

Crazy Love: Loving Across Cultural Lines

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ACTS 2:1-12 NKJV

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"

GENESIS 11:1-9 CEV

At first everyone spoke the same language, but after some of them moved from the east and settled in Babylonia, they said: Let's build a city with a tower that reaches to the sky! We'll use hard bricks and tar instead of stone and mortar. We'll become famous, and we won't be scattered all over the world. But when the Lord came down to look at the city and the tower, he said: These people are working together because they all speak the same language. This is just the beginning. Soon they will be able to do anything they want. Come on! Let's go down and confuse them by making them speak different languages—then they won't be able to understand each other. So the people had to stop building the city, because the Lord confused their language

and scattered them all over the earth. That's how the city of Babel got its name.

Two Cultures:

Earthly Culture and Kingdom Culture

ACTS 2:44 NKJV

Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common ...

ACTS 4:32 NLT

All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had.

JOHN 13:34-35 NLT

“So now I am giving you a new commandment: LOVE EACH OTHER. JUST AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, YOU SHOULD LOVE EACH OTHER. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

COLOSSIANS 3:10-14 NLT

Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us. Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

How Do I Learn to Love Cross-Culturally?

1. Love with a new identity.

“We all tend to identify most with the area where we’ve had our greatest struggles.”

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-19 NKJV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

GALATIANS 3:26-28 NLT

For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.

GALATIANS 2:20 NLT

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2. Love with righteousness and justice.

PSALM 89:14 NKJV

Righteousness and justice are the FOUNDATION OF YOUR THRONE; mercy and truth go before Your face.

PSALM 97:2 NKJV

Clouds and darkness surround Him; RIGHTEOUSNESS and JUSTICE are the foundation of His throne.

ISAIAH 28:16-17 NLT

Therefore, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: “Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never be shaken. I will test you with the measuring line of JUSTICE and the plumb line of RIGHTEOUSNESS...”

RIGHTEOUSNESS: LIVING RIGHT; deals with conforming to a moral code of conduct prescribed by the Word of God

JUSTICE: DOING RIGHT; deals with correcting the injustices of society, defending the poor and marginalized

3. Love with intentionality.

God's love is proactive not reactive.

“You can't allow the immaturity of the world to define how you will act toward people of other cultures.”