

GAP 22: ETHNICISM AND RACISM

Driving Question for Collaborative Design

How might Christians in the church, parachurch, and workplace collaborate to reach and disciple others across dividing ethnic lines by challenging racism and standing as agents of reconciliation?

Description

Ethnic and racial tensions are an increasingly visible division in society, the church, and also – if sometimes less sharply – within mainstream workplaces. This lack of mutual acceptance undermines the gospel that all people, without exception, are welcome in Christ's kingdom and have gifts to share. Additionally, when ethnic and racial tensions manifest themselves within the church, and churches do not equally recognize other neighboring churches and their discipling efforts, the work of the Great Commission is undermined. Jesus taught that the way his disciples love one another, being united in our triune God, is the greatest witness to Christ's own love before a divided world. Thus, ethnic disunity must be dismantled, with every follower of Jesus taking up the ministry of reconciliation to challenge racism wherever it is found.

Acknowledging that ethnicism has regional variances, but poses a challenge to the Great Commission in making disciples of all the nations, without discrimination, this conversation prayerfully explores:

Collaboration Questions

- How does ethnicism create barriers to the Great Commission, and what initiatives are needed to respond?
- How can church/lay leaders, and mission agencies, be active agents of reconciliation within the church?
- How can the church, mission agencies, workplace organizations, and leaders across every sphere be active agents of reconciliation within the broader society?
- How can the church, mission agencies and Christian-influenced organizations be seen as, and have a reputation for, a voice of unity and equal opportunity befitting the Great Commission?

Sub-Topics

- Ethnicism within the church (regionally)
- Ethnicism within society (regionally)
- Ethnicism within Christian mission structures
- Ethnicism within workplace organizations

Preparation before Seoul 2024

Please read these sections of the State of the Great Commission Report:

- Introduction from the Theology Working Group
- Part I, on the State of the Great Commission globally, captured by text and graphics
- Part II, with the article on 'Ethnicism'
- Part III for your particular region in which you primarily work or serve in church or parachurch