

## CJ'S CITY | INTENTIONALLY MULTICULTURAL

Exercises<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION:

Being intentionally multicultural in ministry means fellowship with people from different races and ethnic backgrounds.

In Matthew's genealogy we see several happy surprises that reinforce our intentionally multicultural vision.

In our Lord's roots are obviously the notable righteous men (Abraham and David), the unrighteous including (Manasseh), we expect the Jews in that lineage, but also included are Gentiles (Canaanites and Moabites- arch enemies of Israel), the women as well.

This intentionality needs to be both in our Outreach (Evangelism) and Inreach (Discipleship)

The passages below show an inextricable link between evangelism and multicultural ministry.

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### <sup>1</sup> Exercises

#### Exercise 1

In the Asia and African culture it's customary and respectful to address the elders by titles and yet in the Western culture it is quite acceptable to address the elders by their first name. What should be the biblical response in a multicultural context?

#### Exercise 2

You are in an inter-cultural relationship, in one culture it's expected for one to always consult with the elders before making a decision and the opposite is true in the other culture. What should be the biblical response?

#### Exercise 3

Is it right that the **have-nots** should always be the ones to go an extra miles in learning a language or understanding a situation better, than the **haves** because they are the ones who need the help?

#### Exercise 4

A believer from England is travelling through Southern Africa and everywhere he goes he gets a warm welcome and incredible generosity (Inc. free meals, travel and free accommodation) one of the believers who had offered help visits England and they organise to meet up, while on the phone the believer from England asks the believer from Africa to bring enough money for the day, saying that this is not Africa and people pay their own way here. Was this an appropriate behaviour or is there a better way to have dealt with this case.

#### Exercise 5

You are on an Alpha weekend and after the introduction, the whole group goes to the local pub for a drink, an Asia brother pays for the first round of drinks for everyone costing about £30 and 30 minutes later he sees a white couple go to the pub and buy a drink each and then they disappear. The Asia brother is really angry with this but he keeps it to himself. What should he have done?

## THE GREAT MULTICULTURAL MANDATE

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in<sup>1</sup> the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matt.28:18-20*

“**Making Disciples**” is what we are commanded to do and “**Panta Ta Ethne**” meaning of all nations or every ethnic group shows the extensive target, our Lord Jesus had in his Divine Business Plan.

In Matthew 10:5-6, the message was restricted to just the Jews not so in Matthew 28, were all nations, peoples, languages, cultures; ethnic groups are to be evangelised.

Paul says, in Eph.2:14 that the dividing wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile has been broken.

### **New Testament Example:<sup>2</sup>**

Peter and the other apostles confronted the racial and ethnic challenges head on.

### **The story of the first deacons:**

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**1**In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. **2**So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables.

**3**Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them

**4**and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

**5**This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

**6**They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

**7**So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. Acts 6

The Grecian Jews were complaining that their poor widows were not receiving fair distribution from the wealthy.

The Hebraic Jews, like the apostles had neglected this minority group.

**How did they resolve this issue?**

By appointing Godly, Greek speaking deacons to serve the widows

**THE POWER TO BE GLOBAL WITNESSES**

*8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

**Acts 1:8**

Jesus told his disciples that their witness will be not just local but global and at Pentecost we see the first fulfilment of this scripture.

Empowered by the Spirit, the Disciples preached to all the nations present on the streets on Jerusalem.

The audience included “Parthians, Medes and Medes and Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrysia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and coverters to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs” **Acts 2;9-11**

Three thousand men came to accept Christ, the number including women and children was probably close to about ten thousand people.

As we multi-ethnically evangelise we will no doubt multi-culturally worship as we disciple those who respond.

## THE MULTICULTURAL LIFESTYLE

*20To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21To those not having the law I became like one not having the law*

*(Though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. 1 Cor.9:20-22*

Paul accommodated himself to the Gentile culture in order to preach the Gospel, but the condition was “no violation to his vow to God”.

When we interact at deeper levels with those from other racial and ethnic backgrounds, our cultural behaviour must be adjusted. We need to learn 21<sup>st</sup> century lessons in order to communicate His timeless message.

## AMBASSADORIAL CALL

*17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21God made him who had no sin to be sin<sup>[a]</sup> for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Cor.5: 17-21*

God reconciled the believer to himself (2 Cor.5: 18) and He has also given us the ministry of reconciliation. All who are in Christ are ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor.5: 20); we are called to represent him regardless of ethnic identity.

Christians are called to evangelize their world regardless of color, creed, class, and culture.

## **CHRIST JESUS, THE INTENTIONALLY MULTICULTURAL SAVIOR AND LORD<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>3</sup> 7When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

9The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.<sup>a</sup>)

10Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

11"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? 12Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

13Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

15The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

16He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

17"I have no husband," she replied.

18Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 18The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

19"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. 20Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

21Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

22You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

25The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

26Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

### **The Disciples Rejoin Jesus**

27Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

28Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, 29"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" 30They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

31Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

32But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

33Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

34"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. 35Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. 36Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. 37Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. 38I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

### **Many Samaritans Believe**

39Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." 40So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. 41And because of his words many more became believers.

42They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

### **Jesus Heals the Official's Son**

43After the two days he left for Galilee. John 4:7-43

Christ crossed all barriers (cultural, racial, and gender) to reconcile her to God by simply asking her for a drink of water.

The woman in v.9 pointed out to Jesus the fact that she was a Samaritan woman, how could Jesus ask her for a drink? Jesus knew what he was doing; he was deliberately building a bridge to cross the ethnic and gender divide.

The Samaritan woman understood the good news of salvation, she immediately became an ambassador for Christ, and she returned to her town and shared the good news of Christ with others.

The results were amazing, Jesus build a bridge to a woman, and the woman built a bridge to her community. A true ambassador!

### **Christ Jesus' Intentionality**

- Jesus was deliberately in a place where he could meet non-Jews at a Samaritan well.

#### ***Our Intentionality***

- I intentionally go to where non-Christians hang out (Markets, Night Clubs, Club, Parties, Gyms etc)
- My marriage (Asia, Africa and Europe)

### **Christ Jesus' Insight**

- Jesus knew the history, heritage, and hurts of the Samaritan woman.
- Jesus took the gender, colour, and class into account as he ministered to her.
- Jesus did not rebuke the woman for saying that she was a Samaritan woman

Jesus reached out to this woman in his sovereign love and grace, he reached across those lines to communicate the Gospel of Salvation as he validated her.

### **Christ Jesus' Identification**

Jesus identified with the Samaritan woman in that he also needed water, a basic need.

Jesus showed the woman that she had something she could provide- water!

Immediately they had common ground and everything else did not matter, the barriers came down, whether religion, class, culture, race, or gender.

### **Christ Jesus' Instruction**

When the disciples came back Jesus took the time to instruct them on how they should relate to others.

The disciples got some training on multicultural ministry, Jesus knew as we saw already that some day they will be witnessing cross culturally.

### **DISCIPLESHIP IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT | 1 COR.12**

The Body of Christ is one unit, but many parts  
Spiritual Gifts given by the Spirit

As Paul deals with the subject of the Church and the Gifts given to her members, he also talks about:

### **Race and Culture**

*For we were all baptized by <sup>1</sup>a one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. **¶** Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. **I Cor 12:13-14***

As members of the body of Christ we need to know that we need each other racially and culturally as we express the gifts and as we worship our God.

We need to move into a free-flowing use of the gifts and talents within a multicultural atmosphere of love and acceptance, and freedom and fun.

In Acts 2 the people came from over 15 different locations and languages both Hebrews and Gentiles moved by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let us conclude today with 8 pointers from **Romans 12:9-13**

Because we are transformed, we have renewed minds we need to have a life producing intimate relationship with God.

Here is what it looks like:

- Sincere love v.9
- Hatred of evil and Love of God v.9b
- Devotion to one another above self v.10
- Honor others above self v.10b
- Zeal and Spiritual fervor in God's service v.11
- Being joyful, patient, and faithful in prayer v.12
- Share with God's people in need v.13
- Practice hospitality v.13b

We need the power of the Holy Spirit to produce these- the old has gone and the new has come.

Old attitudes about self, others, church, world, and God must be replaced with a new motivation, intention, action and attitude.

**Acknowledgements:**

1. David A.Anderson, Multicultural Ministry pp.137-52
2. Blue Letter Bible
3. Bible gateway
4. TCZ, Zim 1986-88
5. CBC, USA 2000-2002