Large Group Series

**INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES**

*The Better World proxe* station has been designed in response to the racial injustices perpetrated against the African-American community for generations. The purpose of this proxe station is to illustrate God’s plan for “a better world” even in this midst of racism in the 21st century. This generation’s rise of social media has catalyzed a new movement following the public violation of the dead body of unarmed black teen, Michael Brown, the non-indictment of George Zimmerman for the shooting of unarmed black teen, Trayvon Martin, and many others through publicizing trending topics with hashtags such as #blacklivesmatter and #staywoke.According to urbandictionary.com, the term *woke* refers to *“a state of perceived intellectual superiority one gains from being socially conscious; i.e. relating to racism and social injustice.*” The Better World proxe hopes to bring awareness to the racial injustices in the 21st century, while engaging both Christians and non-christians in conversations that provide hope.

Pretending that we were in a post-racial society may have been easier 15 years ago, but now, with the rise of social media and smartphones, anyone can broadcast the realities of this broken world instantly. We can view video proof of these injustices. Millions of views of these countless atrocities can bring the average viewer to a state of hopelessness. Will we ever see growth in race relations? How do we resolve these racial injustices? Marching? Protesting? Trending hashtags?

Moreover, does the Church have a voice in this dialogue? Both Christians and unbelievers alike can struggle with the concept of faith in the face of the wrongs we all witness and experience. If God is real, then why is this world so broken? Should we just “shut up and have faith”?

We are wrestling with these legitimate theological questions and more that, if gone unanswered, may cause many to reject the image of Jesus they have seen reflected in a divided Church that has been perceived as “asleep,” ignoring or catalyzing the injustices of this society.

However, looking at the actual model of the entire Scripture, we see that in the New Testament, Jesus challenges His followers to “Stay Woke.” We also see models even within the Old Testament of God’s people facing oppression. God encourages His people not only to be aware of injustices but also, through Him, to create solutions that meet the needs of a divided society.

Throughout this small group and large group series, we will be exploring the life of Daniel and will be answering the following questions: How can a historically oppressed people group effectively communicate the gospel to their oppressor? Although many minority groups have been oppressed for generations, how can they/we effectively communicate the hope of a better world even in the midst of their/our brokenness?