
What's Race?

The connection between slavery and blackness predated the arrival of Africans in Virginia. In this episode, we go back in time in order to explore the roots of the connection between blackness and slavery and the role Christians played in solidifying that association. We will also learn more about what race is (and isn't) and why where our ideas about race come from matter today.

Key Questions:

1. What are the roots of the connection between blackness and slavery?
2. What is race?
3. How might the history of race affect our engagement with modern debates?

Reflection Questions:

1. What, in this episode, most surprised or challenged you?
2. In this video, Sarah claims that people began to read Genesis 9 in a way not supported by the text owing to a race-based economic slavery. Do you think Christians today read modern understandings of race into biblical texts?
3. How did you define "race" before watching this video? Do you still define it that way?
4. If Sarah is correct and our modern racial categories are neither "natural" nor morally innocent, what does that mean for how we think about our racial identities and those of other people?
5. Think about the ways you identify yourself. How do you react when those identities are challenged or their roots explored? Why do you think that you react the way that you do? [Note: this question is not meant to suggest that anytime you react negatively to an identity being challenged, you are doing something wrong. It is meant to get you to reflect on when and if that is so.]