



June 10-11, 2023

Foundations For Flourishing - Week 4 “One Human Family”

GATHER

- Describe a time you were surprised by something out of your control. (This could be something bad - like a car breaking down; or something good - like a being thrown a surprise birthday party). How important is it for you to feel ‘in control’ of a situation?
This weekend, we look at the gospel story (from creation, fall, redemption, to restoration) and how it both gives us a) a foundation for understanding humanity from past to future, and b) informs our approach to issues connected to the consequences of sin (like injustice). What we’re getting people primed for is the discussion that includes people feeling “powerless” because of the injustice in our world.
- If you were at a weekend service, share your takeaways from the message you heard. What was something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?

GROW

This weekend’s message was launched out of Genesis 1:26-27 and interacted with some other key texts (see below). Talk through the topic more thoroughly as a group using the outline below.

Feel free to select a suggested question or two in each section to guide your conversation.

- **Understand Their Story**
Read Genesis 1:26-27 and discuss the idea of how God created humanity in “the image of God”. Similar to last week, we’re drawing from this foundation to see the implications of this in our human history and for our future.
 - Compare 1:26-27 to the state of things after sin enters the world. Read Genesis 6:5-12.
 - How does Genesis 6:6-7 describe the state of humanity?
The wickedness of the human race became great. The intention of people’s hearts became evil.
 - What does God observe about how the world is affected by humanity’s fallen state in Genesis 6:11-12?
The earth became corrupt and full of violence.
 - Now read Genesis 9:1-7 and 12:1-3. Despite humanity’s wickedness, how does Genesis continue to reinforce...
 - The value of human life? (We looked at this last week, but in case you need a reminder: see especially Gen. 9:1-7)

Don't kill. Life is sacred. Why? Because humans bear "God's image" - see Gen. 9:6. God treasures human life!

- Are there places where you see people, who are made in the image of God, being "de-humanized" (even by Christians)? How does the view from Genesis push against discrimination or persecution of people?

■ God's heart for all ethnicities? (See Genesis 12:1-3)

From the beginning, God places unsurpassable worth on humans (Gen. 1:26-27), and - as such - desires to bless all humanity (Gen. 12:2-3).

- Does this match the perceptions about the Christian worldview in our city/country? (eg. do people think Christianity is a faith which brings blessing to all humanity?)
- Where is Abram from (see Genesis 11:27-32)? What is the geographical setting of the whole Bible? Abram is from Ur of the Chaldeans (in Iraq). The whole Bible is set in the middle East (Egypt / Israel / Jordan / Turkey) & the Southern Mediterranean (Greece & Rome)
- Based on these facts is it logical for people to perceive Christianity as a "white person's religion?"
No - Our faith is global. The gospel was brought to white non-Jewish people.

● **Connect To His Story**

- The gospel story clarifies that God has a redemptive plan for all of humanity. He created *one* human race, and is redeeming his creation to become one family.

■ First, read Ephesians 2:11-22.

- Most of us at Northview are not Jewish by birth. What does this passage tell us about those who (as "Gentiles") were at one time separated from Christ?
We were excluded from citizenship in Israel. We were - foreigners/strangers to the "covenants of promise". Having no hope. Without God. (see Eph. 2:12)
- What does this passage tell us about what God's plans for humanity are "in Christ"?

To be brought near by the blood of Christ (2:13), to destroy the hostility between Jews and Gentiles (2:14), to make one new humanity and make "peace" (2:15), for all people groups to be reconciled to God through the cross (2:16), to have access to the Father by one Spirit (2:18), to be joined together and become a "holy temple" in the Lord (2:21), a "dwelling place" in which God lives (2:22).

■ Next, read Revelation 7:9-10 to see what eventually happens because of Ephesians 2.

- What are the characteristics of the "great multitude"?
Immeasurable. From every nation, tribe, people, and language!
- What are the actions of the "great multitude"?
They are wearing white robes, holding palm branches, and worshiping God.
- How does what we see here, at the end of the Bible, connect to what God desired at the start? How does this impact your appreciation of the entire biblical story?

God desired to bless all nations. God made a people from all nations. All nations will dwell with God and worship him.

■ We believe Christians are to live as "kingdom people" *now* in light of what the kingdom is and will be in eternity. What have these texts reminded you of when it comes to how you think and live (especially in regards to other people groups)?

GO

- **Apply To Our Story**

Understanding the gospel story informs our responses to the issues we face in our world today.

Understanding the implications of the gospel story (namely, the presence of the Holy Spirit!) supplies us with the power to act on those responses.

Feel free to select a section or two to use in your group time.

- Have you interacted with a different (or persecuted) people group? What has helped you understand people different from you?
- Based on the gospel vision for humanity (as seen in the examples above), how should we think about things like racism? How is the Christian approach to social justice different from other approaches? (What Bible verses do you lean on most to support your answer?)
(You could also check out other texts like Proverbs 31:7-8, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Micah 6:8 for more here! Additionally click [HERE](#) for a resource we've used on this topic at our Community Group Leader Coaching events recently!)
- If you, or people in your group are asking questions about these issues, feel free to connect with our care department (care@northview.org) to talk, or to receive resource recommendations. Another great resource is ApologeticsCanada.com. You can check out some of their resources here:
<https://apologeticscanada.com/acle-210506-crt/>
<https://apologeticscanada.com/2020/07/01/critical-theory-is-it-compatible-with-christianity/>
<https://apologeticscanada.com/2020/06/11/racism-its-still-here/>

Pray!

- In light of your conversation or things happening in the lives represented in your group, how might the Holy Spirit be prompting you to pray?
- All of our activity is unto God's glory and our mission is to help every person become a "deeply rooted follower of Jesus". In case you haven't noticed... *we put this next question in every Community Group guide because we believe it's important*: Who are those who don't currently follow Jesus - or are wrestling with the subjects we've looked at this week - that you could pray for *by name*?