

IN THE WORLD • ...ALL DUSTY IN SAMARIA

CONNECT

1. Let's begin our group tonight with a fundamental question:
Should we talk about racism and prejudice in the church?
Why or why not?

ENGAGE

As we get into our story today, it's important for us to remember that racism is not a white problem, or a black problem, or a brown problem—Racism is a Human problem because it's a sin problem. And *sin problems require gospel solutions*.

John 4 tells a story that must have troubled first century Jews. In a time when they would have avoided any contact with “Samaritan dogs,” Jesus does the unthinkable—He meets a Samaritan woman in public, and with love, changes her entire life. Today we look at this story and compare the racial climate of Jesus time with ours today as we consider three categories: *The Other*, *The Attitude*, and *The Faith Community*.

The Other

The Samaritans were the ultimate “other” in Jesus' time. This racially mixed group was treated as subhuman and hated by all Jews. On Sabbath we discussed that there is no *one* “other” in our time. Instead, the “other” varies from person to person because of our own *implicit biases*.

Note: *Implicit bias* is the subtle and quick judgments that occur subconsciously in our heart.

2. Can you think of a moment when your *implicit bias* caused you to judge someone incorrectly? What changed your mind about that person?

The Attitude

In Jesus' time, Jews had "no dealings" with Samaritans.

(John 4:7,9) In our time, our own *implicit biases* cause us to have certain attitudes towards the "other."

3. What attitude do *you* tend to have towards your "other?"

The Faith Community

In John 4:20, we see two groups historically worshipping in separate places because that's what "the fathers" had always done.

4. Do you see any similarity between the faith community in Jesus' time and faith communities today?
5. What change, if any, do you think needs to happen in faith communities who want to live according to the gospel?
6. What changes, if any, should occur in *our* faith community if we want to live according to the gospel?

CHALLENGE

What change do you need to make if you want to live according to the gospel?