

COLORBLIND CHRISTIANITY

1. What do you think about racism?

- There's more racism today than in past years.
- There's about the same racism today as in past years.
- There's less racism today than in past years.
- There's no more racism.

2. What about you? Check the things below that are **true** for you.

- I've talked with a member of another race about race relations.
- I would be willing to talk to a member of another race about Jesus Christ.
- I know someone of another race fairly well.
- I'd feel comfortable working on a school or church project with a member of another race.
- I'd want to be close friends with a member of another race.
- I have a close friend or family member of another race.

3. What do you think? Do you **A (agree)** or **D (disagree)**?

- ___ Teenagers are less racist than adults.
- ___ There's more racism directed toward black people than other minorities.
- ___ Churches have little to offer minorities.
- ___ Minorities should quit blaming their problems on others.
- ___ White people owe other minorities because of past discrimination and injustices.
- ___ Minorities have just as much of an opportunity as others.
- ___ Minorities are as racist as non-minorities.
- ___ It's hard to define what a minority is today.

4. How would you answer these questions—**Y (yes)** or **N (no)**?

Have you ever—

- felt you might be prejudice?
- heard about a racially motivated fight at your school?
- participated in racial name-calling?
- been prejudiced against by others?
- Heard a racial joke that offended you?
- talked with a member of another race about Jesus Christ?
- visited a racially hateful Web site?



5. What is one thing your church could do to fight racism?

What is one thing your school can do to fight racism?

What is one thing you can do to fight racism?

6. Check out the following verses. What does each one have to say about racism?

Matthew 28:19

Galatians 3:28

Revelation 4:11

Luke 12:7

James 2:8, 9

THIS WEEK

Despite political correctness and efforts at unity, friction between races is still an issue for some of today's teenagers. Use this TalkSheet to take a look at the state of race relations in your community and your church. Many of people—young and old—verbalize their lack of prejudice and discrimination but still commit acts of bigotry. Racism persists as a problem around the world. Christians, however, can tear down racial lines and respect others—regardless of their color.

OPENER

Break the students into small groups. Ask each group to think of or create a stereotype for a specific group of people—a peer group from school (like the skaters, jocks, surfers, and so on), a race-ethnic group, or an age group like senior citizens. After each group shares the stereotypes, you may want to ask them with these questions—

- What are the assumed ideas about each group?
- How common are these stereotypes among high schoolers and people in general?
- Why do these stereotypes exist?
- Are the stereotypes true? Why or why not?
- Do these ideas help or hurt those being stereotyped?
- Do the stereotypes help you better understand a group of people?

Your kids may have a variety of answers for the opener. Maybe some of them haven't taken a close look at stereotypes before.

As you go through this TalkSheet, be sensitive to members in your group who may be victims of stereotypes and prejudice. Encourage the group to be open-minded and honest, yet sensitive about how they voice their opinions and ideas.

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. How prevalent do your kids think racism is today? Take a poll of the young people's opinions and group their responses on the scale to get a picture of your group's perception of racism. How do they think this compares with racism in the past?
2. Depending on your community or group, some of your kids may have more contact with minorities than others. For some, this isn't an issue. The more personal and positive contact one has with other races, the less racism exists. Ask your group why some kids may—or may not—feel uncomfortable in close relationships with other races.
3. What do your kids think on these statements? Discuss the statements the teens don't all agree on. If there's one that causes a lot of argument, let them debate the issue.

4. Ask for opinions on each of these statements. These are emotional issues, so don't allow kids to put others down with their responses. Can they back up their responses with support from the Bible? Many of them have most likely not considered what the Bible says about race relations.

5. What can the church do about racism? Are there prejudice attitudes there? What about your kids' schools? What can your kids do to heal or fix damaged race relations?

6. Let the students share their interpretations, then focus on one passage to study. Relate to the group the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) in which Christ condemns the Jews' hypocrisy as well as their bigotry. The Samaritans were hated by the Jews, yet the Samaritan demonstrated love and mercy in response.

THE CLOSE

The Bible makes it clear that God is opposed to racism—in any form. God clearly says that everyone is equal in his eyes—even the people of Israel that Jews and Gentiles. Because everyone was created equally, they should all be treated equally (Numbers 15:15). Christians should oppose racism and discrimination and live in such a way that people of all races will be drawn to God's redemptive, colorblind love.

MORE

- You may want to ask your group to keep a list of observations about race relations at their schools and in their community for one week. What positive or negative things to they see, hear, or read? How often did it occur? When? What happened and how was it handled? What groups were involved? Was it just racial groups, or was a peer group involved as well?
- Or have your kids surf the Internet for information on hate groups—they are everywhere. Some include skinheads, neo-Nazis, and white supremacists. You may be surprised at what your kids already know about these—they are nearly in every school across the country. Take some time to learn more about these if you don't know anything about these groups. Discuss the motives behind these groups, what issues they are angry about, and what your kids can do to deal with these groups.