

From Every Nation; Revelation 7:9-10

- I. Prejudice
 - A. Sports are very big here in Texas, especially football
 - B. People here who are Cowboys fans know about those who are Redskin fans, right?
 - C. I spent a lot of time in Europe, so I watched ‘football’ (AKA, soccer)
 - D. The rivalries in England come to a fever pitch
 1. People hate those who support the rival team
 2. They physically harm them (and are encouraged to do so by others)
 3. They are brought up learning to hate — a tradition of hate
 - E. These traditions extend beyond sports teams
 1. Protestant versus Catholics in Ireland — Billy McGuigan tells of his young life as a cable TV installer in Ireland — when he went into a certain part of the city he had to change his name because of the hate between Protestants and Catholics
 2. We, here in America have a history of hate — there were times in this country (and still might be today) that certain groups actually thought that people with a darker skin color were not really humans, that they had no soul and could not go to heaven
 3. We certainly know that there is prejudice in the country
 4. And even in the church
 - F. Revelation 7:9–10 (ESV); 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!”
 - G. Galatians 3:26–29 (ESV); ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** ²⁹ And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.
 - H. Romans 1:16 (ESV); For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God **for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.**
 - I. Colossians 3:9–11 (ESV); ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹ **Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.**
- II. What Does This Mean
 - A. Acts 2:5–12 (ESV); ⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” ¹² And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”
 - B. Fifteen different, distinct groups of people (both Jews and Gentiles [proselytes])
 - C. Could this be Jesus’ vision for His Kingdom?
 - D. If so, we have to overcome traditions of hate
 - E. Matthew 15:21–28 (ESV); ²¹ And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely

oppressed by a demon.”²³ But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, “Send her away, for she is crying out after us.”²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.”²⁶ And he answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.”²⁷ She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.”²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

1. Here in this text, we see a tradition of hate between two groups of people — Israelites and Gentiles
2. Even Jesus’ disciples were asking Jesus to ‘send her away’
3. The Israelites, in their misguided attempt to follow God, hated everyone who was not like them
4. Jesus’ answer fully rebuked His disciples’ tradition of hate!

III. Overcoming Traditions of Hate

- A. Physical differences (what some call race) do not have to be a barrier in our society
- B. The church needs to overcome these traditions of hate
- C. Three things we need to overcome
 1. We need to know the Gospel story (of love)
 - a) The great commission sends us into “all” the world
 - b) As we live (love) out the Gospel message we love our neighbor
 - c) The story of the Samaritan man who helped the Israelite beaten and left for dead is a perfect example of loving out the Gospel
 - d) John 13:35 (ESV); By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
 - e) If the world is going to overcome these traditions of hate, the church has to reflect the love of Jesus
 - f) We are ALL created in the image of God — every color is precious to God, therefore precious to us!
 2. We need to have a broken heart
 - a) Compassion — sympathetic consciousness of others’ distress together with a desire to alleviate it¹
 - b) How often do we read, “He (Jesus) had compassion” in our Scriptures?
 - c) But we like to be around people ‘like us’
 - (1) How often do we see churches voluntarily segregated because of color or ethnicity?
 - (2) We have the wrong understanding of ‘like us’ — ‘like us’ is not physical, but spiritual!
 - d) John 17:20–21 (ESV);²⁰ “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,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.
 - e) We must all be one, regardless of our ethnic background, our skin color, our culture
 - f) Does your heart break over how other people are treated? People who are not ‘like us’?
 3. We need to be healers
 - a) Jesus healed the Canaanite woman because of her faith
 - b) Reconciliation starts and ends with relationships
 - c) If we are going to be healers, then we need to build relationships

¹ Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

- d) "What's it like to be you"
 - (1) Ask this question
 - (2) Then listen with understanding, with empathy
 - (3) Pray for or with them
 - D. A lot of us were raised to hate those who are different from us
 - E. We have to own and overcome it
- IV. The Good News
- A. Is the message of love and salvation for all
 - B. We are all (everybody, everyone) made in the image of God
 - C. We all have (had) a need to be saved from our sin
 - D. We all have the power to end hate
 - 1. Imagine two friends walk in, one in a Cowboys hat and one in a Redskins hat
 - 2. "Can't be friends" — "we are Christians and we believe that God loves everyone no matter what team you support"