



A Self-Paced Study Guide for  
the Presbytery of East Iowa

*"Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world.*

*And ready to fight for it."*

*- Arundati Roy*

## **WEEK THREE - Theme for the Week**

Containers

### **Readings from *Caste***

PART TWO: THE ARBITRARY CONSTRUCTION OF HUMAN DIVISIONS

Ch. 4 – A Long-Running Play and the Emergence of Caste in America

Ch. 5 – The Container We Have Built for You

### **Scripture**

#### **Titus 3:5**

He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

#### **Colossians 3:11**

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

#### **Genesis 1:27**

So God created humans in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

### **Questions for Reflection**

1. "Before there was a United States of America," Wilkerson writes, "there was a caste system, born in colonial Virginia." How can Americans reckon with this fact? How can we make sense of a system of inequality that was firmly in place before the country itself came into being?
  2. Whom does a caste system benefit, and whom does it harm? What kinds of benefits does the caste system make possible for those at the top?
  3. Caste and race are not the same thing. What is the difference between the two? How do casteism and racism support each other?
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### **Action Steps**

The Implicit Association Test (IAT) offers a way of personally assessing where you are in terms of bias and what goes on in your own mind. It's free and online. Carve out some time this week to take the test and then to continue the journaling project this week about your personal and community reflections.. The test can be accessed at this link: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

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