

BONUS CONTENT 17 - All Nations, Tribes, Peoples, & Languages! (Rev 7:9-10)

Derwin Gray says "Just because America is becoming more diverse does not mean our local churches will. We have to be intentional. If we aren't, we will build churches around our own ethnic tribes."

Derwin Gray says, "A vision for the future transforms what you do today."

- Studying the book of Revelation should cause us to live differently today.
- As we see God love all people, nations, tribes, and ethnicities it should affect us today in such a way that we too should love all people, nations, tribes, and ethnicities.
- We should be moving our lives toward this goal to reflect what is happening in heaven for all eternity- on earth as it is in heaven.

The above quotes are from Pastor Derwin Gray's book about building multiethnic churches in a multiethnic world. (***The High Definition Leader***) This book stresses the importance of Leaders applying God's kingdom right here on earth as it is in heaven, which includes embracing all nations, tribes and peoples. Pastor Derwin wrote this before it was popular and a hot topic in America.

Every ethnicity group and culture of people matter to God & His Church.

- WHY? Because God LOVES the whole world!!! **John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.**
- God loves ALL PEOPLE and He offers SALVATION TO ALL PEOPLE.
- The Bible says He will not cast out anyone who calls upon His name (**John 6:37; Rom 10:13; Acts 2:21**)

John Piper in his book ***Let the Nations Be Glad*** says, "God is pursuing with omnipotent passion a worldwide purpose of gathering joyful worshipers for Himself from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. He has an inexhaustible enthusiasm for the supremacy of His name among the nations."

- God wants to save ALL PEOPLE. This is why Paul would quote at the end of **Romans (15:11)** **"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him."**
 - Worship God because of who He is, what He has done and how He brings glory to His name.

The Bible Teaches us as followers of Jesus to Love God BUT ALSO that God wants us to LOVE our neighbor...to love all people (all people groups).

- This is especially important as people are talking about RACE & social injustice in our world today.
- We as Christians see that God has a heart for EVERYONE and His beautiful church is a people group of all the nations that exalt His Name.

Reflections on Rev 7:9-10 and God's love for all people.

"9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" Revelation 7:9-10

- In this text we see that God is for the nations! All the tribes, people, languages and every nation is around his throne praising God for His gift of salvation.
- This is an awesome scene that should encourage us and help us see the glory and beauty of heaven... THAT GOD BRINGS UNITY!!!
 - He commands us as His followers to walk in unity now!

Eph 4:3 (be) eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.

- Our soul should be rejoicing in these scriptures as we see His salvation offered to all men through Jesus Christ.

This salvation comes from the promise that God gave to Abraham to bless the nations!

Genesis 12:1-3 **1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless**

you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

- Sin entered into humanity and God was going to send a Savior and set apart a people group to follow Him.
- The nations would see the blessings upon a people group that follow Him, and they too would turn to follow Him.
- God promised Abraham that he would give him a big, multiethnic family and blessings through his seed.
- In the body of Christ, we should see this great fulfillment in Jesus and rejoice in it!

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING but WE NEED TO BE CLEAR...racism is a sin!

- Giving favoritism & having prejudiced inappropriate behavior is not ok with God.

James 2:9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

**"It is only God's love that moves us beyond racism, prejudice, unforgiveness, and misunderstanding." -DG
God's LOVE transforms our heart!**

When followers of Jesus read the text in Rev 7:9-10, our hearts should rejoice as we see God fulfilling His Word .EVERYONE IS THERE in heaven...All nations & people!

- We see this great promise of salvation fulfilled in Jesus because Jesus came to die for THE WHOLE WORLD - every ethnicity & people.

1 John 2:2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

- Our God loves all people and saves all those who call upon Him for salvation!
- A beautiful multiethnic redeemed people living in unity and practicing love should be an attractive thing to a world that is living in sin, racism, and disunity.

"Local churches are to be a mouth-watering foretaste of the full course meal to come (Rev 5:9-12; 21:1-4). According to God, the eternal church will be a multiethnic church of love, reconciliation, unity, and celebration of Jesus, so we are called to join Jesus to make that a reality today. Our individual salvation is to point to a greater, more beautiful story. It's the story of God's glory revealed in his multiethnic church and unified in his eternal son, the Lord Jesus" -DG

Peter told us this about the church: 1 Peter 2:9-10

9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

- God has made us a HOLY (different type of) PEOPLE.
- Through the blood of Jesus, we've been adopted into the family of God and now as His priests and holy nation, we bring him glory.
- WE ARE TO BE DIFFERENT THEN THE WORLD and ATTRACTIVE to the world.

"The eternal God of heaven now expresses his heavenly life through us on earth." DG

We are also called Priests — Deuteronomy 10:8 gives us a job description of priests.

At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD to stand before the LORD to minister to him and to bless in his name, to this day.

- Priests carry the presence of the Lord.
- Priests stood before the Lord (to minister to Him).
- Priest blessed the people (they arranged meetings for the people).
- We as the church now carry the presence of the Lord, and we are to stand before God and minister to Him.
- Our role in the priesthood also includes blessing people by pointing them to Jesus.
- God wants his church to be His priests and to bring glory to Him which includes pointing others to Him by our actions and by loving people.

“We believe that spiritual mature people love Jesus and want lost people to love him too.” -DG

One of these the greatest ways we can love people is pointing them to Jesus!

- When we are walking in LOVE & UNITY it does this!
- Jesus prayed for in **John 17:21 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me**

We now carry the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives as a HOLY NATION and AS PRIESTS we are empowered to do God’s Will to LOVE HIM & LOVE OTHERS!!!

- We bring services and ministry to others to point them to the Lord.
- God wants us to love all people just like He loves all people.
- He has snatched us from darkness to light, and we are now the light of the world. **(Matt 5:14)**
- As we are conformed to Christ our hearts should desire to love all people as well.
- As we look at racism, and hate in this world, people should see a stark difference in believers in Christ because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts to accomplish His will which is to love all people. **(ROM 5:5)**
- God tells us to share His LOVE to others & share His gospel with others. **(Matt 28:19-20)**

“The greatest thing we can ever do for other human beings is to introduce them to Jesus Christ.” DG

“If you love the glory of God, you cannot be indifferent to missions.” John Piper

Pastor Derwin argues in his book HD leader that we should strive towards this future amazing scene in **REV 7:9-10** right now. As this is God’s heart for the nations, salvation!

“Jesus is returning, and when he does, wonderful, mind-blowing things will happen. The garden that was lost will be transformed into a city of the redeemed, and God will dwell with his multiethnic people. In the new heavens and new earth there will not be segregation.

But until that day, we, the bride of Christ, must be ready for his return. Our readiness will serve as a witness to those trapped in darkness that the God of light and love is a husband who seeks their hand in marriage.”

-DG

- As the Church walks out a new humanity of saved people by God’s grace of every ethnicity walking together in love it is a beautiful witness to the world right now.
- It is a foretaste of what is to come & shows people the power of God as we love one another.

Galatians 3:28-29 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male & female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

(see also Col 3:11)

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

It does not mean our ethnicity, background, culture, or even language will be taken away or is that it is of no value, but it does mean that first & foremost our identity is found in Christ.

- We don’t find our value and identity in our ethnicity but rather in Christ.
- This unity is not found in uniformity, as we see in **Rev 7**, but it is found in our common denominator-Jesus.

In this passage of scripture (**Rev 7:9-10**) we see a wonderful truth, that following God will bring racial reconciliation and unity as you love God.

God doesn’t want us to wait for heaven to walk in this UNITY & LOVE; He wants us loving Him and loving all people NOW.

I will finish with this last quote from Derwin Gray,

“Until our husband, the Lord Jesus, returns, we are to progressively grow in our beautiful relationships with one another. According to Paul, beauty looks like love, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience (**see Col 3:12-13**). Can you imagine a world filled with people who exhibit these characteristics? Isn’t that beautiful? In an ugly world, beauty like this is simply irresistible. Local churches of love and beauty become a haven of hope to a hopeless world. The body of Christ becomes a corporate expression of Jesus to our world.”