

## Apologetics Homework Assignments 10-11

### Are There Really Different Races?

For today's assignment, you will need to read the attached excerpt *Are There Really Different Races?* from *The New Answers Book I* by Dr. Ken Ham, founder of creationist ministry Answers in Genesis.

As this is a long article, I will give you two weeks to do this assignment, and it will count for double the normal homework grade. It will be due on Wednesday, December 20. The (also double-length!) memory quiz for this assignment will be given on that date, as well.

1. What is the full title of the famous book that Charles Darwin published in 1859?

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2. What "race" of human was displayed along with an orangutan in a Bronx zoo? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How many races of humans do scientists today say there are, biologically? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What word or phrase does the author of this book personally believe we should use instead of "race" when referring to people of different skin colors?

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5. What is the percent difference that scientists have found to be the basic genetic difference between *any* two people anywhere in the world, even from the same people group?

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6. On the other hand, what (smaller) percentage of human biological variation do scientists attribute to so-called "racial" characteristics that people think are major?

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7. From where does ABC News claim the differences among us stem, if not race? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is the major pigment called that produces skin colors? \_\_\_\_\_

9. How many genes have geneticists found that control the amount and type of melanin produced in a person's skin?

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10. What was the likely skin shade of Noah and his family? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What do we read about in Genesis 11? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What was one effect that resulted from God giving each family group a different language at the Tower of Babel incident?

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13. In what sorts of areas would ancient darker-skinned people have been more likely to survive based on the protective factor of melanin?

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14. In what sorts of areas would ancient lighter-skinned people have been more likely to survive based on their ability to produce vitamin D from sunlight?

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15. What is one explanation of how the darker-skinned Inuit tribe managed to survive living in cold northern regions?

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16. According to the Bible and science, is there actually such a thing as interracial marriage? \_\_\_\_\_

17. What is one important purpose of marriage according to Malachi 2:15?

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18. What priority does the Bible give as to who a Christian should marry?

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19. What does the author propose is the main reason for American Christians being against interracial marriage?

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20. According to 1 Samuel 16:7, where does the Lord look to see the true substance of a person?

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### Memory Work:

1 Samuel 16:7b: The Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

Acts 17:26a: God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth.

From now on, books of the New Testament are liable to appear as extra credit opportunities on memory quizzes in addition to books of the Old Testament; however, a list of book names will not always be provided on your homework assignments. You will need to check the table of contents of a Bible or else listen to one of the many “Books of the Bible Songs” available on YouTube.

## Are There Really Different Races?

by [Ken Ham](#) Featured in [The New Answers Book 1](#)

Available online (with footnotes) at <https://answersingenesis.org/racism/are-there-really-different-races/>

What if a Chinese person were to marry a Polynesian, or an African with black skin were to marry a Japanese—would these marriages be in accord with biblical principles?

A significant number of Christians would claim that such “interracial” marriages directly violate God’s principles in the [Bible](#) and should not be allowed.

Does the Word of God really condemn the marriages mentioned above? Is there ultimately any such thing as interracial marriage?

To answer these questions, we must first understand what the Bible and [science](#) teach about “race.”

### What Constitutes a “Race”?

In the 1800s, before Darwinian evolution was popularized, most people, when talking about “races,” would be referring to such groups as the “English race,” “Irish race,” and so on. However, this all changed in 1859 when [Charles Darwin](#) published his book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*.

Darwinian evolution was (and still is [1](#)) inherently a racist philosophy, teaching that different groups or “races” of people evolved at different times and rates, so some groups are more like their apelike ancestors than others. Leading evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould claimed, “Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory.” [2](#)

The Australian Aborigines, for instance, were considered the missing links between the apelike ancestor and the rest of mankind. [3](#) This resulted in terrible prejudices and injustices towards the Australian Aborigines. [4](#)

Ernst Haeckel, famous for popularizing the now-discredited idea that “[ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny](#),” [5](#) stated:

At the lowest stage of human mental development are the Australians, some tribes of the Polynesians, and the Bushmen, Hottentots, and some of the Negro tribes. Nothing, however, is perhaps more remarkable in this respect, than that some of the wildest tribes in southern Asia and eastern Africa have no trace whatever of the first foundations of all human civilization, of family life, and marriage. They live together in herds, like apes. [6](#)

Racist attitudes fueled by evolutionary thinking were largely responsible for an African pygmy being displayed, along with an orangutan, in a cage in the Bronx zoo. [7](#) Indeed, Congo pygmies were once thought to be “small apelike, elfish creatures” that “exhibit many ape-like features in their bodies.” [8](#)

As a result of Darwinian evolution, many people started thinking in terms of the different people groups around the world representing different “races,” but within the context of evolutionary philosophy. This has resulted in many people today, consciously or unconsciously, having [ingrained prejudices](#) against certain other groups of people. [9](#)

However, *all* human beings in the world today are classified as *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Scientists today admit that, biologically, there really is only one race of humans. For instance, a scientist at the Advancement of Science Convention in Atlanta stated, “Race is a social construct derived mainly from perceptions conditioned by events of recorded history, and it has no basic biological reality.” This person went on to say, “Curiously enough, the idea comes very close to being of American manufacture.” [10](#)

Reporting on research conducted on the concept of race, ABC News stated, “More and more scientists find that the differences that set us apart are cultural, not racial. Some even say that the word *race* should be abandoned because it’s meaningless.” The article went on to say that “we accept the idea of race because it’s a convenient way of putting people into broad categories, frequently to suppress them—the most hideous example was provided by Hitler’s Germany. And racial prejudice remains common throughout the world.” [11](#)

In an article in the *Journal of Counseling and Development*,<sup>[12](#)</sup> researchers argued that the term “race” is basically so meaningless that it should be discarded.

More recently, those working on mapping the human genome announced “that they had put together a draft of the entire sequence of the human genome, and the researchers had unanimously declared, there is only one race—the human race.”<sup>[13](#)</sup>

Personally, because of the influences of Darwinian [evolution](#) and the resulting prejudices, I believe everyone (and especially Christians) should abandon the term “race(s).” We could refer instead to the different “people groups” around the world.

### **The Bible and “Race”**

The Bible does not even use the word *race* in reference to people,<sup>[14](#)</sup> but it does describe all human beings as being of “one blood” (*Acts 17:26*). This of course emphasizes that we are all related, as all humans are descendants of the first man, Adam (*1 Corinthians 15:45*),<sup>[15](#)</sup> who was created in the image of God (*Genesis 1:26–27*).<sup>[16](#)</sup> The Last Adam, Jesus Christ (*1 Corinthians 15:45*) also became a descendant of Adam. Any descendant of Adam can be [saved](#) because our mutual relative by blood ([Jesus](#)) died and rose again. This is why the [gospel](#) can (and should) be preached to all tribes and nations....

### **“Racial” Differences**

But some people think there must be different races of people because there appear to be major differences between various groups, such as skin color and eye shape.

The truth, though, is that these so-called “racial characteristics” are only minor variations among people groups. If one were to take any two people anywhere in the world, scientists have found that the basic genetic differences between these two people would typically be around 0.2 percent—even if they came from the same people group.<sup>[19](#)</sup> But these so-called “racial” characteristics that people think are major differences (skin color, eye shape, etc.) “account for only 0.012 percent of human biological variation.”<sup>[20](#)</sup>

Dr. Harold Page Freeman, chief executive, president, and director of surgery at North General Hospital in Manhattan, reiterates, “If you ask what percentage of your genes is reflected in your external appearance, the basis by which we talk about race, the answer seems to be in the range of 0.01 percent.”<sup>[21](#)</sup>

In other words, the so-called “racial” differences are absolutely trivial—overall, there is more variation *within* any group than there is *between* one group and another. If a white person is looking for a tissue match for an organ transplant, for instance, the best match may come from a black person, and vice versa. ABC News claims, “What the facts show is that there are differences among us, but they stem from culture, not race.”<sup>[22](#)</sup>

The only reason many people think these differences are major is because they’ve been brought up in a culture that has taught them to see the differences this way. Dr. Douglas C. Wallace, professor of molecular genetics at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, stated, “The criteria that people use for race are based entirely on external features that we are programmed to recognize.”<sup>[23](#)</sup>

If the Bible teaches and science confirms that all are of the same human race and all are related as descendants of Adam, then why are there such seemingly great differences between us (for example, in skin color)? The answer, again, comes with a biblically informed understanding of science.

### **Skin “Color”**

*Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight.*

When Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (*Matthew 19:14*), He did not distinguish between skin colors. In fact, scientists have discovered that there is one major pigment, called melanin, that produces our skin color. There are two main forms of melanin: eumelanin (brown to black) and pheomelanin (red to yellow). These combine to give us the particular shade of skin that we have.<sup>[24](#)</sup>

Melanin is produced by melanocytes, which are cells in the bottom layer of the epidermis. No matter what our shade of skin, we all have approximately the same concentration of melanocytes in our bodies. Melanocytes insert melanin into melanosomes, which transfer the melanin into other skin cells, which are capable of dividing (stem cells), primarily in the lowest layer of the epidermis. According to one expert,

The melanosomes (tiny melanin-packaging units) are slightly larger and more numerous per cell in dark-skinned than light-skinned people. They also do not degrade as readily, and disperse into adjacent skin cells to a higher degree.[25](#)

In the stem cells, the pigment serves its function as it forms a little dark umbrella over each nucleus. The melanin protects the epidermal cells from being damaged by sunlight. In people with lighter shades of skin, much of the pigment is lost after these cells divide and their daughter cells move up in the epidermis to form the surface dead layer—the stratum corneum.

Geneticists have found that four to six genes, each with multiple alleles (or variations), control the amount and type of melanin produced. Because of this, a wide variety of skin shades exist. In fact, it is quite easy for one couple to produce a wide range of skin shades in just one generation...

### **Origin of People Groups**

Those with darker skin tend to live in warmer climates, while those with lighter skin tend to live in colder climates. Why are certain characteristics more prominent in some areas of the world?

We know that Adam and Eve were the first two people. Their descendants filled the earth. However, the world's population was reduced to eight during the Flood of Noah. From these eight individuals have come all the tribes and nations. It is likely that the skin shade of Noah and his family was middle brown. This would enable his sons and their wives to produce a variety of skin shades in just one generation. Because there was a common language and everybody lived in the same general vicinity, barriers that may have prevented their descendants from freely intermarrying weren't as great as they are today. Thus, distinct differences in features and skin color in the population weren't as prevalent as they are today.

In *Genesis 11* we read of the rebellion at the Tower of Babel. God judged this rebellion by giving each family group a different language. This made it impossible for the groups to understand each other, and so they split apart, each extended family going its own way, and finding a different place to live. The result was that the people were scattered over the earth.[29](#)

Because of the new language and geographic barriers, the groups no longer freely mixed with other groups, and the result was a splitting of the gene pool. Different cultures formed, with certain features becoming predominant within each group. The characteristics of each became more and more prominent as new generations of children were born. If we were to travel back in time to Babel, and mix up the people into completely different family groups, then people groups with completely different characteristics might result. For instance, we might find a fair-skinned group with tight, curly dark hair that has blue, almond-shaped eyes. Or a group with very dark skin, blue eyes, and straight brown hair.[30](#)

Some of these (skin color, eye shape, and so on) became general characteristics of each particular people group through various selection pressures (environmental, sexual, etc.) and/or mutation.[31](#) For example, because of the protective factor of melanin, those with darker skin would have been more likely to survive in areas where sunlight is more intense (warmer, tropical areas near the equator), as they are less likely to suffer from diseases such as skin cancer. Those with lighter skin lack the melanin needed to protect them from the harmful UV rays, and so may have been more likely to die before they were able to reproduce. UVA radiation also destroys the B vitamin folate, which is necessary for DNA synthesis in cell division. Low levels of folate in pregnant women can lead to defects in the developing baby. Again, because of this, lighter-skinned individuals may be selected against in areas of intense sunlight.

On the flip side, melanin works as a natural sunblock, limiting the sunlight's ability to stimulate the liver to produce vitamin D, which helps the body absorb calcium and build strong bones. Since those with darker skin need more sunlight to produce vitamin D, they may not have been as able to survive as well in areas of less

sunlight (northern, colder regions) as their lighter-skinned family members, who don't need as much sunlight to produce adequate amounts of vitamin D. Those lacking vitamin D are more likely to develop diseases such as rickets (which is associated with a calcium deficiency), which can cause slowed growth and bone fractures. It is known that when those with darker skin lived in England during the Industrial Revolution, they were quick to develop rickets because of the general lack of sunlight.[32](#)

Of course, these are generalities. Exceptions occur, such as in the case of the darker-skinned Inuit tribes living in cold northern regions. However, their diet consists of fish, the oil of which is a ready source of vitamin D, which could account for their survival in this area.

Real science in the present fits with the biblical view that all people are rather closely related—there is only one race biologically. Therefore, to return to our original question, there is, in essence, no such thing as interracial marriage. So we are left with this—is there anything in the Bible that speaks clearly against men and women from different people groups marrying?

### **Purpose of Marriage**

*Malachi 2:15* informs us that an important purpose of marriage is to produce godly offspring—progeny that are trained in the ways of the Lord. Jesus (in *Matthew 19*) and Paul (in *Ephesians 5*) make it clear that when a man and woman marry, they become one flesh (because they were one flesh historically—Eve was made from Adam). Also, the man and woman must be one spiritually so they can fulfill the command to produce godly offspring.

This is why Paul states in *2 Corinthians 6:14*, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”

According to the Bible then, the priority in marriage is that a [Christian](#) should marry only a Christian.

Sadly, there are some Christian homes where the parents are more concerned about their children not marrying someone from another “race” than whether or not they are marrying a Christian. When Christians marry non-Christians, it negates the spiritual (not the physical) oneness in marriage, resulting in negative consequences for the couple and their children.[34](#)

### **Conclusion**

1. There is no biblical justification for claiming that people from different so-called races (best described as people groups) should not marry.
2. The biblical basis for marriage makes it clear that a Christian should marry only a Christian.

When Christians legalistically impose nonbiblical ideas, such as no interracial marriage onto their culture, they are helping to perpetuate prejudices that have often arisen from evolutionary influences. If we are really honest, in countries like America, the main reason for Christians being against interracial marriage is, in most instances, really because of skin color.

The church could greatly relieve the tensions over racism (particularly in countries like America), if only the leaders would teach biblical truths about our shared ancestry: all people are descended from one man and woman; all people are equal before God; all are sinners in need of salvation; all need to build their thinking on God's Word and judge all their cultural aspects accordingly; all need to be one in Christ and put an end to their rebellion against their Creator.

Christians must think about marriage as God thinks about each one of us. When the prophet Samuel went to anoint the next king of Israel, he thought the oldest of Jesse's sons was the obvious choice due to his outward appearance. However, we read in *1 Samuel 16:7*, “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’” God doesn't look at our outward biological appearance; He looks on our inward spiritual state. And when considering marriage, couples should look on the inside spiritual condition of themselves and each other because it is true that what's on the inside, spiritually, is what really matters.