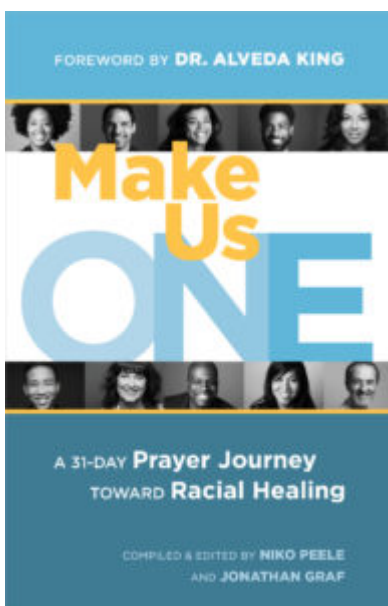
Empower us to love others in the same way You love each of us personally. Awaken our ears to hear the pain and suffering of others. May we also be quick to extend our hands in service, for we love not only with words, but also with action.

We are in awe that You have commissioned us to live as light bearers. As agents of Your light and dispensers of Your love, we speak grace and peace over fractured families, over our national discord, and over racial unrest. May we live collectively as “the city on the hill” that gives light to everyone and brings glory to God.

We ask this in Your name, amen.

(Psalm 27:1; 36:9; Matthew 5:14–16)

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—These prayers are excerpted from *Make Us One: A 31-Day Prayer Journey Toward Racial Healing*, compiled and edited by Niko Peele and Jonathan Graf.