



WEEK 5: "TOWARDS A MORE DIVERSE ANGLICANISM" BY ESAU MCCAULLEY

[WATCH OR LISTEN TO THE SESSION: BIT.LY/2JMOTLY](https://bit.ly/2JMOTLY)

SYNOPSIS: The Anglican Church in North America has a mission statement: "Reaching North America with the transforming love of Christ." But Anglicanism has largely been absent from the African American experience, and the reasons for this are many. African Americans are often portrayed as statistics, or as victims of their history or environment. But African Americans are not simply acted upon; they are actors. They need Jesus. What they don't need are human saviors. If the Church is to reach African Americans, the Church can't come in with the attitude that they are somehow better than the communities they serve. The Church must actually care about the reality African Americans face, and disciple them through relationship. Moreover, the Church must develop a plan for reaching African American communities—becoming a part of them, serving them, evangelizing them and integrating them into community. It is impossible to reach North America with the transforming love of Christ without thinking about people of color.

Esau articulated several important things to consider as we move towards a more diverse church:

- We must develop a plan towards church planting in inner-city communities, where the majority of African Americans live, that goes beyond mere outreach and coming in to give services. It must involve becoming a part of these communities and serving there, then developing ways to integrate the people there into our church communities.
- We must be unrelenting advocates for those who suffer, particularly in these communities. As Esau mentioned, this crucial question needs to be addressed: What is your concern for the poor and the marginalized?
- We must take seriously some of the statistics that Esau mentioned, like that 36% of Evangelicals believe that racism against African Americans is a major problem, while 88% of African Americans believe it is. And our responses to statistics like this are important.
- The Church must get over what Esau called a "shadow battle" with a distorted black religiosity. The majority of black Christians in North America are faithful, orthodox followers of Jesus. Anglicans must get over this shadow battle against a black liberalism that has never been the dominant voice of the black community. The inability to get over this dilutes our witness.
- Esau suggested one of the first steps to reaching African Americans could be on college campuses, amongst the emerging black middle-class students who attend these institutions.

- There must be intentional plans at all levels to devote time and resources to the recruitment and development of African Americans into leadership positions in the church.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Esau McCaulley says, “Concerns with black bodies lying in the street is part of evangelism.” Respond to this statement. How might it influence the way you think about evangelism, particularly towards minorities and people of color?
2. What can we learn from the faith of African Americans, which is tied to their survival in incredible hardship?
3. What are your cultural/racial stereotypes? What would repentance and change look like toward these stereotypes?
4. What are some of the reasons why more Africans Americans don’t exist in your church community? What are some of the steps you might take to change this?
5. How can the Church develop a real plan for reaching African American communities? What would it take to make the plan a reality? In your context?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Books:

[*Trouble I’ve Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism*](#) by Drew Hart

[*Free At Last: the Gospel and the African American Experience*](#) by Carl Ellis

Articles by Esau:

[*After Lemonade: The Future of Black Christians in the Diaspora*](#), The Witness, May 2018

[*The invisible: African Americans in North American Anglicanism*](#), The Living Church, May 2016

WEEKLY PRACTICE:

Commit to having a deeper conversation with a person of color whom you know. Or, if you don’t know someone, find a space in your city or locale (coffee shop, restaurant, etc.) that African Americans frequent, and commit to being present there regularly.