

WPC YOUTH

SOLIDARITY

SESSION 4



WHAT IS SOLIDARITY?

RADICAL DEPENDENCE

Solidarity means finding ways to cultivate radical dependence rather than trying to "go it alone." We are all born into this world physically connected to another human being. We cannot survive as individuals, which is another way of saying that "individuality" is a myth. To make our world better, we must realize that we need one another, that we are *dependent* on our neighbors, and that we all must work together to flourish in justice and peace.



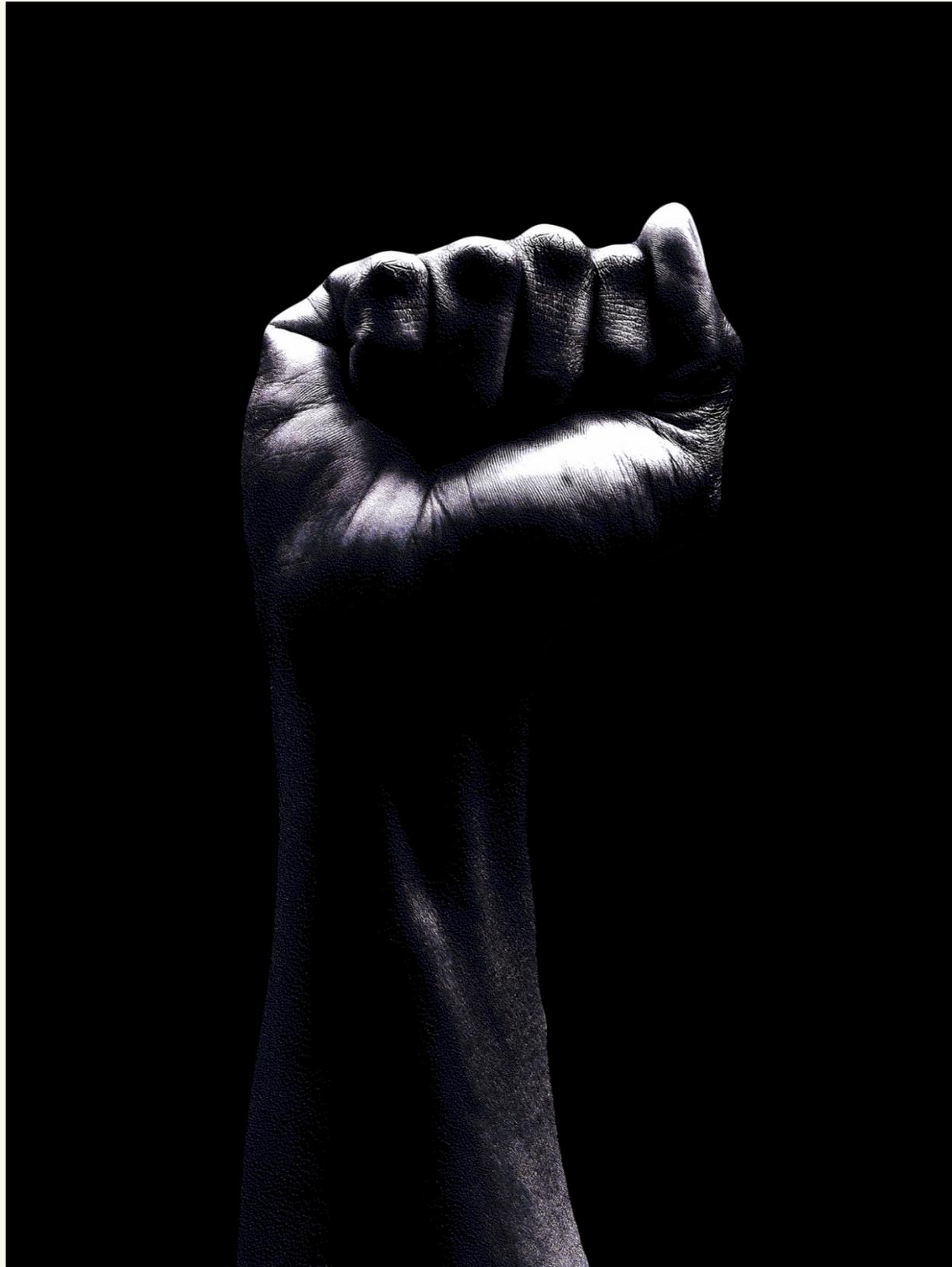


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THIS WEEK

BLACK, INDIGENOUS,
LATINX, &
PEOPLE OF COLOR





LISTEN

‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’

‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’



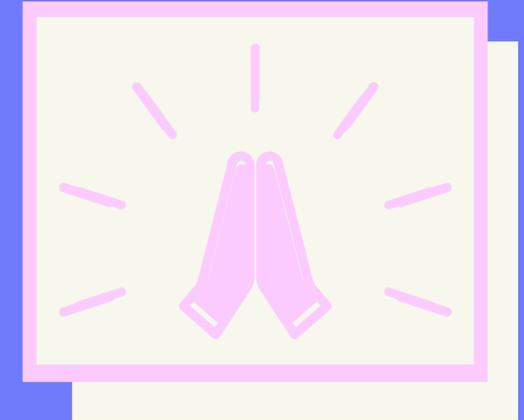
MATTHEW 25:40 + 45

••• BREATHE DEEPLY

Take some time to contemplate these verses from Matthew's Gospel. Paint a picture, go for a walk, listen to some music that helps you think (I like [this album!](#)), light a candle and meditate, or spend some time in prayer. Take note of any thoughts or feelings that arise in you as you focus on these two oppositional statements from Christ. Be honest with your feelings. There is no way to "fail" this exercise. There are no wrong answers or feelings or thoughts. The important thing is that you're honest.

••• THINK ABOUT SCRIPTURE

- Who are "the least of these" that Jesus is speaking about?
- Why does Jesus say that what is done or not done to "the least" in society counts as action toward *him*?
 - Is this helpful or harmful in thinking about how to pursue justice in our own time? Why?
- How is Jesus showing *radical dependence* in these verses?
- Does it harm you when your neighbor is harmed? If yes, then how? If not, then why not?



CONTEMPLATE

●●● RACISM ISN'T JUST INTERPERSONAL, IT IS *SYSTEMIC*

Part of the shift we have to make in talking about racism is recognizing that it isn't just interpersonal and intentional. The vast harm of racism occurs systemically and implicitly.

●●● INDIGENOUS AMERICANS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE KILLED BY POLICE THAN ANY OTHER RACE

Erasure and invisibility are real aspects of racism in America, especially against indigenous peoples. It's vitally important that we give a voice to those who are silenced.

●●● PEOPLE OF COLOR ARE FAR MORE LIKELY TO DIE FROM COVID-19

This is largely due to long-standing systemic health and social inequities that prevent many POC from accessing adequate healthcare and other social resources.

RACISM
in
AMERICA

BLACK AND WHITE?

Many of us have grown up in a society that claims to be "colorblind" or "post-racial." What this means is that explicit conversations about race are often discouraged or deemphasized, and many of us believe that we don't have overt racist attitudes. We have friends and perhaps even family members of different races and ethnicities, and we love them! How could we be racist? Well, research shows that at 30 months, children use race to choose playmates, and that by the age of 5, white children remain strongly biased in favor of whiteness.

But racism is not just about interpersonal attitudes. It is about the systems and institutions that have long benefitted white people at the expense of our neighbors of color. That's why it's important for us to really look at the inequities in our healthcare system, our educational system, our economic structures, our prisons and structures of policing, and our housing and food systems. The reality is that our entire world is shaped by racial injustice, and by focusing on racism only when it explodes into our world, we distract from the ways in which racism persistently and insidiously shapes our everyday lives.

Implicit bias leads to systemic injustice, and these unjust systems put our neighbors lives at risk. We are *radically dependent* on one another, and if we are really in this together, then we must do the work to help our neighbors of color flourish.

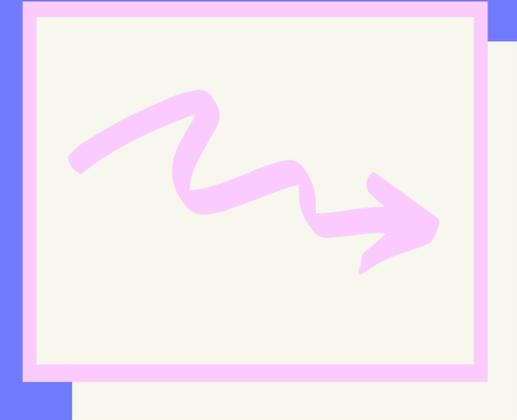


DISCUSS

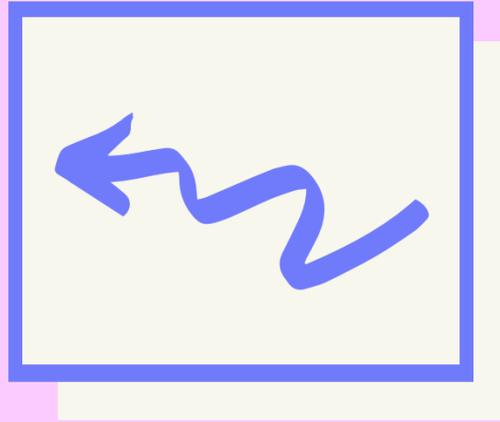
- DO YOU EVER THINK OF YOURSELF AS RACIST? WHY OR WHY NOT?
- IF YOU'RE WHITE, IT'S EXTREMELY LIKELY THAT YOU HAVE UNCONSCIOUSLY BENEFITTED FROM RACIAL INJUSTICE. HOW CAN YOU BEGIN TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT?
- HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE CHURCH BETTER ADDRESS RACIAL INJUSTICE AND STAND WITH POC?

••• ON YOUR OWN

- Begin the work of learning about things like systemic racism and implicit bias. [This podcast](#) from The Liturgists is a really helpful starting point.
- If you are white, it's best not to expect your friends of color to educate you about racism. It's your job to educate yourself and to confront your own complicity in racial injustice. Don't ask your friends of color what you can do. Instead, learn from their lead and support them. Tell them that you are standing with them, and then actually *do it*.
- Don't center your own experience of confronting racism. This is one way that POC who are speaking up about systemic issues get silenced, by white people who want to center their own personal journey toward anti-racism. Instead, work to amplify and spread the voices of POC who have been in this struggle long before us.



GO AND DO



GO AND DO



WITH YOUR FAMILY

- Watch *I Am Not Your Negro*, a documentary that explores the life, thought, and activism of James Baldwin – one of the most prominent voices during the Civil Rights Movement – and connects it to the Black Lives Matter movement. His words are grievously important for us to hear still today.
- Please continue to talk about racism as a family. We cannot be allies in the cause for *racial justice* until we acknowledge our own complicity in the structures of *racial injustice*. Here again is a trove of resources for families to begin having this necessary discussion together.