

Closing The Racial Divide

I. How To Connect With People

I Peter 2:5a (Contemporary English Version) And now you are living stones that are being used to build a spiritual house.

II. Five Principles for Connecting With Others

1. Trust People 2. Take The First Step

Philip. 2:4 (God's Word) Don't be concerned only about your own interests, but also be concerned about the interests of others.

Five Ways You Can Take The First Step

Don't Be Afraid of people you don't know

II Tim. 1:7 (Living Bible) For the Holy Spirit, God's gift, does not want you to be afraid of people, but to be wise and strong, and to love them and enjoy being with them.

3. Be Willing to Forgive Others

Col. 3:13 (New Living Translation) You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

Proverbs 17:9 (Today's English Version) If you want people to like you, forgive them when they wrong you. Remembering wrongs can break up a friendship. Having the willingness to forgive others is a must in building lasting relationships.

4. Be Tolerant With Others

Col 3:13-15 (Phillips Translation) Be patient and tolerant with one another, always ready to forgive if you have a difference with anybody for you were called to live as one united body and always be thankful.

Plato said be kind because everyone is fighting a battle.

5. Appreciate People's Differences

James 2:1-4 (The Message) My dear friends, don't let public opinion influence how you live out our glorious, Christ-originated faith. ²If a man enters your church wearing an expensive suit, and a street person wearing rags comes in right after him, ³and you say to the man in the suit, "Sit here, sir; this is the best seat in the house!" and either ignore

the street person or say, "Better sit here in the back row," ⁴haven't you segregated God's children and proved that you are judges who can't be trusted?

III. What The Kingdom of Heaven Looks Like

Matthew 13:47 (Contemporary English Version) The kingdom of heaven is like what happens when a net is thrown into a lake and catches all kinds of fish.

IV. Answering the call – Let Down Your Net

Luke 5:4-8 (King James) Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. ⁵And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. ⁶And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. ⁷And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. ⁸When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

V. A Call To Action

Deut. 7:1-2 (New Living Translation) "When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are about to enter and occupy, he will clear away many nations ahead of you: the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. These seven nations are all more powerful than you. ²When the LORD your God hands these nations over to you and you conquer them, you must completely destroy them. Make no treaties with them and show them no mercy.

James said you can talk about how much faith you have all day, but I will show you my faith by my actions.

James 2:18 (Today's English Version) But someone will say, "One person has faith, another has actions." My answer is, "Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. I will show you my faith by my actions."

One of the evidences of the kingdom of God is action.

1 Cor. 4:20 (New Living Testament) For the Kingdom of God is not just fancy talk; it is living by God's power.

II Cor. 8:24 (God's Word) - So give these men a demonstration of your love. Show their congregations that we were right to be proud of you.

Closing Thought: Let People Know You Care

I John 3:18 (New Century Version) My children, we should love people not only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring.