



THE 7 RHYTHMS OF ROOTED



DAILY DEVOTION



PRAYER



FREEDOM FROM STRONGHOLDS



SACRIFICIAL GENEROSITY



SERVE THE COMMUNITY



SHARE YOUR STORY



CELEBRATION

- Week One: Hard Times
- **Week Two: Racism**
- Week Three: Hypocrisy
- Week Four: End Times
- Week Five: Burnout

What does Jesus say about racism? How does he desire to use this often institutionalized and generational evil to grow and refine us as believers? How will he redefine what we see and value in other people?



Racism is real.

Racism is personal.

Racism is not new.

Racism begins when we pre-judge a group of people based on observable traits (what they look like), ethnic origins (where they are from), or cultural expressions (what they do). It takes root when one group determines and asserts its superiority over all other groups based on these differences. It then prevails when this perceived superiority becomes embedded in our hearts and minds resulting in behaviors that devalue anyone considered “other.”

God has always been for all. Yes, through what is often called the “scandal of particularity,” he chose some to be his people. He chose them to be representative of life in relationship with him to all in order to bring all into his loving care. The Bible accounts for numerous tales of “outsiders” being brought into the family of God by faith, some of whom are even mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus himself.

If Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God and our clearest look into the heart and desires of God, let’s examine how he treated others. Jesus valued and built bridges with those who were considered “other” by society—tax collectors, prostitutes, even Samaritan women. He saw his role as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, existing to set the captives and the oppressed free to be in relationship with the Father. In Christ, the Kingdom of God was opened to all who desired it. There were no longer distinctions of economics, gender, ethnicity or other categories of division. Galatians 2 and Colossians 3 both clearly state, God has no favorites.

So, what does this mean for those of us who are struggling to identify our next steps toward racial reconciliation? We need to pray for sensitivity, awareness and open eyes. May the Spirit guide each of us to our next right step for his glory and the good of all people.

Dear God—Show me how you would have me work for the value and esteem of all people. I confess my own shortcomings and recognize the church has failed in this area in the past. What does my next step look like today, Lord Jesus? Help me to love and serve the way you did, for your glory.



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome

Opening Prayer - Invite God's presence into your group time. Thank him for the gift of fellowship and ask him for insights, creativity and reminders of his love for you.

Group Sharing - Share something that has been meaningful to you from your daily devotionals.



Discussion Guide:

Has racism ever impacted you personally? Have you ever experienced what it is like to be an "outsider?" Share your story.

Do you ever get overwhelmed with the size of the problem and feel helpless to effect change?

How does Revelation 7:9-10 confirm the truth that racism is outside the design of the Gospel message?

What is a good first/next step in your life toward racial reconciliation?

What clouds the issue for you? What gets in the way (political opportunists, media coverage and perspective, etc.) of you hearing God's direction for you regarding racism?

How did Jesus treat those who were on the borders of society?

Spend some time in concentrated prayer using the acronym P.R.A.Y.

Praise - Praise God for who he is and what he has done.

Repent - Recognize where you need to turn from unhealthy or destructive thinking and patterns and turn back to God's way of life.

Ask - Ask for God's intervention on your behalf and on behalf of others.

Yield - Entrust your requests to God's good and perfect response and timing.



For further study: Using the S.O.A.P. method found [here](#), explore the following passages related to this week's message.

The power to overcome our baser nature - Romans 6:6-7

Christ's power to transform us - Romans 12:2

Jesus' inclusion - John 4:9

Jesus' sense of purpose - Luke 4:18-21

The humility of Jesus - Mark 10:45