

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Approach the conversation with a spirit of humility and learning. Everyone's experience is different, and we want to honor and understand where each person is coming from in this conversation. You may consider watching the video several times before engaging in conversation.
- Be careful not to place any unnecessary expectations on any person in the group to be a spokesperson for their culture or ethnicity. This can be well-meaning, but it might be exhausting and frustrating for some.
- We must see our responsibility and motivation to address racism through a theological lens. If you read the rest of Ephesians, you will see that God is uniting all things in Christ. See verses 1:10, 2:10, and 3:10 alongside the passage for the day. The good news about the Kingdom isn't that individuals can get right with God, but that God has formed a forgiven people who are "in Jesus" and are committed to embodying God's love and justice in the world. We aren't concerned about racism because it's cool or woke, but because wherever dividing walls are knocked down in the church, the Gospel is made visible to the watching world. It is a sign that sin and sinful structures and systems have been conquered by Jesus.
- Concerning the questions about telling the truth: many people in the group have experience with a home or workplace that brushes hard conversations under the rug. However, when there is space and opportunity to speak openly about what has happened, it allows a community or family to deal constructively with the problems it's facing. That feels like freedom, and it is a vital part of putting what's wrong back together.
- Don't worry about having people map their journey along the landmarks mentioned in the video. The main idea is to get people to realize that this is a journey, and it's one we have to take together.
- As your group wrestles with taking next steps, encourage the group to see greater awareness, learning, and conversation as appropriate next steps. It's OK to take small steps here.
- The way you have this conversation can set the tone for challenging conversations in the future, so be patient and know that it may produce fruit in the future.

FOR FURTHER REFERENCE: DR. BRENDA SALTER MCNEIL'S LANDMARKS

1. Catalytic events – moments that move people out of old patterns and assumptions.
2. Realization – discovering a new reality.
3. Identification – your people become my people.
4. Preparation – getting ready for lasting change.
5. Activation – Repairing broken systems together.

COMMUNITY'S RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. **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.
2. **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. Listening is one of the most practical ways we love people.
3. **Disagree Freely.** We have to help people become more comfortable with disagreement. This is like a muscle - a community muscle that needs to grow and develop, and it grows stronger as we come together and get more comfortable living in a diverse community.
4. **Love Anyway.** Loving well doesn't mean we will all agree or that we should expect uniformity. It does mean giving space and freedom to others to be who they are and where they are on their spiritual journey. As a leader, you are helping people to grow and take steps they wouldn't have taken on their own, so we want to love people right where they are in their journey by challenging them and supporting them.