

Discussion Questions for Mark Charles' [Ted Talk](#):

1. How does Mark Charles counter the myths you grew up knowing? How do you feel about that? What are the questions and wondering you have following this?
2. Why do you think the governmental institutions and the two major parties are often unwilling to deal with issues of Indigenous ethnic cleansing past and present?
3. Charles talks a lot about how white supremacy is baked into the core of the United States. What does that look like today? What does it look like in our community? How do we counter that?
4. What role does churches need to play in this healing? How do christians grapple with this history? What are actions steps?
5. Early this year the Vatican [said](#), "The Catholic Church therefore repudiates those concepts that fail to recognize the inherent human rights of indigenous peoples, including what has become known as the legal and political 'doctrine of discovery.'" Why do you think the Doctrine of Discovery has yet to be overturned in the United States? Why do you think so many people don't know about the Doctrine of Discovery?

Here are the 10 elements of the Doctrine of Discovery. This is a handout I give to my Indigenous Studies Students.

1. **First discovery.** The first European country to “discover” new lands unknown to other Europeans gained property and sovereign rights over the lands...
2. **Actual occupancy and current possession.** To fully establish a “first discovery” claim and turn it into a complete title, a European country had to actually occupy and possess newly found lands...
3. **Preemption/European title.** The discovering European country gained the power of preemption, the sole right to buy the land from the native people...
4. **Indian title.** After first discovery, Indian Nations and the indigenous peoples were considered by European and American legal systems to have lost the full property rights and ownership of their lands. They only retained rights to occupy and use their land...
5. **Tribal limited sovereign and commercial rights.** After first discovery, Indian Nations and native peoples were also considered to have lost some of their inherent sovereign powers...
6. **Contiguity.** This element provided that Europeans had a Discovery claim to a reasonable and significant amount of land contiguous to and surrounding their settlements and the lands that they actually possessed in the New World...
7. **Terra nullius.** ...Euro-Americans often considered lands that were actually owned, occupied, and being actively utilized by indigenous people to be “vacant” and available for Discovery claims if they were not being “properly used” according to European and American law and culture.
8. **Christianity.** ...Under Discovery, non-Christian people were not deemed to have the same rights to land, sovereignty, and self-determination as Christians...
9. **Civilization.** ...Euro-Americans thought that God had directed them to bring civilized ways and education and religion to indigenous peoples and often to exercise paternalism and guardianship powers over them.
10. **Conquest.** ...It can mean a military victory. “Conquest” was also used as a “term of art,” a word with a special meaning, when it was used as an element of Discovery.