

INTRODUCTION

The last two weeks have been challenging as we have seen even more clearly how cracked and broken our society has been for a long time. In light of these realities, the leadership of Community Christian Church has sensed God calling us to pause and seek his wisdom for how we can pray for our neighbors and nation during this time of unrest. So we are taking a moment to listen as the first step toward reconciliation in a conversation with Quentin Mumphery - Senior Pastor of New Hope Covenant Church in Chicago. This guide was created for our small groups to discuss the topic of race and racism and includes “Four Rules of Engagement” for us to keep in mind as we have this conversation.

- **Listen Well.** We don’t listen in anticipation of our turn to talk. We listen to understand. We are also not listening to place blame on a group of people when there is disagreement. When we listen to understand, we absorb and diffuse negative emotions and communicate that our group is a safe place. Listening is one of the most practical ways we love people.
- **Ask Anything.** What if your first response to someone’s challenging statement was a question and not a rebuttal. By asking questions and seeking to understand how people have arrived at their opinions and perspectives, we create a safe place where people can belong and be known.
- **Disagree Freely.** We have to help each other become more comfortable with disagreement. Disagreeing with respect and understanding is like a muscle - a community muscle – that needs to grow and develop. It grows stronger as we come together and get more comfortable living in a diverse community.
- **Love Anyway.** Loving well doesn’t mean we will all agree. It does mean giving space and freedom for each member of the group to be who they are and where they are on their spiritual journey. We are all in different places on our journeys, and by learning from one another, we are taking steps in directions we wouldn’t have made otherwise. So we want to love each other right where we are in our spiritual journey. This means supporting each other, even if our conversation is challenging.

OPENING THOUGHT

Author Pete Greig, whose writing has influenced this series, says, “The Lord’s Prayer is a cry for reconciliation at every level. In our broken relationship with God (Our Father, hallowed be your name), in our broken relationships with one another (forgive as we forgive), and in our broken relationship with the world (your Kingdom come).

1. What stands out to you from Pete Greig’s statement?
2. What does it mean for there to be reconciliation at every level (God, one another, the world)?

Watch the Video of Dave Ferguson interviewing Quentin Mumphery found on the COMMUNITY App or on demand at communitychristian.org/media

3. What new ideas or feelings did this interview generate in you?
4. What new questions did the video raise for you?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

5. Read Ephesians 1:9,10; 2:14; 3:6, 3:10 – What are these passages saying about God, Jesus, the Church, and humanity?

New Testament scholar, Tom Wright¹, comments on chapter 3 verse 10 by saying,

[This passage] “is one of the New Testament’s most powerful statements of the reason for the church’s existence . . . the rulers and authorities must be confronted with God’s wisdom, in all its rich variety, and this is to happen through the church! Not, we should quickly add, through what the church says, though that is vital as well. Rather, through what the church is, namely, the community in which men, women, and children of every race, color, social and cultural background come together in glad worship of the one true God.”

6. What is Wright saying? How would you put this statement in your own words?
7. What would it look like for you to live this out?
8. What would the effect be on our community if our church modeled this well?
9. Lewis Smedes is a critical thinker in the area of forgiveness. He says there’s a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation. Forgiveness is a personal, internal process the offended has to undergo, while reconciliation is an interpersonal engagement that includes two people being reunited? How can we, as a church, work toward reconciliation and unity? What can you do on a personal level?

CHALLENGE

What next step will you take to work towards reconciliation? What can your group do to take the next step? How can our actions go beyond words?

¹Tom Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 36.

RESOURCES FOR THIS TOPIC

If you are feeling called to take the next step as an individual or as a group, these resources would be a great next step.

PODCASTS:

- On Scene Radio: Season 2-Seeing White - sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/
- Unlocking Us: Brené with Ibram X. Kendi on how to Be An Antiracist- brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-with-ibram-x-kendi-on-how-to-be-an-antiracist/

MOVIES/SERIES:-

- Just Mercy - currently free justmercyfilm.com/
- When they See Us - netflix.com/title/80200549
- Chicago at the Crossroads - chicagoatthecrossroad.com/
- I am not your Negro - pbs.org/independentlens/films/i-am-not-your-negro/

BOOKS:

- I'm still Here - Austin Channing Brown
- The Color of Compromise - Jemar Tisby
- The Hate you Give - Angie Thomas
- Be the Bridge - Latasha Morrison

WEBINARS AND CONVERSATIONS

- The Global Immersion Project - globalimmerse.org/how-we-train/webinars/
- Justice Journey Alliance - thejja.org/events/postcovid-19