

# Bridging the Gap: Us and Them

December 20, 2020

**Scriptures:** Gen. 1:27; 10:32; 12:1-3; Gal. 3:28-29; Rev. 21:24-26

**Bottom Line:** The gaps between "Us" and "Them" are being bridged by Jesus.

## The Gap Between "Us" and "Them"

We don't just notice differences between "Us" and "Them," we make value judgments based on those differences. We tend to believe that "We" are not just different from, but *better* than "Them."

## Bridging Gaps in Genesis (1:27; 10:32; 12:1-3)

- God gives **all** humans His image, bridging the gaps we make between royalty and regulars.
- All humans come from one family, bridging the gaps we make between people groups.
- God promises to bless all nations, bridging the gap we make between the people God loves and everyone else.

## Jesus Bridges All Gaps

The biggest gap is the one between God and humanity, and we are **all on the same side of that gap**. Jesus came to our side of that gap at Christmas. He experienced the gaps that exist between "Us" and "Them." He bridged the gap between God and us, but He also bridges the gaps between "Us" and "Them."

## Unified Yet Distinct

- **Gal. 3:28-29** - Jesus unifies the Church despite our differences. Everyone can experience the blessing God promises through Abraham
- **Rev. 21:24-26** - In new creation, the Nations are still distinct, and those distinctions bring glory to God

"I can't fully realize my own humanity without understanding, appreciating, and being connected to someone other than me." -Tim Mackie

## Response

1. Confess who "They" are in your life, and pray for God to bless "Them"
2. Spend time on the other side. Reach out to someone on the other side of an issue and ask them to help you understand things from their worldview

# LISTENING

Have someone in your group share something about their week. They could answer one of the following questions:

- What was a big challenge or problem you faced this week? How did you handle it?
- Where did you experience God this week? Or where do you wish you had experienced God this week?
- Based on your life experience this week, what do you think God is trying to teach you right now? What is He trying to build in you?

After the person shares, the group can respond. Make sure you let them know you heard them: tell them what you heard, offer wise advice where it's asked for, share from your own experience as well.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Review Sunday's message. What stood out to you? What challenged you? Are there any lingering questions?
2. Who are "They" for you? Who are the people you keep divided from "Us?"
3. Read **Matthew 9:9-13**. What gaps is Jesus bridging in this story?
4. How can people be unified, yet distinct? Can you think of any examples from your life or experience?
5. What do you think of the image John sees of new creation? What kind of differences do you think will still exist in new creation? How does that change your perspective of those differences in this life?