



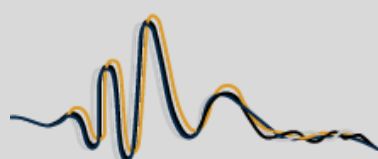
THREADED

THE JOURNEY

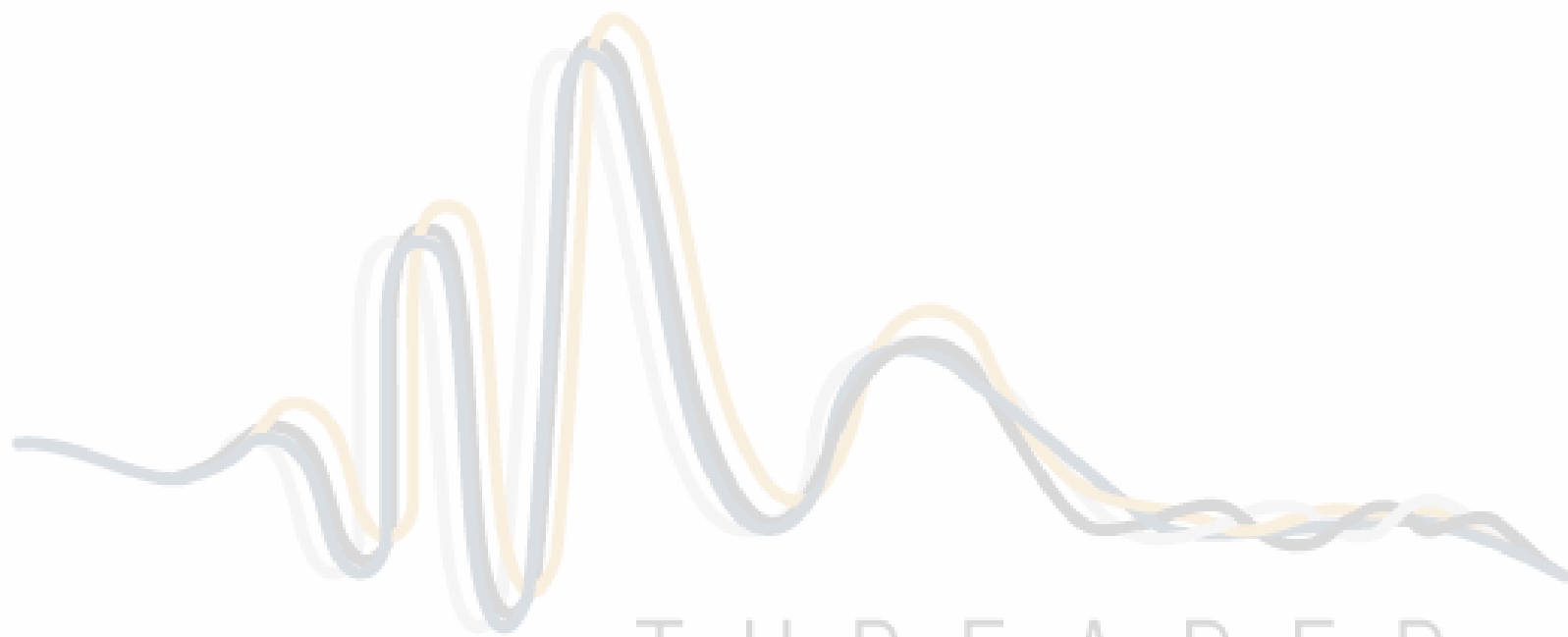
A small group guide for discussing race & reconciliation in the church

SAMPLE EDITION

A RECONCILIATION RESOURCE BY



THREADED



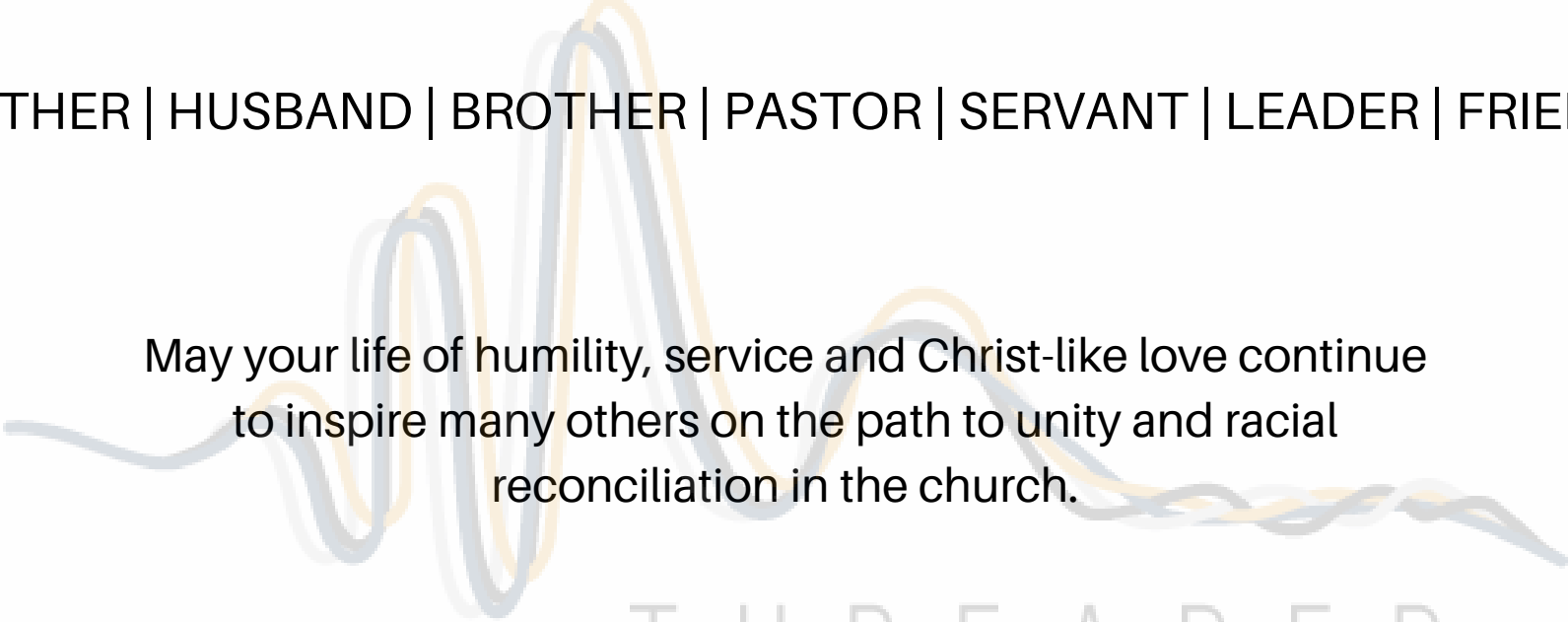
T H R E A D E D

Dedicated to

JAVIER RUSSELL

12.07.77 - 09.04.17

FATHER | HUSBAND | BROTHER | PASTOR | SERVANT | LEADER | FRIEND



May your life of humility, service and Christ-like love continue
to inspire many others on the path to unity and racial
reconciliation in the church.

T H R E A D E D

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This book is meant to act as a multi-perspective catalyst for conversation around issues of race within the Christian Church. Threaded in no way represents the authors or organizations mentioned in the book. Nor do the words or lives of the authors of this book necessarily represent the thoughts, beliefs, actions and values of Threaded.



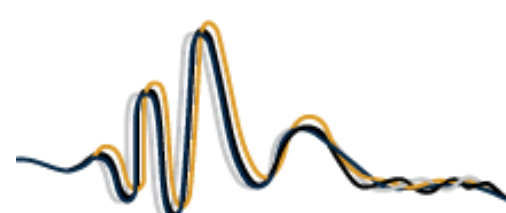
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T H R E A D E D

about threaded

VISION:

We desire the body of Christ to be seen as a mesmerizing tapestry, restored to unity, displaying its dazzling colors, and stitched together in purpose and love -- a tapestry that captivates the world and draws it closer to the God who threaded it together.

MISSION:

To inspire relationships, reconciliation and collaborative action among the diverse body of Christ.

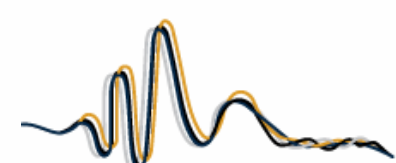


about learning groups

THREADED

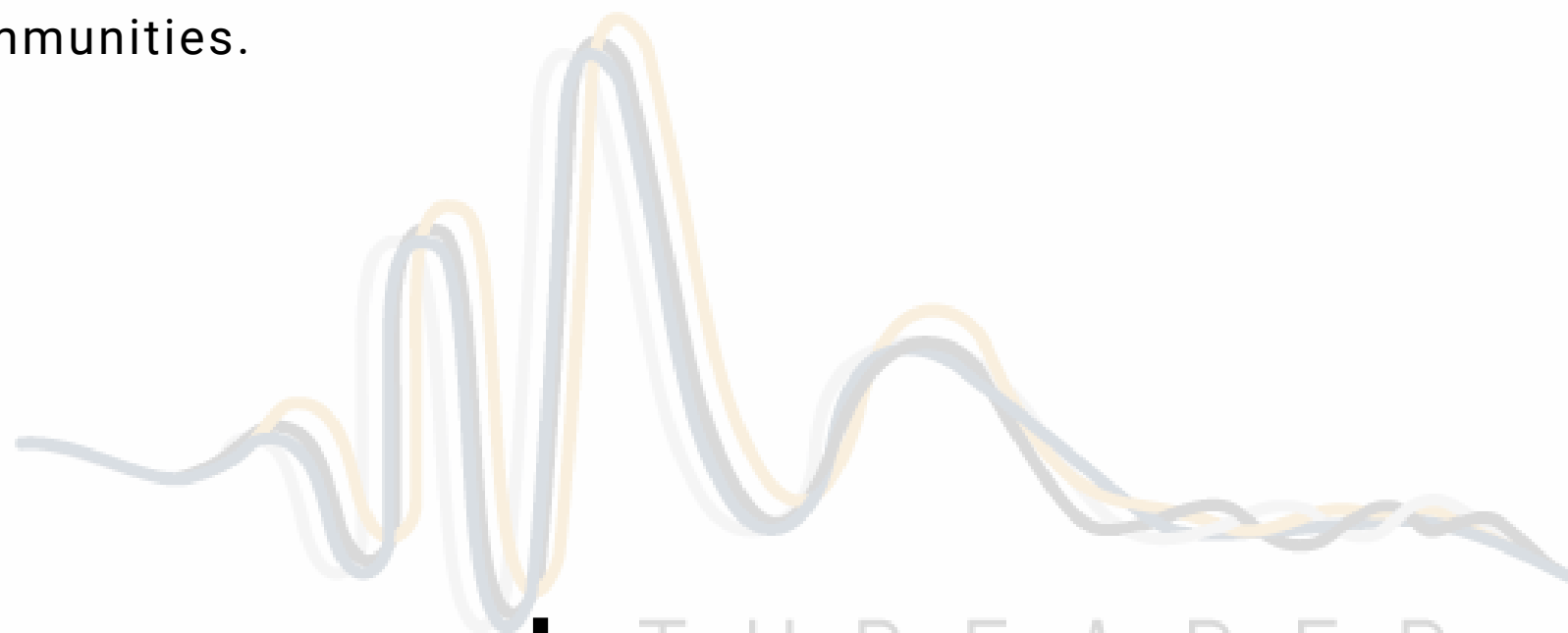
Learning groups are one of the best atmosphere's of growth for people looking to bring the gospel to racial conflict.

Relationships are developed and cultivated in small groups. We work to create diverse small group experiences that utilize vulnerable questions and unity-centered reading materials to inspire relationships, reconciliation, and collaborative action among the diverse body of Christ.



this study is for you if...

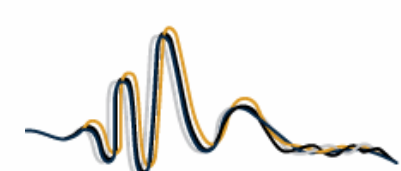
- You are tired of seeing the Church segregated and divided and want to do something about it.
- You long to see the name of God restored in our world through the unity of His Church.
- You are seeking to create pathways to your ethnically diverse neighbors for the purpose of building relationships with them and sharing the Gospel.
- You believe the expansion of your perspective will bring an expanded understanding of God.
- You desire to experience greater diversity and richness in their relationships.
- You are tired of the injustice, apathy, and fear practiced in our churches, our country, and our communities.



what to expect T H R E A D E D

Each session will address and develop the three aspects of the threaded vision with the following components:

- **Personal Storytelling** for multi-ethnic friendships.
- **Biblical guidance** for a growing theological understanding and skill development in reconciliation.
- **Inspiring readings** to encourage conversation and collaborative action among individuals, ministries, and churches for racial reconciliation and multi-ethnic relationships and experiences.



the long haul

The road towards racial reconciliation feels like a scary, daunting path. Many have stood at the starting point and gazed down the road, noticing the potholes, overgrown weeds, and the many twists and turns that seemingly lead nowhere,

It is true. Racial reconciliation is difficult. In fact, in our current cultural climate it sometimes feels impossible to achieve. But what if it's not impossible? What if you learned that it has already happened? Wouldn't that give you hope? The good news is that it HAS already happened!

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.

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. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

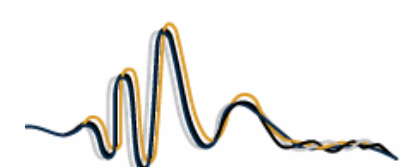
2 Corinthians 5:16-21 (ESV)

Reconciliation has come through the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. He has broken down the walls of hostility between His people and made them one (Eph. 2:13-16).

So then, why are we still so divided? Why is the Christian church still the most segregated institution in America? Why after reading the scriptures and committing ourselves to Christ do we still battle across racial lines?

This study is designed to help get to some of the deep and hidden things that keep us divided. It brings us face to face with our own prejudices and lovingly guides us into humble repentance, rich relationships, and an enlarged perspective of the world. But it's no silver bullet, and the results don't happen overnight. This is just a step on the long, rewarding journey ahead. If you decide to take this step, prepare yourself for the long haul.

Are you ready to begin the journey?



threaded core values

When something matters to us, we value it. Shared values are more often revealed in a group rather than stated. They influence a group's motives and experiences together. These Threaded core values provide both the overall direction of each session and the desired shared experiences of everyone in the group.

KINGDOM-ORIENTED The eternal vision of heaven is a multi-ethnic church (Rev. 7:9-12). Jesus leads us to pray, seek, and serve for that kingdom reality on earth, now as it will be in heaven (Mt. 6:10; Eph. 2:14-22). That is the aim of our hearts and efforts together. This group is not about a church. It is about The Church, beautiful in her diversity, united in Christ's headship, and more satisfying than we can imagine.

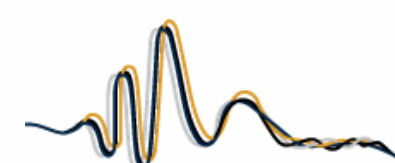
CONFESSIONAL CONVERSATIONS: There is no resurrection without a cross and no healing without addressing the pain. Vulnerability breeds vulnerability. Therefore, in moving forward together, the first steps must be made with a humble willingness to confess how we have sinned in the area of race relations, and a readiness to share and listen to personal stories of Christ's redemption.

GRACE EXTENDING: The grace of Jesus Christ has been lavished upon us. Therefore, we must extend it to others as we engage in conversation. Everyone is welcome and adds meaningfully to our growing understanding. We are not all at the same point on the journey and there is nothing that makes someone want to quit like the lack of grace.

COMPASSIONATE & COURAGEOUS CONTENDING: Everyone's experience and contribution is valid, so we will fight to let their voice be heard and show empathy and compassion even if we do not agree with them. Compelled by the love of Jesus Christ we will suffer with, speak truth lovingly, and move into conflict and areas of injustice for the sake of others coming to know the reconciling power of Jesus Christ.

REJOICE ALWAYS

In a broken world of difficulties and divisions, the Spirit leads us to celebrate any places where the Kingdom advances against the walls of racism. Things may be bad and they are certainly are not perfect, but we seek to rejoice at the victories we can find and pray for the power to carry on through the defeats.

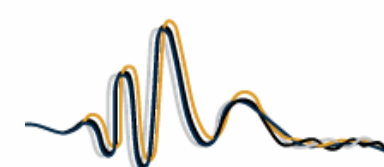


curriculum outline

THREADED VALUE

SCRIPTURE READINGS

01. THE JOURNEY BEGINS	Kingdom-Oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 Corinthians 5:16-19• Introduction to Curriculum
02. HOMING BEACON	Compassionate & Courageous Contending	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Micah 6:8• Letter From a Birmingham Jail
03. THE DESTINATION	VISION OF DIVERSITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revelation 7:9-12• LTABJ* Chapter 5
04. TAKING THE WHEEL	Compassionate & Courageous Contending	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ephesians 2:14-16• LTABJ* Chapter 8
05. HEADLIGHTS	Confessional Conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matthew 7:3-5• LTABJ* Chapter 6
06. TWO PATHS	Grace Extending	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Colossians 3:12-14• LTABJ* Chapter 3
07. UNCHARTED TERRITORY	Compassionate & Courageous Contending	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Luke 10:36-37• LTABJ* Chapter 2
08. RIGHT-OF-WAY	Grace Extending	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Philippians 2:1-5• LTABJ* Chapter 4
09. ARRIVALS	Rejoice Always	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isaiah 11:6-9• LTABJ* Chapter 10
10. REJOICE	Rejoice Always	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 Corinthians 5:17-20



the johari window

One of the key processes in this group experience is for each participant to increase his or her self-awareness and personal development - particularly in the area of race relations.

According to the Johari Window model for understanding perception of self and others, two processes are necessary for increasing awareness: **feedback** and **disclosure**. According to the Oxford dictionary.

Building trust is an important part of any group experience in which we participate. It takes trust to share (disclose), and to accept confrontation and listen (feedback).

FEEDBACK	Information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc., used as a basis for improvement.
DISCLOSURE	The action of making new or secret information known

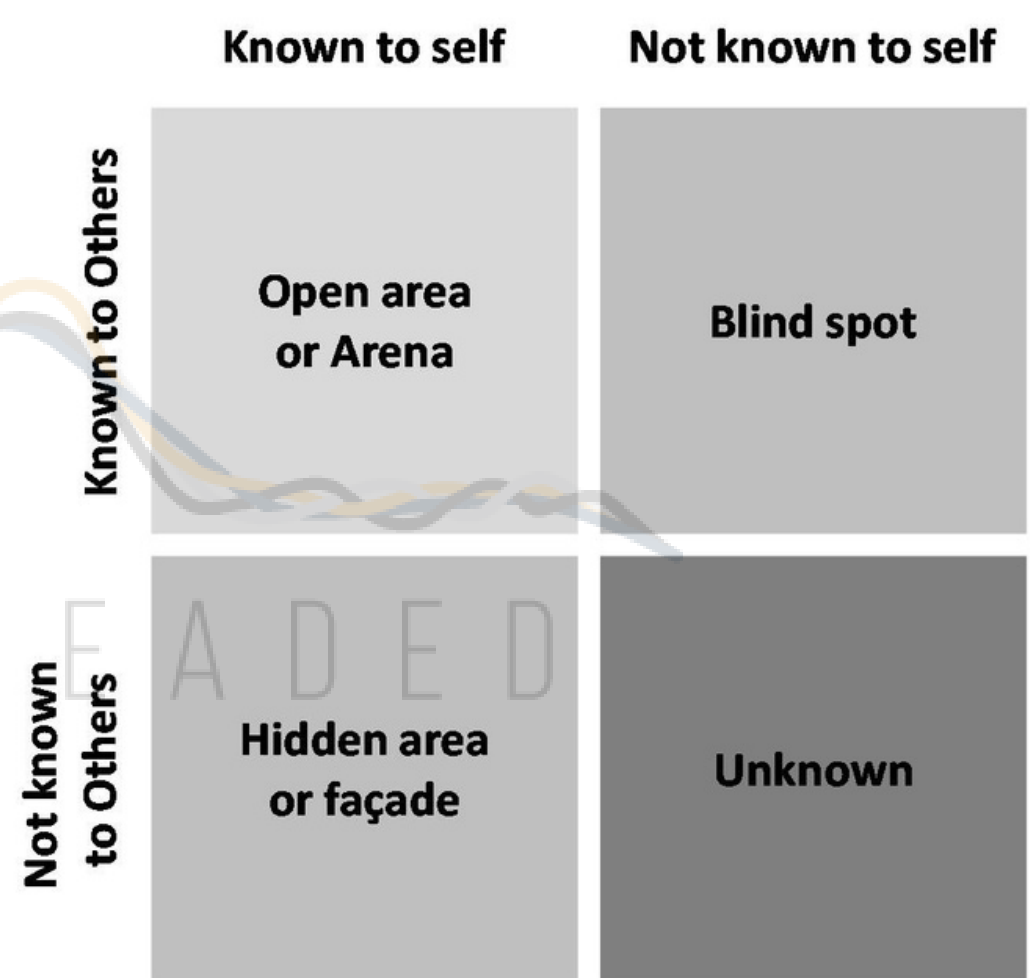
Each individual's awareness is represented by the four quadrants:

1. Open Areas: *Known to Self, Known to Others*
Information in this area, such as attitudes, behaviors, emotions, feelings, skills, and views, are known by the individuals as well as by others. When two people engage in this area, there are opportunities for growth and honest communication. An individual brings information from the hidden area to the open area through selfdisclosure (sharing and confessing), while others help bring information from blind spots to the open area through giving feedback (confronting and exhorting).

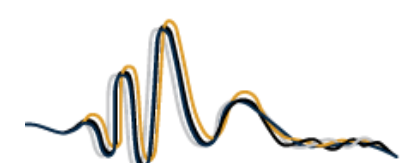
2. Blind Spot: *Unknown to Self, Known to Others*
The information in our blind spot is known or observed by others but not ourselves. It can be uncomfortable at times to have our negative blind spots (weaknesses, sin) pointed out; yet it may be a blessing to have our positive blind spots highlighted (strengths, gift) by others.

3. Hidden Area: *Known to Self, Unknown to Others*
This area is also known as the "facade" and is information that we know about ourselves but choose to keep secret from others. We hide information for various reasons: shame, guilt, fear, pain, privacy, or self-protection. Through confession, we can bring our "dark" thoughts about race to the surface in order for healing to begin taking place.

4. Unknown Area: *Unknown to Self, Unknown to Others*
This area covers information of which both you and others are unaware. It can vary greatly from the hidden gifts and talents that God has given you to the painful traumatic memories you have chosen to forget. Communication in community and a rich spiritual, devotional life are some ways to help uncover our "unknown areas", for the Holy Spirit works make known all things that are unknown.



The Johari Window Model



group rules & guidelines

We have found that agreeing to some simple rules helps create the safest and most effective atmosphere for transformation in a group study like this. Take some time to review and agree together to follow these guidelines.

RESPECT

- ❖ Respect one another with our words and actions as we talk about our differences.
- ❖ Expect different points of view and be willing to consider perspectives outside of our own.

LISTEN

- ❖ Commit to listening (actively) to one another. Avoid dominating the conversation.
- ❖ Seek to understand others, not just to be understood.

WRESTLE

- ❖ Be ready to wrestle with our agendas (both open and hidden). We are not here to simply defend our past positions.
- ❖ Expect to be stretched outside your comfort zone intellectually, emotionally, and theologically.

LEARN

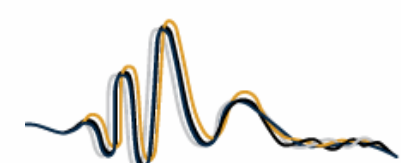
- ❖ Come to each session expecting to learn something new about ourselves, our group members, the Scriptures, and other races and cultures.
- ❖ Remember the goal: It's not about winning; it's about learning.

GRACE

- ❖ Allow the grace of God through His Holy Spirit to guide us in all conversations. Practice humility and patience as we interact with our group members.
- ❖ Extend forgiveness unto others as well as seek forgiveness from others when appropriate.

remember...

- 1. Our oneness in Christ means that we should and can pursue these conversations.**
- 2. Our conversations should be seen as “family” conversations with the Christian family as our priority.**
- 3. Our battle is spiritual, not against flesh and blood. Division and disunity are weapons that the enemy uses for stifling the mission of the church.**
- 4. Our responsibility is to respond to Scripture that consistently calls us to engage with gentleness and meekness**



conflict guidelines

Sometimes this conversation leads to tense and emotional moments of conflict. These are personal conversations that can sometimes lead to misunderstanding and defensiveness. If you find yourself in a tense moment, here's a safe way out.

W.A.G.E war on your preconceived ideas:

W. What if I am wrong

No one is perfect and so it is important that we step back and ponder how we could be wrong in the situation.

A. Ask questions

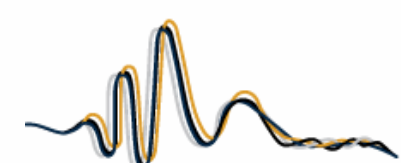
It is very easy when we are in the midst of a conflict to make statements about what we think is going on. However, asking questions first can give you more clarity and may even reveal that there was no reason for conflict in the first place.

G. Get different perspectives

It is helpful in conflict to ask others who think differently than yourself for advice about the conflict and how to handle it.

E. Envision the BEST

Always envision the most positive options when measuring the intentions, words and motivations of the person with whom you are in the midst of conflict.



before you get started

- Contact your group facilitator / members to establish a time and place for consistent group sessions.
- Look up a digital or printable copy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" online.
- Purchase a copy of Letters to a Birmingham Jail: A Response to the Words and Dreams of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by Bryan Loritts, editor. (you can purchase a copy from wearthreaded.org/resources)
 - **Reminder: Please note that each group session in this curriculum corresponds with a specific chapter of the book.**
 - The chapters are stand alone essays and we will be reading the chapters from the book out of sequence.
- Write down two or three personal goals that you hope to achieve as part of this journey.
- Pray for strength, humility, and courage for the journey ahead. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and your group.



SESSION ONE:

the journey begins

"Reconciliation is truly a journey, not a destination. It is a process that leads to personal, spiritual, social and systematic transformation."

// Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil- Roadmap to Reconciliation

session overview:

We begin this dialogue about racial reconciliation by acknowledging how we see Christ differently because of our beliefs. By recognizing Christ as LORD, we are compelled then to see others not according to the flesh. Instead, we follow His example of love by bringing reconciliation into our world.

session aims:

ORIENT: Review and establish expectations for the group.

EXPLORE: "Why does a study on racial reconciliation matter?"

ENGAGE: Begin personal storytelling.

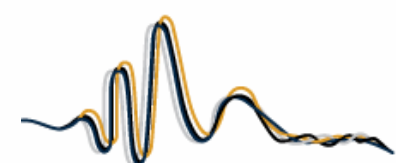
THREADED VALUE IN FOCUS: KINGDOM-ORIENTED

key text

"From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.

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."

2 Corinthians 5:16-19 (ESV)



explore the scriptures

❖ OUR MOTIVATION

- ❖ What is Paul's motivation in his ministry (see also verse 14)? What is your motivation for taking part in racial reconciliation ministry?

❖ OUR IDENTITY

- ❖ With His resurrection from the dead Christ began His work of new creation to all believers. Anyone who places faith in Jesus Christ begins to have their true identity transformed by Him.
 - ✦ How does the new creation work of Jesus affect our relationship with God and each other?
 - ✦ How does the new creation work of Jesus affect our own identities? What are some ways you identify yourself that may get in the way of your primary identity?

❖ OUR RESPONSIBILITY

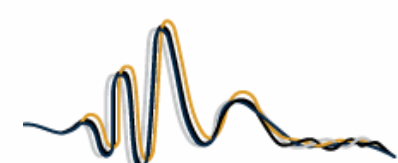
- ❖ Participating in the new creation brings the privilege of representing God's Kingdom work on earth. We are ambassadors that are sent by the King, bound by the King's message, and commissioned with making known the King's glory.
 - ✦ What is the focus of the message that we are entrusted to make known through our proclamation and lifestyle?

discussion questions

- ❖ What was your first experience with race? Recall to the best of your ability your first memory of becoming aware of race and racial differences.
- ❖ Describe a time when you were misunderstood, or even criticized for being different or having a different cultural lens. What concerns or fears do you have about being misunderstood while participating in this group?
- ❖ How have your religious views and spiritual journey influenced your ideas about race and how you see those from a different race?
- ❖ Has your understanding about race changed over the years? How and why?

reflections

- ❖ Before you conclude the day, observe and share how you are reacting.
- ❖ How can the group function as a whole to make it more comfortable for you as an individual to speak up and share? Are there any additional rules needed?
- ❖ Share one expectation of how you hope this group will impact you as an individual.



your next steps

Prior to the next session, read “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This can be found after the introduction in *Letters to a Birmingham Jail: A Response to the Words and Dreams of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

Answer these questions as you read:

❖ In his letter, how did Dr. King compare negative peace and positive peace? Can you think of a current example to illustrate his point?

❖ What does Kings say is the difference between a just law and an unjust law? Based on this definition, can you think of a potentially unjust law in our country?

❖ Dr. King claims, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly” (Loritts 20). If this is true, then in what ways have you and/or your ethnic group been harmed by the racial injustices done to other ethnic groups?

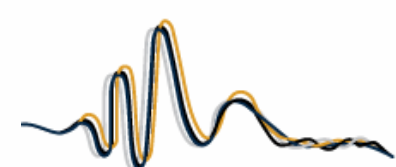
❖ Knowing what we know now, what would have been an appropriate response by the churches of this nation in response to the racial injustice that Dr. King and his followers were experiencing?

prayer

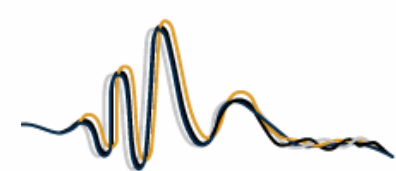
❖ Make sure you write down the names of each member of your group and pray for them this week.

experience

Watch a historical documentary or film that deals with racial injustice. Visit www.wearethreaded.org/resources for ideas.



notes



SESSION TWO:

homing beacon

We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

// Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter From a Birmingham Jail"

session overview:

The Holy Spirit serves as our "homing beacon" who guides us towards the kingdom and righteousness. The Holy Spirit enlightens us to care about what Jesus cares about.

Micah 6:8 shows us what God cares about and what He wants us to care about as well.

session aims:

ORIENT: Recognize that contending against injustice is part of God's vision for His people.

EXPLORE: "What role do Christians play in standing against racial injustice?"

ENGAGE: Continue storytelling about your own experience with racial injustice.

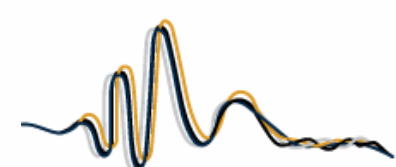
THREADED VALUE IN FOCUS: COMPASSIONATE & COURAGEOUS CONTENDING

THREADED

key text

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Micah 6:8 (ESV)



explore the scriptures

CONTEXT MATTERS. Micah prophesied to a divided and disintegrating nation during the rise of the Neo-Assyrian empire and up to and beyond the conquering and captivity of Israel (722 BC). Micah was fiercely concerned about the poor and middle classes being harshly oppressed by the wealth upper classes who were defended by corrupt magistrates and self-serving prophets and priests. Micah's resounding message is for spiritual reform and the accompany works.

- ❖ Read Micah 6:1-8.
 - ❖ Why could it be important for us to consider our audience when discussing racial issues?
 - ❖ Why is Christian involvement in justice so important to God?
 - ❖ How do justice, kindness and humility work together and why are they a requirement of God?
 - ❖ What could be some of the consequences of the lack of humility in the midst of the racial injustice conversation?
- ❖ For a gospel-fulfilled context, read Matthew 25:31-40. At Jesus's glorious return as reigning king people will be separated out as His based upon what criteria?

skills building

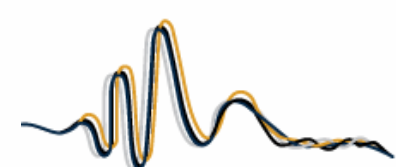
What did you read, see or hear from the list of sources below that impacted you and/or your thoughts about race this week? How did it affect you mentally, emotionally or spiritually?

News | Social Media | Historical Events | Readings | Bible Study | Devotion | Personal Encounters
(Review Group Rules and Guidelines from page 7)

discussion questions

Based on "Letters From a Birmingham Jail" by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (after introduction in Letters to a Birmingham Jail)

- ❖ "If I have said anything in this letter that overstates the truth and indicates an unreasonable impatience, I beg you to forgive me. If I have said anything that understates the truth and indicates my having a patience that allows me to settle for anything less than brotherhood, I beg God to forgive me" (Loritts 39).
 - ❖ Was there anything in this letter that was over or under stated?
 - ❖ Was there any part of this letter that moved you more than others?
- ❖ As a group make a list of historical racial injustices you all can agree are sins in the eyes of God.
- ❖ In hindsight we are able to recognize several racial injustices practiced legally in this country by non-Christians and Christians alike.
 - ❖ How did Christians justify these actions in the past?
 - ❖ What actions can we take to ensure that we don't allow ourselves to justify injustice?
- ❖ In describing negative peace versus positive peace, Dr. King wrote "We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive" (Loritts 28).
 - ❖ What hidden racial tensions are below the surface of today's society?
 - ❖ How can we bring these tensions to light in a productive way?
- ❖ In the midst of a mighty struggle to rid our nation of racial and economic injustice, I have heard many ministers say: "Those are social issues, with which the gospel has no real concern" (Loritts 34).
 - ❖ Is the race problem a gospel issue or merely a social issue? Why or why not?



ministry/church leaders

“I felt that the white ministers, priests, and rabbis of the South would be among our strongest allies. Instead, some have been outright opponents, refusing to understand the freedom movement and misrepresenting its leaders; all too many others have been more cautious than courageous and have remained silent behind the anesthetizing security of stained-glass windows” (Loritts 33).

- ❖ Do you believe white ministers and churches have gotten better in their response to racial injustice?
- ❖ In what ways can the “white church” respond today in order to inspire confidence in people of color?
- ❖ In what ways can the “ethnic church” respond today in order to stimulate action among those “white churches” that would be considered inactive.

“So often the contemporary church is a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. So often it is an arch defender of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church’s silent—and often even vocal—sanction of things as they are” (Loritts 35)

What are your thoughts when you read something like this?

reflections

- ❖ Before you conclude the day, observe and share how you are reacting.

your next steps

Prior to the next session, read LTABJ Chapter 5: “Why We Can’t Wait for the Multiethnic Church” by Bryan Loritts. Answer these questions as you read:

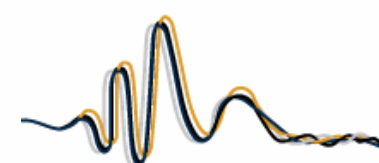
- ❖ What are some of the advances in race relations and freedoms that Loritts raises as proof of change in our country?
- ❖ What is the one “brick” that Loritts believes still lingers from the Jim Crow era?
- ❖ How does Loritts describe passivity in this chapter?
- ❖ How aware are you of your surroundings in reference to race? Do you count the number of people who look like you the way Loritts did as a child? If so, why?

prayer

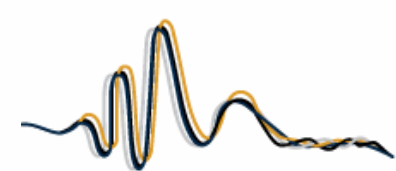
This week look for injustice that is happening outside your ethnic community and pray for that community. Pray that God will show you a way to come alongside them.

experience

Visit a local museum or monument that is connected to our country’s racial history. Record your thoughts.



notes



SESSION THREE:

the destination

*"If you do not like the diverse church, you are going to hate heaven."
// John Bryson- Letters To a Birmingham Jail*

session overview:

Next stop, Heaven! Well, not exactly. In order for us to bring to fruition the work of the Holy Spirit on earth, we need to catch a glimpse of heaven. By envisioning the ultimate outcome God has intended for humanity, we become more aware of the work left to be done and can find the energy to press forward when things are difficult.

session aims:

ORIENT: Recognize awareness of how racial reconciliation fits in the Kingdom of Heaven.

EXPLORE: "How should the vision of race interactions in heaven affect our approach towards race interactions now?"

ENGAGE: Continue storytelling about friendships with people of different races. Share the personal value and expectations of racial reconciliation conversations.

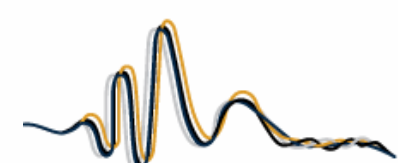
THREADED VALUE IN FOCUS: VISION OF DIVERSITY

key text

"After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'

And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.'"

Revelation 7:9-12 (ESV)



explore the scriptures

Revelation 7:9-12

- ❖ Consider the future picture of the heavenly gathering of God's people.
 - ❖ What are they doing?
 - ❖ Who is included?
 - ❖ How are they distinguished?
- ❖ Consider by comparison the reality of the current church. Reflect upon a church you are familiar with such as the church in which you grew up, your current home church, churches you have visited over an extended period of time, or the church in North America.
 - ❖ What are they doing?
 - ❖ Who is included?
 - ❖ How are they distinguished?
 - ❖ Describe the differences between the picture described in the passage above and the present reality of your congregation.
 - ❖ What current responsibility does the local church have to strive towards her heavenly reality?

skills building

What did you read, see or hear from the list of sources below that impacted you and/or your thoughts about race this week? How did it affect you mentally, emotionally or spiritually?

News | Social Media | Historical Events | Readings | Bible Study | Devotion | Personal Encounters
(Review Group Rules and Guidelines from page 7)

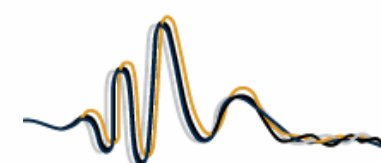
T H R E A D E D

discussion questions

Based on LTABJ, Chapter 5: "Why We Can't Wait for the Multiethnic Church" by Bryan Loritts

"Our nation is rapidly becoming more and more ethnically diverse, while the church of Jesus Christ has been entrenched in homogeneity" (Loritts 124).

- ❖ Do you agree with this statement?
- ❖ What examples have you seen to support your answer?
- ❖ The Gospel has never found a culture it could not infiltrate. The past and present narratives of each culture determine which part of the Gospel is most influential. For example, in a culture traumatized by the plight of slavery, the gospel of redemption becomes the perfect bridge to salvation.
 - ❖ Think about your own culture. What are some of the cultural narratives?
 - ❖ Which part of the Gospel most strongly impacts that narrative? Share with the group.
 - ❖ Why is it beneficial for Christians to understand other cultural narratives?
 - ❖ How does it affect their ability to fulfill God's vision of a multiethnic heavenly church?
 - ❖ What are some ways to discover other cultural narratives?
- ❖ If it applies, talk about your first friendship with the member of another race. What was it like? Was it different? Was it difficult to make that first friend?
- ❖ How did your experience as well as your other experiences with interracial friendships shape your understanding about race? How did these friendships influence your view on your own race? How did these friendships influence your views on other races?



ministry/church leaders

“Statistics say that by the year 2050 America, for the first time in her history, will become majority minority.” (Loritts, pp 123)

- ❖ How then is the American Church uniquely positioned to achieve Gods vision of a diverse heavenly church on earth?
- ❖ How is it responding to this opportunity?

reflections

- ❖ Before you conclude the day, process your Threaded experience so far.
- ❖ What were some of your reactions to last week’s conversations?
- ❖ What awareness have you gained?
- ❖ How would you know that this experience has positively changed you?

your next steps

Prior to the next session, read LTABJ Chapter 8: “Why We Can’t Wait for Christ Exalting Diversity” by Charlie Dates. Answer these questions as you read:

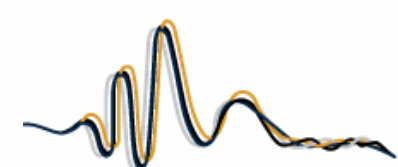
- ❖ Take a personal inventory on the following:
 - ❖ What authors do you read?
 - ❖ What theologians, mentors, teachers, pastors have you learned from?
 - ❖ What church do you attend?
 - ❖ What race are the last ten people on your text or phone call list? How diverse is your list?
 - ❖ How could diversifying these areas of your life aid you in contending courageously and compassionately for others?

- ❖ “It was King’s conviction that the movement needed those outside the black community to aid its cause, and that the only successful appeal for justice had to come on the basis of the Scripture” (Loritts 172).
 - ❖ Who do you know that is outside the black or any other racially different community that is working to aid the other’s cause?

- ❖ “I want to put forth a clarion call for biblical exposition on race and the gospel, the involvement of the marginalized in our Christian institutions, and a bolder, more aggressive attack on the lethargic pace at which the church is moving toward ethnic diversity.” (Loritts 172-173).
 - ❖ How often does your church speak about race and the gospel? How do they do it?

prayer

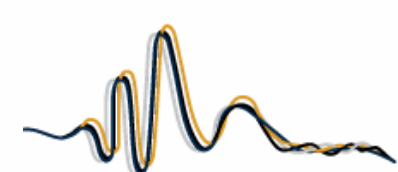
Pray that God would bring people from different tribes, tongues, and nations into your community and that they would be drawn into relationships with Christians.



experience

As a group or as an individual visit a church with a different ethnic majority than the one you attend. Take note of the style and theme of the message and music. How is it the same or different than your own church? How did you feel in the church?

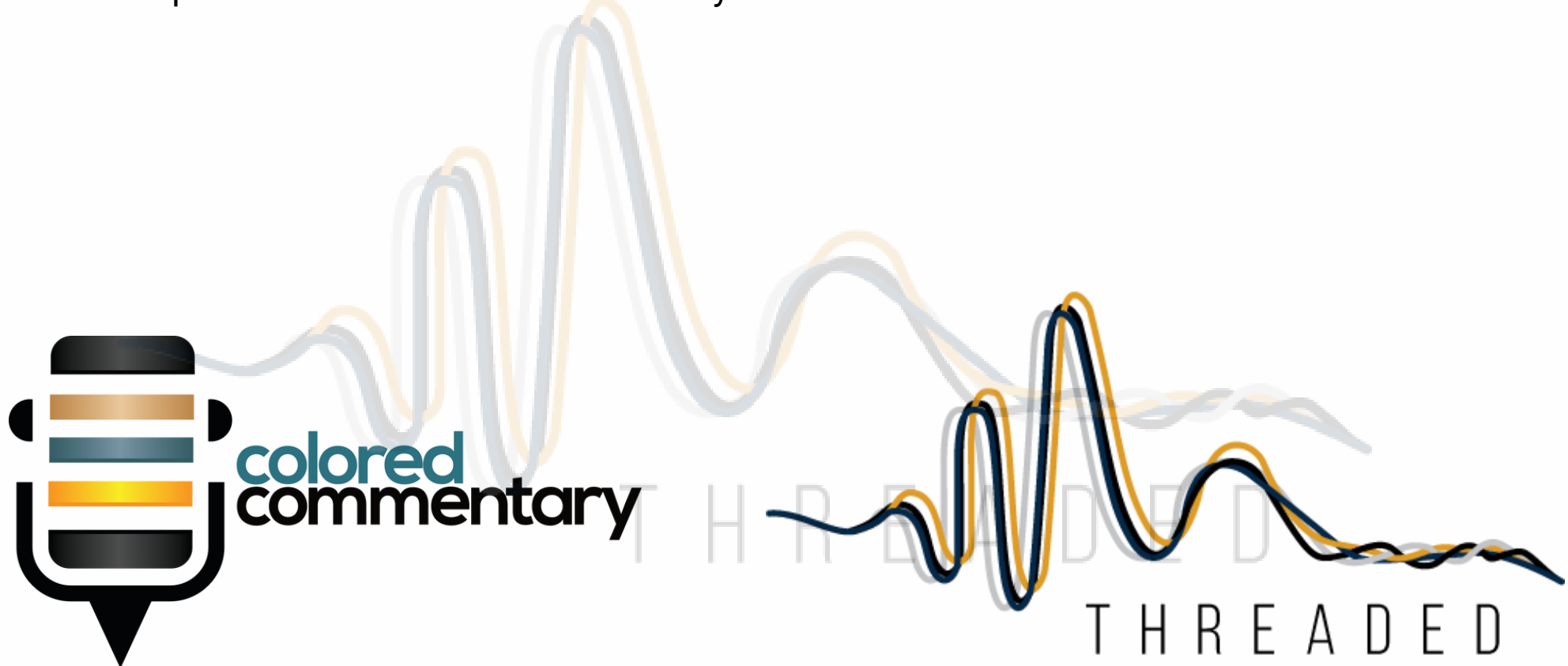
notes



More Resources

THREADED is an organization committed to resourcing you with gospel-based tools you can use to bring light and love to racial conflict in our society. We inspire relationships, reconciliation and collaborative action among the diverse body of Christ.

We have several resources (many of them free) for you. If you are interested in continuing your growth, follow the podcast "Colored Commentary" and other social media outlets and check out the website.



coloredcommentary.com

wearethreaded.org



THANK YOU !

