

In going through the articles in the September issue and the responses in the December issue of *Diolog*, I do not see any mention or suggestion of an event timeline as to how we arrived at where we are today in race relations in the 1,982 years since Christ's resurrection (presuming His death, burial and resurrection occurred in the year 33 of the common era).

In this vein, I relate the following as a catalyst for such a discussion,

"According to classical scholar Frank Snowden, skin color did not determine social status in ancient Egypt, Greece or Rome. Relations between the major power and the subordinate state were viewed as more significant in a person's status than was their skin color." (From [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_skin\\_color#Social\\_status.2C\\_colorism\\_and\\_race](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_skin_color#Social_status.2C_colorism_and_race))

This is a summary of Mr. Snowden's work *Blacks in antiquity: Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman experience* (ISBN 0-674-07625-7) published in 1970 and touches on a relevant aspect of the anthropology of the Roman occupation.

There exists much in the same vein of color blindness when it comes to the three birth narratives of Jesus in the Gospels; Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:1-20 and John 1:1-14, nothing to suggest Jesus was Caucasian, black nor even any hint as to the texture of his hair, be it lamb's wool or strait. The mental image many carry of Christ is similar to the one of Him found in two works of art. First in the fresco by Pietro Perugino of The Baptism of Christ completed in 1492 ([https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism\\_of\\_Christ\\_\(Sistine\\_Chapel\)#/media/File:%3APerugino%2C\\_battesimo\\_di\\_cristo\\_01.jpg](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism_of_Christ_(Sistine_Chapel)#/media/File:%3APerugino%2C_battesimo_di_cristo_01.jpg)), 1,459 years after His resurrection and currently located on the north wall in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. The other is in the first Eucharist depicted by Juan de Juanes in the mid to late 16<sup>th</sup> century, possibly 1562 ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicente\\_Juan\\_Masip#/media/File:%C3%9Altima\\_Cena\\_-\\_Juan\\_de\\_Juanes.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicente_Juan_Masip#/media/File:%C3%9Altima_Cena_-_Juan_de_Juanes.jpg)).

Now turning to the tenor of the interaction between the articles in the September edition and the letters in December edition, perhaps some quotes and excerpts from Rowan William's sermon at the 2012 General Synod Eucharist are in order,

"We're feeling frustrated with each other, of course, and that's more or less routine. That's part of the shadow side of life in the body of Christ and the mysterious incapacity of other Christians to see that we're right."

"Most of us are frustrated with the structures of the church. And our feeling that the way in which we do our business is, at the moment, preventing us from doing what we actually want to do as a church."

“... to paraphrase the words of the prophet Isaiah we are a church of frustrated hearts dwelling in the midst of a people of frustrated hearts.”

“What changes my neighbor’s heart? The recognition that nothing matters to me more than my neighbor’s joy.”

“How are we to love unconditionally without betraying what is most real for us and in us? Issues of conscience that divide us are not idle or arbitrary, they are about **that** question. And yet nagging away again and again at all of us is that basic truth. Nothing will change unless my neighbor knows that her or his joy is what most deeply I care about.”

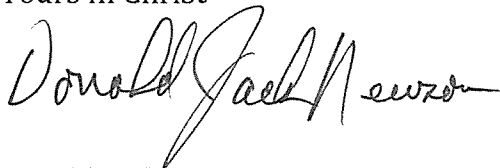
“No power can force the human heart. So how does the human heart change? It changes when it is broken by love. It changes with the revelation that nothing is too costly to be expended upon us.” [Meaning] “... the very life of The Son of God Himself.”

And finally the subject of the treatment of strangers, in this case the Syrian refugees. The Christian Church began life as a sect inside Judaism. After the fall of the second Temple in the year 70, this Christian Sect became gradually more isolated from and thus increasingly strangers and foreigners within what was becoming known as Rabbinic Judaism. This became especially acute at the institution of the Eucharist. More specifically the text within Deuteronomy 12:23-24 may give some hint as to why Jews found the Eucharist objectionable,

“<sup>23</sup> But be sure you do not eat the blood, because the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the meat. <sup>24</sup> You must not eat the blood; pour it out on the ground like water.”

As these events occurred between 1,945 and 1,915 years ago, there are two ways to discover these events, go back into first century Church history in hardcopy or watch the *Frontline* documentary *From Jesus to Christ*.

Yours In Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald Jack Newsom". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Donald Jack Newsom  
Lometa, Texas