

AAPJ Unity and Prayer for Repentance

May 2020

Dear friends and pastors who care about Asian Americans and Asian American Christians,

We feel privileged to send you this Asian American and Pacific Islander prayer for unity and repentance. In these days, as we have seen incidences of discrimination against Asian Americans, we have undertaken soul and scripture searching to ask the Lord what He thinks about these scenarios and produced what we think has been His response to us.

The Lord loves His Church and purchased it at a very high cost- the price of His Son.

Would you therefore join us in this prayer for repentance during Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month this May? We believe that this time of COVID-19 gives us a unique opportunity for our voices to be heard, especially as this virus has also unmasked incidences of discrimination amongst persons who might also love the Lord. We all possess blind spots and have things to repent of. But repentance begins with us and creates room for the Lord to move. We read in the scriptures that the prayers of the righteous avail much.

Please see the prayer below that we invite you to pray together, out loud, with your congregation during the month of May. If you would like, it might be especially powerful to pray this together on the National Day of Prayer on May 7, which happens to coincide with AAPJ Heritage Month.

Our team of volunteers who love the Lord and His body of Christ have also prepared a **Self-Reflection Tool** that we encourage you to disseminate to your community. This tool is envisioned to create space for the Lord to move and breathe unity into His Church here in the United States and beyond. In addition, we aim to create the website www.allthingsprayer.com by May 10, 2020 to provide additional information and resources. Please check it accordingly.

Thank you so much for reading this note and for your consideration to partner with us to build unity in the Lord's Church.

God bless you.

AAPI Unity and Prayer for Repentance

Lord God, I thank you that you are the Creator God who breathed this Earth into existence. And so it is only right as Habakkuk 2:14 says that “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” I thank you that I live in a country that provides me with:

- opportunities
- happiness
- liberty
- freedom of worship

Lord Christ, I glorify your Name which is above all names, and say Yes and Amen to Your plan for Your Church, the global Body of Christ, to be glorified. So I humbly come before you to pray and seek your face so that you will heal our land. As an Asian American¹ Christian, I repent for how we have, as you call your people out in Haggai 1, *put our own houses before Your Body who is the global Church.*

I repent...

- for not loving others as ourselves, especially those from different ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds and for harboring biases that are unfair to these groups [other *Asian Americans, Anglo Americans, African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, Arab Americans, Native Americans, and other groups*]
- for not reaching out and being a peacemaker/ bridge builder
- for having a worldly and materialistic mentality rather than seeking the health of those who are vulnerable, including those who are poor and defenseless

I ask you to search our hearts to show us where you would like us to manifest Your Life and Your Love to those around us. I ask you to forgive us, and to give us Your Love, Your Eyes, and Your Vision for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

I pray that you would heal the division and bring unity to your people as we come under the banner of Christ's love. By the power of your Holy Spirit and the example of Christ, I am making a radical commitment to be a bridge to my brothers and sisters who are different from my cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

During this worldwide pandemic I pray...

- for your protection over the health and safety of hospital staff, first responders, police, urban poor, the unemployed, families, teachers, government, and business leaders
- for your peace, hope, and comfort to those who are sick with COVID-19 and those who have lost their loved ones
- for your wisdom and direction for our leaders and their day to day decisions

Thank you God for your love for us and for your desire to see your global Church glorified. During this Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, we ask you to bless the Asian American Body of Christ. Thank you for the privilege of partnering with You in your work here so that your will be done here on Earth as it is in heaven.

In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.

¹ This prayer can be adapted for persons for all ethnic, geographic, etc. backgrounds- just change this one phrase.

AAPI Unity and Prayer for Repentance

“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

John the Baptist (Matthew 3:8)

“...repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.”

Paul (Acts 26:20)

In recognition of the repentance that has just taken place, we invite you to take a tangible step to invest in the Lord's multicultural, global body. You may do this by:

- 1) Raising funds through a cross-cultural love offering for vulnerable families facing a higher incidence of death due to COVID-19
- 2) Providing a scholarship fund for students from a different culture majoring in medical and health care related fields or in church or para-church ministries
- 3) Investing in an action to build bridges with a community of believers who you don't know and who would be blessed by the funds

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He shine His face upon you and give you Peace.

Self-Reflection Tool

Asian American Church

To be conducted in conjunction with the Prayer of Repentance

The purpose of these questions is to help readers identify our personal biases in perceiving our own race & others. We hope this exercise helps our awareness & ability to respond better if confronted with harassment as an Asian American.

Please select the answer that reflects your true feelings & how you would react. This is not an academic test. No answers are better than any others. Try to receive each question as a mirror of your true feelings. There are two sections: The first section presents racial bias questions; the next section attempts to help us think through our Asian identity.

A. Racial Bias Questions

1. How do I verbally respond if someone insults my race?
 - a. Don't respond. Avoid that person.
 - b. Ask the person to stop insulting me.
 - c. Get angry & talk back.
 - d. Ask the person to explain why they don't like my race.

2. A close pal asks what you think about hate crimes against Asians blamed for Coronavirus. You reply with:
 - a. No opinion.
 - b. Most nations have not handled the virus very well. China is no different.
 - c. The Chinese government is not me nor my concern.
 - d. We should stop blaming & focus on helping all the victims.

3. When I'm in the presence of a person of a different background who I find scary, I:
 - a. Run & hide.
 - b. Tell the person to stop staring.
 - c. Get help if possible.
 - d. Ask the scary person why they're staring at me.

4. While walking outdoors, a stranger confronts you & says, "You Chinese people need to stop creating deadly viruses!" You reply with:

- a. Denying involvement and walking away.
- b. "I'm not from China, I'm American."
- c. "The virus is the only enemy, not people."
- d. "Why are you upset? Let's talk."

5. How is China's role in spreading Coronavirus different from Japan bombing Pearl Harbor in 1941?

- a. Chinese people are victims of this disease like everyone else.
- b. I blame the Chinese government for not preventing the spread globally.
- c. I don't care about China or how China is perceived by Americans.
- d. Let's discuss with people how they feel about the Pearl Harbor bombing which was intentional & accidental disease spreading.

6. American religious leaders should respond to racist attacks by doing what?

- a. Avoid the topic & turn the other cheek.
- b. Cite how Jesus & Gandhi spoke up without retaliation by force.
- c. Encourage retaliation by acquiring weapons for self-defense.
- d. Engage safely with haters in dialogue and other ways to hear how they think.

B. Identity Questions

1. I perceive myself as:

- a. Passive. Non-confrontational.
- b. Neutral. Don't want violence.
- c. Ask for assistance when harassed.
- d. I can defend myself.

2. I feel like I have a negative bias towards:

- a. Caucasians
- b. Blacks

- c. Hispanics
 - d. Other Asians
 - e. Other ethnicities
3. I think within Asian communities, the Asians harassed the most are:
- a. Chinese
 - b. Japanese
 - c. Korean
 - d. East Indians
 - e. Filipinos
 - f. Pacific Islanders
 - g. Others
4. If I could change my race, I want to be:
- a. No change (my race)
 - b. White
 - c. Black
 - d. Hispanic
 - e. Others

*We encourage you to dialogue with others who take this Self-Reflection Tool
(Please see the following page for Discussion Group Tips)*

Discussion Group Tips

We encourage those who take the Self-Reflection Tool to create a safe, open space for community members to discuss and process their findings of the Self-Reflection Tool.

After a group leader is chosen, coordinate a time for those in your community to dialogue about your experiences taking the Self-Reflection Tool.

In case conversation starters would help, please see below:

- 1) What was your experience taking the Self-Reflection Tool?
- 2) Did your responses to the options for each question surprise you?
- 3) Are there additional/alternative questions and answers that you would have included? If so, what are they?
- 4) What are practical ways our community can build bridges with brothers and sisters from different racial and/or cultural backgrounds?