



Nazi banners at a Southern pride rally

South Carolina has been slow to change. A black man was recently elected sheriff for the first time in my county's history, defeating a white incumbent by only a few votes. Whites charged fraud and appealed to the state election commission; blacks protested with charges of racism.

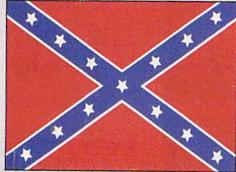
A black pastor summed up his frustrations while we were having lunch recently. "What year is this?" he asked me. "We're on the verge of a new millennium, yet we're still dealing with Reconstruction issues!"

This is 1999, not 1865. But in South Carolina, it was only last year that voters agreed to amend the state constitution to make racial intermarriage legal.

Yet racist views aren't confined to the South. A black friend confided in me recently: "Gene, I sat in lunch counters in Kentucky in the 1960s, but never in my life have I seen such racism as there is here in Los Angeles."

I've learned that racism is a demonic stronghold that must be opposed through aggressive spiritual warfare. What are the weapons we need to fight it?

1. Confession. After the 1992 Los Angeles riots, church leaders got serious about admitting sins of racial pride.



Breaking the Power of White Pride

Racism isn't just a Southern problem. It's an American problem that can only be resolved through prayer.

BY GENE BROOKS

Black and white Pentecostals washed one another's feet and sought forgiveness; the Southern Baptist Convention publicly renounced its racist past.

This confession movement has trickled down to the local level. Last year Christians in Wilmington, North Carolina, gathered in a city park and confessed their sins on the 100th anniversary of a racial massacre. Such strategic spiritual warfare deprives demons of the access they need to control nations.

2. Repentance. In 1996 I participated in Operation Restoration, an 800-mile prayer walk through Georgia and the Carolinas. With 15,000 people praying with us from their homes, our 13-member team repented for

the sins of our forefathers as we knelt at plantations and burned churches, and at a slave market built in 1757. The federal government has reported a sharp decline in church burnings since our journey was completed.

We've also learned of other breakthroughs. In my hometown, a white supremacist sold his Ku Klux Klan museum to a black minister and joined his church.

3. Reconciliation. Promise Keepers trumpeted the need for reconciliation throughout the mid-1990s. But the brutal slaying of a black man in Jasper, Texas, in 1998 prompted a renewed call for action. Prayer leaders marshalled a huge army of prayer warriors to target racism with laser precision.

And we are seeing the results of

prayer more than ever. The first monument to black South Carolinians will be erected next year on the State House grounds in Columbia. In September 1998, March for Jesus USA appointed Wellington Boone as the first African American leader to direct a national prayer ministry started by whites.

March for Jesus organizer Tom Pelton says it's time to move beyond tearful apologies. "We must confront systemic racism by relinquishing positions of power to those who have previously been excluded," he says.

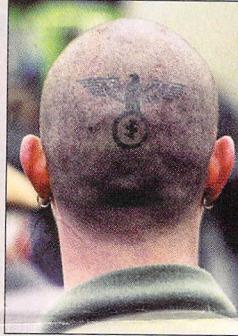
4. Restitution. It's not enough to acknowledge sin and repent of it. We must pay restitution when people have suffered injustice.

But let's remember that African Americans are not the only people who suffered injustice in this country. Native Americans have endured genocide that was endorsed by our government.

Christians are helping to right those wrongs today. An oil tycoon in Wyoming designates a percentage of his revenue to the Indian tribe that once lived where his oil rigs are located. Another donor gave a Native American minister \$147,000 last year to help rebuild Native communities.

We need to aim our restitution efforts at Hispanics as well. Spanish-speaking immigrants—particularly Mexicans—have become an exploited underclass in many of our cities. Let's make sure they aren't the next victims of white pride.

It is time to confess our sin, repent of our prejudice, reconcile with our brothers and sisters, and make restitution when necessary. If we use these powerful weapons, the strongholds of racial pride will be overthrown. □



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Branded by hate:
A neo-Nazi youth