

Good Afternoon, my name is Ekemini Uwan. I'm a public theologian, a member of the International Civil Working Group for the Permanent Forum for People of African Descent, co-founder of Truth's Table Podcast and co-author of Truth's Table: Black Women's Musings on Life, Love, and Liberation.

I am a devout Christian woman whose faith, life, and purpose are bound to the Brown-skinned Palestinian-Jewish God-man, Jesus Christ. My faith follows in the tradition of African and African-American women starting with my Ibibio Grandmother Arit Ebek Johnson, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Nannie Helen Burroughs, Maria W. Stewart, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett. These women placed their faith in the Liberator, The Lord Jesus Christ, and lived to liberate their own people in defiance of the ubiquitous counterfeit white supremacist Christianity of their day. This is the Christian tradition to which I belong, and it is by the power of the Holy Spirit that I declare that Churches Owe a Debt.

As a public theologian, it is my duty and calling to put forth a liberating framework where the dignity, livelihoods, and flourishing of all African people and people of African descent are upheld. I am NOT ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation for those who believe. What I am ASHAMED about, aghast at, and angered by is the Catholic and Protestants churches' complicity in the oppression of my people. It is a lamentable fact that the church, both Catholic and Protestant, were the architects of and the primary vehicles through which the Transatlantic Slave Trade, chattel slavery, colonialism, and imperialism—among a host of other wicked enterprises—spread on and through the African continent and beyond.

Therefore, I am calling the church to account on theological grounds for its egregious sins against Africans and African descended people. Ecclesial, theological, and hermeneutical malfeasance via the Doctrine of Discovery, The curse of Ham and other WICKED interpretations of the Bible laid the groundwork for African and African-Descended people's perpetual oppression.

Reparations is personal for me. I am a Black woman, an African-American woman, a Nigerian-American woman, an African woman, a Nigerian woman, and an Ibibio woman. Therefore, I don't speak about slavery and reparations as an outside observer. According to Dr. Randy J. Sparks, "1.2 million slaves were transported from the Cross and Niger Rivers in the eighteenth century."¹ That's ten percent of the 12.5 million Africans stolen during the transatlantic slave trade. My people, the Ibibio people, make up a significant portion of the ten percent of Africans stolen and brought to the Americas. The church must be called to account for its reprehensible contribution to the constellation of oppression mentioned above. I strongly recommend that the UN and my fellow reparationist comrades to include the catholic and protestant churches in the quest for global reparations to Africans and People of African Descent. Failing to do so is a grave miscalculation.

Churches Owe a Debt. Thank you. I yield.

¹ Sparks, Randy J. "Two Princes of Calabar: An Atlantic Odyssey from Slavery to Freedom." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 59, no. 3, 2002, pp. 555–584. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/3491465.

