Look at Numbers 12. We find there that Moses had married a black woman from Ethiopia. A Jew with a black woman, Miriam, the sister of Moses, threw a fit! She rebelled. She said it was awful, she objected strongly to that marriage (and also to Moses’ leadership – and she and Aaron wanted to share it) and do you remember what God did to Miriam? He struck her with leprosy! Moses intervened on her behalf, and because of what Moses said, God gave her leprosy for just a week. But it’s obvious that God was most displeased with Miriam’s attitude.

Racists have their priorities reversed. As Martin Luther King, Jr. expressed it, they make decisions according to the “color of one’s skin,” instead of “the content of his character”—either against people or for them.

Racism is a dangerous evil. It dishonors God’s plan of development and ethnic diversity. It’s judgmental. It constitutes “respect of persons” and thus is not God-like. You’ll recall that Peter perceived “that God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34); the Greek text literally reads, “God is no respecter of faces.” Human beings ought not to be either.

- R.W.
The Color of Racism

Tomorrow is a holiday set aside to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was an ardent supporter and campaigner for equality among black and whites. In view of that, it seems that the issue of prejudice, race, and in particular, racism, would be appropriate for us to consider.

First, what is prejudice? The word “prejudice” actually means “pre-judgment;” that is, before the facts are considered, we’ve already made up our minds. It’s been said that prejudice is a great time saver, because you don’t have to read or hear the facts. So it doesn’t matter what the facts are, what the background is; prejudice means that we make up our minds regardless of or before learning the facts of the matter.

Sometimes we say, “You can’t judge a book by its cover.” A book’s cover may be visually appealing and look exciting, but when you begin reading the book, it turns out to be a bore. It’s very true in this life: you can’t judge a book by its cover; and yet, when it comes to the subject of racism, that’s basically what’s happening: judging people by the color of their skin or their ethnic characteristics. Sometimes, one’s outward appearance can give us a few clues about what’s important to him or her, but we must never allow outward appearance to cause us to jump to conclusions and pre-judge before getting to know the individual. Actions, speech, etc., are much better indicators of a person’s character.

Another term rapidly finding new and intensified use is “racist.” If you want to insult someone with whom you’re upset, call him a racist. No one wants to be thought of as a racist. That epithet received a celebrity boost a few years ago when former president Jimmy Carter charged that those who oppose the current president’s policies are motivated by racism and not by the fact that his policies are simply not conducive to American prosperity or in keeping with more conservative beliefs.

Racism is nearly as old as time. It probably began after the dispersing of humanity in the days after the flood. Early humanity largely neglected the Creator’s charge to “fill the earth (Genesis 1:28). A sizable portion absolutely refused to do so (Gen. 11:1-9). As a result, God “confounded” their speech and “scattered them abroad” (Gen. 11:6ff). Being separated created the circumstances that led to the physical variations of human beings. An incredibly rich genetic pool, combined with dispersal, created just the right variety of environments for the development of various physical features.

In his book, Human Heredity, anthropologist Dr. Ashley Montagu, an evolutionist, admitted that “all the ethnic groups of man must have originated from a single ancestral stock... The more we study the different ethnic groups of man, the more alike they turn out to be” (1960, 184).

Secondly, how do we recognize it? Racism is not restricted to one segment of our population. It’s white, black, brown, and yellow, red, and so on.

A racist is generally a person who judges others on exterior features, such as skin pigmentation, language accent, or other externals. A racist will resist hiring one of another race, or will hire a less qualified person over a more qualified one, to accommodate his own race.

A racist cringes to see people of different color in marriage—“People need to marry their own kind.” We’re all the same “kind.” We’re descendants of Adam and Eve. Every human cell contains DNA. DNA is the code that was programmed by the Creator for the production of different varieties of biological organisms, including the potential for differences within humankind. The responsibility for “race diversity” lies ultimately with God. / continued on back page...