



OTHERS SERIES – PART 2: UNIQUENESS

Brian Flewelling
August 30, 2026

WORSHIP

Begin your group with a time of worship. If someone in your group can lead worship, invite them to lead two or three songs. Alternatively, consider using one or more of these songs from our Sunday morning worship time:

- **Who Else** (*Gateway Worship*)
- **Worthy** (*Elevation Worship*)
- **What a Beautiful Name** (*Hillsong Worship*)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- James 2:1-9
- 1 Timothy 4:16
- Galatians 3:28
- Acts 10:34-35
- Titus 3:9-10

OPENING PRAYER

Open your time together in prayer. Consider praying specifically for the Poland Team and Instep Ministries, as well as for Jalana Rissler and Alvin Lapp, who are going into missions as Pastor Brian mentioned at the start of the sermon.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Favoritism is a sin rooted in pride and insecurity.
 - James 2:1-9 makes clear that ranking people by outward appearances or social standing is not a neutral habit -- it is a spiritual failure. The evil in our hearts ranks people, while the humility of Christ honors them.
2. The gospel establishes equal value without erasing real differences.
 - As Galatians 3:28 reminds us, unity in Christ does not mean uniformity. Our differences in ethnicity, gender, financial status, personality, and conviction are not problems to manage -- they are gifts to celebrate.
3. We need each other's uniqueness to become who God created us to be.
 - Pastor Brian put it this way: "I need you to become all that you were created to be, for me to become all that I was created to be." Receiving others as gifts requires humility and a posture of genuine need.
4. There are two areas where the church holds firm unity: belief and practice.
 - Outside of the core commitments of the gospel -- what we believe and how we live -- God gives wide room for uniqueness. Love, not agreement on secondary issues, is what binds us together.
5. Uniqueness is not something we tolerate. It is something we celebrate.
 - Our society remains fractured by racism, classism, and sexism. The church is called to model a better way -- not domination, but reception of one another as gifts.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Opening

1. Think about a person in your life who is very different from you -- in background, personality, or perspective. What is one thing you genuinely appreciate about them that you could not have learned from someone just like you?

Digging In

2. Pastor Brian said, "The evil in our hearts ranks people. The humility in Christ's heart honors people." Where do you most naturally tend to rank people -- by wealth, education, personality, accomplishment, or something else? What do you think drives that tendency in you?

3. James 2:4 describes showing favoritism as becoming "judges with evil thoughts." That is a strong phrase. Why do you think James frames favoritism as a form of judgment rather than just a social preference or habit?
4. Pastor Brian described two broken political responses to financial inequality -- greed on one side and jealousy on the other -- and said the gospel calls us to "stop competing with the world and get wealthy in love." What does it look like practically to be wealthy in love across financial differences?
5. Regarding ethnicity, Pastor Brian said, "God defines us ethically, not ethnically." What does that statement mean to you? How does that change the way you think about your own cultural identity and the cultural identities of others?
6. Pastor Brian made the point that love is not blind to our differences -- it actually celebrates them. How is that different from the way our culture often talks about equality or inclusion?
7. When it comes to personality and spiritual gifts, Pastor Brian noted that certain gifts tend to get more attention and honor than others. Which gifts do you think are most undervalued in church culture? Have you ever felt that your own gifts were overlooked or underappreciated?
8. On the topic of differing convictions, Titus 3:9-10 warns against divisive controversies. How do you personally navigate the tension between holding a genuine conviction and genuinely honoring someone who sees things differently? Where have you struggled with that?

Going Deeper

9. Pastor Brian said, "Instead of feeling threatened by your differences, I have to receive you as a gift. I have to take the posture of need and receptivity." Is there a relationship in your life -- at church, at work, or at home -- where you have been feeling threatened rather than receptive? What would it look like to shift your posture?
10. The sermon closed with this challenge: uniqueness is not something we grin and bear, but something we run toward to celebrate. What is one specific type of difference -- financial, ethnic, gender-related, personality-based, or conviction-based -- that you find hardest to celebrate? What might be holding you back?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION (10 Mins)

This week, choose one of the following to put into practice:

- **Identify a blind spot.** Reflect honestly on which of the five areas of uniqueness -- financial status, ethnicity, gender, personality and gifts, or differing convictions -- you tend to show the most favoritism in. Bring it before God in prayer and ask Him to reveal where pride or insecurity is at work.
- **Seek out a gift you have been avoiding.** Think of someone in your church community whose background, personality, or perspective is very different from yours. Make a deliberate effort to spend time with them this week -- not to teach, but to listen and receive.
- **Practice honoring a different kind of gift.** Look for someone in your church or community whose contribution tends to go unnoticed -- someone serving quietly, giving practically, or showing mercy behind the scenes. Find a specific and sincere way to honor what they bring.
- **Examine a conviction.** Think of a secondary issue -- screen time, entertainment, alcohol, schooling choices, or another area of personal conviction. Ask yourself honestly: do you genuinely honor others who land differently than you, or do you subtly judge them? Bring that before God and a trusted friend.

Closing Thought and Prayer

Pastor Brian reminded us that our society is still deeply fractured by racism, sexism, and classism -- and that the church is called to model something different. Not a forced tolerance, but a genuine, Spirit-led celebration of the people God has placed around us. The goal is not to become the same. The goal is to become one -- the way Christ intended.

Close your group time in prayer, asking God to replace the pride and insecurity in your hearts with the humility of Christ -- the kind of humility that receives every person as a gift.