

What Faith Bible Church Believes ‘Living To Make Him Known’ Looks Like In a Multi-ethnic Church Community

*“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell in Unity”
(Psalm 133:1)*

Faith Bible Church, July 2021

I. THE PURPOSE

The leadership of Faith Bible Church has prepared this document with the purpose and the hope to present the biblical truth relative to multiethnic ministry and God’s heart for ALL people. Our desire is that all who read this paper sense the Lord’s pleasure and this church’s passion to be unified around the Lord Jesus Christ above, but not apart from, our cultures, ethnicities, political perspectives, educational achievements, gender, etc. While there are many things that can be used to divide, Jesus prayed that those who are a part of His Bride, the church, would be one.

Racism, the prejudice, discrimination or hostility against an individual or group based on their membership in a particular ethnic group, has been used by Satan to attempt to divide the human race against itself. There has been slow progress in the area of racial reconciliation in our country, but we believe a united church is the only hope for a divided nation and our desire is to be the answer to Jesus’ prayer for unity. As we walk by faith into the future, Faith Bible Church is committed to speak truth into this struggle and learn what it means to be a vibrant, multiethnic fellowship which honors our gracious Redeemer.

II. THE APPROACH

Many approaches could be utilized as this issue is addressed. The approach chosen by the leadership of Faith Bible Church is to use the Bible as our guide and to seek to determine what God says and then to clearly present His heart and His mind on the topic. While there are many issues/topics related to the ‘race question’ which could be dealt with, we have chosen a singular path. Dealing with topics being discussed in today’s culture could cause this paper to become quite lengthy, could steal the focus from what we hope to accomplish and, finally, we do not want the core of this paper to be debatable topics/phrases whose very definitions are argued by experts. Rather, we hope to use biblical language and remain closely aligned with the text of Scripture.

III. WE BELIEVE

- A. Acts 17:26 states, “*And He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth...*” asserting that all humanity originated from one man, Adam.
- B. Genesis 1:26-27 teaches that each human being is created in the Image of God.
- C. Romans 5:12 states that, just as we inherited the Image of God through Adam, so through Adam’s sin death came to all people because all people sin.
- D. Genesis 12:1-3; 15:28; 17:5-8; 13:16; 22:15-19; 18:17-18; Gal. 3:7-9 are just some of the texts that teach that God made a covenant with Abraham in which He promised to bless him, make his name great and make him a great nation yet, God’s plan was also to bless all nations through Abraham.
- E. Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalms 11:7, Psalms 146:6-8, Isaiah 1:17, Micah 6:8 are just some of the texts that reveal God as the God of Justice and He exhorts His people to act justly.
- F. James 2:8-9, Leviticus 19:15, Exodus 23:3 & I Timothy 5:21 give evidence that from the beginning of the Law through the end of the New Testament, the Scripture consistently calls favoritism sin.
- G. Acts 10 is just one of the many passages in Scripture that reveals how God brought unity between two conflicting ethnic groups: Jews and Gentiles. This text states that God does not show favoritism and that ALL people have the same access through Christ to the Throne of Grace.

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- H. Matthew 28:19-20 states that God’s purpose for all New Testament believers is that they make disciples of all nations (a people, *ethnos*).
- I. John 17:20-23 is the record of Jesus’ praying for all believers to be “one” so that, as a result, the world would know that God did indeed send Jesus.
- J. Galatians 2:14 details a difficult time when the Apostle Paul aggressively and publicly confronted the Jewish Apostle Peter who had begun withdrawing from Gentile believers in order to bring Peter back ‘*in line with the truth of the Gospel.*’
- K. Ephesians 3:3-7 is an interesting passage in which Paul asserts that the ‘*mystery of the gospel*’ is that Gentiles are now ‘*fellow heirs...fellow members...fellow partakers...through the gospel.*’
- L. Romans 12:5 and I Corinthians 12 reveal Paul using the metaphor of a physical body for the church, which is a unified whole of diverse parts, and teaching that all believers form one body of diverse parts and each member belongs to all the others.
- M. 2 Corinthians 5:16 finds the Apostle Paul stating that believers have been given the ministry of reconciliation and are now commanded to regard no man according to the flesh (NIV, “*worldly point of view*”).
- N. Revelation 7:9 describes what worship will be like in heaven when believers from every nation, tribe, people and language are worshipping the Lord together. Additionally, Jesus shared His ‘model prayer’ in Matthew 6:10 in which He states that His followers should pray that “*His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*”

IV. WE AFFIRM THAT

- A. Every human being is created by God and made in His image.
- B. God is three-persons-in-one and one-person-in-three and that His very essence of perfect community is a model for which we are to strive.
- C. The Image of God is reflected in God’s charge to humanity to rule over the earth and all creation, to resemble or reflect His image, and to be in relationship with Him and with other believers.
- D. There is only ONE race...many ethnicities/many cultures/many nations...but ONE race – the human race. Adam and Eve were the first man and woman and from them all humanity (tribes, peoples, ethnicities) developed.
- E. Adam and Eve’s sin resulted in the fall of all humanity.
- F. Jesus paid the price for all sin and His resurrection assures every person who has placed his/her faith in Christ that they are forgiven, they are made a child of God, and they are guaranteed a place in heaven.
- G. Satan is real and his desire has always been, and continues to be, to steal, kill and destroy. Satan turns man against man and brother against brother. Satan’s influence will not be eliminated until Christ returns and removes Him forever. Mankind will continue to sin and division will exist in this sinful world until Jesus removes humanity’s sin nature.
- H. All forms of racism and prejudice are sin.
- I. God desires Faith Bible Church to serve every individual and each family He has brought to our body and to then equip them to reach out to our community in Jesus’ name.
- J. Multiethnic ministry causes the local fellowship to be richer as believers come to love one another and assist one another in becoming more like Jesus...as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.
- K. The love of Christ compels us to show love and to stand in solidarity with those who have faced or are facing prejudice or racism as well as stand against injustice in any form...whether it is expressed in the church or in society (Micah 6:8, Romans 12:9-21).
- L. Biblical unity is possible through the Holy Spirit’s power to forgive, heal and unify.
- M. A believer’s obedience and humble submission to the Word of God can overcome divisions the enemy can use to disrupt biblical fellowship.

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V. WE COMMIT TO

- **Live To Make Jesus Known** – Our primary responsibility as believers in Christ and as a corporate Body is to glorify God by proclaiming, teaching and making disciples of Jesus Christ.
- **Multi-ethnic ministry** – To model the oneness of Christ to our disparate community, the body of Faith Bible Church must serve and reflect Jesus’ others-centered heart. We believe that a local multi-ethnic church best represents the unity of the God-head and the diversity of the body of Christ which will be experienced in Heaven. And while there are easier paths to walk as a local church, we believe this direction honors the Lord and answers Jesus’ prayer in John 17:20-21.
- **Confront racial sins** – The prideful feelings, actions of superiority and the consequent dehumanization of other people must be confronted wherever they appear. We denounce the exploitation of and cruelty to other human beings in any form. The only appropriate response to racist attitudes and behaviors is repentance and restoration.
- **Intercede for His people through focused times of prayer** – We do not believe racism is simply a struggle between ethnic groups. God declares that our struggle is against principalities and powers and spiritual forces of darkness in the heavenlies (Ephesians 6:10-12). The means to combat these evil and destructive forces is by petitioning the Holy Spirit to cleanse us and empower us to reflect God’s love for people regardless of their ethnicity, whether male or female, socio-economic status or any other difference.
- **Expand our efforts to partner with local ministries that serve ethnic minorities** – God’s commission is for His followers to go into all the world and proclaim the good news which is found only in Christ. Faith Bible Church commits to maintain a global ‘missions focus’ as well as continue to reach out to others in our local community that demonstrates a heart for the various ethnicities that are represented locally.
- **Celebrate diversity in our fellowship** – We will plan times to celebrate aspects of the various cultures represented in our body by celebrating Christ-honoring aspects of different ethnic celebrations.

*“And to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him;
His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,
and His kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”
(Daniel 7:14)*