



VICTORIOUS
EDUCATOR
MINISTRIES



PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Discussion Guide

May God richly bless you and your partner as you work through this discussion guide. Our ultimate goal as believers is to point others to Jesus. He is really the only solution. Christian educators can be a witness to others as we forge cross-ethnic friendships for the purpose of combating the prejudices and biases that exist in our country.

Jackie

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
Galatians 3:28



PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Guidelines

Victorious Educator Ministries (VEM) is a forum to support, empower, ignite, and encourage educators around the world to live out their Christian faith in the workplace—in front of kids, parents, and colleagues. Our Christian walk must be characterized by love and acceptance of all groups of people. As a result, we must seek to understand the backgrounds and cultures of those we serve. One way we can do this is to engage in open and honest dialogue with a fellow sister/brother in Christ.

As you begin your journey with a purposeful partnership, please abide by the guidelines listed below.

- Commit this partnership to the Lord. Pray for His blessing and guidance for the relationship.
- Have an open mind and heart. Listen and seek to understand. Ask questions respectfully.
- Let go of defensiveness.
- Be respectful. It isn't about feeling respect; it is about showing respect.
- Be honest while maintaining a posture of kindness.
- Practice humility.
- Provide assistance when requested.
- Give encouragement.
- Support each other through prayer.
- Keep ALL conversations confidential.
- Refrain from political discussions. Keep the focus on the cause of Christ.
- Connect regularly. We recommend connecting one or two times a month.
- Follow the discussion guides for the first five meetings. Please begin and end with prayer. Prayers have been included, but feel free to use your own words and speak from your heart. It isn't about reading a prayer but communing with our Heavenly Father and inviting Him into our conversations.

Relationships take time. The more you interact, the better. The discussion guides are only meant to get you started. It is our desire that your relationship grows into a purposeful partnership that increases understanding, breaks down barriers, and combats any form of racism. All children and adults in our learning organizations deserve to feel valued and accepted. As we learn and grow together, we will not only be better for those around us, we will be better for ourselves. May God bless you and your partner as you draw near to Him and develop a lifelong friendship.

Note: If at any time you feel your partnership is not working, please let us know, and we will find you a new partner. No questions will be asked. We are all human, and sometimes things just don't work out. Please go to www.victoriouseducator.com/purposefulpartnerships.

Discussion Guide

Meeting 1

Purpose: To get to know each other on a personal level.

Introductions, please!

Opening Prayer:

Dear Father, you are our Lord, our Holy one, our Creator, and our King. We desire to love you, listen to your voice, and hold fast to you. We give this time to you. May we be pleasing in your sight. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to make a new Christian friend and to explore all you have to teach us through each other. Bless our conversation, and draw us near to you. We love you and praise you.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Begin this session by reading through and agreeing to the guidelines listed above.

Potential Questions:

1. Where do you live, and what is your job?
2. Who are the members of your family?
3. What do you enjoy doing outside of work?
4. What's your ethnic and religious heritage?
5. What are you hoping to gain from this partnership?

Please ensure both partners have equal time to share. If other questions arise, feel free to stray from or add to this list. The goal is to begin to know each other and form a connection. Remember, relationships take time.

Scripture: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22*

What might this Scripture mean to you regarding this new partnership?

Set up your next time to visit. Make an appointment!

Closing Prayer:

Mighty God, we praise you! We exalt you for everything in Heaven and earth is yours. You knew this partnership was going to occur long before we did. Thank you for the opportunity to learn about each other. We dedicate this new relationship to you. Help us to be open to share as we grow closer. May your Holy Spirit be ever present during our time together. We look forward to how you are going to work through this relationship.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Notes:



Discussion Guide

Meeting 2

Purpose: To get to know each other on a personal level.

Let's learn more about each other!

Opening Prayer:

Dear Lord, as the prophet Isaiah claims, you are my God! I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done marvelous things, things planned long ago. We thank you for your provision and your sovereignty. We know this new relationship has passed through your fingers, and we dedicate this time to you. Be present in our conversation, guide our thoughts, and fill our hearts with your love.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Potential Questions:

1. What are some of your favorite foods?
2. How does your family celebrate Christmas?
3. Where did you grow up? Describe your childhood.
4. How do you feel your upbringing has impacted your view of racism?
5. Where did you go to college? Recount some of your memorable experiences.
6. What do you like the most about your job?

Please ensure both partners have equal time to share. If other questions arise, feel free to stray from or add to this list. The goal is to begin to know each other and form a connection. Remember, relationships take time.

Scripture: *A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.* **John 13:34-35**

What might this Scripture mean to you as you interact with people who have opinions and views different than yours?

Set up your next time to visit. Make an appointment!

Closing Prayer:

God you are so good. You are faithful in all you do. You love righteousness and justice. We are blessed by your unending love. We thank you for the experiences you have provided that shape who we are, but we know we have much to learn. We are grateful for the transforming power of the Holy Spirit and look forward to growing in our walk with you. As we prepare to talk next time, break down any barriers that may exist so our hearts will be open to your truths. We love you.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Notes:



Discussion Guide

Meeting 3

Purpose: To discover experiences with racism.

Let's start talking!

Opening Prayer:

Mighty God, in your hand is the life of every creature and of all mankind. You are righteous in all your ways and loving toward all you have made. We praise you, Lord. Today we begin some tough conversations. Help us to lean into the uncomfortableness knowing that your mercy abounds. Help us to let go of pride, or shame, or anything that gets in the way of true transparency. Give us a spirit of grace. We seek to be more like Jesus. Bless our time together.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Potential Questions:

1. What's your earliest memory of becoming aware that some people looked different from you?
2. What's your earliest memory of becoming aware of racism?
3. Do you have friends from different ethnic groups? Describe those relationships.
4. How would you define racism?
5. What experiences (or lack thereof) have you had regarding racial bias or inequity?

Scripture: *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Hebrews 12:1-2*

What things do you do to help keep your eyes fixed on Jesus?

Set up your next time to visit. Make an appointment!

Closing Prayer:

God of mercy and grace, we honor you. You are our everything, and you are enough. We know that no matter what, you will never leave or forsake us. Your faithfulness endures forever. Thank you for our time together and for the chance to share our experiences. Forgive us for where we have failed to see others as you do. Fill us with your love, and help us to see each person through the eyes of your son, Jesus. We thank you for Jesus. Without Him we would all be lost. Speak to our hearts this week and prepare us for our next conversation. May we be honoring to you in all we say and do.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Notes:



Discussion Guide

Meeting 4

Purpose: To discover ways to combat racism.

Let's build bridges!

Opening Prayer:

Our gracious heavenly Father, we praise you this day. We acknowledge that you are in charge of all things. We thank you that your plans are for us to prosper and that you desire to give us a hope and a future. We know that our future involves serving you and loving others. Guide our conversation today. Fill us with a desire to learn and understand what we can do to break down the barriers that divide us. We commit this time to you. Use it to draw us closer to you and to each other.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Potential Questions:

1. Do you feel white people have advantages over people from other races? Why or why not?
2. What's one way you think your life would have been different had you been born another race?
3. What is one way you think you could connect with people who have differing views about race?
4. What experience have your students had with racism?
5. Is there anything, no matter how small, that you are willing to commit to doing to end racism that you are not already doing?

Scripture: *Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.* **Romans 12:9**

How do you balance loving others and at the same time taking a stance against evil?

Set up your next time to visit. Make an appointment!

Closing Prayer:

Precious Father, we are humbled to come into your presence. How great you are! You are beyond our understanding, and yet you love us. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, and help us to be obedient to your call on our lives. Give us courage to do what is right. Lift us up. May all that we say and do bring glory to your name, O Lord. We thank you for the opportunity to join you in your work. Fill us with your love so we may love others. Continue to bless this partnership as we seek you with all our hearts.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Notes:



Discussion Guide

Meeting 5

Purpose: To continue the dialogue.

Let's grow together!

Opening Prayer:

Our Father, how great are your works! Your righteousness endures forever. You, Lord, are gracious and compassionate. As your chosen people, holy and dearly loved, helps us to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Give us wisdom and discernment as we seek out ways to create learning environments free from bias and prejudice. We desire to shine your light into dark places so others will come to know you. Guide our dialogue, and give us courage to do what you ask us to do. We love you.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Potential Questions:

1. How is your school addressing the issues of racism?
2. What can you do in your classroom to create an inclusive and accepting learning environment free from prejudice?
3. What books have you read to increase your understanding of issues surrounding the racial divide?
4. Talk about a time when someone else said or did something racist and how you interrupted it.
5. Talk about a time when someone else did or said something racist and you didn't speak up and why.
6. What is one thing you have learned by being part of this partnership?

Scripture: *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Romans 12:2

What are some ways you try to keep your mind on things of God versus letting the world influence you?

Set up your next time to visit. Make an appointment!

Closing Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, there is none like you. We are nothing without you. We thank you for your presence and guidance in our conversations. We thank you for the gift of friendship, and we pray Lord that you will continue to bless this relationship. Guide us in our next steps as we continue to grow as Christian educators. Help us to let our light shine so others will see our good works and glorify your name. May we bring glory and honor to you.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Notes:

Next Steps

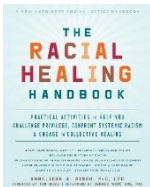
VEM will be conducting some follow-up ZOOM sessions for the purpose of debriefing as a community. Announcements for these sessions will be posted in the VEM Facebook Group in addition to email. VEM will also be posting **Topic Tuesday** in the Victorious Educator Facebook Group. The topic will focus on learnings from **Purposeful Partnerships**.

By now we hope the relationship with your partner is well underway, and we pray the two of you will continue to meet on a regular basis. Keep the conversation going, build the relationship, and actively seek out ways to not only create classroom environments free of racial bias but classrooms that encourage equality and acceptance of all ethnic groups.

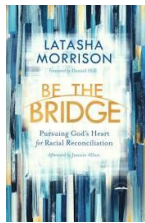
Highlighted below are some potential next steps for your partnership.

1. Continue an informal dialogue and prayer time.
2. Discuss topics that your school is addressing.
3. Debrief YouTube lectures.
4. Participate in a formal or informal book study.

Some resources you may want to consider reading and discussing together are listed below.



<https://www.newharbinger.com/search/site/Racial%20Healing%20Handbook>



<https://bethebridge.com/>



<https://store.tonyevans.org/>



Jesus' prayer for you!

John 17:20-24

"I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.

"I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me. Father, I want these whom you have given me to be with me where I am. Then they can see all the glory you gave me because you loved me even before the world began!"