

AUTHOR OF *THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES*

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Life-Changing  
*Cross-Cultural*  
Friendships

HOW YOU CAN HELP HEAL  
RACIAL DIVIDES,  
ONE RELATIONSHIP AT A TIME



**A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK**

ZONDERVAN BOOKS

*Life-Changing Cross-Cultural Friendships*

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## CHAPTER 1

# *An Unexpected Friendship*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. Do you have a friend or friends of a different culture or race? If so, how did you meet?
2. If you don't have a friend of a different culture or race, why do you think this is so?
3. Would you like to have a friend of a different culture or race? Why or why not?
4. If you do have a friend or friends of a different culture or race, how did you feel during your initial encounter? Why?
5. What was it about this other person that drew you to him or her?
6. What do others in your community say about having friends of a different culture or race? How does what they say influence you?

7. Whether or not you have friends of a different race or culture, what do you think some of the benefits would be of having a friend who is different from you? Why?
8. What do you think is God's perspective about his children having friends who are different from them?



## CHAPTER 2

# *Different Levels of Friendship*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. How have you observed different levels or types of friendships in the lives of people with whom you are acquainted?
2. Can you think of another level or type of friendship in addition to those we have shared?
3. How would you describe the difference between an acquaintance and a friend?
4. Do you have different levels of friendship? Write the names of those with whom you are friends and place them in one of the categories.
5. Do you have friendships that you would like to move to a deeper level?
6. Do you have anyone to whom you are a mentor—investing your life in their life?

7. Do you have a mentor—someone who is older than you and whom you trust—who is investing their life in yours?
8. If you answered no to questions 6 and 7, consider asking God to give you someone in whose life you can invest your life, and for someone who will invest their life in yours.
9. If you have any type of friendship with someone of a different culture, what do you think are the benefits to you and to them?



## CHAPTER 3

# *Friendship Begins with Courtesy and Patience*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. Courtesy (being friendly minded) is often the first step in beginning a friendship with someone. How would you treat someone of a different culture or race if you treated them as though they were your friend?
2. When you reflect on your encounters with someone of a different race, in what ways did you express a friendly attitude? What might you have done differently?
3. How do you typically handle conflict with a family member or friend?
4. How do you think conflict with someone of a different culture or race should be handled? Why?

5. What would be the benefits of talking through an uncomfortable conversation with a new friend of a different culture or race?
6. What are some of the payoffs of having patience with a friend who is different from you?
7. How do you feel when people are patient with you, especially if you are new or different?



## CHAPTER 4

# *Friends Love Each Other*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. After reading this chapter, do you have a new perspective on loving like Jesus?
2. What impressed you most deeply about loving as he loved?
3. How do you envision yourself loving others cross-culturally as Jesus did?
4. What did you learn from Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman? How will Jesus' actions help you express God's love cross-culturally?
5. Will you ask God to lead you to someone of a different race or culture with whom you might begin a friendship?



## CHAPTER 5

# *Friends Apologize and Forgive Each Other*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. Do you remember the last time you had to apologize to someone? What was it for?
2. Did that person forgive you? If he or she did, how did that make you feel?
3. If you were forgiven, did that take your friendship to a deeper level? Why or why not?
4. When was the last time someone apologized to you? How did you feel when they apologized? Did you forgive them? Why or why not?
5. If you forgave that person, did your friendship go to a deeper level? Why or why not?
6. Have you ever had to grant forgiveness in a cross-cultural friendship? What was hard about that situation? What helped overcome the hurt?

7. If you ever had to ask for forgiveness in a cross-cultural friendship, how did you do it? How would you do it differently after reading this chapter?



## CHAPTER 6

# *Friends Are Not Colorblind*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. Have you ever used the word *colorblind*? If so, what were you trying to convey?
2. What were your initial thoughts regarding the word *colorblind* possibly being interpreted negatively?
3. Why do you think God seems to be a God of difference?
4. What do you think could be some possible dangers of the colorblind mindset?
5. According to 1 Corinthians 12:12–27, what are some of the possible dangers of not embracing God’s design of difference as a follower of Christ?
6. Have you ever protected someone of another culture? What happened? How did you feel about it? Did others of your culture see it? How did

they respond to your action? Did their response affirm or disappoint you? How did the person of the other culture respond to you? Did that individual's response affirm or disappoint you?

7. Have you ever intentionally said or implied that you didn't need someone of another culture? If so, why? Can you apologize to that person? Have you asked God for his forgiveness?



## CHAPTER 7

# *Friends Disagree Agreeably*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. During your first conflict with a close personal friend, whether of the same or a different race or culture, what were your feelings?
2. Why do you think you had those feelings?
3. Would you have done anything differently if you were either Andrea or Elise? What would you have done and why?
4. What did you learn from Andrea and Elise about resolving a conflict, especially a cross-cultural one?
5. What did you learn from Dr. Davidson's interview of sixty Caucasian and sixty African American MBA students?
6. How did James Baldwin's words in this chapter impact your thinking about working through cross-cultural conflict?



## CHAPTER 8

# *Friends Are Friends Forever*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. Do you have a person with whom you have been friends most of your life? If so, what has that been like for you?
2. If you have a best friend, how did you meet?
3. When you met, did you expect that you would be friends for so long?
4. What are key ingredients of your friendship?
5. What are some of the benefits of this long-term friendship for you?
6. What would you tell someone about how to maintain a friendship for a lifetime?
7. If you have had a cross-cultural friendship for a long time, how has it benefited your faith in Christ?
8. How has it influenced your ability to put yourself in someone else's situation and understand their perspective?



## CHAPTER 9

# *Will You Accept Our Cross-Cultural Friendship Challenge?*

### *Your Thoughts*

1. What suggestions would you give to help someone make cross-cultural friends?
2. Does the idea of trying to make a friend cross-culturally make you nervous? Why? Typically, feeling nervous about initiating a friendship even within your own culture is very normal.
3. What are some of the factors that make you nervous about initiating a friendship, whether it is cross-cultural or not?
4. If you are a Christ follower, how did reading the fact that nothing is impossible with God make you feel as you think about making a friend cross-culturally?

5. If you are a Christ follower, how did reading Matthew 28:18-20, the Great Commission that our Lord gave his disciples, make you feel about seeking cross-cultural friendships?
6. Have you ever thought about praying that God would give you a friend of another race? Will you consider praying for that now?
7. What role do you think your faith will play in making friends cross-culturally?
8. Do you consider yourself a friendly person? Would the people who know you best say the same?
9. If you don't consider yourself to be friendly, do you think the suggestions in this chapter will help you to become more friendly? Why or why not?