



You Belong Here

Message Next Steps

A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

FEBRUARY 24

God's hope is to bring people from all nations, tribes, languages, and ethnicities together into one family. It's why Jesus came to die for all of us. But oftentimes, this harmonious diverse community is not at all our experience. What leads us to issues in our diverse communities, and how can we overcome the barriers that plague us?

Work through the following questions and Scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

Please read before your conversation about A Diverse Community:

We are so excited for how God will grow us into a diverse community that welcomes, serves, and uplifts each other! We also recognize that there are hurts, divisions, and very complex issues that would seek to divide us. As a movement at Gateway, we are beginning a journey that will be beautiful, challenging, and at times uncomfortable. We invite you to join us because God's heart is for us to reflect God's coming kingdom here and now (see **Revelation 7:9-10**).

For Life Groups:

- Honor one another.
- Please avoid political conversations. If the conversation begins to become political, divisive, or unhelpful, pause the conversation immediately. Acknowledge the different viewpoints, remind people that it's okay to disagree, and then redirect it back to the scriptures and questions we've provided.
- Allow space for different stories. We're not here to disprove another person's experience. Your story and another person's story can both be true.
- Listen, acknowledge, and learn, even if we disagree with another person.
- Ask for permission from people of color before inviting them to share about their experiences and/or perspectives. Some of us may be open and ready to share, while others are not. Please respect those postures.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever made a decision based on a stereotype? Share some examples. Have you ever been the victim of stereotyping?
2. Do you have neighbors, coworkers, or family members from different ethnic backgrounds? How can you reach out to love them, serve them, and learn from them?
3. **Read Ephesians 2:14-16.** How can you more actively serve and love others with whom you disagree without compromising your convictions? When is it appropriate to partner with others who do not agree with us?
4. What, if anything, do you believe are the dangers of colorblindness as a solution to racism?
5. **Read Revelation 5:9-10.** When we fail to value all the diversity of races, ethnicities, and languages that God created and is in the process of bringing back together—with Himself and with each other—we miss the importance of what He's working to do; to demonstrate how we should love each other just as He loves us. This week, pray and ask God to help you as you seek to discover the beauty and brokenness of your culture, and share your heart and insights with your life group, running partners, family, or friends. How can knowing more about the beauty and brokenness of your culture help create more unity among your diverse community?

KEY SCRIPTURES

Revelation 5:9-10 – “you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

Ephesians 2:14-16 – “For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility. . . . His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.”

DIGGING DEEPER

As you look to dig deeper into the topics of this week’s message, consider checking out the tips and upcoming events detailed below.

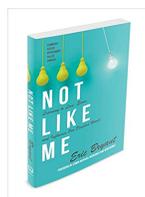
If we’re going to grow as a diverse community, there are three things we can start to practice:

1. **Be Curious** – learn, ask questions, be a cultural detective. Think about marriage or any loving relationship. If the person doesn’t really know you or want to know you, you will never feel loved.
2. **Be Empathetic** – Rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn. Care about what others care about. Tim Keller wrote, “To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is what we all need.”
3. **Be a Lifter** – be someone who will lift up others around us. If it’s someone of a different culture or ethnicity, find ways to lift them up, to encourage, to bless, to value and show how much they are worth to God and to champion the gifts and message of God they can bring to all of us.

Some additional great next steps include:

- Attending *A Call to Unity*, a special night of prayer, reflection, and worship on Wednesday, February 27th, at our North campus at 7pm
- Checking out our *Beyond Colorblind* class, beginning on March 27. Go to gatewaychurch.com/northevents to register
- Joining a *Be the Bridge* Facebook group, as you begin to pursue God’s heart on diversity

Additionally, the You Belong Here series is inspired by our South Campus pastor’s book, *Not Like Me*. *Not Like Me* is for sale in the lobbies of Gateway’s Austin locations (at a discounted price), as well as on Amazon.com. To follow along with the You Belong Here series, this week read Chapters 6, 8, and 9 of *Not Like Me*.



SPIRITUAL OUTCOMES—
gatewaychurch.com/spiritual_outcomes/relationally-engaged