



Discussion Starter

1. Discuss what comes to mind when you hear the phrase “everyone matters”?
2. If you were to be completely honest, are there individuals or types of people whom you deem insignificant or unimportant? Explain. If you responded yes, also explain how your current perception impacts your interactions with these individuals or types of people.

Everyone Matters

1. Share something that resonated with you during the *Everyone Matters* message.
2. Do you think how we regard all people matters to God? Explain why or why not.

From inception, *Everyone Matters* has been one of The Bridge’s core values. We desire to be a local church that reflects the diversity of our city, the body of Christ, and, ultimately, heaven. This requires recognizing that all people are created in God’s image and have inherent value. This also involves recognizing that amid our oneness in Christ, the body of Christ is still comprised of people from various nations, tribes, ethnicities, languages, positions, socioeconomic statuses, et cetera. We endeavor to exercise unity and fellowship. Meanwhile, we celebrate diversity, and acknowledge the unique heritages and plights of both current and future members of Christ’s body.

Biblical Connection

1. Read each Scripture reference listed below. Note anything that stands out to you as you read. Additionally, note what each passage communicates about oneness in Christ.

Scripture Reference	Notes
1 Corinthians 12:13-14	
Galatians 3:26-29	
Ephesians 2:11-22	

2. The spreading of the gospel from the Jews to Gentiles caused cultural unrest. The gospel challenged barriers and tensions that existed between Jews and Gentiles, native Hebrews and Hellenistic Jews, men and women, etc. Accordingly, these issues were addressed. Does it surprise you to learn that the early church dealt with and addressed these issues? Explain.
3. Read Acts 17:26-27. These verses reveal that diversity was a part of God's sovereign plan. Further study also reveals that Paul challenged the original audience's prideful disposition. Athenians felt superior to other people.^{1 2} Do you harbor biases for and/or against certain groups or types of people? Share why you harbor these. What does Scripture teach regarding your biases?
4. Read Revelation 7:9. This verse describes a diverse host of people who took a stand for Christ and who will one day dwell in God's presence forever. What does this glimpse of heaven impress upon your heart and mind regarding The Bridge's core value *Everyone Matters*?

¹ Stanley D. Toussaint "Acts" in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, eds. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries, 2003), 403.

² FF. Bruce "The Book of the ACTS" in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. Gordon D. Fee (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 337.

5. How do the passages covered in this lesson impact how you respond to division that exists within (1) society and (2) the body of Christ? Elaborate.

6. How may The Bridge better accomplish its mission if you wholeheartedly embrace the core value *Everyone Matters*? Elaborate.

Moving Forward

Contemplate and confess any prejudices, biases, contempt, favoritism, and/or resentment you have toward individuals and/or groups of people. Identify 1-2 things you will intentionally do to live out the core value *Everyone Matters*. Share these with your accountability partner.

Assignment

- Attend The Bridge's upcoming Sunday worship experience. If you're unable to attend, listen to the sermon online before your next group gatherings. Note anything that resonates with you in preparation for the Week 9 discussion.