



FAITH AND RACIAL JUSTICE

Systemic Bias (Clear Definition)

Systemic bias refers to **patterns of unfairness built into the policies, practices, and structures of institutions**—even when no one intends to discriminate.

It's bias that lives in the **system**, not just in individuals.

What Systemic Bias Looks Like

Systemic bias shows up when:

- Certain groups consistently receive fewer opportunities
- Rules or procedures unintentionally disadvantage some people
- Long-standing practices create unequal outcomes
- “The way things have always been done” benefits one group more than others

Examples can appear in:

- Schools
- Housing
- Healthcare
- Employment
- Criminal justice
- Lending and banking

- Government services
- Even faith communities

Key Point

Systemic bias does **not** require individual hatred or intentional prejudice. It can exist even when everyone involved believes they are being fair.

It's the result of:

- History
- Culture
- Policies
- Traditions
- Unequal access
- Old systems that were never corrected

Why Systemic Bias Matters for Faith and Community Work

Understanding systemic bias helps us:

- Recognize why some communities struggle more than others
- Address root causes, not just symptoms
- Build trust across racial and cultural lines
- Create fairer systems in churches, schools, and neighborhoods
- Live out God's call to justice, compassion, and equity

It moves the conversation from "Who is to blame?" to "How can we fix what's broken?"

How You Can Use This in Your Interfaith Work

This definition fits perfectly into:

- Clergy training
- Community forums
- Racial justice workshops
- Youth discussions

- Public statements
- Interfaith collaboration meetings