

Q & A



All God's Children *How Confronting Buried History Can Build Racial Solidarity*

June 20, 2023 | \$18, 240 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0595-8

Terence Lester shares the buried history of the struggles Black people have faced against unjust systems. He tells powerful stories of courage, injustice, pain, and triumph, including ones from his own history. He also unpacks the sociological and cultural dynamics of unconscious bias and inattentive ignorance that keep us apart, and how they can be overcome. This honest account of what it's like to be Black in America paves the way for the church to move beyond showing support from a distance toward loving one another in long-term solidarity, advocacy, and friendship.

From Racial Reconciliation to Racial Solidarity

As the author of *I See You* and *When We Stand*, focusing on poverty, homelessness, and justice, what led you to now speak into the topic of race with this book, *All God's Children*?

Terence Lester: During the wake of 2020 I realized that I needed to lend my voice to racial discussion. I realized there is a connection between the work I do with anti-poverty and anti-racism. Being immersed in a community where most of the persons that will come to our organization are poor and BIPOC, many of these persons started to look to me during Covid-19 for answers, especially regarding race.

Another reason I wrote the book was because I realized my children are getting older and are starting to recognize matters of race from TV, especially in 2020 when the killing of George Floyd occurred. This caused me to reflect on the two pastorships that I participated in simultaneously. One was at a historically Black church and one at a predominantly White church. The way that these two congregations responded to racial injustice was drastically different.

Finally, I realized the lack of understanding of history being buried and not really discussed was at the core of why I felt that people from totally different walks of life could not come together. I wrote this book to hopefully talk about these hard topics, cultivate empathy, and move people toward racial healing and friendship.

How is this book especially unique from your previous books?

Terence: This book is a huge step for me. My previous books have been centered around the work that I've done with Love Beyond Walls, and while there are some stories in this new book that reflect Love Beyond Walls, I am really trying to communicate my own experience as a Black male in the US who is also Christian.

What do you hope *All God's Children* brings to the discussion of race in our culture?

Terence: Having conversations about race in a way that is unifying and nonthreatening can bring communities together in a sense of shared solidarity and empathy. I also think that it's unique in that I am using history not necessarily as a tool to beat down on anyone. I am using it as a tool for people to gain clarity to see brothers and sisters through Christ so that we can have compassion toward them. I also think it's unique that I am sharing my own journey with my relationship to buried history and really wrestling with what that means for me and how I talk about it in a way that invites other people to stand with me.

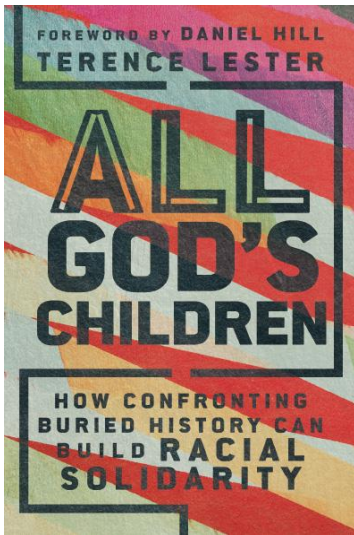


Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media



Q & A



All God's Children *How Confronting Buried History Can Build Racial Solidarity*

June 20, 2023 | \$18, 240 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0595-8

"Terence Lester has a longstanding track record of listening to and standing up for those society would rather forget. This book beautifully, and in some spaces hauntingly, weaves together the story of the unhoused while providing crucial racial analysis that did my soul so much good to read. I think this book deserves a space in classrooms and libraries all across this country."

—Robert Monson, codirector of Enfleshed, writer, and podcaster

What key points do you hope people walk away with after reading this book?

Terence:

- History impacts people in the present.
- We have to honor people in the present to understand how their history has shaped them.
- I think that we need to move away from the usage of the term racial reconciliation and start moving toward **racial solidarity**. Racial reconciliation speaks to forgiveness, but racial solidarity speaks to standing with others during their struggle. I think from that, forgiveness and togetherness can happen.
- I want people to build authentic friendships with others from various BIPOC communities not in a charitable way but in an authentic way that breeds equality and equity.
- I want readers to really end up understanding that God is a God of all and that we should do all we can to resist racist structures that prohibit all of God's children from receiving the love of God.

Who did you have in mind as you were writing *All God's Children*?

Terence: The primary audience for this book are those who are seeking to grow in Christ's likeness, particularly with regard to race relations and confronting biases within a historical context in an effort to understand, empathize, engage, and act. They have caring hearts and good intentions and are keen to learn more about how to connect their faith with people who look and think differently from themselves. They will hopefully connect with my own journey of identifying with and humanizing others and with how I explain how to cultivate actionable empathy and bridge the gap of racial relations by learning the deep, hidden history many people carry with them. These readers are looking for a shift in perspective that is sustainable. They want to gain usable tools and implement practical steps to move their relationships beyond the surface level to form true, holistic, and unconditional relationships with others in Christ who are different from themselves.

These are people who want their perspectives challenged to live the radical, Jesus-type of life they have always wanted to live. They recognize that they could do more to develop their cultural awareness in a way that will allow them to see different people in deeper and more meaningful ways.



Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media



BIO



All God's Children
How Confronting Buried History Can Build Racial Solidarity

June 20, 2023 | \$18, 240 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0595-8

Terence Lester, Founder of Love Beyond Walls

Terence Lester is a minister, speaker, community activist, author, and founder of Love Beyond Walls, a not-for-profit organization focused on poverty awareness and community mobilization. He is known for nationwide campaigns that bring awareness to issues surrounding homelessness, poverty, and economic inequality. His campaigns on behalf of the poor, including #LoveSinksIn (which provides handwashing stations for the poor) have been featured in *USA Today*, *Black Enterprise*, *Essence*, and *Reader's Digest*. They have been viewed by millions of people globally on *The Today Show*, *Good Morning America*, CBS News, NBC, Upworthy, and "The Bright Side" with Katie Couric. He was named by Coca-Cola as one of their History Shakers.

Terence has delivered countless sermons and speeches at conferences, churches, and schools around the country. In 2018, he led the March Against Poverty as he walked from Atlanta to Memphis (386 miles). Terence finished the march and spoke at the historic Lorraine Motel for the fiftieth anniversary of MLK's assassination.

He has received numerous awards for his community activism including the Empire Board of Realtists Distinguished Service Award (2017), SCLC Social Advocacy Award (2016), Atlanta Voice's 50 under 50 honor (2016), the True to Atlanta Award presented by the Atlanta Hawks (2016), and the Fulton County Schools Service Award (2015).

Terence's books include *When We Stand, I See You*, *Getting Past Stuck*, *Simple Prayers for Hurting People*, and *Identity Theft*. He has also coproduced a biographical documentary based on his book *The U-Turn Project: Answering the Call*.

He and his wife, Cecilia, and their family live in Atlanta.

Visit Terence's website and read his blog at TerenceLester.org.

Learn more about Love Beyond Walls at lovebeyondwalls.org.



Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media