

Conversation Starters

- Have you ever been a victim to racial prejudice?
- How has that affected your life?

Discuss

Racism is believing in racial superiority, leading to racial prejudice and often bigotry. Racism has divided American culture today in many ways. It was also an issue in Biblical times, but condemned. One instance can be found against Moses and his wife, who were in an interracial marriage.

While they were at Hazereth, Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because he had married a Cushite woman. ([Numbers 12:1 NLT](#))

God condemned this racism (see Number 12:1-11) and throughout the Bible teaches each person has infinite worth beyond the boundaries of race. Racism implies that another race has less than the image of God. Racism has divided America in institutional (socioeconomic, education, etc.) respects, but more importantly, it has divided us relationally and on an individual level. Racism today, compared to the open physical and verbal forms more common in past times, often takes form with implicit bias or a "pseudo-acceptism" where someone may be accepted but not fully embraced.

...for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ([Galatians 3:27-28 NIV](#))

- What are some implicit racial biases you have seen or heard?
- Are there any that you are guilty of, without having stopped to consider your words or actions?
- Do you model the celebration of racial differences in your family life?

The Church is called to be the new community. The hope of the world, modeling what community is meant to be. A place where people are fully loved and embraced regardless of racial differences.

For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another. ([Galatians 5:14-15 NLT](#))

"...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." ([2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV](#))

- How would your life look like if you modeled love towards every person you encounter?
- Do you continually seek ways to serve and show love towards others?

In guarding against racism, the church can hold each other accountable, help educate each other about differences, intentionally build relationships with people of another race, and offer forgiveness for past and present racial sin. The church can offer grace and love to each other, just as God offers it to everyone.

If anyone refuses to obey our clear command written in this letter, don't let him get by with it. Point out such a person and refuse to subsidize his freeloading. Maybe then he'll think twice. But don't treat him as an enemy. Sit him down and talk about the problem as someone who cares. ([2 Thessalonians 3:14-15](#) [The Message](#))

- Are you prepared to offer grace to others before condemnation?
- How educated are you on racial differences?
- What are some ways you can or need to step in and correct racist attitudes, even implicit ones?

Next Steps

If the Church is going to model the new community described in the Bible in relation to racial matters, it requires us to take action. An easy first step each person in the church can take to do this is simply meeting and building relationships with people of another race. Is there someone from another race that you can reach out to and talk about this subject this week?

Further Reflection

Read [Number 12:1-11 NLT](#).

Pray

God, you love each one of us with unmatched love and grace. Sadly, our world does not reflect that love in all the ways that we could. Thank you for your love. Help us to love each other, and to overcome the evil of racism. Help us to offer grace and truth when we need to and model the community you want and call us to.