

Removing Racial Barriers
The Difference – Part 5 of 6
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Jesus came to set people free

Luke 4:18–21 The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. ²⁰ He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. And the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ He began by saying to them, "Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled." HCSB

One way Christians carry out his purpose is by tearing down racial barriers

Acts 14:26–28 From there they sailed back to Antioch where they had been entrusted to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. ²⁷ After they arrived and gathered the church together, they reported everything God had done with them and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸ And they spent a considerable time with the disciples. HCSB

What is a Gentile?

As a Noun...

- a person of a non-Jewish nation or of non-Jewish faith
- pagan

As an Adjective...

- of or relating to the nations at large as distinguished from the Jews

-Merriam-Webster

"Ethnos": Nations, People (Greek New Testament)

Acts 15:1 Some men came down from Judea and began to teach the brothers...

"Unless you are circumcised according to the custom prescribed by Moses, you cannot be saved." CSB

Acts 15:4-10 When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, the apostles, and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. ⁵ But some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses." ⁶ The apostles and the elders gathered to consider this matter. ⁷ After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you are aware that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the gospel message and believe. ⁸ And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us. ⁹ He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now then, why are you testing God by putting a yoke on the disciples' necks that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? CSB

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Acts 15:11-12 On the contrary, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way they are.”¹² The whole assembly became silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul describe all the signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

God makes no distinction between peoples

Who were the specific people who worked to tear down racial barriers and overthrow open slavery in the modern world?

Racial Barriers

“The Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. is, without a doubt, among the most influential and successful advocates of racial equality and human rights. A survey of his sermons, speeches, and writings makes clear that King was motivated and shaped by the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Christian Bible.”

-John Dickerson

The End of Open Slavery

- **Harriet Tubman**
- **William Wilberforce**

“Wilberforce remains credited, more than any other individual, with ending the slave trade in the vast British Empire, including India—which had an estimated eight to nine million indigenous slaves in the Hindu caste system.”

-John Dickerson

- **The Quakers**

“If you read your Bibles, you will see that slavery is declared evil by God. Anyone who claims to be a Christian while owning a slave is not a true follower of Christ. And all those who sit by while others are enslaved also cannot claim to be loving their neighbor as themselves, as Jesus taught. Therefore, as Christians, we give our lives and fortunes to end this evil in our land.”

-John Dickerson

Revelation 7:9 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... ESV

My next step today is to...

- ☐ Respond to the gospel of grace for the first time
- ☐ Confess any prejudice, superiority, or racial barriers I've had
- ☐ Forgive any hurts I've experienced from prejudice, and work through any bitterness