

## Race and Reconciliation: *Location, Language, and Listening*

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**Text: Genesis 11:1-9; Acts 2:1-11**

**Introduction: Language Matters**

*If the church is ever going to be able to accomplish the Spirit enabled mission that began at Pentecost, we are going to have to learn to communicate.*

*If the church is ever going to be a city on the hill such that the world can see the glorious righteousness, justice, and peace of God manifest, we are going to have to take the lead, not follow the herd, in regard to this issue; We are going to have to find a common language!*

### LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community.*

*The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Are there aspects of the discussion about race and reconciliation that make you uncomfortable?
- Does your life intersect frequently with people of a different ethnic or economic background than your own? If not, how might you explain that?
- How does Pentecost (Acts 2:1-11) speak of a church empowered to undo the curse of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9)?
- Can you think of examples of how we as a culture have stopped communicating (both Christians and non-Christians)?
- How does Galatians 2 help us see that unity, for Peter (Cephas), had to become more than theological... to become practical?
- What does James 1:19-20 teach us that will help us overcome the problem of not understanding our neighbor's language?
- How might Ephesians 2 inform our understanding of how important unity between various ethnic and racial groups in humanity is to Christ?

### I. Location Matters

*The story of Babel is about a curse that results in division and scattering, but the story of the gospel is about a blessing that gathers and reconciles, moving toward a city... the city of God, the New Jerusalem.*

## II. Location Matters

### A. Acts 10

b) If Jesus suffered in order to break down the dividing wall of hostility between peoples, how much more should we seek to know what divides us that we might take up our cross in order to bring down those dividing walls.

iii. In Christ, there can be no dividing wall of hostility and where there is, it is anathema... contrary to the gospel itself.

### B. Galatians 2:11-14

#### iv. James 1:19-20

a) David P. Leong: "People can only listen to one another closely when they share the same geography."

b) Leong: "Whether we recognize it or not, too many of our lives—especially in our cities—are functionally segregated by issues of race and class."

*Unity must be something more than theoretical; it must be actual!*

v. Location effects our ability to listen which effects how we understand the language of our neighbor.

## III. Location Matters

### A. Ephesians

i. Ephesians 1:9-10 The gospel intends to undo Babel and bring both *God and humanity*, and *humanity and humanity*, back together in Christ.

#### ii. Ephesians 2:11-18

a) Jesus was so intent on the unity of humanity in Himself that he put to death the Law with its commands and regulations in his own body on the cross.