

## **Practical Skills For Developing Deep Cross Cultural Relationships**

**Key Point:** A God-honoring church should preach, promote, and provide a context for understanding and living out the “one-another Scriptures.” These are scriptures that emphasize loving one-another, being kind to one another, and giving preference to one-another. We should learn to take into account differences of culture, context, condition, and to value the contributions of other ethnic groups and cultures within in our Christian community. We should do this in a way that does not minimize or maximize their unique cultural existence but instead, seeking to promote Jesus Christ and His agenda within their culture. Relating cross culturally should lead to a focus on unity in Christ without ignoring our real and valuable cultural differences. When our relationships are diverse among various ethnic groups and demonstrate love it promotes a powerful message to the world—that the love we share in Christ values our uniqueness while bringing us together to glorify God together. Let us consider the key ways to promote this accordingly. (Ephesians 4:1-6, Romans 12:9-21,15:7-12, Colossians 3:12-17)

### **I. Embrace the sad reality that racism is alive and well.**

- A. Embrace the fact that racism is the result of human sin.
- B. Study the impact of racism on the people group you are connecting too.
- C. Learn and take ownership of your own personal bias in relation to that ethnic group.
- D. Determine the origin of your personal bias in relation to that ethnic group.
- E. Study the political views, media promotions, and personal experiences in relation to the ethnic group you are connecting to and bring them under the scrutiny of the Word of God.

### **II. Learn to take into account differences of culture, context, condition of the ethnic group in relation to your own and respect and appreciate accordingly.**

- A. Evaluate the cultural practices of the ethnic group you are connecting to.
- B. Where their cultural practices do not compromise or contradict the biblical standards there must be respect on your part.
- C. Understand what contributions the particular ethnic group you are connecting to has brought and seek to appreciate.
- D. Do not seek to “correct” practices of others simply because they differ from your own.
- E. Be biblical without being blind to ethnic differences by not minimizing cultural difference or maximizing cultural differences but promoting Jesus Christ and His agenda accordingly.

### **III. Prepare for Misunderstandings**

- A. Even with good intentions, misunderstandings will occur.
- B. Words and their meanings are misunderstood and misinterpreted; Body language is taken the wrong way.
- C. When misunderstandings happen you should address the offense immediately and bridge the gap of misunderstanding accordingly.
- D. Seek forgiveness for the offense and explain your intentions.
- E. Learn how to say something in a way that isn’t culturally offensive, using appropriate words to articulate your message. Learn what certain gestures mean and the appropriate gestures to use. Don’t run from these misunderstandings—embrace them and learn from them!

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**Use The Connect Principle:**

- C-Consider the people group you are connecting to.
- O-Omit stereotypes knowing that it can only create discord within the relationship.
- N-Notice the central issues that need to be understood to build the relationship.
- N-Notice the central issues that need to be understood so that relationship is not broken.
- E-Eliminate any parenting mentalities.
- C-Confront all sin with compassion and care.
- T-Treat the person the way you would want to be treated.

**Key Point:** “Let us respect our differences while building on Oneness in Christ.”