

OUR PRESENT CONDITION

- * Our response to the issues in society **MUST** be driven by our **christian faith!**
- * This is **only possible** when our **identity in Christ** is priority!!
- * If our **identity** is first a **white man** or a **black man** or a **hispanic** we will not respond correctly to the challenges of society!!!
- * If our response is our **political party affiliation** we will **NOT** respond in a Godly way!!
- * Please understand this is **NOT** a political statement and I certainly do not mean to be offensive or unpatriotic: **If I respond to our challenges first and foremost as an AMERICAN**, I will **NOT** respond correctly!
- * I must respond as a **CHRISTIAN!**
- * I stand here today as a minister, pastor, shepherd and spiritual leader!!!
- * If you hear anything in my statements but **JESUS** and my attempt to be like Him.....then I am not communicating well or you aren't listening and you have missed the whole point!!!!!!!!!!

- I. From the scriptures we can see a picture of the Heavenly Father's desire!!

Revelation 7:9-10 (NLT)

9 I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands.

10 And they were shouting with a great roar,
"Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne
and from the Lamb!"

Revelation 5:9-10 (NLT)

9 And they sang a new song with these words:

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and break its seals and open it.

For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation.

10

And you have caused them to become
a Kingdom of priests for our God.
And they will reign on the earth.”

A. The very first truth to realize, accept and live out, is **God is
a God of diversity!!**

1. Absolutely settle the fact that **we are all created in His image!!**

Genesis 1:27 (NLT)

So God created human beings[a] in his own image.
In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

2. God told Man to “be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth”!!

Genesis 1:28 (NLT)

28 Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

3. The Tower of Babel is an event and story about Man’s refusal to “multiply and fill the earth”! **We like sameness!!** God likes **diversity!!**

Genesis 11:1-8 (NLT)

11 At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. **2** As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there.

3 They began saying to each other, “Let’s make bricks and harden them with fire.” **4** Then they said, “Come, let’s build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous **and keep us from being scattered all over the world.**”

5 But the Lord came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. **6** “Look!” he said. “The people are united, and they all

speaking the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them! **7** Come, let's go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won't be able to understand each other."

8 In that way, the Lord scattered them all over the world, and they stopped building the city.

B. Let's settle in our hearts that **racism is sin!!!!!!!**

rac·ism

prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior.

1. How can we continue to think and act in a discriminating way when it is abundantly clear we are all created in God's image and have common ancestry through Adam!!

Acts 17:26 (NLT)

26 From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries.

2. Did this animosity begin with Cain and Abel?

Genesis 4:7

7 You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master."

3. Does racism find its roots in the story of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth? Some say yes because Ham saw his father's nakedness.
4. Do we use the excuse to hate because of Isaac and Ishmael?
5. Yes, there is a **promised son**, but in the story we also see God's blessings on Ishmael.

Genesis 21:13 (NLT)

13 But I will also make a nation of the descendants of Hagar's son because he is your son, too."

6. Did it originate with the Jews and Samaritans?

John 4:9 (NLT)

9 The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?"

C. Regardless of our ideas of the **avenue of racism**, we need to call **hatred what it is.....SIN!!!**

II. Considering all of this, what should be our christian response???

A. Don't allow yourself to be distracted by all the politics and societal pressures! Stay focused on your **FAITH!** That's our context of life!!

1. We greatly hinder our message when we do not **look like Jesus!**

John 13:35 (VOICE)

35 Everyone will know you as My followers if you demonstrate your love to others.

2. I believe we lash out at others because we are not at peace with ourselves!!!

Romans 5:1-5 (NLT)

5 Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, **we have peace with God** because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. **2** Because of our faith, **Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege** where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

3 We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. **4** And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. **5** And this hope will not lead to disappointment. **For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.**

B. Let's agree to grapple with this scripture as we walk together!!

James 2:8-9 (NLT)

8 Yes indeed, it is good when you obey the royal law as found in the Scriptures: "Love your neighbor as yourself." **9** But if you favor some people over others, you are committing a sin. You are guilty of breaking the law.

1. Jesus has defined "our neighbor" as the person around us in need.
2. What we call the "Golden Rule", treating others the way we want to be treated is a start.....but only a start! There is something deeper, from the heart of God Himself, that should guide our behavior!!

Ephesians 4:31-32 (NLT)

31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. **32** Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

C. The **ultimate point is being Jesus to those around you!!**

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 (NLT)

18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. **19** For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. **20** So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us.

D. Back to **priority!** My race, my political leanings and my nationality **must be secondary** to me being a child of God!!

Philippians 3:20(NLT)

20 But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior.

1. Let's identify with our Lord first and foremost!!
2. The scripture says we have **"the mind of Christ"**!
3. Only allow yourself to respond as Jesus would respond!!

E. This is our perspective as **"ambassadors for Christ"**!

2 Corinthians 4:18 (NLT)

18 So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.