

## Hope Academy's Ten Guiding Principles About Cultural Harmony

Whereas we are a community of Christ-followers working and living in the most contentious, difficult, meaningful, and important cultural space in America in 2021, we affirm the following principles and seek to equip our staff and students with the following beliefs:

1. We believe our commitment to **the supreme authority and truth of the Scriptures** deeply impacts our understanding of cultural harmony and should inform both our strategies and tactics of how we pursue the unity of the Spirit together.
2. We believe that perspective matters, and ideas have consequences. Therefore, we believe **the Bible gives us a distinctively God-centered way to understand issues of race, justice, culture, equity, and reconciliation**. We recognize that while secular resources may be helpful, they are often lacking in truth or love and will need to be aligned to a biblical perspective.
3. We believe that **our identity in Christ supersedes all other identities**. Recognizing two overarching, super-bloodlines (we are image-bearers of God and blood-bought members of the family of God) profoundly affects our pursuit of cultural harmony. Submitted to these two super-bloodlines, culture and ethnicity will flourish as beautiful creations of God that should be recognized, engaged, and celebrated because they ultimately help us to know and love God better.
4. We believe that understanding both the **original and on-going sin-nature** of every human being is essential in our pursuit of cultural harmony. This implies on-going vigilance, self-examination, and repentance for bias, abuse of power, and prejudice.
5. We believe the gospel of Jesus Christ is powerful enough to help us do the necessary work of **recognizing historic sins of racism with honesty, humility, and hope**. We lament the painful legacy that racism and discrimination have left our society, and we are committed to fighting it in every form, personally and systemically.
6. We **believe the gospel of the forgiveness of sins** through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit fundamentally infuses our pursuit of cultural harmony with hope when we are tempted to despair.
7. We believe **Jesus' jubilee commitment** to lead a movement that "proclaims good news to the poor and sets at liberty those who are oppressed" (Isaiah 61:1-3; Mark 4:18-19) means that our responsibility to prepare servant leaders equipped to practice justice is not optional.
8. We believe the **family is a primary institution** of faith formation and development. We will leverage the distinctive, God-given role of the family in shaping their children's humble, wise, and courageous hearts for engaging in the flourishing of cultural harmony.
9. We believe that **role models are important and necessary** in growing up into the love of God and the character of Christ. We will intentionally pursue a more diverse pool of qualified teachers and staff who deeply understand and sympathize with our students' life experiences because our parents and students have told us this is important to them.
10. We believe that we can **maintain the unity of the spirit** by "bringing every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:5) We will expose Satan's wicked lies designed to sabotage kingdom initiatives and divide the people of God.

Therefore, **Hope Academy has a unique opportunity** in our city to display the glory of the mercy of God as evidenced by cultural harmony within the beloved community. Jesus himself prayed that his

followers “may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. (John 17:20-21)