

## INTERRACIAL RELATIONSHIP

### INTRODUCTION:

How should a pastor view interracial relationships in the community and in the world today?

### I. BIBLICAL

#### A. UNITY OF THE RACE

1. Genesis 1:27, From this single pair God started the human race.
  2. Genesis 6:13, Only Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives survived the flood. From this family all of mankind has come.
  3. The term race is hard to define, let us remain with the black, white, yellow, and red races, this is, indeed, an over simplification. (Note: these terms are only being used because they are most common. A biological definition of a distinct population of a species / subspecies is understood by few and is not the definition used when applied to humans)
  4. The method of the origins of races. Genesis 10 gives the table of nations, Gen. 10:32,
  5. How the different colors came to be. The black nations are associated with the word "Ethiopian." Jeremiah 13:23, "*Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?*"
- Conclusion: The whole human race came from one source and therefore all mankind is related.

#### B. Race Relations in the Old Testament

1. Noah's curse on Canaan. This curse has been used and is still being used to show that the black race is to be the slave of the other races.
  - a. Who was cursed? Canaan. No where does it say that Ham is cursed. Segregationists limit the curse to the black people. What about the other descendants of Ham - Babylonians, Egyptians, etc.?
  - b. Why was he cursed? It is stated that Noah knew what his youngest son had done to him. (The reference is to the youngest male descendant at that time which was Canaan, Noah's grandson through Ham). What Canaan did to Noah is not stated
  - c. Was the curse legitimate? Noah was a righteous man and the blessing on the other sons was sensible and so therefore was the curse on Canaan.
  - d. Was the curse fulfilled? Yes, 1 Kings 9 - they became slaves
  - e. Was the curse permanent. They are all gone - the curse was fulfilled.

Conclusion: Ham was not cursed and this curse does not apply to the black races.

2. Moses and the Ethiopian woman. Number 12:1. The question as to Moses' wife being black is not clear (her father was a priest of Midian (Exodus 2) and she was of Cushite lineage (Numbers 12:1). If she was black, we find that God has sided with Moses (Numbers 12). We do get an insight into society, however. The problem seems to be whether they would be drawn after other gods (Nehemiah 13:25-27). God forbids intermarriage on religious grounds not because of race (Deut. 7:3-6). (See also 2 Corinthians 6:14-17),

Conclusion: God is not against inter-racial marriages, only inter-religious marriages.

#### C. Race Relations in the New Testament

1. Jews and the Samaritans.

Jeroboam formed his own system of religion. Samaria became his capital. The Assyrians conquered Israel and shipped in foreigners who intermarried with the remaining Jews and a

syncretic religion was formed (2 Kings 17:24-41), so the reference to "Samaritan" designated a race as well as a religion (See also John 4).

In the days of Ezra, two hundred years later after no contact during all this time, they now offer to help rebuild the temple. They are considered as enemies and unacceptable on religious grounds, not racial. If they had come as true worshipers of Jehovah the racial differences would have been overlooked.

Conclusion: Religious differences developed into racial overtones

2. The Jewish lawyer in Luke 10:25-37 asked *Who is my neighbor?* Jesus responded with the story of the good Samaritan. The principle is: Neighbors should love one another as themselves.'
3. Jews and Gentiles.  
Due to the Canaanites worshiping idols there was a very strong restriction against intermarriage (Deut. 7:3)
4. The early Church and the Gentiles.  
Peter's sheet vision (Acts 10) caused him to go to the Gentiles

## II. PRACTICAL

Where Does the Church fit into the present day situation regarding interracial relations?

### A. The Multiracial community.

1. The large cities of the United States have become multiracial and multinational.
2. Most of these races live in segregated communities.
3. When the population increases, the community must be enlarged
4. They normally move adjacent areas.
5. The neighborhood they move into will change
6. The reaction within the existing community:
  - a. The people who were living there now move. ("White flight")
  - b. The retired, the widows, and poor normally stay.
7. The reason for the reaction
  - a. Usually the first to go are families with junior high and high school age children. They fear violence, a lowering of grade standard, and intermarriage.
  - b. Fear of decreasing property value
  - c. Fear of violence and crime in the neighborhood.

### B. The Church in a changing community.

1. The Church members move out also and then try to commute back for awhile.
2. Church membership decreases
3. Church members in that community attempt to keep the church alive, but soon there are only older adults in the church.
4. For all practical purposes the church is dead.
5. By this time they have either sold the church facilities or are trying to sell it.

### C. A possible solution.

1. The pastor is the key to how the church reacts.
2. When the pastor sees the change coming, he may with the help of his leaders reach out as a mission to these new neighbors .
3. Get a few families involved and train them in the church. Teach them to be leaders.
4. As the community changes, the church remains alive and continues evangelism to reach the new demographics moving in to it.
5. Get a new pastor.

Conclusion: The pastor should view interracial relationships in the community and in the world as one people who are sinners heading for hell and in need of the righteousness that only Christ can give to them. God sees no racial boundaries. God is no respecter of persons. God sent His Son into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. Jesus commands us to go and make disciples of all nations. In the light of this command, the pastor is the key to interracial relationships in the church, the community and in the world.

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