

What Makes Others Worth It? | Genesis 1:26-27 Sermon Discussion Leader's Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To come with a practical way to better see or treat someone we might consider an outsider.

Sermon Refresher: One measure of the goodness of a society is looking at how it treats the outsider. Every culture has its insiders and outsiders. Greco-Roman culture was characterized by a cruelty towards the weak, women, the young, the elderly, the sick, or other ethnicities. The concept of innate human rights originated in the teaching of the Bible and fully demonstrated in the life and teaching of Jesus.

Icebreaker: When is a time you have felt like an outsider?

Discussion:

1. Think for a moment about what comes to mind when you see...
 - A motorcycle rider clad in leather
 - A hipster on a bike
 - Someone with a MAGA hat or someone with an "Antifa" sticker on their car
 - Homeless person
 - Controversial celebrity
 - Charles Manson

What do you notice about your first reactions?

2. How do the following statistics David had in his sermon show how we as a country at regarding the outsider?

New York Times columnist Thomas Edsall, "No Hate Left Behind"

- 42% consider people in the opposition party are "downright evil"
- 20% agree political adversaries lack the traits to be considered fully human
- 20% of one party, 16% of the other agree that the country would be better off if large numbers of the opposition party died
- 18% of one party, 14% of the other agree violence would be justified if the opposing party won the 2020 election

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3. Read Genesis 1:26-27. The foundational way to see other human beings according to the Bible is being created in the image of God. What is significant about that?

Genesis 1:26-27

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

Transition: Two chapters later in Genesis, we see that this image is deformed and marred by human rebellion towards God. Yet, Jesus, being and functioning fully in the image of God gives the hope of being renewed in the image of God like him to all who would trust in him. Dave said, "Because of Jesus, every human being has this potential glory (being renewed in the image of God). And, Genesis 1:26-27 means there is a rock solid, objective, irreducible glory and significance and dignity and worth to every human being."

4. Read and discuss the quote from C.S. Lewis.

C.S. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory"

"It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory hereafter; it is hardly possible for him to think too often or too deeply about that of his neighbor...To remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, it at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is in light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealing with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal...It is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit...Next to the Blessed

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Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses.”

5. Read James 3:9-10. How should seeing people as created in God’s likeness change the way we see and speak about others?

James 3:9-10

⁹ With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

6. Who do you have a hard time seeing in the image of God? Or, when do you find yourself getting sucked into seeing people the wrong way?
7. What can you practically do this week to try to see people correctly?

Sharing and Prayer:

Ask for any specific prayer requests. Have people pray silently for the person or people they want to see in the image of God. Then, close in prayer with the prayer requests.