

steps toward racial healing



Overview:

Racism didn't end with the abolition of slavery or with Martin Luther King Jr. Start a conversation about how to begin healing racial divides.

Lessons:

1. Step #1 Toward Racial Healing: Listen
2. Step #2 Toward Racial Healing: Love
3. Step #3 Toward Racial Healing: Lead



STEP 1: LISTEN

Find discipleship resources at pursueGOD.org/Racial-Healing

TALKING POINTS

How should Christians understand and respond to the current state of racial tension in the United States? The first step is to listen.

- Racial _____ has not gone away, and it is a topic Christians need to _____.
- The first step toward healing is listening both as _____ and as a _____. Often, people “listen” so they can give a rebuttal instead of listening to understand and _____. **James 1:19**
- Many black men are taught to “_____” when it came to interactions with police officers. This is not a situation many white men ever have to experience.
- _____ is necessary for real listening; it is important to hear before you are _____. This is where true understanding and empathy begin.

DISCUSSION

1. Did anything about this conversation make you uncomfortable? Explain.
2. Have you ever “listened” to give a rebuttal, either in conversation or to something in the media? Explain.
3. Read James 1:19-20. What is one practical way you could put this verse into action in your life as it relates to issues of race?
4. What are some ways you’ve observed racism to be a continuing issue in the U.S.? Explain.
5. Has a police officer ever asked you, “Why are you in this neighborhood?” Explain.
6. Do you “freeze up” when a police officer comes behind you in traffic or on the street? Why or why not?
7. How do you think your answers to the previous two questions might differ from those of people of other racial or ethnic backgrounds? Explain.
8. Read Galatians 3:27-29. What do you think Paul means when he writes, “all are one in Christ?”

STEP #2: LOVE

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TALKING POINTS

All people are created in God's image, which means all people are valuable in God's eyes.

- The first part of Jesus's greatest commandment is to _____ God with our all. It is this love that moves us toward the second commandment: loving our _____ as ourselves. **Matthew 22:36-40**
- People have a natural tendency to love themselves and their _____ people or communities before they are willing to love people who are different. All people are created in God's _____, which means all people are _____ in God's eyes. **Genesis 1:26-27**
- On some level we are all _____, but we cannot adopt a "victim mentality." We must transcend our _____ and _____, but we also cannot dismiss wrongdoing, especially when it continually occurs. **Luke 10:25-37**

DISCUSSION

1. *Have you ever benefited from the unwarranted kindness and provision of another person or family? Explain.*
2. *Have you, your parents, or your grandparents ever been threatened for wanting to buy gas, groceries, or some other need? Explain.*
3. *Read Matthew 22:36-40. What does it mean to "love your neighbor as yourself?" Give a practical example of how this has looked in your life or how it might look in the future.*
4. *We have a natural tendency to love ourselves and our own people before we love those who are different. Why do you think this is? How can we show value to those who are different from us?*
5. *Read Luke 10:30-37. Samaritans were racially different from Jews, but priests and Levites were pureblood Jews. How does this detail affect our understanding of the story of the Good Samaritan? Who are your neighbors that deserve care and attention from you?*
6. *In your opinion, what are some practical steps the Church can take to love more and to stand up to injustices?*

STEP #3: LEAD

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TALKING POINTS

We should lead with grace, work to understand other perspectives and take a stand against injustice.

- The first guideline is to think like _____. As Christians, we develop the mind of Christ by spending personal time in _____ and study of God's word, the _____. **Philippians 2:12-18**
- The second guideline is to _____ when necessary. We should give others the benefit of the doubt and ensure that we are seeking to correct, not to _____ or to foster _____ because we are offended or angry. **Ephesians 4:15**
- The third guideline is to extend _____. Are we willing to be reconciled to others, or are we simply desiring to be "_____?"
- The fourth guideline is to make _____. We are to follow Jesus in thought, word, and deed. We must be _____ more disciples and those disciples are to be doing the same. Matthew 28:19-20

DISCUSSION

1. *Has someone ever insulted or hurt you out of ignorance or unawareness? Explain.*
2. *Have you ever said or done something hurtful without intending to do so, and someone corrected you? Explain.*
3. *Read Philippians 2:12-18. Identify all that this passage calls believers to do. What does it mean that the Christian life is "an inside-out experience."*
4. *"The body of Christ should be the headlights of the world, not the tail lights." What does this mean? What does it look like practically?*
5. *Read Ephesians 4:15. How can you graciously correct people when they say offensive things? How would you want someone to approach you when you say something offensive?*
6. *Read Matthew 28:19-20. How can making disciple makers impact the racial divide in our society?*
7. *What does it mean to have an "eternal perspective" when it comes to dealing with issues of race and with other contemporary social and human rights issues? Explain.*

