



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

WEEK EIGHT - Theme for the Week

Social Tetris: Building a Tower of Power

Readings from *Caste*

Pillar Five: Occupational Hierarchy – The Jatis and the Mudsill

Pillar Six: Dehumanization and Stigma

Scripture

Matthew 25:40, 45

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done [it] unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done [it] unto me. . . . Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did [it] not to one of the least of these, ye did [it] not to me.

Micah 6:8

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Genesis 1:27

So God created humans in his own image, in the image of God he created them. . . .

Questions for Reflection

1. It is a widely held belief that in our capitalist American culture working-class white American may often act against their own interests by opposing policies designed to help the working class. Reflect on how the logic of caste disproves this idea. How does caste redefine this same choice from the perspective of maintaining group dominance?

Action Steps

EXERCISE: Whom to Leave Behind

This exercise may be used in your group, or, if you are individually reflecting on this week's readings, you may use it as a prompt for reflection and journaling.

The twelve persons listed below have been selected as passengers on a spaceship for a flight to another planet because tomorrow the planet Earth is doomed for destruction. Due to changes in space limitations, it has now been determined that only eight persons may go on this flight. The group on the flight are the surviving remnant to start a new culture.

Your task is to select the Eight (8) passengers who will make the trip. On your own, take approximately 5 minutes and rank order of the passengers from one to twelve based on those who you feel are most deserving to make the trip with one being most deserving and twelve being least deserving. Also decide on who should lead this group.

Next, the group discusses and decides who will make the trip. PLEASE NOTE: When you make your decision as a group EVERYONE must agree on the final eight passengers and come to a consensus on why these should be selected. You are NOT allowed to vote or take a "majority rules" decision.

Original passenger list:

- ___ a white female accountant with a substance abuse problem
- ___ a militant African-American female medical student
- ___ a 33 year old male Native American manager who does not speak English
- ___ the accountant's pregnant Japanese wife who works in retail service
- ___ a famous female Malaysian novelist with a physical disability
- ___ a 21-year old, female, Muslim international student who works in the maintenance dept.
- ___ a Hispanic clergyman who is against homosexuality
- ___ a white female movie star who was recently the victim of a sexual assault
- ___ a white male armed police officer who has been accused of using excessive force
- ___ a homosexual male, professional athlete
- ___ an Asian, orphaned 12-year old boy
- ___ a 60-year old female Jewish university administrator