

A Few Takeaways from Tyler + Ilze's Race + Transformation Conversation | 6/9/2020:

- Tyler noted that guilt isn't the point for white Christians helping to fight racism. Guilt is a good indicator and starting place to go to Jesus in repentance to begin to "do the work", but is a terrible motivator for sustained action. According to Dr. Anita Phillips, guilt causes paralysis if we remain in the space of feeling sad instead of embracing our call to be restorers of brokenness.
- God's vision for racial reconciliation is one of transformation. A life-long journey of movement to pursue black lives mattering as much as all other lives.
- Ilze reminded us, "the Bible says do not conform to the patterns of this world but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind". That the motivator for her pursuit of justice is the Scriptures. Knowing that Jesus, was the ultimate seeker of "that which was lost" and the lover of "the least of these". The one who calls us to "the great requirement" to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8). Jesus embraced the outcast, the woman at the well, Zacchaeus hiding in the tree.
- We must then be centered around the word of God, giving time and space for God's Spirit to give us the capacity and calling to be world changers who are anti-racist. To be transformed, healed, and motivated to care for black lives. To reconcile and "transform all things" (Rev 21:5) as our churches vision is built around. To join God in doing the work to fight racism.
- Yet true reconciliation (as Ilze witnessed it in her childhood in the truth and reconciliation commission coming out of apartheid South Africa) requires both truth and grace. For true restoration, forgiveness, and healing, we have to take inventory of our own faults, own them, apologize, and change course. We have to extend grace as we have first received it from Christ in ways that are wise and healing.
- We all bring our cultural lenses and readings of the scripture to the table (Dr. Anita Phillips). As a result, we must use whatever privilege and resources we have to "use our difference, to make a difference" (as Ilze's friend Tayo Rockson frames it). To push past our biases and prejudices (that we all have) to fight racism until black lives matter. We must embody this very truth and grace as Jesus was in his fully God/fully human body in our midst. To do so until we are transformed and all divides are made right by Jesus' return, and our kingdom coming in the meantime.
- We have nothing to lose. Anti-racism is a win for all. It frees shackles of both oppressor and oppressed. We get to ask God to sanctify our biases, prejudices and racism until He makes would world new in and through us. To examine as a church where we marginalize people at ASC and in our neighborhood, city, and world. That we would have active hope and faith in what is unseen. That we would be transformative.