

## Conversation Starters

- How has this series brought a different understanding to race and racism?
- How has it changed the way you see others?

## Discuss

**With the record number of documented hate crimes in the U.S. and scrolling through social media outlets, we can quickly see that there has been a true loss of civility in our world. Many people (Christian or not) approach everything with a war-like attitude. Being offended is a choice. We have a choice of how to respond when someone says or does something to us.**

- What are some examples you have seen of the loss of civility?
- Are you guilty of similar responses?
- How does the realization of taking offense being a choice change how you respond to others?

**The church should be the ones to set the example of how to respond in an uncivil culture. The Bible teaches that what we say is not neutral. Everything we say will have an effect. Even if we believe we are right in a situation, our response is important. The goal should be for everything we say to lead to healing, understanding and reconciliation.**

*Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose. ([Proverbs 18:21 The Message](#))*

*Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing. ([Proverbs 12:18 NLT](#))*

*A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare. ([Proverbs 15:1 NLT](#))*

*Kind words heal and help; cutting words wound and maim. ([Proverbs 15:14 The Message](#))*

- Do you give much thought to the words you use?
- How have words spoken to you in the past caused tension or anger?
- Have you ever used words causing tension or anger?

**Civility is a practice. We can only change and heal by how we choose to act, say and respond in every opportunity we have in our interactions with others. A good rule of thumb to use when speaking is to ask yourself, “Is what I am about to say true? Helpful? Personal? Loving?”**

*Watch the way you talk. Let nothing foul or dirty come out of your mouth. Say only what helps, each word a gift. ([Ephesians 4:29 The Message](#))*

- Are any of these “speaking filters” harder for you to use than others?
- How would this change how you speak and your interactions with others?
- How could this change the culture around us?

## Next Steps

The divisions and wounds of racism are deep and widespread. Healing can seem beyond our reach. It is not easy to work for in a dark world, but Christ can do through each person who believes in Him more than we could do on our own. Reflect on what you have learned through this series. What is one thing you can start immediately and continue to stay "woke" and bring healing to racism?

## Further Reflection

Read [Genesis 1](#); [Genesis 11:1-9](#); [Galatians 5:13-14](#); [Galatians 3:26-29](#).

## Pray

God, thank you for who you are and created us to be. Thank you for the uniqueness, racial and even beyond that, of each person. Help us to appreciate, through our words and actions, that uniqueness in each person we encounter. Help us to model the community you designed and desire us to be.