

# PEACE MAKERS



*in a noisy world*

## 09 One New Humanity

**Because Christ has made one new humanity in Himself, faithful peacemaking requires churches to resist partiality and cultivate reconciling love across cultural and ethnic difference.**

### EMBARK

#### *First Instincts*

When you find yourself around people in church life who feel unfamiliar to you, what is your first instinct?

- stay with the people you already know
- be polite, but keep some distance
- wait for them to make the first move
- move toward them with curiosity and intentionality

#### Discuss

- Why do people naturally drift toward familiarity?
- Why can politeness still leave people feeling outside?
- What makes intentional movement toward others difficult?
- What would Christlike initiative look like?

### EXAMINE

#### READ Ephesians 2:11–16

1. What divisions does Paul describe between Jew and Gentile?
2. What has Christ done to bring peace?
3. What does it mean that Christ has made “one new man” from the two?
4. Why is hostility not just a social problem, but a gospel problem?

#### READ Ephesians 2:17–22

5. What new identity does Paul say believing Jews and Gentiles now share?
6. How does Paul describe their shared access to the Father?
7. What does this passage teach us about life together in the church?

#### READ Colossians 3:9–14

8. What old patterns must be put away?
9. What new traits must mark the people of God?
10. Why does Paul include ethnic and social categories in this passage?
11. What does it mean that “Christ is all and in all”?

#### READ James 2:1–9

12. What kind of partiality does James confront?
13. Why is favoritism incompatible with faith in Christ?
14. How does this passage expose our tendency to value people by worldly standards?

**CHRIST**  
*did not die to create*  
**PARALLEL**  
**PEOPLES**  
*but*  
**ONE NEW**  
**HUMANITY**  
*in Him*

## EXPOSE

The gospel does not merely save isolated individuals. It creates a new people. In Ephesians 2, Paul explains that Christ has not only reconciled sinners to God. He has also broken down the dividing wall of hostility and created one new humanity in Himself. That means ethnic hostility, social partiality, and relational distance inside the church are not small matters. They contradict what Christ died to create.

Colossians 3 makes the same point in practical terms. Christians are called to put off the old self, along with the pride, suspicion, and harshness that once shaped them, and to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

James presses even further. Partiality is not simply bad manners. It is a denial of the kind of people Christ is making us to be. Churches do not display the gospel merely by talking about unity. They display it by practicing shared life.

Faithful peacemaking requires more than avoiding obvious hostility. It requires intentional love, honest self-examination, and a willingness to move toward brothers and sisters who do not share our background or instincts. Christ has not called His churches to sameness. He has called them to shared life in Him.

## ENGAGE

### *Where Does Distance Show Up? (8–10 minutes)*

*Read the questions below and discuss them honestly but generally. Think in terms of patterns, not specific people.*

15. Where does distance most often show up in church life?
  - friendships
  - hospitality
  - leadership
  - assumptions about maturity
  - whose voices are heard
  - who feels “at home”
16. Which of these forms of distance seem easiest to overlook?
17. What is the difference between natural familiarity and sinful partiality?
18. What practices might help a church grow in real shared life across cultural or ethnic difference?
19. What would it look like to move beyond politeness into genuine fellowship?

### **For further discussion...**

20. Why does familiarity feel safer than shared life with those who are different from us?
21. How does Ephesians 2 challenge the way we think about identity in the church?
22. What does James 2 teach us about favoritism and worldly status?
23. What habits could help our church embody the reconciling work of Christ more clearly?

## MEMORY VERSE

Ephesians 2:14a (CSB) “For he is our peace, who made both groups one and tore down the dividing wall of hostility.”