

RaCiSM ALeRT

Ask group members to discuss:

- Define *racism*. (You may wish to provide **dictionaries** and to select the definition most meaningful to group members.) Compare *racism* to *prejudice*, *bigotry* and *discrimination*.
- Why is racism evil? What does it do to people? to self-esteem? to love?
- Why does racism exist? What does it do to those who are racist?
- What do you think Jesus would do about racism?
- What races are represented in our society? our community? our church?
- Who among us has experienced first-hand the effects of racism? How does it feel? What does it look like?
- Where do you think racism exists in our society? in our community? in our church? in our school?
- How can we fight racism as individuals? as a class? as a church? (List answers on **chalkboard or newsprint**.)

GROUPS: GOOD AND BaD

Divide **chalkboard or newsprint** into two columns. Label one column *Pros* and the other

Cons. Ask:

- What are the pros and cons of having groups to which you belong?
- What are the positives and what are the negatives of having boundaries between groups?
- When have we experienced being inside a group? When have we experienced being outside a group?
- How can we understand the power of "belongingness" without succumbing to the hurtfulness of exclusivity?

SeXiSM

Ask group members to define the word *sexism*. If they need help, suggest: *Sexism is the unfair treatment of people because they are female or because they are male.*

Invite group members to suggest examples of sexism as a volunteer lists their examples on **chalkboard or newsprint**. Discuss:

- When have we been the object of sexism? How did we feel at these times? How did we handle it?
- Why is sexism destructive? What affect does sexism have on people's self-image? on their opportunities to use their gifts?
- What is the purpose of sexism? What does sexism try to protect? to achieve?
- Where might we be guilty of sexism in our church? our group? our schools? our homes?
- How do you think God feels about sexism? What might God be asking us to do about sexism?

LOViNG THE ENeMY

Distribute **paper** and **pencils**. Ask each group member to write down the names of:

- One person you consider to be your *enemy*.
- One religious, political or national group you consider to be your *enemy*.

Discuss:

- What is an *enemy*? Why do we consider others our enemies?
- Why do you think Jesus commands us to love our enemies (Lk. 6:27)?
- What specific actions do people use to show love to children? parents? friends? spouses? teachers? the sick or lonely?
- In what ways can each of these specific actions be extended toward those we consider our enemies?
- What turns enemies into friends?

PEoPLE STEReOTYPES

Tape or tack five sheets of **newsprint** around the room. On each sheet, write the name of a different American racial group: African-American, Native American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific and European-American. Distribute **felt markers** and tell participants that they have 30 seconds at each sheet of newsprint to list reasons people give for disliking people of that race. Explain that such reasons stem from ignorance and fear. Though they are usually offensive, these reasons should be named so that they can be discussed and refuted. Do not, however, use vulgar language.

Call time every 30 seconds until all group members have had time at every list. Then read the lists aloud and ask:

- How did you feel as you listened to what was written on the list for your racial group?
- Where did you get the ideas you listed on the sheets? What did you feel as you wrote them?
- How did you decide what to write on the list for your racial group?
- In what ways do we see racial prejudice demonstrated?
- What can we do to stop ourselves from stereotyping people of other races?