

LIBERATING
BLACK
THEOLOGY



THE BIBLE
AND THE
BLACK EXPERIENCE
IN AMERICA



ANTHONY
B. BRADLEY

Liberating Black Theology: The Bible and the Black Experience in America

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Introduction

Before Sen. Barack Obama ran for president of the United States in 2008, most people in America, including those in the black church, had never heard of black liberation theology. Jeremiah Wright, Obama's former pastor of the Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, made international headlines when, in his support of Obama, he spoke about blacks suffering in America at the hands of "rich white people." Wright reminded us that Jesus was a poor black man who suffered under the oppression of rich, white people just as Barack had in his life. Wright was accused of being a racist for the seemingly racist comments made against whites and for black empowerment. Trinity UCC openly adopted a "Black Value System" written by the Manford Byrd Recognition Committee, chaired by the late Vallmer Jordan in 1981, which includes things like a commitment to the black community, the black family, a black work ethic, and so on. America was introduced to a church that said:

We are a congregation which is Unashamedly Black and Unapologetically Christian. . . . Our roots in the Black religious experience and tradition are deep, lasting and permanent. We are an African people, and remain "true to our native land," the mother continent, the cradle of civilization. God has superintended our pilgrimage through the days of slavery, the days of segregation, and the long night of racism. It is God who gives us the strength and courage to continuously address injustice as a people, and as a congregation. We constantly affirm our trust in God through cultural expression of a Black worship service and ministries which address the Black Community.¹

¹See http://www.trinitychicago.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=12&Itemid=27.

When asked, Wright confessed that his teaching and the teaching of his church were nothing more than the views of a Christian tradition following black liberation theology, and in just a few months America became a black liberation nation.

I should probably write both Barack Obama and Jeremiah Wright a thank-you note because otherwise not many Americans would have been at all interested in black liberation theology, a focus of my research for the past decade, during the 2008 presidential campaign. When Wright's views became more public, it seemed as if I was on the radio every day, explaining to whites and blacks alike what black liberation theology is and what it means today. Glenn Beck asked me to write three articles for his newsletter and interviewed me on his radio program as well as on CNN *Headline News*. The black liberation nation was fully inaugurated.

This short book is meant to be introductory in nature. It's short but substantial. What is unique about this study is that it is interdisciplinary, engaging theology, sociology, anthropology, and economics. I use the term *black theology* to broadly encompass writings on Christianity in religious studies by a wide spectrum of black authors including theologians, authors of biblical studies, ethicists, and the like. This discussion will explain what black liberation theology is, recognizing that many nuances will be missing. I primarily focus on the role that victimology has played in the rise and fall of black liberation theology. I argue that the major flaw of black liberation theology is that it views people perpetually as victims. Thomas Sowell's and John McWhorter's works were hugely helpful for me on this point, and their voices echo throughout the book.

At the end, I suggest an alternate strategy for developing a redemptive-historical approach for understanding the black experience in America while remaining faithful to Scripture and orthodox Christianity. The thesis is that James Cone's presupposition of black consciousness construed as victim supplies a fundamentally flawed theological anthropology for later developments in black liberation theology, leading to the demise of black liberation theology. In other

words, reducing black identity primarily to that of victim, albeit at times inadvertent, contributed to the decline of black liberation to obscurity (that is, until Barack Obama ran for president).

In the 1970s a Presbyterian theologian by the name of Cornelius Van Til predicted that black theology was eventually going to land flat and would not be helpful to blacks in the long run. As Alistair Kee now confirms in his book *The Rise and Demise of Black Theology*, that prediction came true. Kee argues that black liberation theology is dead. Black liberation theology was doomed from the beginning because its initial biblical and theological presuppositions were grounded in the reduction of the black experience in America to that of victim. Early in the development of black liberation theology, black theologians like J. Deotis Roberts clearly pointed out core weaknesses but, like most other critics, simply did not go deep enough to the presuppositional level.

Victimology also wove its way through the social ethics of black liberation theologians and set the stage for the adoption of Marxism as an ethical framework for black liberation theology after Cone. Furthermore, victimology set the stage for the development of black liberation theological hermeneutics by a rejection of “white” theological method for one that distinctively embraces the black experience, including the unique experience of black women articulated by womanist theologians.

This book suggests that for any black theology to serve the black church in the future, it must be formulated within biblically constrained presuppositions. Contextualizing the redemptive story in the black experience, then, can be done with the strictest fidelity to the will of God for human persons and creation, personally and structurally, as revealed in the Scriptures. Black theology has a future only if it presupposes the triune God and seeks to interpret the black experience through the lens of the whole of Scripture.

The outline of the book is simple. Chapter 1 gives a basic overview of the movement, offers some key terms, and gives a trailer as to where this study is headed theologically. Chapters 2 and 3 give

a fairly detailed introduction to the work of James Cone, the chief architect of black liberation theology, and his theological emphases. Chapter 4 explores the role that victimology has played in opening up many black theologians to embrace a form of Marxism as the ethical framework for the black church. Chapter 5 details the story of why black theologians rejected traditional biblical interpretation on the grounds of Eurocentrism and offers a possible scheme that challenges the fact of white racism but remains faithful to the biblical text. Chapter 6 is the “now what?” chapter. In this book I offer an introduction to those who have critiqued Cone and others and offer what is essential for a Christian theology that is faithful to the text and also deals with personal and structural sin.

Setting the Stage: Defining Terms and Theological Distinctions

*The fact that so many people are surprised to hear that anger in some of Reverend Wright's sermons simply reminds us of the old truism that the most segregated hour in American life occurs on Sunday morning.*¹

BARACK OBAMA



This book explores the identification of the human person primarily as a victim in black liberation theology, beginning with the work of James Cone, and suggests an alternate strategy for developing a Christian approach for understanding the black experience in America while remaining faithful to Scripture and orthodox theology. The overall thesis is that Cone's starting point for black identity as victim supplies a fundamentally flawed theological anthropology for later developments in black liberation theology. The flawed anthropology set the stage for the demise of black liberation theology beyond major recent criticism.² To explore the scope of this claim we must fully be introduced to the work of James Cone, the chief architect of black liberation theology.

¹"Obama's Church Takes On Wright Controversy," Associated Press, March 23, 2008, MSNBC online, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23771205/>.

²Alistair Kee, *The Rise and Demise of Black Theology* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006). Kee argues that black theology is dead because black theology presents inadequate analyses of race and gender and no account at all of class (economic) oppression. Black theology simply repeats the mantras of the 1970s. While content with American capitalism, it fails to address the true source of the impoverishment of black Americans. Content with romantic connections to Africa, this "African-American" movement fails to defend contemporary Africa against what Kee believes is predatory American global ambitions.

WHAT IS BLACK THEOLOGY?

A clear definition of black theology was first given formulation in 1969 by the National Committee of Black Church Men:

Black theology is a theology of black liberation. It seeks to plumb the black condition in the light of God's revelation in Jesus Christ, so that the black community can see that the gospel is commensurate with the achievements of black humanity. Black theology is a theology of "blackness." It is the affirmation of black humanity that emancipates black people from white racism, thus providing authentic freedom for both white and black people. It affirms the humanity of white people in that it says "No" to the encroachment of white oppression.³

The context of the statement may explain, in part, the intensity of the statement. This definition was forged at the height of the civil rights movement, when the black church began to focus its attention beyond helping blacks cope with national racial discrimination and move on to applying theology to address the unique issues facing blacks, particularly in urban areas. Bruce Fields explains that black theology seeks to make sense of the sociohistorical experience of blacks in the light of their confession that God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ.⁴

While black theology affirms blackness, that theology should not be construed as an antiwhite reactionary theology. The notion of blackness is not merely a reference to skin color but rather is a symbol of oppression that can be applied to all persons of color who have a history of oppression, as well as to other marginalized groups such as homosexuals.⁵

Black liberation theologians seek to apply theology in a manner that affirms the humanity of blacks in ways that they believe were previously denied. Saying no to being oppressive helps whites no

³James H. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore, eds., *Black Theology: A Documentary History, Volume I: 1966–1979* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), 101.

⁴Bruce Fields, *Introducing Black Theology: Three Crucial Questions for the Evangelical Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 13.

⁵Kelly Brown Douglas, "Homophobia and Heterosexism in the Black Church and Community," in *African American Religious Thought: An Anthology*, ed. Cornel West and Eddie S. Glaude Jr. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 999.

longer to see their oppression as normal and gives blacks an understanding that their lives matter to God.

Black theology begins with the life experience of oppression and formulates theology respectively. The overall emphasis of black liberation theology is the black struggle for liberation from various forms of white racism and oppression, and it views the imperatives of the Christian gospel to that end.

VICTIMOLOGY AND BLACK THEOLOGY

John McWhorter's articulation of victimology will be used in this study to denote a more robust understanding of the victimologist's way of thinking. McWhorter's description provides a critical context for comprehending the long-term effects of reducing the black experience to that of victim. In the end, victimology perpetuates a separatist and elitist platform that provides no opportunity for racial reconciliation.

Victimology is the adoption of victimhood as the core of one's identity.⁶ It is a subconscious, culturally inherited affirmation that life for blacks in America has been in the past and will be in the future a life of being victimized by the oppression of whites. In today's terms, it is the conviction that, forty years after the Civil Rights Act, conditions for blacks have not substantially changed.⁷ It is most clearly seen in race-related policy and through interpersonal evaluation among blacks. Ironically, notes McWhorter, the forced desegregation of the United States in the 1960s actually exacerbated victimology. During this time period, it became acceptable for blacks to confront whites with their frustration and resentment. This freedom of expression gained in the 1960s, coupled with a postcolonial inferiority complex, provides the historical basis for victimology.

McWhorter raises good concerns about grounding one's identity in the condition of being a victim despite abundant evidence to

⁶John McWhorter, *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America* (New York: Perennial, 2001), 3.

⁷*Ibid.*

the contrary. The overall result, says McWhorter, is that “the remnants of discrimination hold an obsessive indignant fascination that allows only passing acknowledgment of any signs of progress.”⁸ Many blacks, infused with victimology, wield self-righteous indignation in the service of exposing the inadequacies of the “other” (e.g., white person) rather than finding a way forward. The perpetual belief in a racial identity born out of self-loathing and anxiety often leads to more time spent inventing reasons to cry racism than working toward changing social mores and often inhibits movement toward reconciliation and positive mobility.⁹

Focusing on one’s victimhood often addresses a moral desire—it is a salve for insecurity. McWhorter maintains that many blacks are rarely able to see racial issues outside of the victimologist milieu and are trapped into reasoning racially in terms of the permanent subjugation of blacks by whites. He concludes that holding so tightly to the remnants of discrimination often creates more problems than it solves.

McWhorter goes on to explain that victimology often perpetuates racial tension. Blacks are encouraged by one another to “know your history.”¹⁰ The communicative function of said mantra is not aimed toward knowledge per se but toward remembering oppression and iniquity so it does not happen again. The irony of victimology is its tendency toward revisionist histories and creating an ethos that, a hundred years ago, would have precluded racial equality. Victimology, in other words, is *perpetuating* problems for black America, not solving them.

McWhorter articulates three main objections to victimology: (1) Victimology condones weakness in failure. It tacitly stamps approval on failure, lack of effort, and criminality.¹¹ Behaviors and patterns that are self-destructive are often approved of as cultural or are presented as unpreventable consequences from previous systemic patterns. (2) Victimology hampers progress because, from

⁸Ibid., 2.

⁹Ibid., 43–49.

¹⁰Ibid., 43.

¹¹Ibid.

the outset, it focuses attention on obstacles. For example, in black theology the focus is on the impediment to black freedom because of the Goliath of white racism. (3) Victimology keeps racism alive because many whites are constantly painted as racist with no evidence provided. These charges may create a context for backlash and resentment, which may fuel attitudes in the white community not previously held or articulated.

Perhaps the most significant tragedy of a victimologist's approach, in McWhorter's view, is that it creates separatism.¹² Separatism is a suspension of moral judgment in the name of racial solidarity that is an integral part of being culturally black in America today.¹³ The black experience is the starting point and the final authority for interpreting moral prescriptions, both personally and structurally. Separatist morality is not a deliberate strategy for accruing power; rather, it is a cultural thought—a tacit conviction that has imbued the culturally black psyche. Separatism is a direct result of victimology because whites are viewed in eternal opposition to the black experience; black America construes itself (albeit in many cases unintentionally) as a sovereign, cultural authority.

Separatism generates a restriction of cultural authority, a narrowing of intellectual inquiry, and the dilution of moral judgment. Mainstream American culture, when refracted through the lens of victimology, renders even the most ubiquitous cultural products and ideas “white.” For example, Manning Marable, a professor at Columbia University, has explicitly exhorted black scholars to focus exclusively on “black issues.” In doing so, he squelches intellectual curiosity (a basic good) outside the purview of the black American agenda.¹⁴ Separatism is the sense that to be truly black, one must restrict his allegiance to black-oriented culture and assent to different rules of argumentation and morality. Few blacks, however, would admit that this is true. The truth, writes McWhorter, is that “the culturally black person is from birth

¹²Ibid., 50–81.

¹³Ibid., 68.

¹⁴Ibid., 52–53. Howard University is a historically black university in Washington, D.C.

subtly inculcated with the idea that the black person—*any* black person—is not to be judged cold, but considered in light of the acknowledgment that black people have suffered.”¹⁵ In the victimologist’s worldview, black suffering is the proper lens through which all else is to be evaluated.

Ultimately, McWhorter warns against separatism. Separatism has, in the name of self-protection, encouraged generations of blacks to set low goals. Blacks have settled for less, not just in respect to racial integration, but also in respect to being human persons.

What James Cone and those who followed him came to develop is not only a theology predicated on the autonomous black person as a nearly permanent victim of white aggression but also a separatist theological system, all in the name of contextualization. This newly developed theology, based on victimology, not only jettisons orthodox Christianity but also impedes opportunities for ecclesial reconciliation.

DISTINCTIONS IN TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN TEACHING

The natural question after being introduced to black liberation theology is to inquire about the major differences between this tradition and orthodox Christianity that would serve as the basis of critique. In other words, how does black liberation theology compare to what Christians have traditionally taught? In order to clearly delineate the objections that historic Christianity might raise against James Cone and other black liberation theologians, it is necessary to introduce a few key distinctions that demonstrate the dislocation of black theology from the rest of Christian orthodoxy. This section also will serve as a trailer of sorts to the comparative points throughout the book. As an example, I have chosen the theological presentations of Herman Bavinck and Louis Berkhof to summarize a general orthodox position on various themes in Christian theology.

¹⁵Ibid., 72.

The Doctrine of God and Scripture

God presents himself in the biblical story as the divine “I AM” (Ex. 3:14–15), the creator of heaven and earth and the great redeemer of his people. Orthodox Christianity has known God by his eternal love, power, and sovereignty as creator and redeemer. This God, as summarized by Louis Berkhof, is articulated in Scripture as a God who redeems. His attributes include his self-existence (Ps. 33:11; John 5:26), immutability (Num. 23:19; Heb. 6:17), infinity (1 Kings 8:27; Jer. 23:23), perfect knowledge (Ps. 139:1–16; Heb. 4:13), wisdom (Rom. 11:33; Col. 1:16), goodness (Ps. 36:6; Matt. 5:45), love (Rom. 15:9; 1 John), holiness (Ex. 15:11; Isa. 57:15), righteousness (Ps. 99:4; Rom. 1:32), veracity (Num. 23:19; 2 Tim. 3:13), sovereignty (Eph. 1:11; Rev. 4:11), and omnipotence (Gen. 18:14; Matt. 3:9; 26:53).¹⁶

What Cone and those who follow him fail to do is ground black theology in the full authority of the Scriptures. This fundamental presupposition regarding God and his Word is the only proper starting point for constructing any theological vision. As we will see in subsequent chapters, this is a central belief that many black liberation theologians jettison. If we do not begin with God in our understanding of the human person, we will not develop a proper understanding of what the human person is in the fullest possible sense.

Herman Bavinck provides a cogent understanding of this theological first principle.¹⁷ Bavinck teaches that all knowledge of God comes to us from his revelation and that we, on our own, cannot appropriate its content except by sincere and childlike faith. Bavinck is quick to note that theology must be grounded in how God presents himself directly, not in the self-reference of the human person. If theology is not grounded in Scripture but is instead grounded in the mind of man, the entire edifice of theology, however skillfully and creatively constructed, collapses like a house of cards. No knowledge of God is possible except that which proceeds

¹⁶Louis Berkhof, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1934), 34–41.

¹⁷Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 1: Prolegomena*, trans. John Vriend, ed. John Bolt (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 208–233.

not from human experience but from and by God (Matt. 11:27; 1 Cor. 2:10ff.). It is God's self-knowledge and self-consciousness that serves as our knowledge of him. Without the divine self-consciousness, there is no knowledge of God in his creatures. Bavinck continues:

The knowledge of God in his creatures is only a weak likeness, a finite, limited sketch, of the absolute consciousness of God accommodated to the capacities of the human or creaturely consciousness. But however great that distance is, the source (*principium essendi*) of our knowledge of God is solely God himself, the God who reveals himself freely, self-consciously, and genuinely.¹⁸

The self-revelation and self-communication of God, argues Bavinck, is what makes theology even possible. The aim of theology, in contradistinction from a Conian approach, can be no other than that the rational creature know God and, knowing him, glorify him (Prov. 16:4; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 3:17).¹⁹

What we will find in Conian and post-Conian black liberation theology, however, is that the goal of theology is to study the being of God in the world in light of the existential situation of an oppressed community, relating the forces of liberation to the essence of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ. The end is not the glory of God but the dignity of the black experience in America. This is a significant divergence from orthodox Christian theology.

The object of God's self-revelation, argues Bavinck, is to introduce his knowledge into human consciousness and through it set the stage for the glorification of God himself through the Spirit. Bavinck argues for three crucial foundations for theology: (1) God as the essential foundation, the source of theology, (2) the external cognitive foundation, which is the self-revelation of God as recorded in the Holy Scriptures, and (3) the internal principle of knowing, the illumination of human beings by God's Spirit.²⁰

The following chapters present the consequences of discarding

¹⁸Ibid., 212.

¹⁹Ibid., 213.

²⁰Ibid.

this approach and replacing it with a view of God and Scripture interpreted through the lens of the black experience. What Cone and those who followed him may not have realized is that orthodox theology was in no need of dismissal and that interpreting the black experience in America would take on not only a different vision but would also present ways of knowing God that are inconsistent with the biblical story.

The Doctrine of Sin and Human History

If the knowledge of God begins with God's self-revelation, then so do issues in anthropology. "When man fell it was [his] attempt to do without God in every respect. Man sought his ideals of truth, goodness and beauty somewhere beyond God, either directly within himself or in the universe about him."²¹

These conclusions are drawn from the theological articulation of biblical anthropology and from the pattern of the redemptive story found in Scripture. Herman Bavinck describes a shared dimension of human persons as sinful resulting from the Fall. The universality of sin is derived in Genesis 3 from the fall of the first human beings, which provides a nonracial common anthropology.²² The consequences and punishments pronounced in Genesis 3:16ff. have direct bearing not only on Adam and Eve but also on their descendants and presuppose a communal guilt even in the present age. Because of the Fall, human history was forever changed and now becomes, says Bavinck, a history of sin, misery, and death. All human persons are now sinful by nature (Gen. 6:5; 8:21). In the New Testament, the universality of sin is explained beginning with Adam's disobedience (Rom. 5:12ff.; 1 Cor. 15:21ff.). Bavinck summarizes it this way:

- (1) Upon the one trespass of Adam, God pronounced a judgment consisting in a guilty verdict and a death sentence; (2) that judgment was pronounced over all humans because, on some fashion that Paul does not further explain here but that can be surmised

²¹Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1967), 15.

²²Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 3: Sin and Salvation*, trans. John Vriend, ed. John Bolt (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 83–85.

from the context, they are included in Adam; all were declared guilty and condemned to death in Adam; (3) in virtue of this antecedent judgment of God, all humans personally became sinners and all in fact die as well. God apprehends and regards, judges and condemns all humans in one [representative man], and also they all descend from him as sinners and are all subject to death.²³

Regardless of our racial or ethnic backgrounds, we have a common solidarity in sin. Moral depravity, says Bavinck, is characteristic of all people by nature and does not merely arise later in life as a result of one's own misguided deeds. It must be remembered that humanity is not simply an aggregate of individuals but a dynamic and organic unity of one race—those made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–27). As such, all the members of the human race can be a blessing or a curse to one another, and increasingly so to the degree that they themselves are more outstanding and occupy a more pivotal role in human associations.²⁴

Jesus Christ is the remedy for sin. Bavinck maintains that when Christ descended to the earth, he became poor, though he was rich (2 Cor. 8:9); but when he rose and ascended to heaven, he took with him a treasure of merits that he had acquired by his obedience “to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:8).²⁵ Jesus Christ as Savior provides deliverance from sin and all its consequences and offers participation in supreme blessedness. The pinnacle of the benefits provided by Jesus' deliverance is reconciliation and atonement. Christ's sacrifice, notes Bavinck, has objective significance. In our solidarity in sin, God manifests his wrath against sins regardless of race, class, or any other distinctions among persons (Rom. 1:18; Gal. 3:10; Eph. 2:3). As sinners, we are God's enemies (Rom. 5:10; 11:28) and are in need of being reconciled to him through Jesus Christ alone. This reconciliation is not unilateral. “Not only must we be reconciled with God, but God, too must be reconciled with us in the sense that, by giving Christ as expiation (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10), he puts his wrath upon him and estab-

²³Ibid., 85.

²⁴Ibid., 105.

²⁵Ibid., 447.

lishes a relation of peace between himself and human beings (Rom. 5:9–10; 2 Cor. 5:18–19; Gal. 3:13).”²⁶

The fact of the Fall and the accomplished redemptive work of Christ serve as the true foundation for the liberation of black people. The fruits of Christ’s sacrifice are not restricted to any one group of people because of our common human solidarity as sinners. Bavinck describes three benefits that accrue from the reconciliation of God through Christ: “(1) juridical—that forgiveness of sins is our justification, mystical—consisting of the Christ being crucified, buried, raised, and being seated with Christ in heaven, ethical—through regeneration and being made alive, (2) moral—consisting in the imitation of Christ, economic—in the fulfillment of the Old Testament covenant and the inauguration of the new covenant, and (3) physical—in our victory over the world, death, hell, and Satan.”²⁷

The fact of sin, and the Fall then also, sheds light on the reality of structural or systemic sin. Within the context of America’s short history, one need only look at the centuries of racial tension to discover that at times sinfulness has led entire institutions to organize to oppress blacks. This is not necessarily a result of the institutional structure as such—the church, for example—but is rather a result of the fact that structural sin is also a consequence of the Fall, as sinners assume positions of influence and power. Bavinck explains that for those in positions of authority and power, their own life and conduct decides the fortunes of their subordinates, elevates them and brings them to honor, or drags them down and pulls them along to destruction.²⁸

Social injustice is rooted in a human history of sin. Structural sin must be evaluated on the same philosophical ground as personal sin because structures have actors (i.e., men and women) who have a shared solidarity in sin. The proper theological orientation on this issue will promote a proper ground for understanding, moving those structural problems toward the good.

²⁶Ibid., 448.

²⁷Ibid., 451.

²⁸Ibid., 105.

"Anthony Bradley's analysis of black liberation theology is by far the best thing I have read on the subject. By covering such figures as James Cone, Cornell West, and Jeremiah Wright, he reveals all of the nuances involved with their approaches to the subject. Anthony has done the Christian community a great service. There was a significant need for a work of this type and its arrival is long overdue."

Craig Vincent Mitchell, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS, SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

"I have read a number of books which purport to explain, define, or critique black liberation theology, but *Liberating Black Theology* is the easiest to understand. This is because Dr. Bradley unapologetically maintains a biblical, orthodox perspective while being sympathetic to the issues and concerns of black liberation theologians."

Wy Plummer, AFRICAN-AMERICAN MINISTRIES COORDINATOR, MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

"With irenic tone Bradley reveals the theological justification of racial separation inherent within the victimization philosophy of both first generation and second generation black theology."

Eric C. Redmond, SENIOR PASTOR, REFORMATION ALIVE BAPTIST CHURCH; ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF BIBLE AND THEOLOGY, WASHINGTON BIBLE COLLEGE

ANTHONY B. BRADLEY (PhD, Westminster Theological Seminary) is a visiting professor of theology at the King's College, New York. He also serves as a research fellow at the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty and is a sought-after commentator on current issues for major broadcast media such as NPR and CNN/Headline News.

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