

Reason #2: The Church is Racially Segregated

Ephesians 2:13-16

Introduction:

- 1) What barriers to friendship and inclusion have you encountered in a church past or present? In selecting a church, what meets the mark of feeling like “family”?

“Digging Deeper:”

- 1) **Read *Ephesians 2:13-14***. What two groups is Paul speaking of in verse 14? Who united these two groups and how? What does this say about God and about who we are to be? (hint: read verses 4-10, and 19-22)
- 2) **Read *Revelation 7:9-13***. Before God’s throne we see those of every race worshipping Him together. Pastor Dave notes a truly multi-racial church has more than 20% of its congregation composed of races other than the dominant race in that congregation. What factors limit church congregations’ multi-racial composition and which ones can be overcome? If you have worshipped in a small or large venue in a crowd diverse in either racial background or nationalities describe your experience. If you have studied God’s Word in a similar situation, describe your experience. Share how you have grown through a church experience rich in racial and social background diversity.
- 3) **Read *Matthew 28:18-20***. Pastor Dave notes that racial reconciliation only can occur through the gospel of Christ. What is the Gospel message (see Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, John 3:16, 1 John 1:9), how can or do you share that message, and what barriers in your own personal life can be surrendered so you can embrace others with Christ’s love which is His command?
- 4) **Read *Acts 13:1***, According to Pastor Dave’s sermon, leadership in the Antioch church was racially and cultural-background diverse and the Antioch church followed them with abundant love and service to each other and the community. What would your outreach look like if you partnered with someone of different background or strengths?

Application (Individual & Group): Pastor Dave & the leadership has asked The Chapel to:

- 1) *Pray* for God to show each of us personally and together how to demonstrate unity.
- 2) *Personally/Grow & Worship: Study in a small group*, potentially in a “Be the Bridge” group.
- 3) *Build bridges/Serve* - Listen to someone, be the friend who understands their background and the prejudices they have experienced. Learn about the cultural richness of their background. Support and encourage them, especially in spiritual growth with your small group and at church. Serve together in outreach on a regular basis or on a missions trip—bonding through shared experience.