

SANCTITY OF LIFE

an anti-racism appeal

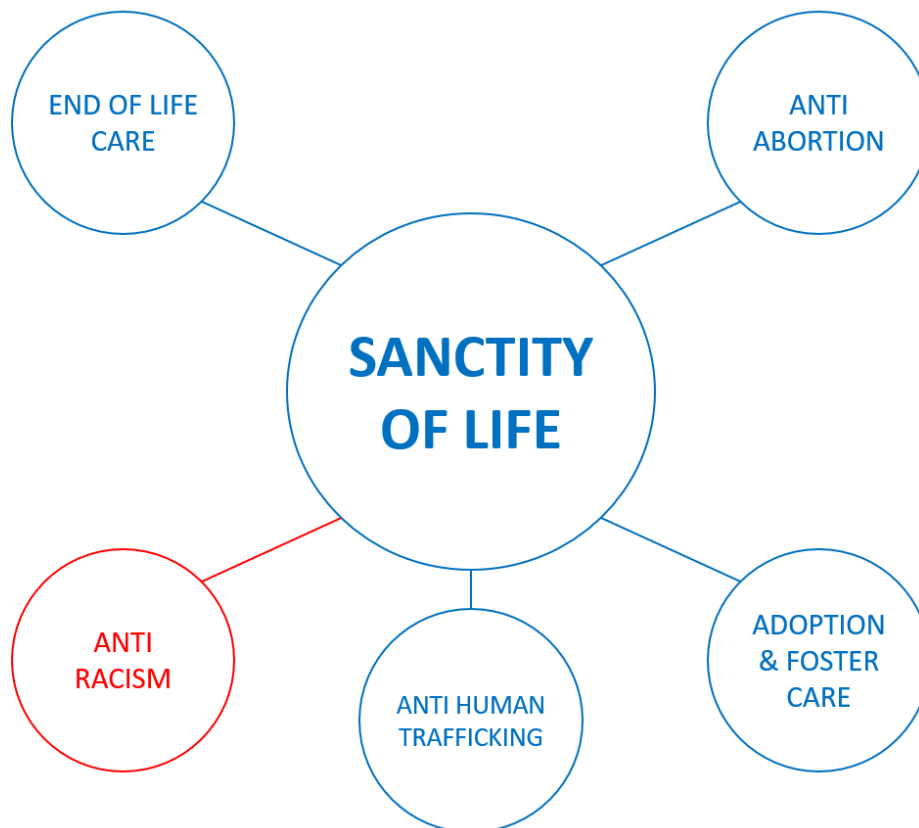
Imago Dei, the Image of God, is the foundational principle for our effort to protect, preserve, and promote human life. The belief that all people are created in His image, known before the world was formed, should propel Christians to always uphold the sacredness of human life.

In our culture, it has become evident that gaps exist in the Church's strategy to fully protect, preserve, and promote human life. As shepherd's, we guard the flock with a watchful eye, not only looking for the wolf we know, but the wolf we do not know. Over the last several years, we have been reminded that the wolf of racism continues to destroy our flock from within the Church. Not only the Church, but the wolf of racism is affecting the communities we serve. As such, we must respond with spiritual force, and we must respond strategically.

The sin of partiality, which promotes racial injustice, is no less offensive to God than other sins that we openly discuss and form biblical strategy to address. As such, the following outlines a proposed plan for addressing the sin of racism and its attack on the sacredness of human life.

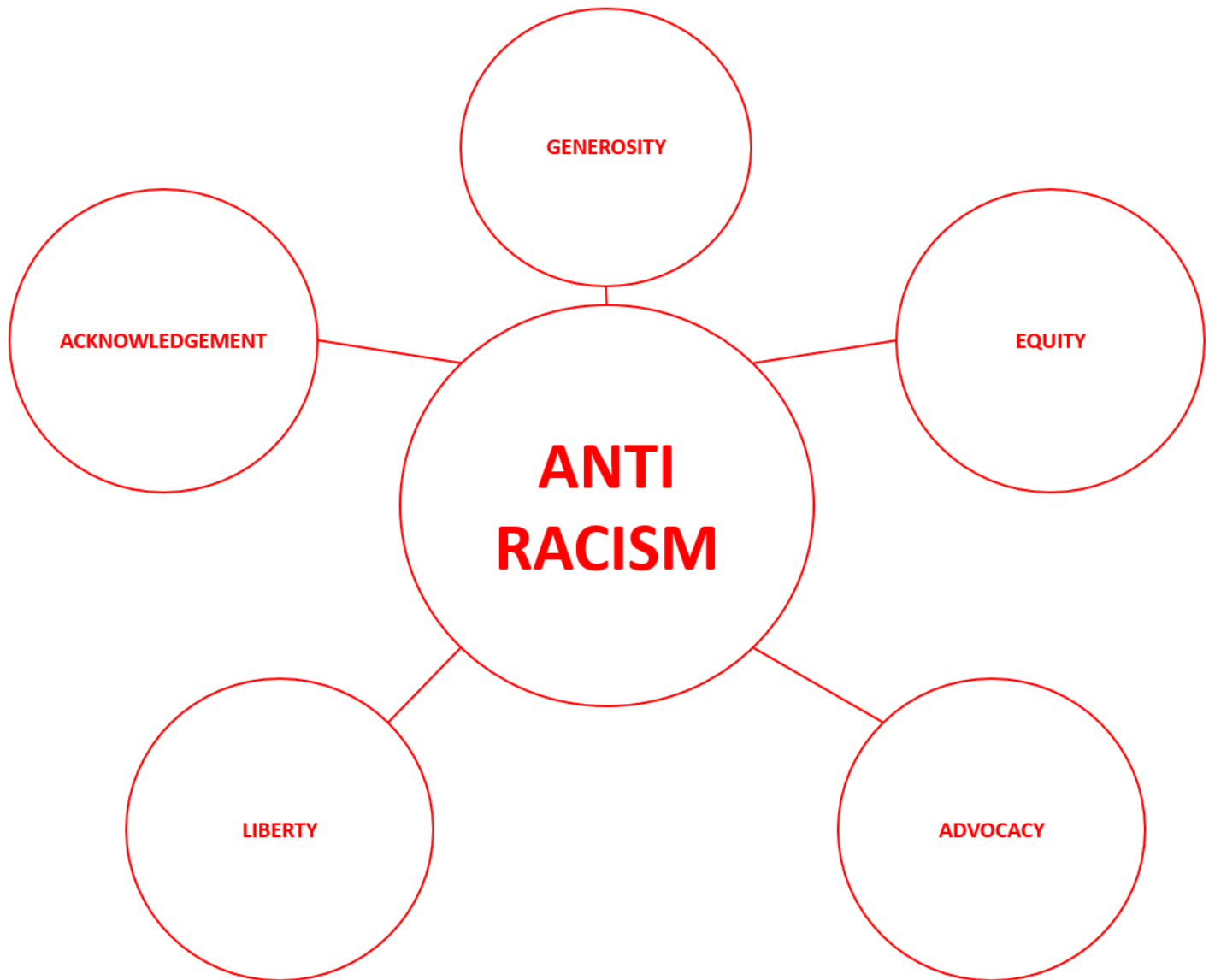
TYPICAL SANCTITY OF LIFE MINISTRY PLAN

We believe that to adequately address the issue of racial prejudice, churches must add 'Anti-Racism' to their Sanctity of Life platform or conversation. The depravity and effects of racism on human life meet the same standard as other issues, and by adding Anti-Racism to the formal platform, we can allocate the appropriate resources.



THE ANTI RACISM PLATFORM

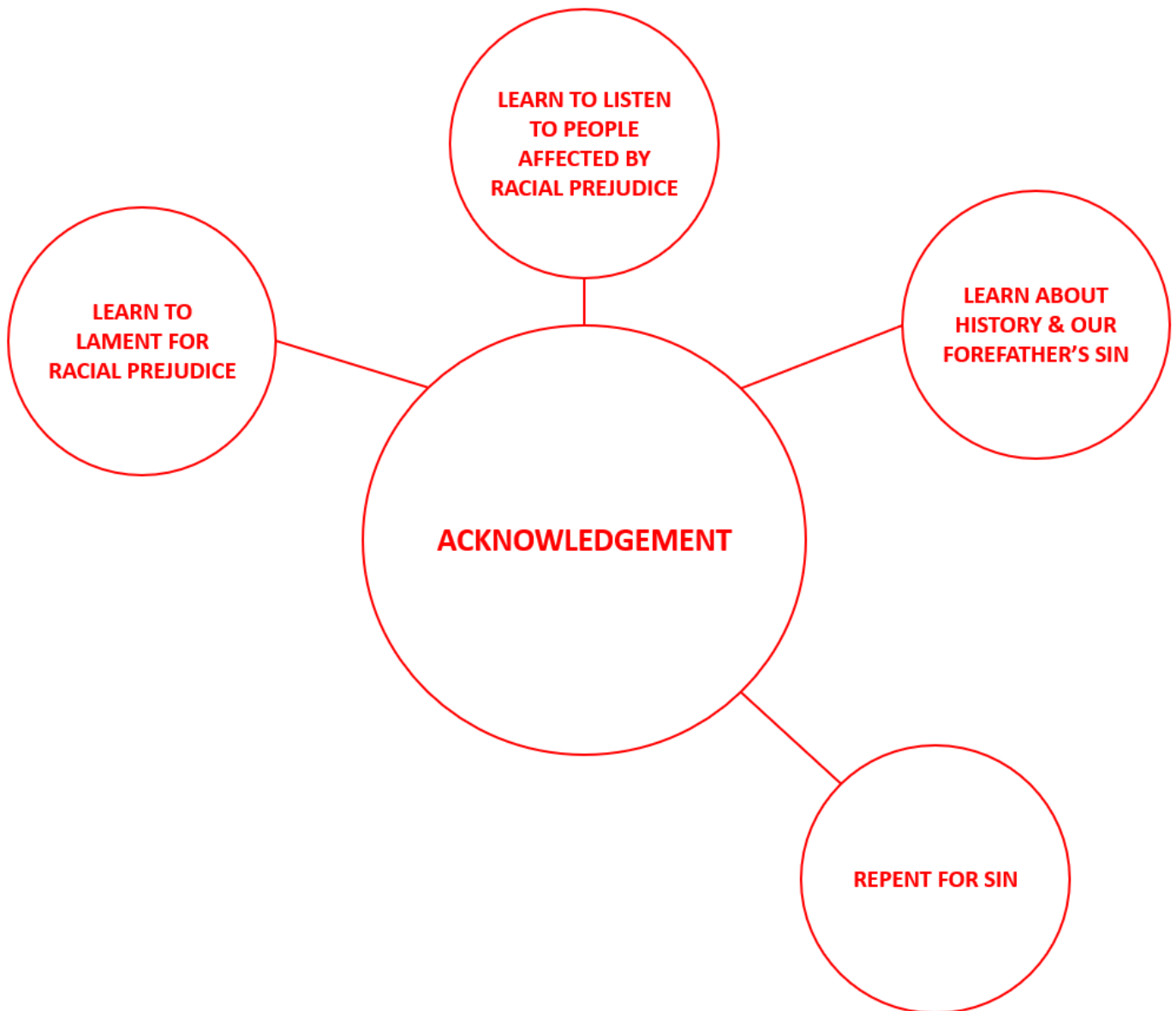
We believe that the Anti-Racism platform should have 5 core tenets. The tenets will create a dynamic strategy that not only protect the lives affected by racial prejudice, but also equip all Saints to do the work of this ministry.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

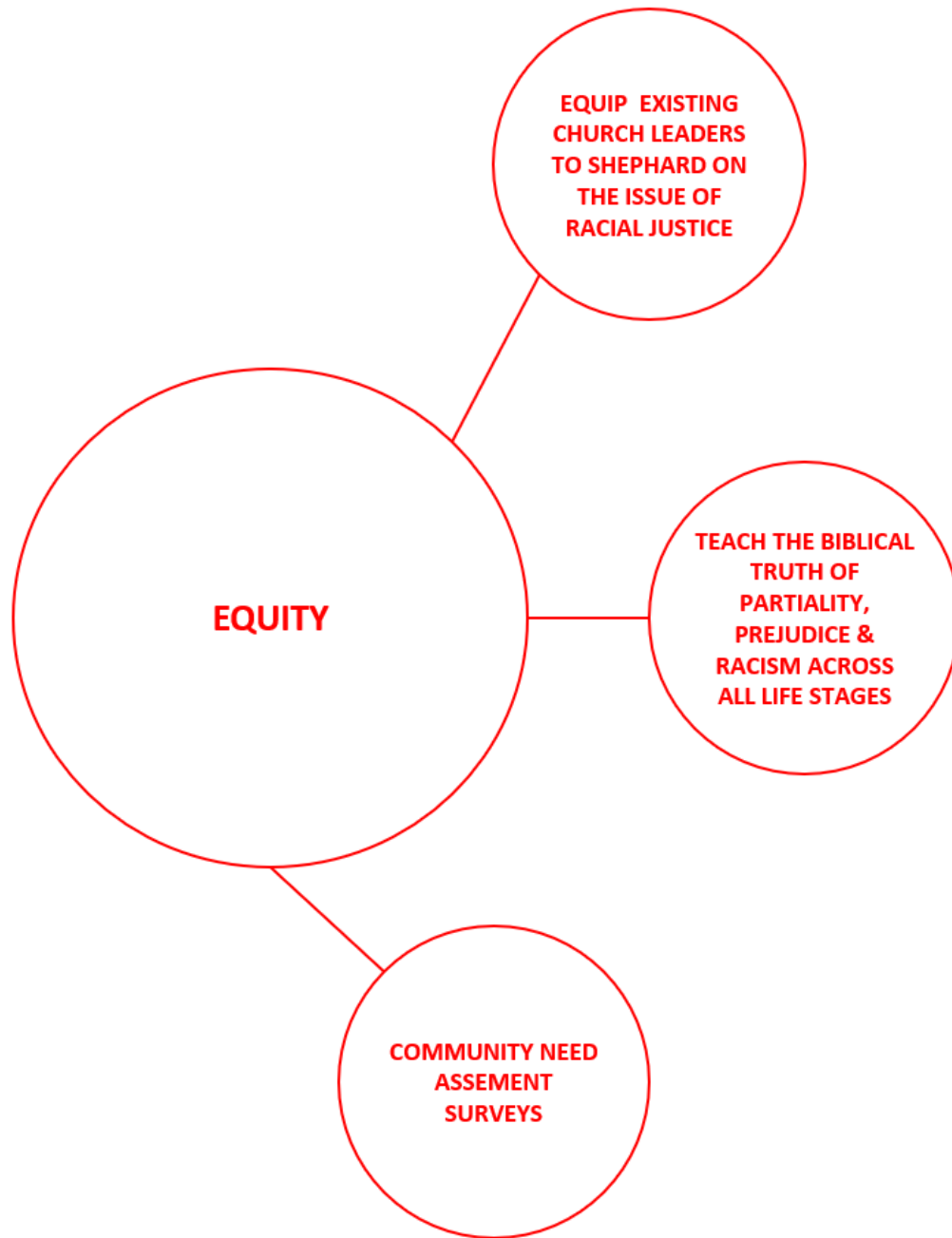
This is the foundation for racial justice and is the hardest to perform. The basis is this, you cannot pursue justice without the acknowledgement of an injustice (sin). We see the difficulty of acknowledging injustice even in the first sin. When God confronted Adam in the Garden of Eden about eating the forbidden fruit, his immediate reaction was denial, 'it was not me, it was her...'¹. Adam refuses to acknowledge his injustice towards God.

Throughout the bible, we are shown man's guilt for showing partiality (prejudice). We are also shown how prejudice has a generational impact, and God's rebuke for those who show partiality. Because we believe in the supremacy and objectivity (what was true then is true now) of scripture, we must acknowledge that we are no less guilty of showing partiality, that generations of showing partiality has a significant impact on those who are being treated differently, and God is not pleased.



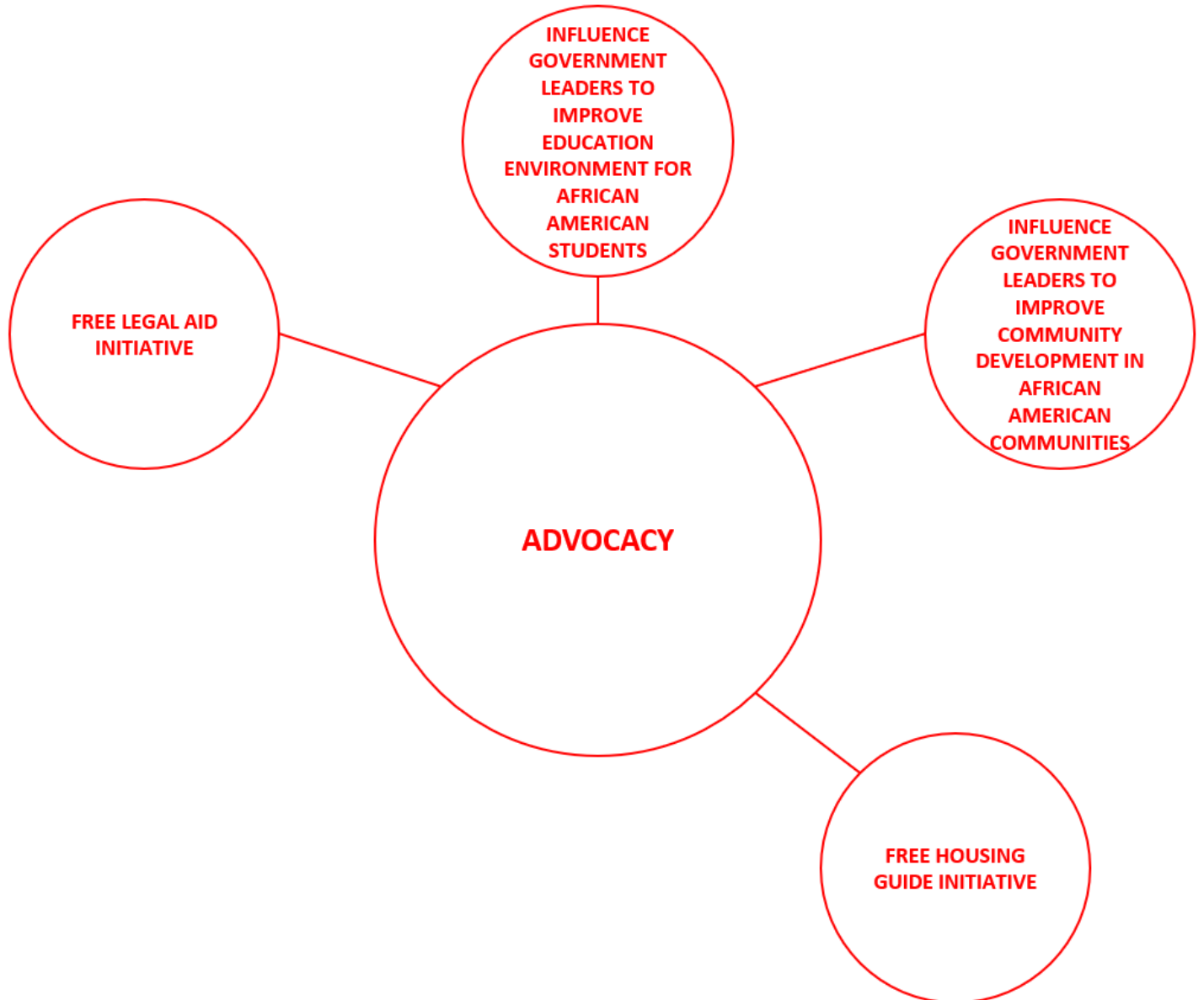
EQUITY

This is different than equality. Equity is dividing resources based on need to pursue God's design for your life, where equality is dividing resources based on an equal distribution regardless of what a person needs to pursue God's design for their life. Our pursuit for racial justice must not stop at equality, but it must chase after an equitable treatment for people of color. We see the theme of equitable treatment throughout scripture. Whether the way Jesus confronts the marginalized people of His time², or the way God distributes spiritual gifts to His people³, the emphasis is not on ensuring people have the same thing, but on ensuring people have exactly what they need.



ADVOCACY

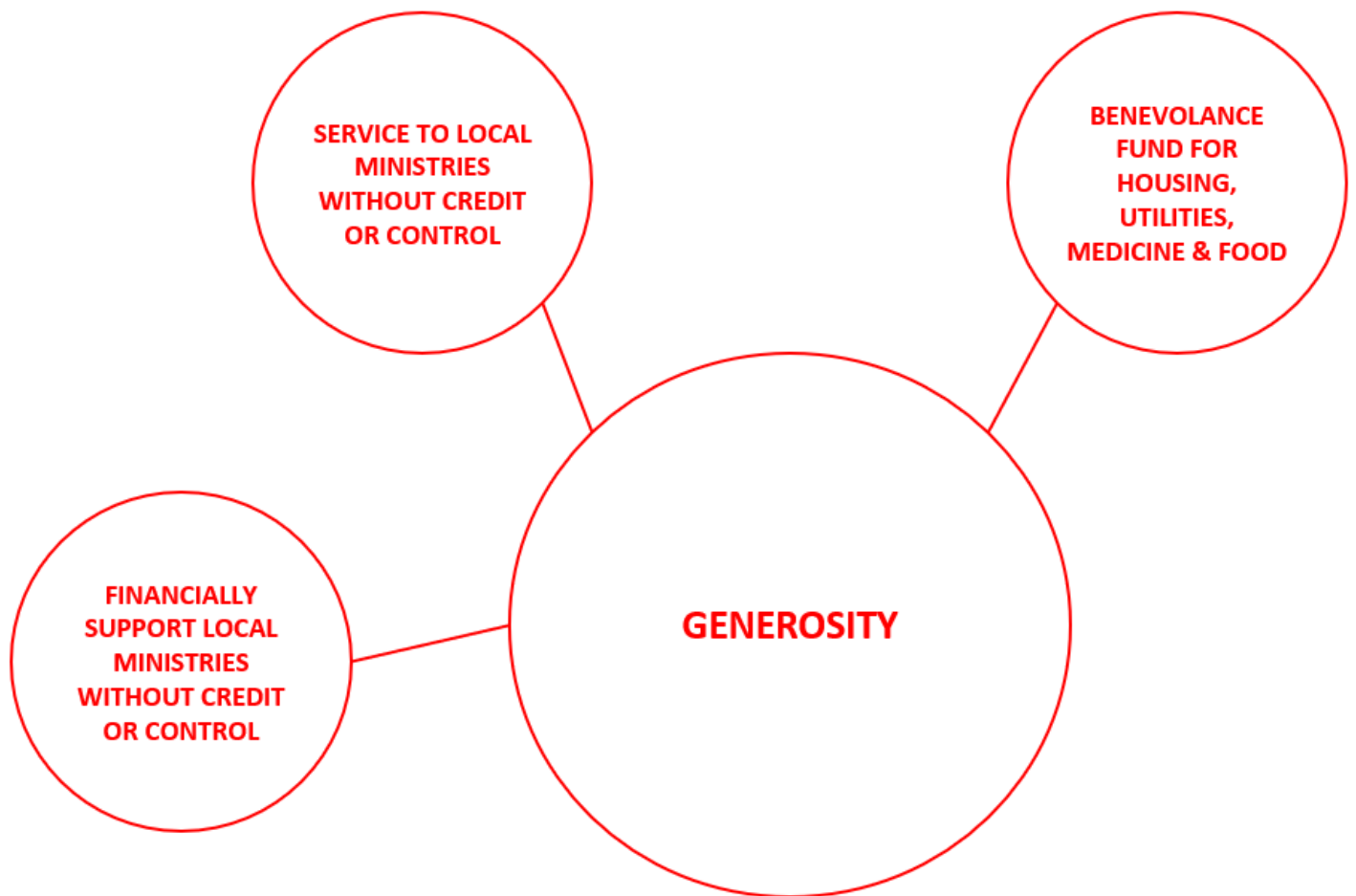
We must stand up and defend those who are oppressed. Proverbs 31:8-9 says, "Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy." Advocacy should be simple. We all know the desire to defend ourselves, parents know how to defend their children, and Christians know how to defend their faith. Racial justice through advocacy should follow these same patterns. The only difference, we are not the beneficiaries. See also⁴



GENEROSITY

So much of what we have is born out of the circumstances we inherit. Just being born in America creates opportunities that being born in any other country does not create. And whether we believe that we created what we have, or we inherited what we have, God says that all we have is His⁵. The question is, what do we do with all that we have?

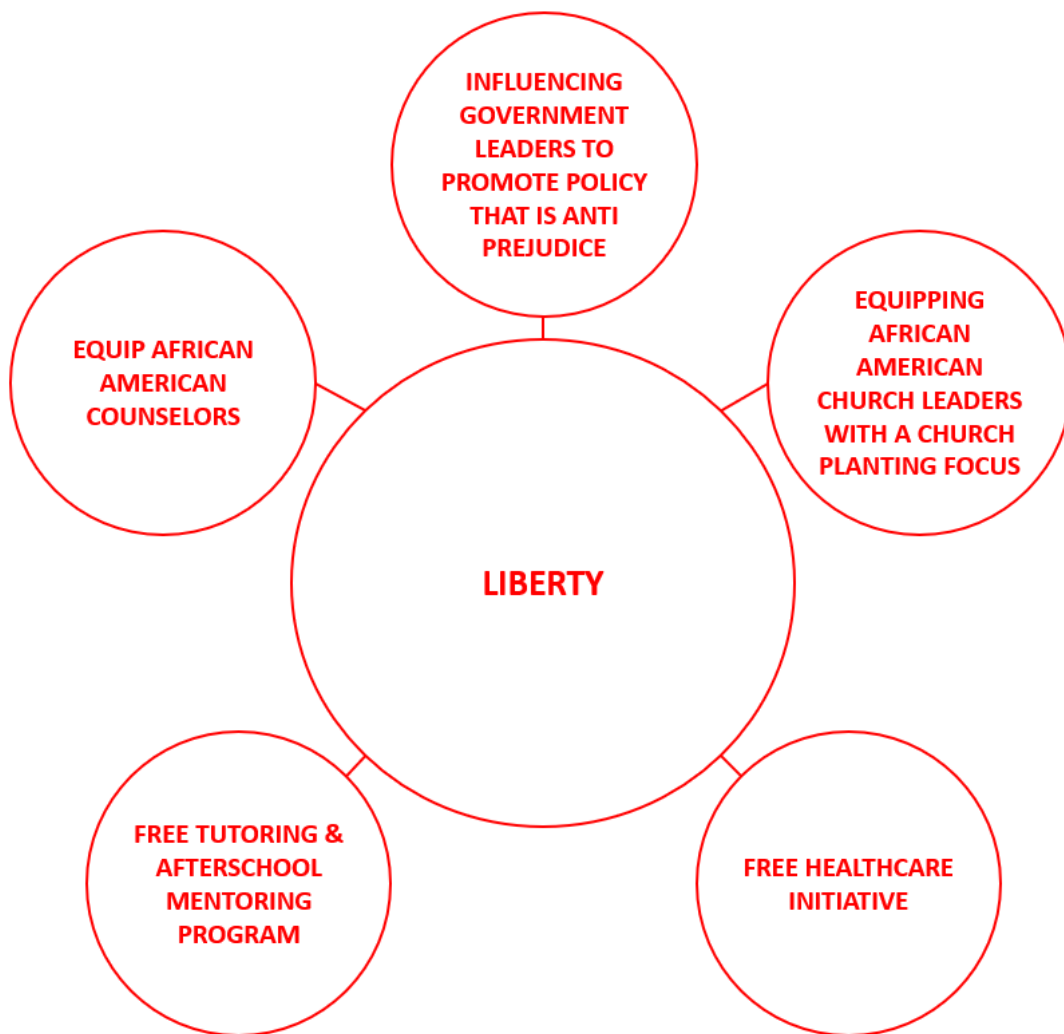
The bible is clear about our responsibility to share in generosity with those who are in need. Not just to share, but to share generously⁶. Most unique to a biblical generosity is our calling to give generously to our enemy. Jesus says things like, "bless your enemies", "give to everyone who begs", "and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil."⁷ Doing justice through sharing generously should not be bound to those who we think deserve it. It should be reserved for those who we think do not.



LIBERTY

To start his ministry, Jesus read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."⁸ The justice of the bible is more than giving generously, it is more than speaking up, it is more than equitable treatment or acknowledging injustices. Biblical justice is about liberating captives! We must set the oppressed free. Jeremiah 22:3 says, "Thus says the Lord: do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed." See also⁹

Biblical justice through liberation comes in 2 forms: on earth and in heaven. Christians are familiar with the concept of a heavenly liberation. This is the Gospel where we are liberated from our sin, through the blood of Jesus, so that we can spend eternity with God in Heaven. However, in our humble view, Christians are more likely to sidestep God's purpose for a liberated justice on this earth. Jesus says that he has come to "set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." The "year of the Lord's favor" is a reference to The Year of Jubilee¹⁰, where land is restored to its rightful owner, business transactions are fair, and neighbors support neighbors in their time of need. Jesus came not only to liberate people from the oppression of their sin, but he came to liberate people from the oppression of their societal bondage. ALL chains must be broken.



It is our belief that by using these 5 tenets, the Church can provide a robust ministerial strategy to attack the wolf of racism. At its core, racism or racial prejudice is an assault on the Imago Dei. A person that is prejudice, in thought or in practice, cannot uphold the created design for human life, and therefore, we believe that the Sanctity of Life ministerial platform is the most appropriate place for this strategy.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

We are a team of 7. We are multi-ethnic & multi-generational. We share a common biblical worldview & believe that God created diversity for His glory & our good. We work hard to provide content that is true, full of compassion & full of logic. Most of all, we pray that the Gospel would be made known through the work of racial justice.

We are not ordained ministers and do not represent ourselves as writers or publishers of bible content. The mission for our content is to plant seeds with pastors and other church leaders. We welcome edits (assuming they are rooted in biblical truth) and hope that our work is a blessing for churches in our city.

For questions, feel free to contact us at m68project@gmail.com.

¹ Genesis 3:12

² John 4, Matthew 8, + more

³ Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4

⁴ Psalm 82

⁵ James 1:17

⁶ Psalm 112:9, 2 Cor 9:11

⁷ Luke 6:27-42

⁸ Luke 4:18-19

⁹ Psalm 82:4

¹⁰ Leviticus 25