
“A Black Christian Definition of White Privilege”

A Black Christian Definition of White Privilege by Kirk Hunt

After one of my Gospel brothers asked about understanding white privilege I wrote this article for him. He knew I would blurt out the truth. [Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.](#)

You have likely heard someone use the phrase “white privilege” and wondered what they really meant. I define white privilege as the system of positive economic, social and political benefits that white people receive in preference to (over) non-white people. These days, most white folks are born into that privilege.

Are you white? Then you have benefited from white privilege. Like it or not. Want it not. Devout Christian or not, the system has heaped benefits and advantage on you.

Often, I hear people cry out, “Yes, I am white, but we are (were) *really* poor. How can you say I have white privilege?”

You may have been poor, but you were likely better paid than your Black or Latinx neighbors. It may have been the same impoverished school, but the teachers took more time and effort with your kids. Even the same scowling policeman did not arrest you as often, or brutalize you as much, if he arrested you.

Said a different way, white folks usually get extra when they should not, are frequently protected when they should not be, or receive fewer blows than they should. And, if that was the end of it, people of color (PoC) would go about their business. Unfortunately, that is rarely the end of it.

White privilege all too often becomes white entitlement. Since most white folk grow up receiving when they should not, or being protected when they should not, or not paying the full price often enough, they come to think that is how it should be. White entitlement is the sense that white privilege is a right and is owed to white people.

In my adult life I have seen more than one example of white privilege that became white entitlement. I have met more than one white business owner who thought employees were his or hers to freely mistreat or misuse. I have interacted more than once with a white subordinate who assumed that his or her opinion carried as much weight as a superior's. Consider the frequent videos of white folks who feel they are empowered and obligated to supervise the lives or conduct of PoC.

And when confronted, white privilege or white entitlement can easily turn toxic (and vicious). [Consider the video evidence against Amy Cooper.](#) Her response to a black man who pointed out that park rules apply to her? She made a dishonest call to police where she lied about the level of threat she and her canine faced.

White privilege came to Amy's rescue. No one filed criminal charges against her for her false call to police. [The canine she choked was removed for a time but has been returned to her.](#)

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White privilege (or entitlement) is a system of benefits and privileges unavailable to PoC. It is a violation of the Declaration of Independence of the United States: “[all men are created equal](#).” The Bible, at [James 2:1-5](#), condemns such favoritism.

While my white brothers and sisters have no choice about having white privilege, they have every choice in how they live out their Christian lives. [Because you are called by God, you can use your privilege to build God’s Kingdom](#).

Now that you know, what will you choose to do? [You might choose to continue sitting on your couch. I pray you will choose to become a Gospel champion](#).

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