



Melinda Bobo: New Frontiers of Embracing the ‘Other’

Open with Prayer:

God of heaven and earth, we gather in your presence.

Speak to us with grace and truth and pour out your love upon us.

May we come together in this time of learning and sharing as people of your Spirit.

We give you thanks, O God, for every blessing and spiritual gift you have given us.

May we use them to be a source of blessing in your world to the glory of your name. Amen.

Watch Video pausing for discussion

You are welcome to pause the video for discussion as you feel appropriate.

A suggested stopping point is at timestamp 21:34.

The following questions are suggestions for discussion.

What can Star Trek tell us about call?

Our call is to go boldly, seek out. It is also not being afraid of what we’re going to find. Is this the call your church recognizes? How close to the edge of the frontier does your call take you?

People of the Book or People of the Story. How does Melinda’s teaching of this idea speak to you?

Melinda tells us that our God is the God of Truth and the God of Love. In what ways does our story reflect this?

Embracing the ‘Other’

In your community who would be considered ‘other’? What has your interaction with them been?

In what ways does “God’s story for us” inform how we are to embrace others?

How do we make ‘them’ into us? How does this idea of ‘story’ help us?

Being the ‘other’

As Melinda relates her story of being the ‘other’, how has your understanding changed? How might this change your perspective with people who have been ‘othered’ in your community, your church, or the world?

If you are comfortable doing so, share a story of when you were the ‘other.’

Being the Oppressor

In what ways are we the oppressors even if we don’t know it? What about systems that we are part of that oppress others? Or us?

Does our church system move us closer to the frontier of the Kingdom of God or is it holding us back?

What our maps tell us

What is the skewed message of the world map of the British Empire that Melinda shares? How is this reflected in the real world? What are the maps of the world telling us?

What do our maps tell us about how we see the rest of the world? And the people in the rest of the world?

How does the rest of the world see us?

Fixing it

What messes do you see in your community? If you could wave a magic wand to fix it, what would you change?

“The US Government’s mistreatment of the Native American People in the United States may have been greatly exaggerated.” How do these sorts of statements not help the efforts of reconciliation and fixing the problem? What is a better way? How do we make it right? Melinda tells us, “The benefit you accepted came with that price tag.” What generational benefits do you enjoy at the cost of another’s generational oppression? How do we heal this generational rift? What roles do Justice and Mercy play?

The Bible Tells Me So

What does the Bible have to say to us about this message of oppression? What does God call us to? How does living our lives in relationship with God inform how we are to treat others?

What is the depth of your experience with scripture? How has it changed you?

Since we are called to be the Body of Christ, called to be Jesus in the world, what is our response to oppression, prejudice, systems that hurt people, and a history that doesn’t always reflect our God’s calling?

How do we make God’s story of Truth and Love manifest in every single life on this planet? What is the first small step?

Close with Prayer:

Good and Gracious God, we ask your Spirit of Truth to be with us as we leave this place of study and prayer. May our joys and hopes follow us and our adventuring continue to enlighten us, bringing us closer to you and to one another. Amen.