



Sunday Teaching Discussion Guide: TDFL Wk2: May 2, 2021

Recap:

- In the ancient world, there was a divide between Jews and Gentiles. However, Paul says that Jesus reconciled Jews to God, Gentiles to God, Jew and Gentiles to each other. He said that we are one family created in the image of God. Paul says that to be the church is to be people of reconciliation. Ephesians 2:14-22 tells us that it is the work of Jesus that tore down the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles and all the people of this world.
- Today, we are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world, so we have to be the people who tear down the barriers of sin. We can find three practices toward breaking down some of these barriers.
- One thing we need to do is examine the assumptions and biases we hold. We often fail to process what we've been told about other groups of people. We need to develop self-awareness and self-examination to see and address harmful stories and falsehoods.
- Next, We also need to hear each other, be open-minded, be comfortable that we could be wrong, and seek to be corrected. We must leave behind the familiar, and make space for different narratives.
- Finally, we need to repent as a church that we are deeply broken and frail people. We sin against God and against each other. Confession is what we need to regularly do as the people of God to become deeply formed in the way of Jesus if we are to live out our calling as the new family formed by Jesus.

Discuss:

1. When did you first come to the realization that we live in a society marked by racial hostility?
2. Read Ephesians 2:14-18
3. What barriers would you say are most prevalent in our world today?
4. How would you say that humanity's laws can cause division among people?
5. How do you see Jesus Christ as one that can unite people who might see themselves as different or who may be hostile to one another?
6. How can seeing others as pieces of the building that is the temple change how we view them?
7. Read Ephesians 2:19-22
8. In verse 19, before Christ, the relationship between Jew and Gentile was that of "foreigners and strangers." To what degree do those words describe your relationship with those different from you?
9. Paul notes that one of the results of the Cross is the creation of a new family. How does this understanding of the Cross shape the way you live in the world?
10. What is God inviting you to sacrifice for the sake of reconciliation you are hoping will result?
11. How do you feel about the three practices of breaking down barriers? Which do you struggle with?

Read at Home: Verses about Racial Reconciliation

- Acts 10:34-48
- Galatians 3:23-29
- Revelation 7:9-10