

It's Complicated Part 2: The Third Option

*"They **knew God**, but they wouldn't **worship** him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of **what God was like**. As a **result**, their minds became **dark** and **confused**. Claiming to be **wise**, they instead became utter **fools**... They traded the **truth** about God for a **lie**." Romans 1:21-25 NLT*

*"God, who **made the world** and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from **one blood every nation** of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us." Acts 17:26-27 NKJV*

Nation (Ethnos) – a multitude of individuals of the same nature or genus; a company, a troop, or swarm; a tribe or people group; a race.

Though there are **distinctions** in our height, weight, skin complexion, eye color, hair color, and hair texture, human beings in every racial group are essentially the same.

*"At one time **all the people** of the world spoke the **same language** and used the same words... So the Lord **scattered** them all over the earth." Genesis 11:1, 8 NLT*

Racism – The belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others. Discrimination or prejudice based on race. (dictionary.com)

Institutionalized racism involves **policies**, **practices**, and **procedures** of institutions that have a disproportionately negative effect on racial minorities' access to and quality of goods, services, and opportunities.

Internalized racism is the basis of individual and institutional racism; it is the systemic **value system** that is **embedded** in a society that supports and allows discrimination.

*"When a **stranger** resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the **native** among you, and you shall **love him as yourself**, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 19:33-34 NASB1995*

In every **race conversation** the **devil** only gives you **two options**. It's us against them.

If we pick a side we **divide**.

*"Division is merely a **strategy of Satan** to keep us from the Divine." – Tony Evans*

In group vs Out group.

In group bias. Out group discrimination.

We can **recognize the image of God** in other people.

"Then God said, "Let us **make mankind in our image**, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." Genesis 1:26 NIV

1. Rename every person as your "brother & sister".

"Whoever claims to love God yet **hates a brother or sister** is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, **cannot love God**, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also **love their brother and sister**." 1 John 4:20-21 NIV

2. Give "in-group" love to your "out-group".

"Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: '**Love your neighbor as yourself**.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.'" Matthew 22:37-40 NIV

"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 7:12 NIV

3. Acknowledge your "brothers" & "sisters" color.

"But he wanted to **justify himself**, so he asked Jesus, "And **who is my neighbor?**" Luke 10:29 NIV

"My **friends** and companions **avoid me** because of my wounds; my neighbors stay far away." Ps 38:11 NIV

4. Give your heart to those "not like you".

"**Love does no harm** to a neighbor. Therefore **love** is the fulfillment of the law." Romans 13:10 NIV

5. Recognize the Church affords you the best opportunity to live this out.

"For **you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus**. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For **you are all one in Christ Jesus**." Galatians 3:26-28 NLT

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ **reconciled** us to himself and gave us the **ministry of reconciliation**; that is, in Christ God was **reconciling** the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the **message of reconciliation**. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, **be reconciled to God**." 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 ESV