

RACISM

From the time of the fall in Genesis 3, the entire world was tainted by sin and the effects of sin run incredibly deep. They are manifested a number of ways and woven into the very fabric of society. One of the threads seen between cultures from the time of the fall that continues and seems to be rampant today is racism. Simply stated, racism can be defined as an anger, hatred, or discounting of an individual based on their skin color, cultural upbringing, or religious background. Racism isn't a new age cultural issue. Since the fall, it has been seen all throughout history whether it involved being unable to marry (as in the story of Naomi and Ruth) or thinking someone else has a greater need of the gospel than you do (as seen in New Testament of the distinguishing between Jews/Greek); which does *not* make it excusable, dismissible, or right. In Genesis 1:27-28, we see that "God created man in his own image...male and female he created them...and he blessed them." It does not say God created *white* man, *black* man, *Hispanic* man, or "*insert any other ethnicity*" man, in his image. It simply says "man" meaning mankind as a whole. It also says God blessed them. Meaning mankind is of equal value and worth. Having an authentic relationship with Christ means those who are considered the Church should be the driving force behind reconciliation between other image bearers regardless of the sinful, cultural push to hate, be angry towards, or discount those who are different from you. We are *all* in need of the gospel—no one more than the other. Christ died for sinners.

Read Galatians 3:28

Discuss: How should this impact the way you react among your inner circle of people in regards to someone of a different race than you?

Confess the sin

Do you tend to fall victim to displaying racism in the “comfort of your own home” or around others who you think share the same ideas?

Have you verbally made jokes or slurs about an individual and their actions simply because of the color of their skin?

Identify the lie

In what situations do you tend to have racist thoughts?
What is the primary influence in your life that drives a tendency towards racism?

Replace the lie with truth

Read the following passages:

Acts 10:28, 34-45

1 John 2:7-11

James 2:8-10

What do these passages encourage us to think about those living in America and/or the world that are different from you?
From reading these passages, what does the Bible say is the consequence of racism?

Apply grace to respond

As a Christ follower no longer being conformed to the passions of former ignorance (1 Peter 1:14), how does being conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29) change your outlook on racism?

In what ways can you immediately display love and understanding to someone of a difference race or cultural upbringing?

Is there anyone you need to pursue to ask forgiveness and reconcile a relationship with?

Memory verse

Galatians 3:28