



SERIES BIG IDEA

Conversations can help us understand the many facets of a tough topic, which can lead to us better understand the heart of God as we seek to help others find their way back to him.

OPENING THOUGHTS

Racism is a difficult topic to address in a group, but it's important for us to be in conversation about it as a community. Use these questions to ease the group into the topic allowing the conversation to be about observations and the stereotypes found in the media. It will be easier to get people talking about the topic if the opening questions aren't too personal or invasive.

BIBLE DISCUSSION

The video does not quote these passages directly, so you may want to look them up as a group. Talk through images and phrases that stand out to the group along with anything they may have noticed for the first time. The passages about forgiveness are difficult.

N.T. Wright on Matthew 6:14:

We pray for forgiveness . . . for at the heart of Judaism and Christianity lies the belief that human actions matter very deeply, forgiveness is possible and, through God's love, can become actual. Jesus assumes that we will need to ask for forgiveness not on one or two rare occasions but very regularly. This is a sobering thought, but it is matched by the comforting news that forgiveness is freely available as often as we need it.

There is, however, a condition, which remarkably enough is brought right into the prayer itself: we must be forgiving people. Jesus takes an extra moment afterward to explain why. The heart that will not open to forgive others will remain closed when God's own forgiveness is offered. Jesus will say more about this in chapter 18:21-25.¹

LIFE APPLICATION

John Perkins says to harm someone; we have to “deface” them. This intriguing statement essentially asserts that when we engage in discrimination or forms of racism, we've stopped seeing specific individuals and are only seeing a caricature of a person or people group. Part of the way we begin to help restore our dignity is to “re-face” people by eating together, praying together, listening to one another, and sharing our lives with one another. Spend time talking through how the people in the group might begin to do this important work of “re-facing” others.

CHALLENGE

In the video, Dave explains that he grew up in a white, middle class, loving two-parent home very different from Dr. Perkins background. Dave asks him what they can do to overcome those differences and come together. How would you answer that question? Where could you get involved?

¹ Tom Wright, *Matthew for Everyone, Part 1: Chapters 1-15* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 60.