



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on March 27, 2019

Theology of Money? Princeton Seminary Students Want Slavery Reparations From School

Call it divinity degrees to dollars, a little mammon thrown in with the religion. But black seminary students in Princeton, New Jersey, are now asking their university to offer reparations for slavery. And you thought it was only young people's minds that today's higher education puts in chains. As LMTonline [reports](#):



Princeton Theological Seminary last year released a report describing its founders' and early faculty's ties to slavery. Now, some of its students want the school to take it a step further and provide reparations as financial restitution for its role in the slave trade.

A group of black seminarians have [sic] collected more than 400 signatures in an online petition calling on the New Jersey school to "make amends" by setting aside \$5.3 million annually — or 15 percent of what the seminary uses from the school's endowment for its operating expenses — to fund tuition grants for black students and establish a Black Church Studies program.

A progressive seminary like Princeton could be a pioneer by distributing reparations, said Justin Henderson, president of the Association of Black Seminarians, the group behind the petition. The school has confessed and repented for the "sin" of its role in slavery, but "repentance doesn't end with confession," said Henderson, who will finish his master of divinity studies in May.

"Restitution is evidence of the repentance," he said. "This is how we know the person has repented."

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And if you really, really, really, really want them to know you've repented, fork over a billion dollars.

Long an idea on the fringes, reparations have become a "thing" in recent times, with even Democrat presidential contenders polishing up their leftist credentials and supporting them. But they're still a bad idea.

First off, with slavery once having been ubiquitous around the world, who wouldn't be owed reparations? As I [wrote](#) last year:

Must the Egyptians pay off the Jews? Should descendants of the Spartans compensate those of the Helots? Rome took slaves from all over Europe, including the lands of some of my ancestors. Will I be getting a check?

"But, c'mon," critics may exclaim, "Rome was ages ago!" Oh? Since antebellum trespasses are fair game, what is the statute of limitations here? An exact number, please.



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Some may also point out that “Rome” (Italy) comprises very different people today than two millennia ago, as it had been invaded physically and genetically. Well, the same is true of the United States.

It’s not just that [only 25 percent](#) of Southern whites owned slaves. It’s not just that we don’t punish children for their parents’ crimes, as once was done centuries ago. It’s that it’s more than just time (many dead generations) separating victims and victimizers here. Note that many Americans’ ancestors weren’t even in the United States in the antebellum age and were of groups (Germans, Poles, and Russians in my case) never involved in the African slave trade. How are they in any way responsible for 19th-century American slavery?

In this vein, ex-civil rights activist Bob Woodson mentioned some more complicating factors on the March 19 edition of *Tucker Carlson Tonight*. “Who pays, and who gets paid?” he asked. Elaborating, he then stated, “There were 3,700 blacks that owned 12,000 slaves; three tribes — the Chickasaws ... the Creek Indians — they owned 3,500 slaves. So ... who pays? Do the sons and daughters of those blacks and Native Americans who owned slaves ... do they pay?” (video below; relevant portion begins at 1:39).

The reality is that not just Princeton, but the whole world has ties to slavery. We could pressure everyone into giving everyone else reparations, but then we should end up where we started, anyway. So maybe we should just forget the whole thing and call it a wash.

It appears, however, that Princeton Theological Seminary (PTS) will pay off. Ninety percent of its students already “receive some form of financial aid, and most of those students have 80-100 percent of their tuition covered,” LMTonline informs. So a “reparations” policy would just add a couple more cars to the gravy train. Don’t feel too sorry for the school, either — its endowment is valued at \$1 billion.

Returning to reparations in general, it’s not just that Westerners (whites) were the ones who actually ended slavery, an accepted norm for millennia; it’s that a purported goal of the pro-reparations crowd is a fantasy.

To wit: You can never “right the wrongs of the past” because they’re, well, past. Even when you change a longstanding misbegotten policy, you’re righting a wrong that still exists in the present. As to this, since this was done in the West with slavery long ago, there’s nothing in that regard left to right.

Nonetheless, the “Association of Black Seminarians ... are [sic] calling for full tuition grants for all African American students and student loan forgiveness for African-American alumni annually” (how convenient), LMTonline also reports.

“The association also suggests 10 grants for Liberian students, citing the report’s disclosure of the seminary’s support for the colonization project in Africa, where slaves were returned to Liberia. And then it calls for 10 grants for West African students from countries where many slaves originated,” the site continues.

Of course, the reflexive response is that this at least will help the individuals chosen. Yet we could wonder how putting these students in a left-wing indoctrination mill such as PTS will help them. After all, speaking of wrongs of the present, West Africa’s problem isn’t yesterday’s slavery. It’s today’s moral degradation and its symptoms — kleptocratic governments and corrupted ideology, such as socialism — which keep them mired in poverty.

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