

## GRACE GUIDELINES FOR RACE CONVERSATIONS

### PREPARE FOR THE DISCUSSION

*“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.” Romans 12:3*

1. How does the gospel speak into racism today? Read Ephesians 2:11–16
2. What does it mean to be unified in Christ? Read Colossians 3:1–17, Galatians 2:11–14

### PRAY

*“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb....” Revelation 7:9*

- Pray using Revelation 7:9 knowing that we all are image bearers of Christ, we all reflect him and all are to worship Him.
- If you are having a hard time with this topic and still can't see it as an issue, pray the Lord would meet you where you are and would work in your heart first.
- Pray for conversations to continue to be had and that we would all seek to be learners and move towards each other and celebrate different cultures.
- Pray for the families who have lost loved ones as a result of race.

### **PRACTICE GRACE (to be read at the start of each discussion):**

- Agree to believe the best in people.
- Recognize that all of us come from different backgrounds and have diverse perspectives. As a result, we all have good intentions, but we also have blind spots.
- Just as Jesus does with us every day, we have to respect where people are and remember that we all are doing the best we can, given our current state of awareness. GRACE WINS!
- Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you avoid negative judgments, language, and name-calling.
- If something is said that is offensive, then speak into it with grace and truth and without attacking.
- Listen to hear and understand, and not so that you can respond or give advice.
- Take the time to process what you've heard, before responding. Don't interrupt.
- Speak only for yourself (“I feel...” “I think...”), not on behalf of your identity (“we feel...” “we are...”) or other identities (“they think...” “they act like...”).
- Be open to feeling uncomfortable - all growth comes with some discomfort.
- Understand that groups of a single race can have multiple perspectives and even the most diverse groups will not all have the same perspectives.
- Stay engaged. It is often difficult once we feel frustrated or misunderstood, to withdraw and drop out of the conversation, but resist this urge. It will be worth it.
- Please don't dominate the conversation, remember that everyone deserves a chance to speak and be heard.
- Don't expect a resolution, complete agreement, or definite answers. This is a discussion, not a debate.