

From Every Nation

Revelation 5:9

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,

I. The Origin Of Diverse Ethnicities (Acts 17:26; Gen 10)

Acts 17:26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,

- A. **God Purposed Nations Giving Them Freedom To Be Unique As Long As They Were Faithful To Him (Gen 10:1-32)**
- B. **God Judged A United Nations That Rebelled Against Him (Gen 11:1-4)**
- C. **God Ordained Nations, But Judges Rebellion (Gen 11:7-9)**

II. The Challenge Among Diverse Ethnicities

- A. **Realize That All Races And Nationalities Come From One Man (Acts 17:26)**
- B. **Be United In Christ, Not Divided By Race (Gal 3:28, Acts 2:5-11)**
Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
Acts 2:5-11 ⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from **every nation under heaven**.
- C. **Love The Immigrant (Deut 10:19)**
Deuteronomy 10:19 "Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt."
- D. **All Nations And Nationalities Are To Seek Their Place Before Christ More Than Their Place In The World (Rev 7:9)**
Revelation 7:9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

III. The Gospel For Diverse Ethnicities

- A. **The Cause: Christ Died For The Sins Of All Nations (Rev 5:9)**
- B. **The Effect: All Nations Will Have Many Who Respond To Christ Even During The Future Tribulation Judgment (Rev 7:9; 14:6)**
Revelation 14:6 Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every **nation** and **tribe** and **language** and **people**.

IV. The Ministry To Diverse Ethnicities

- A. **We Are Responsible For All Nations To Hear The Gospel – Be Involved In Missions**
Luke 24:46 Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to **all nations** beginning in Jerusalem.
Acts 1:8 You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in all Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

- B. We Are Responsible To Make Disciples Of All Nations – Be Involved In Discipleship**
Matthew 28:18–20 Go, therefore and make disciples of **all nations**. Baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.
- C. We Are Responsible To Unite As Many Nations Before One Lord And Savior – Be Involved Cross-Culturally**
Acts 2:5-11 Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from **every nation under heaven**.
Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
- D. We Are Responsible To Reconcile With Others As Christ Reconciled With Us – Be Peacemakers**
Ephesians 2:14-16 ¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.
- E. We Are Free From Cultural Limitations And Expectations To Reach All People – Be Educated And Adaptable**
1 Corinthians 9:19-21 ¹⁹For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. ²⁰To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. ²¹To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.
- F. We Are Free From Cultural Prejudices To Reach Those Who Are Victims Of Prejudice – Be More Concerned About What Christ Thinks Of You Than What Peers Think Of You**
John 4:9 ⁹Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.
John 4:27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"
Acts 10:28 ²⁸Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean."
1 Timothy 5:21 ²¹I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.
- G. We Are Responsible As A Church To Meet The Needs Of Ethnic Groups In The Church – Be Attentive To The Neglected At Church (Acts 6:1-3)**
Acts 6:1-3 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ²And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. ³Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

V. The Future For Diverse Ethnicities

- A. Heaven Maintains An International Diversity, Not A Colorblindness (Rev 5:9)**
B. The Many Nations Will Continuously Bring Glory To God In Heaven (Rev 21:22-27)

Conclusion:

1. We must intentionally seek to be a community church reaching all nations and nationalities.
2. Consider inviting people of different ethnicities and religions into your home.
3. Consider ministry to international students.
4. Go on a short term missions trip to another country or attach a missions trip to your family vacation.

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Introduction:

1. I was at a luncheon with several pastors on the Peninsula and I was talking to Pastor Thomas Fischer of 2nd Baptist Church in Redwood City. I asked him how their church was 2nd to a 1st Baptist Church. He told me that during the Jim Crow laws, African American churches were not allowed to be called 1st Baptist. I was embarrassed, angry, sad and apologetic all at the same time.

2. Reasons For Racism

- Racism
 - Don't call somebody a racist unless you are certain (not based on personality, but in acts)
 - Clear situations in history: Hitler's Third Reich, the Ku Klan Klan, ethnic cleansing in central Asia and Africa (Rhawanda)
- a. **Pride**
 - Kerby Anderson: "So why do people hold racist attitudes? Three reasons are: feelings of pride, feelings of inferiority, and feelings of fear. Pride and arrogance fuel racism. When we are proud of who we are, we can easily look down upon those who are different from us and do not manifest the same characteristics that we do. We can start believing we are superior to another person or race." ("Race And Racial Issues")
- b. **Inferiority**
 - When we feel bad about ourselves, we might pick on another person, race, culture or one's status to feel better about ourselves.
- c. **Fear**
 - Anderson: "Racism also results from fear. We fear what we don't understand. We fear what is strange and foreign. Racial and cultural differences may even seem dangerous to us. Racial attitudes can surface if we don't seek to know and understand those who are different from us."
 - In times, U.S. has gone into extremes because of fears:
 - Chinese Exclusion Act signed by President Chester Arthur on May 6, 1882 to prevent Chinese immigrants – it was the first law banning immigration of any ethnic group
 - Japanese Internment Camp – including Tanforan, no Japanese-American detained in those internment camp was ever a threat, many served heroically for the U.S. in WW2

- Those horrific Jim Crow laws were resisted by heroes like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr.
- Mexican immigrant workers were being taken advantaged of until Cesar Chavez led another Civil Rights movement

d. Evolution

- Evolution doesn't force a prejudiced belief but gives a framework for it.
- "Survival of the Fittest" makes some wonder who is more fit or superior to another race.
- "Natural Selection" leads to conceiving superiority concepts.
- Adolph Hitler's belief that different races evolved separately led him to believe that the Aryan Race was superior to Jews and Gypsies
- Stephen Jay Gould the evolutionary author from Harvard University admits: "Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory." (*Ontogeny and Phylogeny*, Belknap-Harvard Press, 1977, p. 127-128)
- An ignorant question that frequently comes from well-intentioned people: "So where are you from? [America] ... Where are you really from?"
- My family has probably been here longer than many others in America – my great, great grandmother Jenny Cheung was born in Lone Pine, CA on Feb 25, 1869.

3. Racism in the Church

- The Great Reformer Martin Luther was passionate in reaching the Jewish people for Christ, but he was treated so poorly by Jewish people, it led Luther to become Anti-Semitic based on emotions, not theology. But this emotional Anti-Semitism led to an Anti-Israel sentiment among the early reformers that is reflected in many contemporary views on Israel some Reformed circles today.
 - In May, 1994, the Evangelical Lutheran Church denomination publicly apologized to the Jewish community for Martin Luther's Anti-Semitic view – including just watching as Hitler exterminated 6 million Jewish people
 - There were a few voices in the church that spoke against Hitler, e.g. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, but the church largely was silent
- Racism and slavery was big in the South and the Southern Baptist Church denomination – the largest in the U.S. barely blinked an eye. In 1995, they made a formal resolution to repudiate and ask forgiveness from the African-American community.

"We lament and repudiate historic acts of evil such as slavery from which we continue to reap a bitter harvest, and we recognize that the racism which yet plagues our culture today is inextricably tied to the past," and "we apologize to all African-Americans for condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime; and we genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously (Psalm 19:13) or unconsciously (Leviticus 4:27)." Furthermore, in this resolution Southern Baptists asked for "forgiveness from our African-American brothers and sisters" and committed themselves to

“eradicate racism in all its forms from Southern Baptist life and ministry.”

<http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/amResolution.asp?ID=899>

cited by William Shreiner in forward: *Williams, Jarvis (2010-10-01). One New Man (Kindle Locations 273-279). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.*

4. Recently, there has been tension among the Black Christian Churches and the White Evangelical churches.
 - Rapper Lecrae publicly distanced himself from White Evangelicals – and he is one to whom White Evangelicals laid out the red carpet
 - John Piper
5. A **Binary Response** to this Black & White issue is dangerous. Because it leaves out a broader perspective of those who aren't black and white and are also victims of racism. **This is a Black, Brown, Yellow and White Issue!**
 - Who speaks for the Latinos?
 - What is the Asian perspective?
 - Where do Pacific Islanders fit in?
 - What does this have to do with immigration?

6. What is the answer to Racism?

- **Is the answer for Christians to be Colorblind?**
- I don't believe this is the biblical answer.
- **I believe the answer to racism is to be Ethnic-Embracing!**

Acts 17:26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,

- God made the nations. True, we all came from Adam. But God made every nation – He determined their shelf-life (there are no more Hittites or Mayans, though there is a history of them) and their geographical boundaries.

Revelation 5:9 ⁹And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,

- God has every tribe, language, people and nation worshipping God in heaven
- God didn't make everybody mono-racial – even in heaven

I. The Origin Of Diverse Ethnicities (Acts 17:26; Gen 10)

Acts 17:26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,

- Because we are from one man, there is no superior or inferior race
- We are all one in Adam needing to be redeemed by the Last Adam – Jesus Christ

A. God Purposed Nations Giving Them Freedom To Be Unique As Long As They Were Faithful To Him (Gen 10:1-32)

1. The Descendants Of Japheth (10:1-5)

¹ These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood. ² The sons of **Japheth**: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

- Birth order of Noah's sons: Shem, Ham & Japheth
- Order of Genesis 10: reverse

- 14 nations come from Japheth
- His name means "enlarge"

2. The Descendants Of Ham (6-20)

⁶ The sons of **Ham**: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan.

- 30 different nations will descend from Ham
- Several of these nations will be in conflict with Israel – including Canaan
- Ham in Heb. means "hot" or "black"

- **Sons of Ham**: Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan (nothing is mentioned about Put)
 - **Cush – Ethiopia** – some migrated to the Persian Gulf
 - **Egypt** (also called Misraim) – Egypt that enslaved Israel
 - **Put** – Libya (his descendants aren't listed)
 - **Canaan** – Southern Syria (Phoenecia and Palestine), his land would eventually become Israel's

3. The Descendants Of Shem (21-31)

²¹ To **Shem** also, the father of all the children of **Eber**, the elder brother of Japheth, children were born. ²² The sons of Shem: **Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram.**

- Shem father Arpachshad who fathered Eber
- **Elam** had the Elamites
 - **Eber** (v. 21) is the origin for the word **Hebrew**
 - *Eber* means "emigrant"
 - An "emigrant" is leaving their country for another
 - An "immigrant" is arriving at a country from a previous
 - E.g. one leaving Japan to the USA is an emigrant
 - One coming to the USA from Japan is an immigrant

 - "It is interesting that the Ebla tablets, Sumerian texts from the mid-third millennium B.C., refer to a king named Ebrum, who ruled Ebla (northern Syria) for twenty-eight years. Some scholars have speculated that Ebrum and Eber was in fact the same person. Abraham is the first person in the Scriptures referred to as a "Hebrew" (Gen. 14: 13)." *Gangel, Kenneth; Bramer, Stephen J. (2003-04-01).*

Holman Old Testament Commentary - Genesis: 1 (p. 106). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

- Eber had 2 sons – **Peleg** (name means “division”) and **Joktan** (Aramaic name meaning “watchful” or “small,”) / “insignificant”
 - V. 25 The earth was divided

Genesis 10:32³² These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

B. God Judged A United Nations That Rebelled Against Him (Gen 11:1-4)

1. Human Security Apart From God (1-2)

1 Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. 2 And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.

- “the whole earth” – Were there enough people to disperse at Babel?

2. Human Achievement Apart From God (3-4a)

3 And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. 4a Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower

3. Human Rebellion Against God (4b)

4b with its top in the heavens,

- “top in the heavens” = a gate to heaven
- Babel means “gate to heaven”
- Temples to false gods were often at the top of these Ziggurats

4. Human Recognition Apart From God (4c)

4c and let us make a name for ourselves,

- Pride was their motivation – to make a name for themselves
- Cain built a city and named after his son – he wanted to perpetuate his name

Genesis 5:17 Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch.

- Man’s failed plans are evidenced by the fact that nobody today knows who built the Tower of Babel (though they tried to make a name for themselves)
- But God made Abraham’s name great (Genesis 12:2)

Genesis 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your **name great**, so that you will be a blessing

5. Human Control Apart From God (4d)

Ad lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth."

- The people at Babel also defied God's instruction to "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen 9:1)
- They didn't want to be dispersed

C. God Ordained Nations, But Judges Rebellion (Gen 11:7-9)

1. Man Misuses, God Confuses (7, 9a)

⁷ Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech. ^{9a} Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth.

- "confused" = Heb. *balal*
 - Biblically a *balal* of confusion
- Though God is not the Author of confusion (1 Cor 14:33), He will use it to bring judgment to those who defy Him
- 6,900 languages spoken in our world today
- 94 different language families
- 44% of world speak an Indo-European language

Top 10 Languages:

<https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/the-10-most-spoken-languages-in-the-world>

1. Chinese – 1.2 billion
2. Spanish – 400 million
3. English – 360 million
4. Hindi – most spoken among India's official 23 languages
5. Arabic – 250 million
6. Portuguese – 215 million
7. Bengali – 170 million
8. Russian – 170 million
9. Japanese – 130 million
10. Punjabi/Landha – 100 million
11. German

2. Man Subverts, God Disperses (8, 9b)

⁸ So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ^{9b} And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

- They didn't finish building the city
- God dispersed them around the world
- Babel is pretty central for the people to disperse throughout Europe, Asia and Africa
- 70 nations in Genesis 10
- 11,489 people groups in world today

- 6,832 have a population less than 2% Christian
- 3,264 have no Christian witness
- God's original determination was to have several nations across the earth, according to the Apostle Paul

Acts 17:26 And he made from one man, **every nation** of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having **determined** allotted **periods** and the **boundaries** of their dwelling place

II. The Challenge Among Diverse Ethnicities

A. Realize That All Races And Nationalities Come From One Man (Acts 17:26)

Acts 17:26 "He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place."

B. Be United In Christ, Not Divided By Race (Gal 3:28, Acts 2:5-11)

Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Acts 2:5-11 5 Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from **every nation under heaven**. 6 And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. 7 And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, 11 both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

C. Love The Immigrant (Deut 10:19)

Deuteronomy 10:19 "Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt."

D. All Nations And Nationalities Are To Seek Their Place Before Christ More Than Their Place In The World (Rev 7:9)

Revelation 7:9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

III. The Gospel For Diverse Ethnicities

A. The Cause: Christ Died For The Sins Of All Nations (Rev 5:9)

Revelation 5:9 ⁹And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, **for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God** from every tribe and language and people and nation,

- James M. Hamilton: "The gospel levels all notions of racial superiority because it declares that all peoples stand in the same need of the Savior." (*Revelation: The Spirit Speaks to the Churches*, Preaching The Word, Crossway, 2012, p. 158)

B. The Effect: All Nations Will Have Many Who Respond To Christ Even During The Future Tribulation Judgment (Rev 7:9; 14:6)

Revelation 7:9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every **nation**, from all **tribes** and **peoples** and **languages**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

- John saw 144,000 witnesses (vv. 4-8)
- "after this" starts a new vision
- 144,000 came from 12 tribes; great multitude from every nation
- V. 14 they came out of the Tribulation

Revelation 14:6 Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every **nation** and **tribe** and **language** and **people**.

Rev 11:9 – people, tribe, language nations – portion of the whole world viewing 2 dead witnesses

Rev 13:7 – tribe, people, language, nation – beast given worldwide authority

IV. The Ministry To Diverse Ethnicities

A. We Are Responsible For All Nations To Hear The Gospel – Be Involved In Missions
(Lk 24:46; Acts 1:8)

Luke 24:46 Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to **all nations** beginning in Jerusalem.

Acts 1:8 You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in all Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

- The Church, as One body of Christ, is the reversal of Babylon
- The Church is to be united **in** Christ, **not outside** of Christ

B. We Are Responsible To Make Disciples Of All Nations – Be Involved In Discipleship
(Mt 28:18-20)

Matthew 28:18–20 Go, therefore and make disciples of **all nations**. Baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.

C. We Are Responsible To Unite As Many Nations Before One Lord And Savior – Be Involved Cross-Culturally (Acts 2:5-11; Gal 3:28)

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Ephesians 2:14-16 ¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

E. We Are Free From Cultural Limitations And Expectations To Reach All People – Be Educated And Adaptable (1 Cor 9:19-21)

1 Corinthians 9:19-21 ¹⁹For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. ²⁰To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. ²¹To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.

- We are not colonial missionaries trying to make a 3rd world country more American or European
- We are bringing the Gospel to many nations
- Paul would adapt himself to the audience
- Ie/ British Missionary Hudson Taylor would wear Chinese clothes and grow a queue hair style to be part of the Chinese culture to win the Chinese
- Though Paul is a free man (Roman citizen vs. slave), he has voluntarily made himself a servant to all
- We need to get over ourselves:

- Pride – people are beneath us
- Perceived rights –
- Perceived superiority – our people are better than others

Ie/ One Korean American speaker from Conference shared how a white American pastor asked when his people would start coming to their American church. The Korean pastor responded "I spent 6 years learning English so I can understand your church. When are you going to learn Korean so you could understand our church?" Wow! **So you want us to be like you, but you're not willing to be like us!**

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

1. To The Jews

- Paul observed Jewish practices, customs and observances
- He would not eat the food the Jews forbade
- But he didn't compromise the grace of the Gospel with the works of the law
- He even had Timothy circumcised in Lystra to be more effective in ministry among the Jews (Acts 16:3) (they may not look, but they would ask – Timothy could be honest)

2. To Those Under The Law

- He observed the directions of the law
- But proposed a greater purpose of grace over law
- He was under no obligation to follow the law (Rom 6:14)
- Paul wasn't under the law of Moses, but was subject to the Law of Christ (Gal 6:2)

Galatians 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ

3. To The Gentiles

- Unbelievers that weren't Jewish

4. To The Weak

- The "weak" are those who were Jews or pagans who had sensitive consciences towards gray areas or yellow light issues (e.g. meat offered to idols)
- They could be the weak described in 1 Cor 8:9-13 – some among them who have not yet accepted Christ
- Paul withheld eating meat offered to idols or doing anything that might stumble them (causing them to sin)
- Ie/ Superstitious people today
 - Halloween
 - Chinese wives tale myths

F. We Are Free From Cultural Prejudices To Reach Those Who Are Victims Of Prejudice – Be More Concerned About What Christ Thinks Of You Than What Peers Think Of You (John 4:9, 27; Acts 10:28; 1 Tim 5:21)

John 4:9 ⁹Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

- "Hatred between Jews and Samaritans was fierce and long-standing. It dated to the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 b.c. The victorious Assyrians deported 20,000 Israelites, mostly from the upper classes, and replaced them with settlers from Babylon, Syria, and several other nations. These foreigners introduced pagan idols and intermarried with the Hebrews, creating an ethnically mixed population." (*What The Bible Says About ...*, p. 330)

John 4:27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"

- The disciples are astonished at the public conversation Jesus was having with the woman
- Then the woman goes back to the city and talks to men
- D.A. Carson points out: "Some (though by no means all) Jewish thought held that for a rabbi to talk much with a woman, even his own wife, was at best a waste of time and at worst a diversion from the study of *Torah* and therefore potentially a great evil that could lead to Gehenna, hell (*Pirke Aboth* 1:5). Some rabbis went so far as to suggest that to provide their daughters with a knowledge of the *Torah* was as inappropriate as to teach them lechery, *i.e.* to sell them into prostitution (Mishnah *Sotah* 3:4; the same passage also provides a contrary view.) (*John*, p. 227)

Acts 10:28 ²⁸Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

1 Timothy 5:21 ²¹I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.

- What Prejudices Do We Hold?
- Does Our National/Cultural Pride Cause Us To Look Down On Others?
- What Insecurity Prevents Us From Being More Multi-Cultural?
- What Fears Do We Harbor That We Might Subconsciously Pass On?
- How Would You Feel If Your Kids Married Inter-Racially?

G. We Are Responsible As A Church To Meet The Needs Of Ethnic Groups In The Church – Be Attentive To The Neglected At Church (Acts 6:1-3)

Acts 6:1-3 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ²And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. ³Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

V. The Future For Diverse Ethnicities
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A. Heaven Maintains An International Diversity, Not A Colorblindness (Rev 5:9)

Revelation 5:9 ⁹And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,

- **Tribe** = *phyles* – descent (Thomas), common ancestor (Wiersbe), clan, family lineage (Alcorn)
- **Language** = *glosses* – tongue – a group of people who share language
- **People** = *laou* – race – e.g. Cuban, Puerto Rican, Kenyan, Hmong, Polynesian, Danish
- **Nation** = *ethnous* – national identity, culture (Alcorn), political unity (Lenski) – e.g. United States (land of many people)
- Michael Vlach: "**Ethnicity and national distinctions are not erased.**" (*He Will Reign Forever*, Lampion Press, 2017, p. 48)
- Randy Alcorn: "**Leaders of nations will bring the splendor of different cultures into the city where Jesus Christ will reign on the throne.** These are only some of the indicators of our "social state" in Heaven..."

"Who will serve as the New Earth's kings and priests? Not people who were formerly of every tribe, language, people, and nation. Their distinctions aren't obliterated but continue into the intermediate Heaven and then into the eternal Heaven. Tribe refers to a person's clan and family lineage. People refers to race. Nation refers to those who share a national identity and culture. **Dutch theologian Herman Bavinck said of the New Earth, 'All those nations—each in accordance with its own distinct national character—bring into the new Jerusalem all they have received from God in the way of glory and honor.'**"

"Like the current earthly Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem will be a melting pot of ethnic diversity. But unlike the current city, the groups in the New Jerusalem will be united by their common worship of King Jesus. They will delight in each other's differences, never resent or be frightened by them." (*Heaven*, Kindle Locations 6682-6695, Tyndale House Publishers. Kindle Edition.)

Notes:

- Mal Couch: "John saw this great crowd of Gentiles in heaven just before the beginning of the Tribulation. They are church saints who will be raptured before God's wrath is poured out on the world." (*A Bible Handbook To Revelation*, Kregel, 2001, p. 231)
- Warren Wiersbe: "*Kindred* refers to a common ancestor and *tongue* to a common language. *People* means a common race, and *nation* a common rule or government." (*Be Victorious*, Victor Books, 1987, p. 58)
- Robert Thomas: "Behind *phylēs* ("tribe") is the idea of the same descent. It is a group belonging to the same clan and united by family lineage (Lenski; Hailey). People speaking the same language are intended in *glōssēs* ("tongue") (cf. [Acts 2:4, 6, 8, 11](#)) (Lenski; Hailey). *Laou* ("people") unites a people of the same race or stock (Hailey) or possibly of the same interests (Lenski). The group indicated by *ethnous* ("nation") is one bound together by political unity (Lenski) or perhaps, more broadly, by habits, customs, and peculiarities. People of every lineage, language, race, and political orientation are represented in this broad company of the beneficiaries of Christ's redemption." (*Revelation 1-7*)

- Robert Mounce: “In contrast to with the exclusivism of Judaism which prided itself in having been chosen out from among the nations, the church was genuinely ecumenical, recognizing no national, political, cultural, or racial boundaries.” (*Revelation*, NICOT, Eerdmans, 1977, p. 148)

B. The Many Nations Will Continuously Bring Glory To God In Heaven (Rev 21:22-27)

Revelation 21:22-27 ²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ By its light will the **nations** walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵ and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶ They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the **nations**. ²⁷ But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

Conclusion:

1. We must intentionally seek to be a community church reaching all nations and nationalities.
2. Consider inviting people of different ethnicities and religions into your home. Build relationships through intentionally modeling the love of Christ and sharing the Gospel through hospitality apologetics.
3. Consider ministry to international students. Many students come to study in the U.S. and have not been to an American home or a Christian Church. Providing food and help with English is a great open door.
 - Russell Jeung: “What I’ve learned from my family and gained from my refugee neighbors is a more precious gift. I have come to realize that both now and in the future, each of us is honored as a guest of the King. Even despite our temporary sufferings, in the midst of this fallen world, and in light of our shame, God knows our yearnings. And given his loyal love and his overwhelming peace, all of us—refugees, foreigners, aliens, and strangers—can learn to be at home in exile. (*At Home In Exile*, p. 213)
4. Go on a short term missions trip to another country or attach a missions trip to your family vacation. (Mt 28:19-20)

The Goal is not to obliterate ethnicities by becoming **colorblind**, but by **embracing ethnicities** realizing we will be unique in heaven together.