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## **Professors Present Research on Biblical Racial Reconciliation**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** -- [Dr. Kevin Jones](#), dean of the [school of education](#) and assistant professor of education, and [Dr. Mark Owens](#), assistant professor of New Testament theology, will present their paper "Bound Together in Perfect Harmony: Pursuing Racial Reconciliation through Colossians 3:12-17" at the three-day Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, on November 18.

Jones and Owens' paper explores Colossians 3:12-17 and its bearings on racial reconciliation. The two propose that the apostle Paul's passage offers a balanced approach to reconciliation that includes both majority and minority cultures in the solution. They likewise interact with racial theories through a Christian worldview in their paper.

"Anything good or helpful any theorist or philosopher can say about racial reconciliation is copied from what God said through his servant Paul," Jones said. "Our goal through this paper was to, with biblical fidelity, serve the church in truth and grace."

"Paul's vision for racial reconciliation is much more viable," Owens added. "The admonitions in his text are more likely to achieve reconciliation than what certain voices are advocating for today. Paul shows that we all have a role to play in racial reconciliation."

As the two interacted with various racial theories to write this paper, they worked to accept, redeem and reject the proper theoretical components through a Christian worldview.

"Part of where these secular theories are helpful is in bringing to light the issues and the ways sin impacts the world," Jones said. "But to talk about sin, you have to talk about a holy and righteous God who forgives sin. We acknowledge the problems they see but reject their man-made solutions."

After drafting, editing and finalizing their proposal, Owens and Jones submitted it to the ETS under the ethics section earlier this year. The ETS accepted their paper proposal but recategorized it to the systematic theology section. It will be presented with a sub-group of other papers handling race and identity.

"Our paper seems to have an exegetical component that the others in our section don't," Owens noted. "That's where we want to be: evaluating these topics in light of biblical truth, taking what is helpful and finding the nuances in Scripture."

Owens most recently presented at the ETS in 2017 on Ephesians 6, arguing that the classic "armor of God" text should be understood broadly, and can be brought to bear upon institutional racism as a manifestation of spiritual warfare.

In 2016, Jones contributed to and co-edited "Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention."

These joint familiarities with race, critical theory and Scripture are what drew Owens and Jones together initially.

“It’s challenging to find someone who’s immersed in the scholarship and has the right character, theological commitments, personality and academic background,” Owens explained.”

As the two prepare for their November presentation to the more than 1,000 conference attendees at the Fort Worth Convention Center, they’re excited to highlight such a timely issue with implications for the unity of the church and the world.

“We define racial reconciliation in our paper as ‘the intentional advance toward living out the unity that is already inherent in the body of Christ,’” Jones said. “This is the heart of our presentation: all peoples, regardless of ethnic posture, lavishing love in forgiveness.”

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,715 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is one of the largest private universities in Ohio, recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation, and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit [cedarville.edu](http://cedarville.edu).

Written by Heidie Raine