



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: **Racial Reconciliation**
Speaker: **Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor**
Scripture: **Ephesians 2:14-16**

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. (NIV)

Sermon Outline:

The degree to which we understand the Gospel is the degree to which we will give ourselves to racial reconciliation.

The good news of the Kingdom of God is that his life, death, and enthronement no longer have the last word.

Paul lets us know in this scripture that the problem with human condition is not that we occasionally mess up and struggle with morality, the problem is that we are dead and need to be made alive in Jesus Christ. The message of the gospel of Jesus Christ is that dead people can be made alive.

It is through the gospel that a new family - made up of vastly different people – is possible through Jesus Christ.

We have peace with God but in Christ, the walls that separated Jew from Gentile came down as well. Christianity needs to have a faith that not only focuses on the curtain coming down but also works to tear down the walls that separate us.

The Cross is not a just bridge that gets us to God; it's a sledgehammer that tears down walls that separate us.

God is not interested in saving individuals, he is interested in forming a new people. He is looking for form a new humanity and a new way of belonging to one another. In Christ a new humanity is made possible because something has happened in Christ. Unfortunately, we live in a world where sin is still at work and humanity cannot accomplish this on our own. We find ourselves stuck – not only in our world, our country but also in the church.

Just because a church is diverse, does not mean it is a reflection of the Kingdom of God.

“Reconciliation is the ongoing spiritual process involving forgiveness, repentance and justice that restores broken relationships and systems to reflect God’s original intention for all creation to flourish.” --Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil

How do we do this work individually and as a community?

1. We normalize the complexity of being this new family.
2. Explore our Own Racial Formation.
3. We lament and resist the racial sins that continue to shape our world today.
4. We practice repentance and forgiveness
5. We cling to Jesus. Christ is our Peace.

May we be the community that Jesus Christ dreamed about when he died – marked by wholeness, forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor, continues Week 2 of our Deeply Formed Life sermon series. Pastor Rich explores Racial Reconciliation and how we are to work individually, and as a community, towards wholeness, forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In our family of origin, we have all been formed and shaped by our families and culture, which has helped form who we are today. Find time this week to journal about your thoughts and feelings regarding how your family formed you, offering this up to God.
3. Carve time out of your schedule this week to answer the questions below:
 - How did your family talk about different groups of people?
 - Who were the people you were taught to fear? Why?
 - Who were the people you were taught were beneath you?
 - What assumptions about the groups you listed above are you carrying?Can you share your responses with a brother or sister in Christ? As you do, share a time of prayer, offering up your repentance and asking God for forgiveness and healing.
4. In order to do the work of racial reconciliation, we must be willing to do the following: look at sins of the past in order to move forward, joining our lives to those who are mistreated, repent of our blind spots and our insensitivity toward others, and cling to Jesus Christ so that his spirit can have his way in our lives. Where do you see yourself needing to begin, asking for God's help and strength to do so?