

GRACE & RACE

God's Word - God's Love - God's Path

Session 2

PANELIST:

- Sam Polson
- Danny Koh
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TOPIC: "ONE RACE"

KEY SCRIPTURE(S):

John 10:16; 17:16-21; ACTS 8, 10, 11, 15; Gal. 2:11-21;

KEY QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

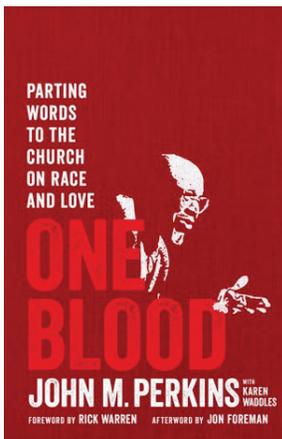
- What is Jesus' vision and mission, presented in the Gospels, for his church to include all people groups in one united assembly?
- How does the struggle in the early Church involving the Jew and Gentiles provide insight into the struggle with the ethnic division in the church today, i.e. racism?
- What is Jesus' vision for unity that he shared with his disciples (John 10:16; 17:16-21)?
- How is Jesus' vision for unity in church captured in the book of ACTS?
- Highlight the disciples' struggles to readily include both Samaritans (ACTS 8) and Gentiles (ACTS 10-11) fully in the fellowship of the Church?
- What factors were involved in the early Christian community hindering the building of a fully integrated multiethnicity fellowship (Gal. 2:11-21; ACTS 15)?
- Does the focus in the early Christian community on inclusion and diversity point to the realization that this issue will be an ongoing expectation for the Church?

- Discuss what a multiethnic fellowship should look like in today's contemporary setting?
- From your perspective, what are the issues that hinders formation of a God-honoring multiethnic fellowship today?
- If a multiethnic fellowship is important to God, what is required to prioritize this desire in our Church?
- How do we pursue a vision to build a multicultural fellowship both on at the congregational and individual level?

REFERENCE RESOURCES

John Perkins, *One Blood: Parting Words to the Church on Race and Love*

As you address the questions above, consider the following quote from John Perkins, found in his book, "One Blood". Come prepared to discuss what insight you have captured after thinking about what Dr. Perkins has shared.



"There's only one race, but over time we've elevated things like skin color, hair texture, language, and ethnicity to a level where they become the main criteria, we use to judge entire groups of people. And then we take those classifications and assign them values that we use to include or exclude, to normalize or stereotype, to celebrate or denigrate. We use these things to determine who we hire, the boundaries of neighborhoods, who gets pulled over by police, the length of prison sentences, and on it goes.

This is wrong. This is sin.

But sadly, we've let it creep into our churches as well. So, when I say the American church has color-coded Christianity, what I mean is that we've allowed our brokenness around race and class to define how we express our faith and how we value one another. We've put our own cultural preferences and perceptions in place of the radical, upside-down values of God's kingdom. In Matthew 20:16, Jesus says "the last shall be first, and the first last," but we've done everything we can to make sure we're first.

Sometimes I think the American church needs a vision like the one God sent to Peter in Acts 10. Maybe we need God to tell us in no uncertain terms about our bigotry and our need to show the same grace to others that has been shown to us. We need for Him to challenge us about calling what he has created "common or unclean." Then maybe we can say along with Peter, "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him" (Acts 10:34–35).

I'm speaking very broadly, of course. And I include myself in the criticism. We as the American church need to take more ownership for our collective sin, our obsession with things that will not make an ounce of difference in heaven, and our failure (past and present) to stand up and speak up for the poor, for the stranger, for the ones who don't look like us. We need to be awakened to the truth—God's Truth."

John Perkins, "One Blood: Parting Words to the Church on Race and Love" (pp. 55-57)