

Sunday, June 18, 2017 - "Why is Ethnic Unity So Hard" - Norflette Shumake

Key Passages: Genesis 11:1-9, Acts 2:4-11

- Feel free to read the passage(s) out loud as a group
- Allow the group to share freely about what stood out to them from the passage or from Sunday's message

Main Ideas

- 4 Unity Truths from last week (1. We ARE united 2. We sabotage our unity when we hold onto any identity marker above Christ 3. The Spirit of God moves through out unity 4. Our unity makes God know)
- Ethnic Unity is HARD but it is a part of who we are as His church
- We are a result of Jesus' great commission (Matt 28:19)
  - Someone poured the gospel into us
  - We are united in our fulfillment of the great commission
  - we are called to go to the NATIONS...to bring new kingdom culture and customs to other cultures/customs
- Celebrating diversity is only the beginning
  - We can be in the same place and NOT be united
  - Some are asking "Do we really want this?"
- We share 99.99% of our genes!!
- Genesis 11:1-9
  - The people WERE united. They shared ONE language
  - BUT...they were disobedient and prideful & they were trying to make a name for themselves
- Language → how you create culture (verbal & non-verbal)
  - Out of the mouth flows life and death
  - ethnic diversity is hard because we have different languages
  - And if we don't STAY long enough, we can't understand one another (people hate to move and to change and to be uncomfortable)
- Our human nature is to seek out people who are similar to our culture and our interests
- Our region has a powerful and influential history of ethnic separation
  - This is a different doctrine than the gospel
- We as believers are REQUIRED to offer hospitality to one another (hospitality put another was is love of strangers)
- Local churches should not seek to be intentionally ethnically and socially the same or separate from others
- The New Jerusalem will not be bland sameness
- Our mosaic and our diversity are a REFLECTION of HEAVEN
- Acts 2:4-11
  - Language is key again
  - We speak the same language and it's the language of our King and the language of love and of life and of peace
  - That language leads to culture, a culture that represents our love for one another and the love of our KING

Questions (Feel free to use all of these, some of these, or none of these)

1. What is an experience or relationship of yours where you felt and understood the difficulty of ethnic diversity?
2. What did God teach you through that situation or relationship?
3. How you feel like language affects the culture of your relationships, small groups, families and church?
4. How is God calling you to create kingdom culture through your language and love for those different from you?
5. How do you think God might want to grow you in the areas touched on in this sermon/these notes?
6. What does it look like for us as believers to offer hospitality to those like us and those different from us?
7. How might God be calling you to go to the "nations" right where you are?
8. What is God inviting you into as a result of this passage or sermon?

**\*\*15 Minutes with God Reading Plan-**

**Mon: Matthew 18 Tues: Matthew 19 Wed: Matthew 20 Thurs: Matthew 21 Fri: Matthew 22**

**\*\*5 Minutes Reading/5 Minutes Writing/5 Minutes Praying**