

Week 2 Chapters 1-2

QUESTIONS

1. On page 8, Pastor Miles states that when God sees us, He sees that we were made in His _____ and _____ loved. How does this help you see others?
2. On page 12, Pastor Miles talks about the different shades of the same. What did he say was important for us to do in order to see unity occur?
3. We've read that racism can be a sin of omission. Can you think of a situation where you witnessed racism and did not act? Discuss some of the reasons people do not act?
4. On page 21, Pastor Miles states, "When you don't belong to a certain group, you're relatively limited in your knowledge of them." Discuss some ways you can increase your knowledge of other people groups.

SCRIPTURE

Dear children, let us not love with words or speech, but with actions and in truth.

1 JOHN 3:18

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart.

1 PETER 1:22

PRAYER

Thank you God, for being a loving Father. Because of You I know that I am righteous, holy and dearly loved. Help me to love others as You have loved me. Create in me a clean heart and open my eyes to any offense I may have towards my brothers and sisters in Christ. Help me, through Your Holy Spirit, to be a vessel of Your love and peace. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Week 3 Chapters 3-4

QUESTIONS

1. Ephesians 2:10 says that we are God's handiwork. Explain how life's experiences might make us think otherwise. What practical steps can we take to remind ourselves that we are made in God's image?
2. When the Bible says that we are God's handiwork, this includes all people. What are some of the reasons people might have difficulty seeing the value in everyone?
3. Read James 2:8, 9 and discuss what it says about showing favoritism and how we should treat others.
4. Discuss how our personal experiences shape our viewpoint of ourselves and others.

SCRIPTURE

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

JEREMIAH 29:11

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

EPHESIANS 2:10

PRAYER

God, help me to honor Your image inside of each person regardless of their race. Please heal the pain in my past that causes me to view others negatively. Give me a heart filled with love so I can experience Your peace and play my role in bringing glory to You. Amen.

Week 4 Chapters 5-6

QUESTIONS

1. Talk about a time when someone pointed out one of your blind spots. How did you react? Looking back now, would you respond differently?
2. Discuss how being in relationship with someone who has a different background from yours can change your assumptions of them.
3. Pastor Miles says the first step in discovering your blind spots is being willing to admit they exist. Discuss some ways to discover and address your blind spots.
4. Discuss how generalizations about yourself or your in-group can be internalized. Explain how God's truth can be used to overcome them.

SCRIPTURE

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--His good, pleasing and perfect will.

ROMANS 12:2

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

PROVERBS 11:2

PRAYER

Lord, search me for patterns that are not from You. Place people in my life who deeply love You and will boldly show me the blind spots and patterns that are not Your will. Give me the desire and discipline to renew my mind. Let me be open to a new way of receiving Your love and Your image through others, no matter how similar or different they may appear to me. I pray this, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Week 5 Chapters 7-8

QUESTIONS

1. Give examples of how humility can open the door to unity and reconciliation.
2. Pastor Miles mentions how characterizing groups of people as something other than our neighbor, our brother, or our sister, disqualifies them from being someone we need to love. How might this affect the way you interact with people in these groups?
3. In Mark 12:31, Jesus tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Discuss what this verse means to you.
4. Talk about a time when you incorrectly judged someone before getting to know them.

SCRIPTURE

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

EPHESIANS 4:2-3

PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank You for being my peace and protection and for the sacrifice You made for me on the cross. Please open my heart to love and see all people like You do. Use me as Your hands and feet to lead by example and soften hearts towards You. Father, thank You for this opportunity to share experiences with others in unity, while seeking You with all my heart. These things I pray in Jesus' mighty name, amen!

Week 6 Chapters 9-10

QUESTIONS

1. Chapter 9 tells the story of a police officer who planted evidence on an innocent man and caused him to be convicted of a crime he didn't do. In spite of this, the man who was wrongly convicted forgave the officer. Describe a situation where you struggled with forgiving someone.
2. Explain how fear could prevent someone from interacting with people in their out-group. What steps can be taken to eliminate this fear from the environments that we control?
3. How do stereotypes affect how we view others?
4. As believers, we are called to forgive. What are some benefits of forgiveness?

SCRIPTURE

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

COLOSSIANS 3:13

PRAYER

Father, thank You for giving me abundant grace and infinite mercy. Today, I choose to extend the same grace and mercy to all those that have hurt me. I forgive them just as You have forgiven me. Please help me to remove fear from my life, and give me the wisdom to make all environments that I control welcoming to all people. All of these things I ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Week 7 Chapters 11-12

QUESTIONS

1. Privilege can be defined as an advantage of one individual over another or one group over another. Discuss some of the advantages some may experience that others may not.
2. Discuss the humanistic viewpoint. Why is this viewpoint counterproductive to loving people as God would love?
3. Describe a situation where a lack of trust could stand in the way of two parties coming to a mutual agreement. What are some steps we can take to overcome a lack of trust?
4. Honorable assumptions are those assumptions we make when we assume the best about a person or a situation when we have limited information. Discuss how having honorable assumptions about those you come in contact with might facilitate trust.

SCRIPTURE

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

LUKE 12:48

PRAYER

Lord, I ask You to open my eyes to unfair advantages that I may unknowingly possess. Help me to love those who have advantages that I do not and to soften my heart to those around me in all circumstances. Show me how to be a blessing to others as You have blessed me. Fill my heart with Your love so that others may see You through me. I pray all of these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Week 8 Chapters 13-14

QUESTIONS

1. On page 171, Pastor Miles states that the better we understand the _____ others carry, the easier it is to _____ their pain. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 and discuss God's heart for comforting others.
2. On page 182, Pastor Miles tells the story of the conditioned fish in the tank. Explain how honor can help to remove invisible barriers.
3. On page 192, Pastor Miles states that we honor people by talking _____ them and not _____ them. What could the law partners and the black woman in Key #2 have done differently to avoid the initial tension in their relationship? Is there anything to learn from Dan's interaction with her?
4. Read Romans 12:9-13. How can we use these principles to have meaningful encounters with others and to resolve issues as well?

SCRIPTURE

For this reason, He had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people.

HEBREWS 2:17

PRAYER

Lord, Your Word says to be happy with those who are happy, and to weep with those who weep. With that in mind, I ask that You open my eyes so that I would see those in need of compassion. I also pray that any negative thoughts or false assumptions would be replaced by Your truth. Soften my heart to prioritize open communication with others and help me love others the way You love me. In Jesus' name, amen.

Week 9 Chapters 15-16

QUESTIONS

1. Pastor Miles states, “we honor the power of God’s love, which has no out-group, by allowing it to break through man-made barriers that stand between us.” Identify the barriers standing between you and someone different from you.
2. Talk about some of the benefits of having friends from different backgrounds in your life.
3. Read James 2:1-8. How do you believe God would want you to respond to someone different from you?
4. How can a culture of mutual honor be established in relationships?

SCRIPTURE

Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them My disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.

MATTHEW 28:19-20

PRAYER

Father, keep me focused on carrying out Your Great Commission and help me realize the need I have for others. Help me speak in truth and love as I walk out being our brother’s and sister’s keeper. Teach me to always be honorable and to stand up for those who are not being treated in a way that honors them. In Your name I pray, amen.

Week 10 Chapters 17-18

QUESTIONS

1. Identify cultural practices you have learned from others that have enriched your life.
2. On page 232, Pastor Miles says if you're looking for a reason to segregate, you will find one. Based on Luke 11:33-34, a lamp that shines bright is placed on a lampstand to give light to everyone around it. How can you use your cultural experiences to be the light to honor and unite those around you?
3. Timothy (the young heart transplant recipient) described us as being a part of the "human family" regardless of our differences. Discuss the similarities between the new heart that Timothy received and the new heart that God provides for us when we accept Him.
4. Although the concept of seeking unity is simple, Pastor Miles provided a lot of examples and observations intended to open our minds to all that is happening around us. Talk about your biggest take-aways from "The Third Option."

SCRIPTURE

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

JOHN 13:34

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, grant me a tender heart and humble mind. Let unity begin with me! Use me to bring change in my world and help me to choose the option of honor. Teach me to love and value all people regardless of what they look like, where they come from, or how different they are from me. In Jesus' name, amen.