



**Message Topic:** Theodore Sedgwick Wright and Theodore Weld and the Beauty of Vision

**Message Date:** October 25, 2020

**Focus:** The beauty of racial justice and the multicultural character of the Kingdom of God.

**Primary biblical texts:** Isaiah 25, Revelation 7:9–17

## Introduction

Our goal is to engage in conversations about the beautiful life that Jesus has called us to live. Each week, we will be unpacking an element of this life. Each topic is paired with a historical figure who will show us one way to embody each week’s topic.

## Purpose of Community Groups

To engage with the ideas and scripture presented in the messages, to build connections with each other, and apply what we have learned to our lives.

## Gathering

(To help people get to know each other.)

*Mixer Question:* What would be your dream job/career (with no limitations on training, schooling, talent, or money)?

## Message Content

*Review Message:* This week, Christian spoke about two Theodores from the 19th century. First, we heard about Theodore Weld one of the architects of the abolitionist movement and author of the definitive history of slavery in America. Second, we learned about Theodore Wright, a pastor and founder of the American Anti-Slavery Society. They both believed that all people are loved equally by God. Because of their undeniable God-given gifts, and incredible ability to communicate, the world was forever changed for the better. They fought good fights for the rights and dignity of blacks in our country. Without their work, and without their courage in facing major opposition, the abolition of slavery might not have come about. They are amazing examples of Christ followers standing up for the oppressed and persecuted. In light of these men’s lives, Christian challenged us to listen for vision of what God might ask us to do, to not give up, and to trust God’s promises.

*Discussion Questions:*

1. What stood out to you from the message this week?
2. Have you ever gotten into “the good kind of trouble?” Have you been treated wrongly for doing good?
3. Christian challenged us that the beauty of God’s vision is that it inspires us to fight *for* others, not *with* others. Where are people fighting *with* others instead of *for* others? How does this manifest itself in the church?

## Scripture Study

Read Revelation 7:9–17.

# beautiful

LIVES THAT SHOW THE GOSPEL

1. What stands out as you read it? Why?
2. Christian mentioned that four kinds of people were the four ways that people in the early First Century divided themselves up — by nation, tribe, people, and language. How do we divide ourselves up today? What do we fight about most?
3. John wrote this passage to give Christians a picture of God's future, to encourage them to know what they should fight for in the present. What invitation to action is there for the church in this passage? What is God showing you that you should be working at to bring about this vision?

## Personal Reflection

1. What is wrong in the world that makes you the most mad? (So angry that you believe the Holy Spirit might be prompting you to pay attention to it?)
2. Have you ever been involved in a project, ministry, program, or organization that is fighting to right a wrong? How did it feel to be a part of it?
3. What is the most diverse (based on: gender, socioeconomic, cultural, etc.) community you've been a part of? What was it like?

## Challenge

Christian gave us an invitation to listen and do what God asks us to do, to not give up, and to trust God's promises.

1. From the questions above, what is one thing you can do this week, or a step you can take to move towards social justice, racial reconciliation, or a more multicultural community?
2. If there is a group of people or a type of person that is hard for you to love like Jesus loves, pray for them. Ask God this week to soften your heart to this person or group of people. Pray for yourself to be able to see them as Jesus sees them and to go towards them in love.
3. If you have an idea to help our church be more multicultural, racially diverse, or welcoming to outsiders, write it down and share it with the Renaissance Church staff.

## Prayer

As a group, pick three things to pray about from the message. Ask God to give you a vision of some good fights you can get involved in this week.