



## Sermon Discussion Guide

Preaching Passage: Ephesians 2:11–3:13

Sermon Series: Foundations

Sermon Title: Our Values – Diverse Unity

Date: March 10, 2019

Preacher: Bart Box

**Diverse Unity:** *We recognize that churches are sometimes attractional in nature, resulting in congregations who share demographics of race, age, socioeconomic level, etc. But we desire to see the Holy Spirit move among us in such a way that we become more diverse and, therefore, more unified in the One who truly holds us together—the Lord Jesus Christ.*

### Discussion Questions:

- 1) Bart stated that diversity (and in particular, racial diversity) in the church is not merely a social issue but a gospel issue. **[Q]** Using the logic of Ephesians 2 and 3 (and the first half of the sermon notes), explain why that is the case.
- 2) This week and last week, we talked about the image of God in mankind. **[Q]** Why is this such an important thing to consider when we think of diversity?
- 3) Bart said that the mystery of the gospel and the glory of God is that the cross overcomes the 1) **natural divisions** of ethnicity, age, family, and gender; 2) the **social divisions** of class, education, and politics; 3) as well as the **sinful divisions** of bitterness, grudges, envy, and prejudice.
  - a. **[Q]** Which of these seem to be the most improbable to overcome?
  - b. **[Q]** How is the glory of God magnified when something so improbable is overcome by the gospel?
- 4) **[Q]** How were you challenged by the point: “Realize that racism will always be a temptation in this life, even for Christians”?
  - a. In particular, **[Q]** what in the following Trillia Newbell quote convicted you?
    - i. “If you are walking in an urban area and a group of large black men approach, what do you think? Do you feel slightly unsettled when someone of your ethnicity marries outside your ethnicity? Do all your friends look like you? Would you prefer for your restaurant server, pastor, best friend, child’s dolls, child’s spouse, electrician showing up at the door, or the lead character in a movie to have your skin color? These biases can be instinctive and they can be a product of our racial favoritism. We are easily influenced by culture—what we’ve read, seen, or heard but not experienced—and the attitudes and belief systems of

generations past. In order to see reconciliation and progress in our nation, communities, and churches, we must recognize that racial favoritism is indeed a possibility for each and every one of us. We then must fight our assumptions of others and learn to ask good questions.”

- 5) [Q] What does it mean and why is it important to be both colorblind and color-conscious?
- 6) [Q] In what ways have you prayed about diversity previously? [Q] How were you challenged to pray in the future?
- 7) [Q] If you take an honest inventory of your life, how many people do you know (more than mere acquaintance) that aren't like you? (Especially in terms of race, but also in terms of socioeconomic status, or even in age)
  - a. For those who have more diverse relationships, share some of the things that have helped you to grow in this.
  - b. For those who don't, [Q] what are some things you could pray for or begin to do to work toward this more faithfully?