

20/20 Embracing a New Vision
Embracing a New Vision on Race- Week #9
Small Group Notes
June 4 and 7

Main Point: The gospel breaks down barriers and gives us a clear vision on how we are to value one another!

Introduction:

What has been difficult for you personally this week? How has it affected you emotionally?

How have you been challenged in your personal beliefs from recent events or today's sermon?

Have you had conversations before that you normally haven't? Why or why not?

This past week has been difficult for our country in the light of the death of George Floyd. Though this time, we can look to Jesus' example of how he broke down barriers to share the gospel.

Before your discussion, read John 4:1-16.

Discuss:

1. A person is willing to go there!

- Read John 4:1-4.

Explain: Jesus and His disciples left Jerusalem for Galilee, traveling by way of Samaria. Jews in those days tried to avoid the Samaritan route because they considered the people in the region to be unclean. Jesus led His disciples toward the Samaritan town of Sychar, where they stopped at Jacob's well, a religious landmark as well as a source of water.

- ***Why do you think Jesus had to travel through Samaria? What was strange about this?***
- ***What lesson do you think Jesus wanted to teach the disciples by going to this place?***
- ***What is a way that you can "go there" individually? As a group? What does it take for us to be willing to "go there?"***

- ***What is a way that you speak out towards all injustices that you see?***

2. A person of vision starts with what we share in common

- Read John 4:5-8
- We are equal in SIN. (Romans 3:23)
- We are equal in SALVATION. (Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 3:27-29)
- We are equal in WORTH. (Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 6:20)

Explain: The Samaritan woman would have been surprised not only that someone was at the well, but also that the person was a Jewish man who wanted to talk. Jesus began the conversation with the woman for one specific reason. For the same reason, He struck up conversations with other people in His ministry. He could tell she had a spiritual thirst that only the living water He alone could offer would quench.

- ***Why did Jesus speak to the woman at the well?***
- ***How does the devil want us to focus on our differences instead of commonalities?***
- ***What areas of common ground can you use to be able to enter into relationship with those who don't look like you?***

3. A person of vision is never blind to prejudice and injustice

- Read John 4: 9

Explain: Clarke explains this interaction: “The deadly hatred that subsisted between these two nations is known to all. The Jews cursed them, and believed them to be accursed. Their most merciful wish to the Samaritans was, that they might have no part in the resurrection; or, in other words, that they might be *annihilated*.” Anything that lingers soon becomes normal. And normalcy leads to numbness, blindness, and barriers.

- ***How was Jesus' simple action of asking for a drink a way to break down barriers?***
- ***Have you been blind to prejudice and injustice around you? Why or why not?***
- ***How does Jesus' example reveal the need for bridges and not barriers?***

4. A person of vision sees racism as a sin problem and not a skin problem

- Read John 4:10-16
- Any push for change that isn't rooted in the Gospel will ultimately fall short (Ezekiel 36:26)

Explain: Jesus could tell she had a spiritual thirst that only the living water He alone could offer would quench. Jesus talked about the water and described living water that gave new life, but the Samaritan woman thought He meant running water, like a river or stream. The woman wanted living water that would never leave her thirsty, because she would not need to go to the well every day.

- ***How did Jesus turn the conversation from His need to hers? What does it mean that the Gospel is our greatest need during this time?***
- ***Read the following verses: John 3:16, Romans 10:13, Romans 1:16, John 3:36. How should these verses impact the way we love and embrace others?***
- ***What does it mean that true change only comes through the Gospel?***

Do:

- 1. What can you do to be a person of vision during these times?***
- 2. Based upon today's conversations, what is one action step that you can do to remove blind spots in your life?***
- 3. Who is someone in your life that you may need to have a conversation with about how to build a bridge of love?***
- 4. How can your group remain accountable to share the love of Christ with anyone and everyone?***