

THE BIG STORY (FOUR CIRCLES) & YOUR ETHNIC STORY

Summary: *Coaching others to share their ethnic stories in light of the gospel.*

STEP 1: Assess your awareness of your ethnic story.

What is your ethnic background?

When was the first time you realized you were _____?

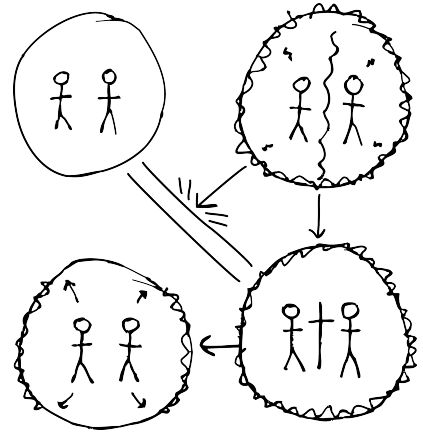
- Be as specific as you can. For example:
 - *"I'm Scottish and German American" instead of "I'm white"*
 - *"I'm black, descended from slavery" or "I'm Nigerian-American" instead of "I'm black"*
 - *"I'm Taiwanese American" instead of "I'm Asian"*
- Speaking in terms of specific ethnic background versus macro-racial background is helpful as we affirm redemptive ethnic identity for all people in Christ.
- Think about when your ancestors/family first planted roots in the United States—whether it was 15 or 250 years ago, or if they lived here long before any people immigrated to the US.

STEP 2: Invite Jesus into your ethnic story.

Spend some time praying and asking God to open new doors in how you understand your own cultural story, to heal the parts of you that need healing, and to help you hear his voice. Ask 2-3 trusted prayer partners to be praying for you as you engage.

Circle 1 and 2:

- What are your general emotions or thoughts towards being your ethnicity? What words come to mind?
- Have there been specific moments or memories in your life where you really loved being your ethnicity? Times when you wished you weren't?
- Say more: What's the specific story? Identify a moment that has the most weight/significance for you.



Circle 3:

- How do you think Jesus feels about that moment? Has Jesus ever said anything or shown anything to you about that moment?
 - *If their theology indicates that they have a broken view of Jesus or the Father, jump to a quick scripture study of Luke 15:11-32 or John 15.*
- If Jesus were to be present that moment, what would he want to say to you? How would he respond?
- Take a moment and listen: Does he want to reframe anything? Want you to confess anything? Are there lies you believe about yourself that he wants you to break off? Truths to replace them instead? Gifts He wants to give you?

Circle 4:

- How does Jesus want to invite (or maybe has been inviting you) to use your ethnicity to bring healing to others?
- How does he want to affirm how he's already used you?
- Are there particular people he's inviting you to love, be intentional with, or respond to?
- Allow room for confession, repentance or commitment

STEP 3: Explore your story.

How is God redeeming your ethnic identity? (Based on Four Circles).

<p>1 \ BEAUTY</p> <p>Growing up, what were the good, comfortable, and/or beautiful things you enjoyed about your ethnicity? (These tend to be cultural.)</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"I grew up appreciating the depth of sacrifice my immigrant parents made to provide for me—they really care for me."</i> • <i>"I love the dancing and celebration my extended family of 100 brought to family gatherings."</i> • <i>"I didn't notice my ethnic background too much. It wasn't a problem; and it was kind of neutral."</i> 	<p>2 \ BROKENNESS</p> <p>How did/have you become aware of areas of brokenness in your ethnicity? (cultural brokenness: idols and sin tendencies; racial brokenness: broken relationships with other cultures—personally, historically, in your family)</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"I've seen and experienced how family expectations, criticism and pressure have led to anxiety and self-hatred in my culture."</i> • <i>"I remember not being allowed into a group because of my skin color."</i> • <i>"I remember a difficult conversation, interaction, name-calling incident, or classroom lesson that made me cringe and wish I was something else."</i> • <i>"I remember learning about white privilege when..."</i>
<p>4 \ RESTORATION</p> <p>How is Jesus sending you out to do mission and empowering others to do the same? (Who are the new people God is calling you to reach; how is God using you to bless those who you felt no previous authority or desire to reach out to?)</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"I've been sharing how God has been healing my ethnicity, and it's helped me share the gospel with my community."</i> • <i>"I've been learning about how to steward who I am in fighting injustice and pursuing systemic change."</i> • <i>"I've been pursuing real, reconciling relationships with friends who are ethnically different than me."</i> 	<p>3 \ REDEMPTION</p> <p>How is Jesus redeeming your ethnic identity? (showing you the goodness he created in your culture; redeeming the idolatries in your culture; healing broken relationships with other people groups)</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"I'm grown to see my skin & my culture as beautiful after thinking it was not..."</i> • <i>"I've heard God tell me I am good as a _____ man/woman when I thought I was unredeemable."</i> • <i>"I had a powerful encounter of experiencing forgiveness towards/from a _____ friend."</i>

ETHNIC STORY WORKSHEET

<p>1 \ BEAUTY Growing up, what were the good, comfortable, and/or beautiful things you enjoyed about your ethnicity? (These tend to be cultural.)</p>	<p>2 \ BROKENNESS How did/have you become aware of areas of brokenness in your ethnicity? (cultural brokenness: idols and sin tendencies; racial brokenness: broken relationships with other cultures—personally, historically, in your family)</p>
<p>4 \ SENT OUT TO HEAL How is Jesus sending you out to do mission and empowering others to do the same? (Who are the new people God is calling you to reach; how is God using you to bless those who you felt no previous authority or desire to reach out to?)</p>	<p>3 \ REDEMPTION How is Jesus redeeming your ethnic identity? (showing you the goodness he created in your culture; redeeming the idolatries in your culture; healing broken relationships with other people groups)</p>