

# JUSTICE & MERCY: THE TRUTH IN OUR STORY

## SCRIPTURE & SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE — JUNE 28

### OPEN

1. As best as you can discern now, how has this sermon series impacted you? Has it been challenging, encouraging, disconcerting? Why?

After a survey of the Old Testament and New Testament the past two weeks, Pastor Curtis focused this week on several dynamics at play in racial division in the history of the American church and even our church, despite the reconciliation provided to us through the cross of Christ. **READ EPHESIANS 2:11-22.**

### DISCUSS

2. In Ephesians 2:11-22, what did the cross accomplish in the relationship between Jews and Gentiles? How does the Apostle Paul describe the church in this passage?
3. How do you respond to the gap between what we read about of the church in passages like Ephesians 2 and what we see of the church in our current moment and history?

Pastor Curtis used the metaphor of “bricks” to help us visualize the ways we “rebuild” the dividing wall of hostility that Christ has torn down. He identified three bricks in particular: (1) Racism, (2) Idolizing Peace and Comfort, and (3) Fear.

4. Curtis challenged us to consider that underneath racism is “the tendency to make God in our image and then dehumanize image-bearers.” In what ways do you think the church has been prone to remake God in their image? Feel free to bring in any examples that come to mind from *The Color of Compromise*.
5. In discussing the way we are prone to idolize peace and comfort, Pastor Curtis unpacked several historical examples of the (white) American church dehumanizing black people and diminishing the physical and social implications of the gospel. What have your thoughts and prayers revealed to you about the kind of “peace” and “comfort” you’re seeking? How do you sense the Lord calling you to sit in discomfort?
6. Pastor Curtis talked about how fear often produces silence. How might be fear be gripping you right now? Is it in not knowing enough? Is it over saying the wrong thing? Is it in disrupting an important relationship? Who do you sense the Lord calling you to engage with in this conversation of justice and mercy? Is it a friend? Family member? Neighbor? Fellow Journey member or attender?
7. Pastor Curtis challenged us to continue learning about our story and deconstructing our “bricks” in order to hold onto the unity that Christ has provided through the cross. What else are you learning about your story and your brick(s)? How can you create space to continue engaging in this work after the series ends?

### PRAY

Read and meditate on Ephesians 3:20-21 — “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” Ask the Lord to continue working in our hearts, our lives, our church, and our world.