

## Genesis 1 – 12 - Race, class, culture, and our common ancestry

### What?

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
<b>Race</b>	Physical characteristics and shared ancestry that define a person as being a member of a specific group	Skin colour, hair colour and texture, eye colour, facial features, physical build.
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Cultural characteristics that define a person as being a member of a specific group	Language, accent, religion, styles of dress, hair, social customs, food
<b>Nationality</b>	The legal status and emotional sense of belonging to a specific political nation state	Citizenship, patriotism
<b>Class</b>	Social, economic and educational status	Middle class, working class etc
<b>Racism</b>	Give unfair treatment advantage or undervalue or do harm because someone belongs to a particular race.	Segregation, slavery, verbal abuse. Some aspects colonial past, way immigrants to this country treated by us today.

### Why?

- Race not a bible category but language tribes and nations are a major topic
- Our unconscious bias sometimes needs to be exposed at the heart level
- Difficult lived experience for some Christians in minority race/culture

#### 1. One Father – many children

##### a) Common ancestor Adam (Acts 17:26,27)

- Everyone is related, all descended from Adam

##### b) Common image (Genesis 1:27, 9:6)

- All made in God's image not a dignity given to any other creature on earth

##### c) Diverse population

- Cultural diversity (Genesis 4:20-22 - farmer musician engineer)
- nations and tribes develop (Genesis 10:5,20,32)
- Predominance of physical and cultural characteristics within groups → race and ethnicity

- All human beings are to be equally valued, treated with same rights and respect

- We can celebrate many aspects of cultural diversity

- The Christian view of what it is to be human is the only real basis for equality

## **2. All Fallen**

- After the fall, conflict: Adam and Eve; Cain and Abel
- Developing religion but growth of evil leading to the flood
- Noah and family repopulate the earth but they are still sinners
- Noah has 3 sons Shem, Ham (Middle East and Africa) Japheth (Europe and Asia)
- At Babel great industry led to pride so God judges and scatters the nations
- Cultural/national diversity includes fear, competition, greed: sophisticated towns/warring tribes

- Our sinful idolatry and fear cause wars oppression and wrongful discrimination

## **3. Some Chosen**

- Abraham chosen to build a nation
- Not because of physical characteristics or strength but God's sovereign choice to love (Deut 7:7)
- Ultimate purpose: blessing to all nations
- Moses marries a "Cushite". Ruth, Rahab, Naaman, Nineveh Nehemiah,
- Prophecies predict blessing to all nations through Messiah

- All efforts to protect or attack other cultures, nations, races, all industry and art are part of a longing for identity only found in Christ