LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

Race, Ethnicity & Culture with Purpose: The Growth of a Multicultural Church Ministry

A Thesis Project Submitted to

the Faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Ministry

by

Jamar R. Mabry

Lynchburg, Virginia

May 2020

Liberty University School of Divinity

Thesis Project Approval Sheet

<div align="right">

_____
Dr. C. Fred Smith
Associate Professor, School of Divinity

</div>

<div align="right">

_____
Dr. Michael Eiras
Reader, School of Divinity

</div>

THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT
Jamar R. Mabry
Liberty University School of Divinity, 2020
Mentor: Dr. C. Fred Smith

Christianity is a major galvanizing factor. However, it is prudent to pay attention to the real and latent divisions in society that hinder social harmony: even without the calming effect of the Christian faith. Attempting to form a multicultural church must therefore involve an understanding of the races and ethnicities that comprise the target population. That process is as academic as it is pragmatic. The academic aspect of conceiving race involves a historically literate understanding of the heritage and factors that created the present race and ethnic power relations not only in the locale: but across the entire country as well. With that background, it is then possible to begin the process of tapping into the demographic-specific motivators of each race to spur their joining one Christian congregation. Different demographics view the Faith differently. It is essential to define and portray the church as a forum that will not only shelter that demographic from the problems that it faces, but also offer it the aspirations that define success according to the aspirations of a specific stratum. These are the ethos of Christianity, and as such congregations can only subsist when these needs are met, through the lens of Christian teaching. Aside from identifying the message that will appeal to the base aspirations of all the demographics of a multicultural congregation: it is also important to normalize the church's interactions with the outside world. To that effect, one decisive approach is to incorporate overall cultural competence in the lists of guests coming to teach at the church.

Acknowledgements

This project is dedicated to the followers of Christ. It is important that we understand Christ's church is not just a single race, ethnicity or culture. To my wife Charleza and family, a sincere appreciation is given for your endless support of my calling and dreams. With gratitude and love, I want to recognize Dr. C. Fred Smith. Dr. Smith's invaluable efforts, guidance, mentorship, and heart to serve has led me to victory in accomplishing this educational achievement. Special acknowledgement to the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla, MO, for your devoted support and endless love for the Body of Christ.

Contents

Abbreviations

DMIN   Doctor of Ministry

TMC   Truth Missionary Church

CH   Chaplain (Army)

S&T   Science and Technology

NAACP   National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

Chapter One

Introduction

In a society of racial, cultural, and ethnical differences, the church represents how diversity must be embraced. Unfortunately, when the church has one dominant race in a metropolitan society, then the world would have an impression that it belongs to a specific cultural group. With this impression, many people may not feel welcome to fellowship in a congregation where they are the minority. God's plan to redeem mankind reflects a diverse assembly. No wonder, during the period when Jesus ministered to the world, he tried to empower the gentiles who had for a long time been marginalized. As Tahaafe-Williams stated, "The Early Church was not homogeneous."[1]

The conciliation potential of multiethnic churches is an issue of interest because it offers hope of crossing cultural and racial divides in attracting congregants.[2] This study is therefore an attempt to ensure that the church reflects God's design for His kingdom, which incorporates human kind from diverse backgrounds. This study aims to provide insights on how the church can grow its congregation to include a more diverse and multicultural group. The study will cover the development of churches in United States focusing on how historic factors such as slavery and civil war shaped the nature of congregations. This implies that the study will therefore cover a broad historic and geographic span in seeking to solve the research question.

---

[1] Katalina Tahaafe-Williams, "Churches in Ecumenical Transition: Toward Multicultural Ministry and Mission," *International Review of Mission* 101, no.1 (2012): doi.10.1111/j.1758-6631.2012.00093.x.

[2] Hyuk Cho, "We Are Not Alone: Historical Journey of the United Church of Canada's Response to Become an Intercultural Church," *International Review of Mission* 100, no.1 (2011): 1-5, doi:10.1111/j.1758-6631.2011.00056.x.

Ministry Context

The research seeks to outline mechanisms that can be employed by churches in the U.S., to ensure that the church is able to accommodate people from various backgrounds and thus reflect God's kingdom. The church that the study seeks to focus on is the Truth Missionary Church (TMC) of Rolla, Missouri. It is important to explore the beliefs of the church, characteristics of the church's congregation, and the historical background of the state where the church is located. The Truth Missionary Church of Rolla, just like many other churches around the U.S., is guided by Christian beliefs and ideologies that were first manifest in the ancient church.

The Truth Missionary Church doctrine is biblically grounded from which their faith is deeply rooted into the foundation. Christians observe the Word of God as a way of remaining in, and abiding by, God's desire as it directs. Inspired by the Word of God, Christians observe the plenary authority as expressed by God through His Word, the Bible. Therefore, individuals have built their faith by strictly following what is expressed in the Word of God. Since the Bible is inerrant and inspiring, it forms the basis for the TMC to create evangelical ministries that inspire other individuals to follow the doctrine of the TMC by believing and abiding by the Word of God.

The TMC baptizes members as an expression of abiding by the Word of God as it is the absolute involvement with Christ. To gain new members, churches look at the existing population to identify a need for a society where it can base its faith in line with the Word of God.[3] The TMC, therefore, strives to ensure that all members in the community are given the

---

[3] Mark DeYmaz, and Harry Li. *Leading a healthy multi-ethnic church: Seven common challenges and how to overcome them*. (Zondervan, 2013).

opportunity of coming into communion with God. The TMC, therefore, bring social justice in communities they thrive in as they strive to assimilate various groups of individuals into believing in God and Christ as the Savior.

The TMC brings evangelism to influence other members of the community in their Christian faith. The TMC builds their faith by believing in God, thus emphasizing faith through evangelism. Believing in God and Jesus Christ has a significant effect on influencing evangelism. The Trinity identifies the Christian faith. In this notion, the TMC have identified with the Trinity to influence the congregation in building their faith in Jesus Christ. The Trinity identifies Christianity in the belief that God is three persons (namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) in one being. The Trinity states that God is one in essence and three in person. This statement shows three critical truths of the Trinity. First, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct persons; second, all the three individuals are fully God; lastly, there exists only one God. The Bible states that the Father is God (Philippians 1:2), Jesus is God (Titus 2:13), and also the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3–4). All the members of the Trinity are equally important. The Trinity is an essential aspect of the Church as small groups of people who accept Christ grow to form a congregation.[4] The Truth Missionary Church of Rolla, therefore, builds its evangelical ministry by identifying with Jesus Christ.

The early church began after the resurrection of Jesus, with the Holy Spirit sent as a guide to the disciples as well as to the new members they were recruiting into Christ's church. The disciples carried on with the teachings of Jesus, bringing aboard people from every walk of

---

[4] Teresa Chai, "Pentecostalism in Mission and Evangelism Today." *International Review of Mission* 107, no. 1 (2018): 116-129.

life, including the gentiles.[5] Thus, inclusiveness is a value inherent in almost every church, and the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla is no exception. Further, forgiveness is practiced in the church. Just as Jesus was sent to forgive all sins, and disciples extended this by baptizing and welcoming new members into the church,[6] the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla exudes this belief and it forms an integral aspect of the church's practices.

The Truth Missionary Church of Rolla has a congregation that is predominantly African American. This does not truly relate to the church's neighborhood, as it is comprised of people from multiple races and ethnicities. However, the church has not succeeded in having its congregation reflect the society within which it exists. Based on the values and beliefs that guide the church, it would be expected that it would at least strive to mirror its immediate society.

One senior pastor and two other associate pastors guide the ministry. It has been three years now since the church held its first meeting and mission. The church is located in Rolla, Missouri close to S&T University. The church is surrounded by a highly religious community which acts as a family of believers who share the Word of God. The church also maintains a casual worship style and accepts all people from different backgrounds. There are a total of six families and roughly 30 people comprised of students and local community members who attend daily services. The church families are closely related with most of them being regarded as a group of people coming from the same localities. The congregation is comprised of more women than men, with total numbers amounting to 34 and 29, respectively.

---

[5] Stephen J. Pope, "Equal Regard" versus "Special Relations?" Reaffirming the Inclusiveness of Agape. *The Journal of Religion* 77, no. 3 (1997): doi:10.1086/490020.

[6] Marilyn McCord Adams, "Forgiveness," *Faith and Philosophy* 8, no. 3 (1991): doi:10.5840/faithphil19918319.

The church, therefore, allows individual non-Christians to take part in such fellowship to create new disciples.[7] The church is non-denominational and Christian based, but also maintains that salvation comes through faith in Christ. The church's position on discipleship and evangelism is that the two are needed for followers to fulfill their lives. The church's evangelistic activities include spreading the good news of the gospel to the local community. The discipleship activities include developing a generation of more followers of Christ. The church is in a region that is considered as highly diversified. However, churches, in turn, lack the necessary diversity to accommodate non-Christians.[8] Like many other churches in the U.S., the church continues to face discipleship dilemmas and must, therefore, remain committed to establishing new methods to transfer faith. Discipleship should be founded on God's bidding, as He commissioned us to compel disciples.[9]

As the population in the U.S. continues to increase in diversity, the church remains committed to making it easier for non-Christians in the region to assimilate into its congregation. Additionally, the small families in the church are critical and the church believes that becoming and making a disciple includes taking part in churches' small groups. The case of small groups or families was well expressed in the book of Acts. The church, therefore, allows individual non-Christians to take part in such fellowship to create new disciples. The families provide an opportunity to build relationships and share lives. Families are welcomed to meet on the first Saturday of the month, to build healthy and godly relationships in fellowship with newcomers

---

[7] Sang W. Sur, "Church Growth Through Discipleship in Small Groups." (PhD diss., United Theological Seminary, 2018).

[8] Damon C. Duran Sr., *Intentionally Diverse: Raising Awareness in the Life360 Church Network of the Multiethnic Community in the Springfield, Missouri Metropolitan Area*. Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2017.

[9] Nathan A. Kuhlman, "Developing a Mentor-Method of Evangelism at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rolla, Missouri." (DMin MAP, Concordia Seminary, 2018).

and fellow families. The family ministry, led by the associate pastors, allow for the introduction of new members and encourage individuals to raise questions and clarify matters relating to the gospel.

Notably, the region's culture includes an overwhelmingly amount of protestant church goers. Baptist is the largest denomination. A closer analysis indicates that the region's major protestant groups also include Methodists and Presbyterian. The city is also known for a significantly sizeable Catholic population. Other religious preferences include groups of Jewish people and the Muslim community. However, some anomalies have recently been identified where church membership is declining at an alarming rate. Spreading the gospel is the primary way in which the church is likely to achieve the requirements of the commandment that requires followers of Christ to go and make disciples.

Discipleship in the church is critical and requires personal discipline in matters relating to devotion. In recent days, there are significant concerns that church members take it for granted to spend personal time with God.[10] The only individuals who appear to evangelize actively are those with family members who are committed to missionaries. Though the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla does not have a significant number of ministries, its internal mission is to expand to other counties in Missouri multiplying in the congregation and its ethnic backgrounds.

The church stands in a region that is experiencing multi-cultural changes in the community and demographics. The church must change with the community through the creation of more disciples of different ethnicities. One of the critical components of church families is young adults. The intervention strategies to create more disciples and to spread the

---

[10] Phillip A. Martin, "Equipping Members at New Salem Baptist Church of Rural Newton County, Missouri, For Outreach." (DMin Thesis Project, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018).

good news of the gospel are centered on the young generation. Families assist in creating a connection between young and adults through its youth ministry. The Church congregation is aware of the recent trends and is providing the necessary support for nurturing young people. Young people are considered as necessary for the continuity of the gospel.[11] The interventions also ensure that young people transit into churchgoers with different backgrounds of life, and hence the church stands in a great position to achieve its objectives for discipleship and evangelism.

Missouri as a state that is well known for slavery. Slavery in the state started with the Spanish and French occupants. The situation did not change as these slaves were incorporated into new slavery system in the U.S. with the buying, selling and use of slaves persisting in the state for several decades.[12] The history of the state with slavery must have had a huge impact with regards to the socio-economic fabric of the state, and this is reflective in the kind of segregation that is evident in the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla, with segments of the society probably feeling alienated based on practices of the past that have created near permanent divisions within American socio-economic structure.

The Truth Missionary Church of Rolla has the opportunity to expand their evangelical ministries in the diverse population of Rolla, MO, creating a multicultural culture in the region of Rolla. The nearby population is comprised of multi-ethnic cultures, and therefore, this is TMC's evangelical target population. The ministry targets the young population of students of the Missouri S&T University, military personnel at Fort Leonard Wood Army Base, and the

---

[11] Serena Alexandria Pace, "Young Adults Leaving the Church: The Tie to Intentional Spiritual Mentoring Among Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Teens Through Youth and Confirmation Ministry." (DMin, 2015).

[12] Christopher Phillips, "The crime against Missouri: Slavery, Kansas, and the Cant of Southernness in the Border West." *Civil War History* 48, no. 1 (2002): doi:10.1353/cwh.2002.0008.

population. The TMC has an opportunity to carry out evangelical ministries that would influence the existing population to believe in Christianity. The TMC won't ignore the impact and issue of race in its mission to become a multi-ethnic church. The evangelism efforts of TMC focus on finding ways to reconcile existing populations through the Word of God, which is a common goal of Christianity. During interaction with individuals, they share, listen, and address issues affecting them, creating commonality.

Problem Presented

The problem is that the TMC is not diversified in its ethnicities, and races. The world is currently undergoing numerous changes in the economic, social and cultural sectors. This inevitable change affects all spheres, such as education systems, social arrangements, and the church. It is therefore imperative that church leaders adopt and uphold the changes continually occurring in shaping the manner in which the gospel is spread among individuals of different cultures.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Doctor of Ministry project is to build a church congregation with diverse cultural backgrounds, which is a true representation of the gospel. There is an urgent need for the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla, MO, to eliminate the systematic racial bias which will potentially create an environment of diverse people who have one common destiny to serve God. Upholding the changes and adopting them in spreading the gospel will ease the acceptability of the Word by the people in the community. The current community incorporates individuals from diverse backgrounds and therefore changes continue to occur in the way the

gospel is administered in the church. For the church leader to successfully implement the changes and have a long-lasting influence for the gospel, the church needs to adapt to the cultural changes in the church in a manner acceptable to all communities.

Basic Assumptions

According to Ed Setzer, the diversity of culture is a significant problem of this era.[13] God has certain expectations from the human beings. Multiculturalism should be one such goal that needs to be recognized by the church because as "we go forward, it is important to understand that the move to multicultural Christian community is not something we achieve because we are forcing it, but because we realize the force in it."[14] As discussed above, The Truth Missionary Church of Rolla is situated in a context in which there is a diversity of cultures; however, this characteristic has not been fully utilized by the church itself.

The study proposes that if the concept of multiculturalism is encouraged in this church, then there is a likelihood for more Christian followers, not only in this area, but in other regions of the world as well. For this, there is a strong need for the church leaders to believe sincerely in a non-racial attitude and congregation. A church can only prosper in such a manner if the leaders undergo radical changes. This involves "unending passion for learning about and from people of different cultures, and being willing to face and work through their biases."[15] When the leaders learn about the core values of the common people of different ethnic groups, then they can learn strategies that can be used to teach people of all groups in an effective manner. In addition, the

---

[13] Ed Setzer. "Challenges to Becoming a Multicultural Church." The Exchange. https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2017/august/challenges-to-becoming-multicultural-church.html.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Chanequa Walker-Barnes, "How Multicultural Churches Can Succeed." CollegeVille Institute. https://collegevilleinstitute.org/bearings/multicultural-churches-succeed/.

leaders would also be able to eradicate the differences among the followers resulting in a unified community.

This research proceeds on several assumptions based on the above discussions, the first being that racial/ethnic imbalance evidenced at the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla is not a result of deliberate action by the church. Second, there are historical underpinnings to such racial/ethnic imbalance. Thirdly, the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla strives, just like any other church, to bring everyone in their society on board. Lastly, this research assumes that Truth Missionary Church of Rolla has failed in its attempts to reflect the community outside its walls by not having a multicultural congregation.

The assumptions pointed out informs the problem and analysis to be addressed for the research. The assumption that the current state of multicultural representation at the church is not intentionally leads to the analysis of the issue under investigation that pertains to the church and its relationship to the community and not the internal organization of the church. The assumption of historical underpinnings to the current predicaments will lead to analysis on the history on the formation of a society. This has the potential of being reflected in the church, and poising challenges for the church. Assuming that the church is open to everyone prompts an analysis seeking to point out issues keeping certain people from the church even though the church is opened to all in a community. Lastly, the assumption that there has been a failure on the part of the church to equally bring on board everyone is an indicative of an analysis seeking to reveal how the church can change its tactics in its ministry to enhance its efforts of bringing everyone on board.

The various assumptions also point out the research approach that the study adopts. The research questions will be addressed from a Christian perspective, so as to point out various

11

mechanisms that could be adopted to encourage every race and every ethnicity to join together in congregation at any church in the U.S., and around the world without the various socio-economic differences between them serving as a barrier. The study seeks to outline how socio-economic issues can be effectively overcome and addressed through ministry in the Christian way of life, thus bringing people from different walks of life into Christ's church.

Definitions

The main purpose of the study is to outline how the church can grow its congregation to include a more diverse and multicultural group. In achieving this purpose, several key terms will guide the research.

Critical multiculturalism – This refers to enlightenment in society about social change, and interventions that can be implemented to redress social imbalances in various settings, such as the church. This is essential as the study seeks to point out how the church can be more inclusive of persons from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Critical multiculturalism is important for this study because this needs to be implemented within the church discussed in this research. This is significant because it ensures positive social change within the society where people meet without viewing each other with the perspective of discrimination.

Deliberate Reconciliation— Reconciliation is considered a pious and spiritual process in the church. It is the spiritual act that seeks a "loving, liberating and life-giving relationship with God and one another, and striving to heal and transform injustice and brokenness in ourselves, our communities, institutions and society." Deliberate reconciliation then refers to the act of creating such a loving and caring attitude among people in a meticulous manner which eradicates

all kinds of differences and later encourages the idea of "reconciliation," unity, love, equality and so on. Deliberate reconciliation eventually leads to a better structured society where the stratification within the different domains no longer exist.[16]

Deliberate reconciliation is impactful for this study because there is a dire need to introduce racial healing in the Truth Missionary Church of Rolla, MO., where the diversity of the people of Missouri does not appear to be properly recognized. The idea of deliberate reconciliation can help the patrons of the church understand that they need to strive for the betterment of the church. This would not only lead to a prosperous church, but a better society as well.

Multiculturalism – In the context of this research, multiculturalism refers to the coexistence of persons from diverse cultures in a social setting such as the church. The research seeks to explain how this can be achieved in the church.

The inclusion of multiculturalism has a deep impact for this study because positive multiculturalism is very important aspect of Christianity. Every part of the world today is abundant with people of various cultures. Christianity can help these people become acceptive to other cultures. If people of different races have one common religion, then there is more likelihood that they would work together to have a positive, loving and caring attitude towards others.

Racial Inequality – Racial inequality refers to the stratification of the society where people of different races adopt a prejudiced attitude against those who are from a different ethnic or cultural background. This also includes discrimination against those people who are of a different color. Ironically, racial inequality also arises because of religious differences within and

---

[16] Racial Reconciliation. "The Episcopal Church." https://www.episcopalchurch.org/racial-reconciliation.

without. For instance, a Muslim might face a biased attitude from a Christian or a Jew or a Protestant Christian might view the Catholic Church with a critical eye.[17] It is very important that the motive of the religious leaders of the congregation should be non-discriminating and the environment of the whole congregation should be built with the same motive. "For a congregation to change the racial attitudes of an individual, it must be a salient environment for an individual."[18]

The impact of racial inequality is detrimental to both society and Christianity. Every religion is made with the aim of uniting people together. Religion is always viewed by the common masses as ideal by the people. They look towards religious leaders as ideals of life. However, if the church and the church leaders embrace equality, it leads to further disunity and a stratified society.

Racial Ideologies and Reconciliation— Racial ideologies refers to the set of rules and regulations that needs to be implemented in order to get rid of racial discrimination within the world, or in this case, within the domain of the church. Racial ideologies have roots in the theory of Marxism, which also elucidates how the stratification of society into classes has resulted in extreme prejudiced attitudes among people. "One needs to find the common thread in all forms of racism and their theories by placing them against capitalist society's goals and hegemonic strategies."[19] These ideologies not only highlight the racial problems, but also delineate the interventions that can used to solve the issue related to racial differences. In that sense, it can be

---

[17] Marylee C. Taylor and Stephen M. Merino. "*Race, Religion, and beliefs about Racial Inequality.*" *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 634, no. 1 (2011): 60-77.

[18] Ryon Cobb, Kevin Dougherty, Jerry Park, and Samuel Perry. "*Congregational Size and Attitudes towards Racial Inequality among church attendees in America.*" Religions 6, no. 3 (2015): 781-793.

[19] Babacar Camara, "Ideologies of Race and Racism," Research in Political Economy Confronting 9-11, Ideologies of Race, and Eminent Economists, 2012. doi:10.1016/s0161-7230(02)20004-8.

argued that these ideologies basically reveal the set of objects that can result in reconciliation among the different groups.

The study of racial ideologies and reconciliation is significant because it can provide a proper framework for the church to get rid of racial discrimination that might occur within a congregation or preaching process. The ideologies and the plans attached to it can provide a framework that has already been checked, analyzed and researched. A key issue is the administrative structures and actions of the church that could keep persons of various races and ethnicities away from the church. The study adopts a Christian ministry perspective and seeks to find solutions for the current problem from a Christian way of living and in accordance with the teachings of the Bible, outlining how the church can reach out to everyone and be all inclusive.

Limitations and Delimitations

The research is limited in numerous ways. First, the sample of the study is comparatively small because the research work settles on only one church (Truth Missionary Church of Rolla, Missouri) from which it seeks to make an analysis and present findings. Along these lines, the extent of the study isn't as broad as a larger report would require. The sample is small so the findings of the study can only be generalized about the specific area and cannot be generalized over other regions.

As the study covers only one church, the scope of the research would only be limited to one geographical location. The nature of the research could have not permitted more as the research studies the relationship between the one church and the case could be uncontrollable in the event that more than one church was settled on due to timing, people, and church leadership. It would be advised that the results should only be implemented over the concerned church,

however, future studies can use the framework of the study for further research or this study could be reviewed for validation of future work.

A qualitative research approach will be used instead of quantitative, which can be considered another limitation of the study. This could be considered a limitation because of lack of numerical data from primary sources, which could be scientifically analyzed to provide concrete results.[20] However, the use of a qualitative research approach is justified, as this will lead to the explanation of a phenomenon;[21] namely, why the church is not reflective of its immediate community's multiculturalism, and propositions for change. The main aim of the research is to determine interventions that can help Truth Missionary Church of Rolla, MO, work through future problems with evangelizing in such a manner that racial inequality is reduced, multiculturalism is encouraged, and Christianity is taught to all people.

Thesis Statement

If the church evangelizes to people across all ethnicities and races, the church could potentially grow in diversity in the congregation. Change is inevitable, but change must be embraced to win souls for Christ. The church must adapt a different evangelizing strategy to thrive in diversity. For this study to be effective, the church congregation will have to become acceptive to evangelizing to people of a different ethnicity and race. The research will develop evangelizing strategies, with the focus of building a multicultural church. Hence, it is important

---

[20] Robert Adcock, "Measurement validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American political science review* 95, no. 3 (2001): doi:10.1017/s0003055401003100.

[21] Egon Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Competing paradigms in qualitative research." *Handbook of Qualitative Research* 2, no. 163-194 (1994): 105.

that the church leadership incorporate a method through which they can adapt to the changes to

embed the everlasting importance of the gospel to a multicultural society.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

Literature Review

The literature review chapter focuses on a wide range of issues related to the project currently being investigated. These issues are critical in the understanding of multiculturalism and religion, with an emphasis on historical factors such as slavery and the civil war. They shaped the nature of congregations, multiculturalism in the church and racial inequality, reinforce ideologies and reconciliation, deliberate reconciliation, as well as teaching religion and theology. Therefore, the review will exhaustively discuss these elements in detail to enhance the growth of the church by reflecting God's view of humankind.

Critical Understanding of Multiculturalism and Religion

Failure to understand the numerous cultures in the United States due to the diversity of languages, religion, and cultures is a possible problem the government cannot reconcile potentially, only the church can.[22] Most churches share a vision of breaking the societal division by having a relationship based, multicultural congregation.[23] This is evident in the growing number of research that has been carried out on multicultural congregations.[24] According to Smith et al., the mono-cultural designs that most churches have is reflective of societal fragmentation.[25]

---

[22] Melissa Steyn and Conway Daniel, "Introduction: Intersecting Whiteness, Interdisciplinary Debates," *Ethnicities* 10, no.3 (2010): doi:10.1177/1468796810372309.

[23] Evelyn Mercado Johnson, "Design for Church-Based Ministry to Evangelize, Educate, and Empower Latinos / Hispanics in the Predominantly Black/African American Membership of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Hampton, Virginia," (Ph.D. diss., Regent University, 2018).

[24] Marilyn Naidoo, "The Potential of Multicultural Congregations in Supporting Social Reconciliation." HTS Teologiese Studies / *HTS Theological Studies* 73, no. 4 (2017): doi:10.4102/hts.v73i4.4622.

[25] R. Drew Smith, William Ackah, and Anthony G. Reddie, *Churches, Blackness, and Contested Multiculturalism Europe, Africa, and North America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

The history of racial relations and the history of the church are inseparable in America. DeYoung emphasizes the need to have multiracial Christian congregations.[26] The authors succinctly provide an outline of how color impact the formation of different worship groups. Conversely, Wagner takes a different view, contending the need for a homogenous church to ensure maximum growth.[27] Between the 1600s and the beginning of 1940s, interracial worship was the norm, as both Native Americans and early White American congregation members worshiped together. The British colonies were wide-ranging and included free Africans, Native Americans, indentured servants, white and colored free servants, and white British. Intermarriages were experienced in some cases; therefore, couples and their families additionally formed part of the churches.

Due to the development of the Atlantic slave trade, however, churches separated based on race, as slave owners and slaves convened in different venues with growing wealth and economy. The various beliefs held by many African slaves as well as the nature of jobs the indentured slaves performed compared to other Africans led to their separation. Consequently, according to Afa'ese, only a few African slaves became Christians, although they believed in God's existence.[28] Christians used biblical teachings to verbally underpin slavery, further complicating the situation. However, the supporting force essentially resulted from the fear to lose labor provided by slaves. Raboteau writes that slaveholders' vague awareness that Christian slaves would demand to congregate was the most significant barrier to missionaries, as such

---

[26] Curtiss Paul Deyoung, "Arguing the Case for Multiracial Congregation," *United by Faith,* 2003, doi:10.1093/9780195152159.003.0009.

[27] R. Stephen Warner, "Religion, Boundaries, and Bridges," *Sociology of Religion* 58, no. 3 (1997): doi:10.2307/3712214.

[28] Uatisone A. Afa'ese, "Multicultural Strategies for Developing a Church with Intentional References to Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Structure as Modeled by the All Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1979-2012," (2013).

freedom would threaten the master-slave hierarchy.[29] Raboteau further notes that in America's early history, when free Blacks became Christians, the option of worship was the "negro pew" in the church building's segregated space.[30] Practicing segregation was not only the Southern states' issue; New England pastors, including Jonathan Edwards and Cotton Mather, were slave masters. Thomas Jefferson, the US President in the 1700s, was equally a slave owner; however, he emphasized they be educated.

Three events marked the 1700s, namely the slave trade, the slaves' life servitude, and the Southern religious revival. The third event, which was also termed as the Great Awakening, drew enslaved Blacks and Whites to Christianity. Blacks and Whites' biracial congregations emerged with European American and African American followers reaching out to one another, addressing each other as "Brother" and "Sister."[31] Although equality with regard to address might appear less significant today, it was significant in an era when it was prohibited to use any familial idea to address Blacks. Boles states that the Whites accepted this practice in principle based on the belief that all were equal and everyone is God's spiritual family members in God's sight.[32] At this time, Naido points out that preachers were opposed to the institution of slavery and freed those they owned.[33] The main supporters of the biracial congregations and revival were lower-class Whites who never owned Africans. The author further contends that at times, White

---

[29] R. M. Dennis and Albert J. Raboteau, "Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19, no.3 (1980): doi:10.2307/1385875.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Westerfield Karen B. Tucker, "*Making Room at the Table: An Invitation to Multicultural Worship* Edited by Brian K. Blount and Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 2000. Theology Today 58, no. 3 (2001): doi:10.1177/004057360105800319.

[32] Elliott A. Wright, "Religion in American education: A historical view." *Phi Delta Kappan* 81, no. 1 (1999): 17.

[33] Marilyn Naidoo, "The Potential of Multicultural Congregations in Supporting Social Reconciliation." HTS Teologiese Studies / *HTS Theological Studies* 73, no. 4 (2017): doi:10.4102/hts.v73i4.4622.

church members overcame their discriminative acts and equally acknowledged Blacks as God's children.

Cetinkaya and Kodan note that the possibility of biracial congregations ended in 1844 when two African Americans, Absalom Jones, and Richard Allen, abandoned the Methodist Episcopalian church and formed the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Discussions were ongoing across the continent regarding the slavery issue.[34] Family, church, and society did not agree and hence there was a need to address the issue. The Civil War tested the Americans' psyche and made the church practices to be examined closely.

The South went through reconstruction following the War, a period that people also reflected as when Christian churches started self-examinations. For instance, the Church of God Reformation Movement relationally defined the holiness of God, indicating that it demonstrated unity between God and humans. That is, embracing of holiness meant equality. Therefore, they stressed the need for recognition of all people without reservations, regardless of their color. Congregations experienced a drastic growth until the beginning of 1900 when the commitment to diversity began to waver. The white church leaders started making exceptions to the racial unity message in marriage, fellowship, and evangelism in 1909 and encouraged Black ministers and members to separately start a church.[35] They formed a National Association of the Church of God, leading the segregation of the church since then. The white leaders clearly and concisely delivered their messages to the National Association of the Church of God: They needed to convert their *own kind* in evangelism, unite with their own people in marriage, and associate with

---

[34] Kenan Cetinkaya and Semanur Kodan, "Ahiska Turks in Philadelphia: Keeping cultural identity and religion in a multicultural environment." *International Journal of Social and Human Sciences* 6 (2012): 398-403.

[35] Ibid.

their own people in fellowship.[36] These messages have continued to deter the unity of the church

to date. In San Francisco, California, 1944, Howard Thurman formed the first truly American

multicultural church known as *The Church for the Fellowship of all Peoples* latter renamed the

Neighborhood Church.[37]

Multiculturalism in the Church

Multicultural congregations recognize, embrace, utilize, and celebrate the gender,

generational, racial, and other diversity represented in the church and the community.[38] The unity

of the church should not have an identity based on race but on their faith in Jesus Christ

(Ephesians 4:11-13). These churches are interested in becoming a "united Body of Christ in

diverse cultures" and emphasize that behaviors are limited by human and cultural habits without

spiritual intervention to change people as a group or personally. Therefore, they are interesting

illustrations of transformations and change; socially and spiritually. Since the congregations'

intention is to primarily focus on inclusivity, the church leaders have to empower their

congregants to have past tolerance and assimilation into the dominant cultures, and to have an

open mindset and welcome change.[39] The integration of diversity in the church not only opens

opportunities for the Body of Christ but how people interact in secular settings. Celebrating

multicultural groups is also a proven way of suppressing segregation,[40] but is subjective if only

one culture or race understands the purpose of celebrating. This requires wisdom and

---

[36] Ibid.

[37] Uatisone A. Afa'ese, "Multicultural Strategies for Developing a Church with Intentional References to Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Structure as Modeled by the All Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1979-2012," (2013).

[38] Brian M. Howell, "Multiculturalism, Immigration, and the North American Church," *Missiology: An International Review* 39, no. 1 (2011), doi:10.1177/009182961103900109.

[39] Scott Williams, *Church Diversity: We are Church Diversity!* (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 2011).

[40] Sander L. Gilman, *Multiculturalism and the Jews* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

discernment so that the pastor and ministerial leaders are not perceived by any ethnic group or race as being biased or practicing favoritism to their ethnicity or race.

In the church, multiculturalism is seen not simply as cultural groups' equal status; rather, multiculturalism includes examination of power imbalances a term defined by critical multiculturalism,[41] which is engaging different cultures with the focus on learning from each other, respect, mutual gifting, interactions, deep connections, and relationship building. As a result, power differentials resulting from identities are addressed and church members can see and learn from one another, thereby leading to an active inclusive congregation and community. Thereafter, multicultural churches may foster powerful, discursive justifications to socially reconcile.

When breaking the barrier in evangelizing to build a multicultural congregation, authors have suggested an emphasis on biblical teachings, integration of flexible worship styles, and spirit led churches as a potential way of curbing division, starting from the church and flowing out into the community.[42] Emerson and Smith suggest that multicultural congregations have the potential to break down inequalities, particularly if they place emphasis on biblical teachings and demonstrate flexible worship styles.[43] Christerson et al. note that multiculturalism can distinctly contribute to racial reconciliation in the US primarily due to their transcendent, religious nature.[44] Multicultural congregations can strongly justify unity in diversity, as they are so

[41] Michael J. Cuyjet, et al., *Multiculturalism on Campus; Theory, Models, And Practices for Understanding Diversity Creating Inclusion* (Virginia: Stylus Publishing LLC, 2016).

[42] Paul D. L. Avis, *Reshaping Ecumenical Theology: The Church Made Whole?* (London: T&T Clark, 2010).

[43] Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by faith: Evangelical religion and the problem of race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[44] Brad Christerson, Korie L. Edwards, and Michael O. Emerson, *Against all odds: The Struggle for Racial Integration in Religious Organizations* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

spiritually and emotionally charged, appealing to absolute truth and transcendence. This view is based on how transformation which occurs in religious organizations or voluntary civil organizations is thus important and distinctive. Compared to voluntary organizations with secular underpinnings, the authors contend, those with religious underpinnings might be more effective in making contributions to changing racial identities.

Linguistic integration limits multiracial congregations.[45] Focusing on the impact of institutional culture on a charismatic church identity, Ganiel revealed that a group's institutional culture influences how identities transform and the directions to which they transform.[46] The author also found that the congregation was integral in achieving socio-economic change. With a specific focus on South Africa, Ganiel gives an evolving social dynamic in which certain churches have realized the successes of the country, thus affirming previous findings that Protestant-affiliated churches have some affinity with nationalism. While research indicates the lack of social integration in US churches and abuse of power by ministerial pastors, research has equally revealed the transformative role played by multicultural churches. For example, De Gruchy reports that a good number of churches have transitioned from monocultural to multicultural churches, which stressed ministries to people that are normally compelled to society's edges.[47]

Multicultural religion has received little attention and not much is known of the extent to which congregations are multicultural. Throughout this study's context, "multicultural" will be

[45] Roy Moodley and Stephen Palmer, *Race, culture, and psychotherapy: Critical Perspectives in Multicultural Practice* (London: Routledge, 2014).

[46] Gladys Ganiel, "Religion and Transformation in South Africa? Institutional and Discursive Change in a Charismatic Congregation." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 63, no. 1 (2007): doi:10.1353/trn.2007.0018.

[47] John W. De Gruchy and Steve De Gruchy, *The church struggle in South Africa* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005).

used instead of multiracial as it de-emphasizes the old racial groups, but it is unclear if culture

has meaningfully become a better category than race for many US citizens. Moreover, the term

multiculturalism has a wide range of connotations abroad in that oftentimes, marginal cultures

and dominant cultures correspond to minority cultures and dominant cultures, respectively. Hall

shows that whereas some minority groups have been promoted and safeguarded in the US, most

cultures have always been marginalized.[48] Therefore, recognizing multiculturalism and diversity

is essential, not only within the context of the church but within the nation-building context, as

well.

Racial Inequality

Racial division is the most sensitive, yet evident, form of a cultural rift in the church.

Most churches in the U.S., have continued to experience segregation and situations in which

there is a mixture of races in congregations. Studies have shown that external factors, including

demographic changes, are as the major reasons for this. As suggested by Naidoo and De Beer,

these racial segregations are caused by the fact that church members neither communicate

properly nor know one another, as there is a lack of enough informal personal contact.[49] A

number of individuals are not intrinsically motivated to attempt to bridge the gap since they hate

the uneasiness it might cause for them. Drawing back into known territory and serving their

interests is more natural and much easier and safer.

Internal considerations, including deliberate efforts aimed at inviting other cultures or

races, have remained quite small within churches. Moreover, congregations make minimal

---

[48] K. Hall, "A model for preaching in a multiethnic/multicultural context: Understanding and connecting with "Every nation, kindred, tongue, and people" in the preaching event." *Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI*, 2008).

[49] Marilyn Naidoo and Stephan De Beer, "Diversity: Negotiating difference in Christian communities," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72, no. 1 (2016): doi:10.4102/hts.v72i1.3525.

efforts to deliberately change their membership composition unless compelled to adapt. Most

researchers argue that religion has a prospect to overcome racialized America and almost every

religion has tried to address inequality. Religious organizations have the potential to draw

individuals out of their private, racially congregated spheres into a social sphere in which

people's interactions are more intimate compared to the public space, as they are mediating

institutions between public and private spheres. Nonetheless, the reality in far too many

situations is that religions, which are traditionally considered reconciliation agents, are at worst,

accomplices in strife, and at best, impotent.[50] With Christian organizations' authoritarianism,

they are structured in hierarchical and patriarchal ways, thereby ensuring that the men prevail

over women and the clergy over the laity, making the oppressive roots deeply embedded. Rather

than being a place of love and acceptance, the church has become an area for homophobia,

sexism, and racial tension. These issues go beyond social management to incorporate religious

issues.[51] Therefore, there exist complex relationships of discriminative reproduction as well as

unequal relationships of change, resistance, compliance, and dominance within religious

movements. Systems of meanings, such as shared traditions, communal rituals, and religious

beliefs, are being used to socialize people. Steyn and Conway state that the key challenge is that

congregants have failed to see how different behaviors and languages reinforce what continues to

be an uneven playing field.[52]

---

[50] Brian M. Howell, "Multiculturalism, Immigration, and the North American Church," *Missiology: An International Review* 39, no. 1 (2011), doi:10.1177/009182961103900109.

[51] Marilyn Naidoo and Stephan De Beer, "Diversity: Negotiating difference in Christian communities," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72, no. 1 (2016): doi:10.4102/hts.v72i1.3525.

[52] Melissa Steyn and Conway Daniel, "Introduction: Intersecting Whiteness, Interdisciplinary Debates," *Ethnicities* 10, no.3 (2010): doi:10.1177/1468796810372309.

Based on the aforementioned, a shift in diversity should start with racial inclusivity.[53] This is because of decades where many local churches have been prone to evangelize and fellowship with only member of their own predominate race and ethnicity. Interacting with individuals who are culturally the other normally makes certain people withdraw and safeguard what is familiar to them, thereby perpetuating the unwillingness and stereotyping to embrace others. Thereby, cultural differences are minimized, and diversity is absolutized. Christerson, et al. state that the key thing is that there is a likelihood of occurrence of identities' transformation when individuals from the dominant social group know their privileged position and are able to compromise.[54]

However, the authors assert that, a majority of white Americans continue thinking white as in thinking that whiteness should be the norm and embarking on power-evasive methods in deflecting attention away from enduring power as well as privileges accompanying the church. The individual identities based on race are not given; instead, they are constructed and if not, deconstructed, as well as reshaped, they have the potential to foster further racialization. Christerson and Emerson particularly caution that these behavioral identities can be constantly utilized by the dominant cultures as a way of justifying racism when analyses of the learned oppressive behavior perpetuating racism is not done.[55] Fortunately, studies have increasingly agreed that that religious community has a significant role in racial reconciliation.[56] A few churches in the United States have so far managed to cross the racial divide and build social

---

[53] Ibid.

[54] Brad Christerson, Korie L. Edwards, and Michael O. Emerson, *Against all odds: The Struggle for Racial Integration in Religious Organizations* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

[55] Brad Christerson and Michael Emerson, "The Costs of Diversity in Religious Organizations: An In-Depth Case Study." *Sociology of Religion* 64, no. 2 (2003): doi:10.2307/3712369.

[56] Reggie. McNeal, *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011).

capital that attracts new members.[57] Other researchers also agree that religion has a great

potential to not only overcome a racial society but also to mediate the public and private spheres.

Reinforcement of racial ideologies and reconciliation

Looking into this study, research shows that failure to have proper conversations and

sufficient informal relationships advances racism.[58] There should be a deliberate effort to build

bridges. The issue of race was on several occasions identified both in the New and Old

Testament as creating cultural divides. On one occasion, Jesus asked a Samaritan woman to give

him water, but she could not do so due to their racial difference (John 4:1-42). The narrative of

Jesus and the Samaritan woman is a clear indication of racial mistrust, which the church can

mend.[59] If the teachings of the church emphasize mercy and grace, even the racial groups that

may have for a long time felt targeted will start feeling welcome in the church. This affirms key

concepts of multi-racial theory, which states that congregations are the primary means of curbing

inequalities.[60]

Theological color blindness, which indicates that all races and cultures demonstrate

similar results in laxity in engaging in dialogues with the most powerful categories of

assimilating with other people. Naidoo notes that meaningful changes and discussions are further

muted in that white American culture essentially embrace individualism and they do not view

---

[57] R. Drew Smith, William Ackah and Anthony G. Reddie, *Churches, Blackness, and Contested Multiculturalism Europe, Africa, and North America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[58] Coleman Baker, "Social Identity Theory and Biblical Interpretation," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture*, 42, no.3 (2012): doi:10.1177/2F0146107912452244.

[59] Hyuk Cho, "We Are Not Alone: Historical Journey of the United Church of Canada's Response to Become an Intercultural Church," *International Review of Mission* 100, no.1 (2011): doi:10.1111/j.1758-6631.2011.00056.x.

[60] Stephen Bevens and KatalinaTahaafe-Williams, *Contextual Theology for the Twenty-First Century* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2011).

themselves as enjoying the advantages of race.[61] Rather than being seen as socially constructed,

race is seen as an object entity, inadvertently silencing the race reality, and suppressing the

perception that these concepts may be socially changed if they are socially created. Ortiz states

that inviting people of other colors into a space should be both a communal and personal

responsibility.[62] Based on this fact, the power discourses of resistance and culture of whiteness in

the church have continued to actively continue. According to the author, theological reflection on

diversity does not draw whites to have a reflection on their privileges and whiteness caused by a

failure to closely engage racial issues in modern America. Although the church's racism

contradicts the gospel's basic tenets, churches are seemingly more interested in improving their

finances and membership than transforming.

In trying to reconcile racial ideologies, understanding a congregation's identity, which

refers to members' complex set of values and beliefs or what makes a group "us," is very

important. Dougherty and Huyser remind us that it is a socially constructed sense of "we," which

makes individuals bond, giving cultural differences less impact as a stronger sense of "we"

coming into a group.[63] Congregational identity is a group's view of themselves; they are potent

values and beliefs that are caused by the history of the congregation associating with its external

environment, whereas ensuring its own inner life is maintained.[64] As a result, strong identity can

---

[61] Marilyn Naidoo, "The Potential of Multicultural Congregations in Supporting Social Reconciliation." HTS Teologiese Studies / *HTS Theological Studies* 73, no. 4 (2017): doi:10.4102/hts.v73i4.4622.

[62] Manuel Ortiz, *One New People: Models for developing a Multiethnic Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996).

[63] Kevin D. Dougherty, "How monochromatic is church membership? Racial-ethnic diversity in the religious community." *Sociology of Religion* 64, no.1 (2003): doi:10.2307/3712269.

[64] Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, *Acts of faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* (Berkeley: Univ of California Press, 2000).

ameliorate internal in-group and/or out-group differences, including those presented by ethnicity and race.

While race remains an important aspect in revealing one's identity, the church must not use it discriminatively on other members. Jenkins shows that both race and identity are important since they are the basic cognitive mechanisms which humankind employs in sorting out themselves and their colleagues, collectively and individually.[65] Social identity has three components, namely emotional (attitudes toward outsiders and insiders), evaluative (the value related to belonging to the group), and cognitive (recognition of belonging to a particular culture). Congregants have the ability to form strong emotional bonds via one-on-one interaction throughout weekly activities and during weekly church sessions. Consequently, the church becomes an important space of socialization in which social identities are learned, which is the result of political, historical, and social practices with emphasis on such identities' tenacity that must be tamed.

In moving from mono-cultural settings, which primarily mirror divisions within society, overcoming embedded social distance customs is critical and must be intentional, requiring a change of worldview and core values. Naidoo proposes that such would require the church to not instinctively take shape but develop a shared inclusive identity which extends past cultural and racial identities.[66] The church will especially need to focus on teaching unity, creating activities to experience unity, and encouraging this oneness via integrated interpersonal fellowship. Subsequently, congregants are forced to invest a lot of energy and time in one another. DeYoung, et al. underscore that an inclusive identity would infiltrate into the church with

---

[65] Richard Jenkins, *Social identity*. (London: Routledge, 2014).

[66] Marilyn Naidoo, "The Potential of Multicultural Congregations in Supporting Social Reconciliation." HTS Teologiese Studies / *HTS Theological Studies* 73, no. 4 (2017): doi:10.4102/hts.v73i4.4622.

practices that are relational, interactive, deliberate, and experimental, and highlight the ability of the congregation to adapt to change with time.[67] Warner's research on embodied ritual frames this form of inclusive identity, arguing that religion has an integral, formative role in maintaining "particularistic communities" of given cultures, whereas at the same time offering bridges for these cultures to universally participate in shared national contexts.[68] The author continues to state that this definition permits an individual to go past assimilation to a distinctive hybrid national cultural identity, which congregations may take on and where a country's cultural complexity is evidenced. Dougherty and Huyser support Wagner's work and state that neither diversity nor cultural variations are promoted in many congregations; if these ideas are brought into focus, the church can serve as a bridge in making a rich mix of societal cultures a component of the church's consciousness.[69] This country-specific identity is based on a theological worldview of unity for use in congregational settings.

Nevertheless, in congregations, this identity and the generally contested nature of nation-building ideas may be challenged. Distinguishing between nationalism and cultural captivity is the most urgent research on identity. Martinez and Dougherty propose that this trickles down to a choice regarding the identities that are primary to us, our tribalism or baptism.[70] In contrast, Christ is what forms the identity for Christians, and as such, it is incumbent upon the church to not uncritically emphasize the culture that surrounds it. It is the responsibility of the church to

---

[67] Curtiss Paul Deyoung, Arguing the Case for Multiracial Congregation," *United by Faith,* 2003: doi:10.1093/9780195152159.003.0009.

[68] R. Stephen Warner, "Religion, Boundaries, and Bridges," *Sociology of Religion* 58, no. 3 (1997): doi:10.2307/3712214.

[69] Kevin D. Dougherty and Kimberly R. Huyser. "Racially diverse congregations: Organizational identity and the accommodation of differences." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 47, no. 1 (2008): doi:10.1111/j.1468-5906.2008.00390.x.

[70] Brandon C. Martinez and Kevin D. Dougherty, "Race, Belonging, and Participation in Religious Congregations." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 52, no. 4 (2013): doi:10.1111/jssr.12073.

work toward achieving reconciliation and reinforcing racial ideologies of all cultures and build a humane society, which is its role. They conclude by writing that the most important component is for the congregation to utilize this dynamic in building a sense of neighborhood and integration without undermining diversity and denying valued beliefs and practices. Church leaders need to understand that the mainstream of federal government and American culture is still struggling to eliminate racial discrimination, in which they play a part.

In such, multicultural churches have an important role in allowing believers to play their part in transforming society at large. Although the new interracial connections formed within the church may be a model of America's social cohesion in the future, it is important to also deconstruct the dominant constructs that continue perpetuating injustice and inequality.

Deliberate reconciliation

It is not enough to create an enabling environment inside the church, since to attract people, those already in the church should reach out through evangelism.[71] In the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman, Jesus reached out to the woman with words that showed acceptance. The parable of the Good Samaritan who rescued a Jewish man after a robbery attack is a good example of how mercy can be extended to reach out to others (Luke 10: 25-37). Culture is to a large extent a social construction that becomes a norm such that unless people are compelled to reach out to other races, they will not do so.[72] Practice needs to go beyond just multicultural interactions to resolve power imbalances between cultures within the church for true

---

[71] Justin Beaumont and Christopher Baker, *Post Secular Cities: Space, Theory, and Practice* (A&C Black, 2011).

[72] Johan Cilliers and Ian Nell, "Within the enclave, Profiling South African Social and Religious Developments since 1994," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 32, no.1 (2011): doi.10.4102.ve.v32i1.552.

reconciliation. This implies that individuals could become culture-creators,[73] by primarily

shaping their own context and culture. However, before creating the new culture, there should be

forgiveness and reconciliation. It is only then that there will be a united local church that is based

on the gospel of Jesus Christ. The unseen structural, social, or individual forces that foster

inequality among cultures needs to be brought into conscious awareness so that they are

examined in a reconciliatory context.

Inclusive congregations produce social networks that defy monochromatic color coding

to embrace integration. Deliberate reconciliation requires the creation of an inclusive identity

that subsequently needs the nurturing of a cohesive whole and extends past simply uniting

various racial groups together. The integration is largely determined by the ability of the church

to nurture powerful relations between congregants of diverse cultures and races. Christerson et

al., contend that the most stable foundation for multicultural congregations is inclusive social

networks;[74] further, is impact intergroup contacts may have on minimizing ethnic hostilities

under ideal situations. Programming, lively worship, the close relationship between members,

and sharing meals can bring a group together.[75] However, creating an inclusive identity is

challenging for the church given the realities of a racialized modern US society.

Ammerman suggests that the need for deliberate practical actions; there is opportunity to

create a safe space for people to tell their encouraging stories, which could reduce racial

discrimination and beliefs that seem to divide them.[76] The author states that small groups during

---

[73] Marilyn Naidoo, "An Ethnographic Study on Managing Diversity in Two Protestant Theological Colleges," *HTS Teologiese / Theological Studies* 72, no.1 (2016): doi:10.4102/hts.v72i1.3509.

[74] Brad Christerson, Korie L. Edwards, and Michael O. Emerson, *Against all odds: The Struggle for Racial Integration in Religious Organizations* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

[75] Ibid.

[76] Nancy T. Ammerman and Arthur E. Farnsley, *Congregation & community*. Rutgers University Press, 1997.

evangelization could facilitate this activity; nevertheless, they could as well serve as enclaves for their peers from the same cultures, possibly bringing another problem of integration prevention as language barriers can exclude others. In addition, the church's style of worship could be challenging, as it is a representation of cultural preferences and differences within a group. The form of contemporary, expressive worship in many charismatic churches is a strategy that can integrate races.[77] The singing of hymns using various languages can work toward attaining inclusion in some Mainline churches. Incorporation of new members entails practicing worship which transcends any single race. In fact, even biblical preaching and teaching from the pulpit which emphasizes the theological justifications for activism, social justice, restitution, and reconciliation may underpin the development of an inclusive congregation.

The church requires deliberate efforts to tackle issues openly that create the division of various cultures. Denominations that confront their racially discriminative histories are more likely to integrate whites and blacks.[78] Denominational polity on the leadership of the church is important and formative since it impacts the possible. Congregations led by ministerial pastors of diverse cultural groups can emphatically make a statement about diversity. Thus, denominations should diversify their leadership in order to ensure that they better represent the local contexts, and this entails among other aspects, implementation of the cross-cultural stationing of pastors. Overall, this point leads the study to the need to incorporate inclusion in teaching theology and religion and is discussed further in the next section.

---

[77] Ibid.

[78] Kevin D. Dougherty, "How monochromatic is church membership? Racial-ethnic diversity in the religious community." *Sociology of Religion* 64, no.1 (2003): doi:10.2307/3712269.

Teaching religion and theology

Some theologies perceive all cultures to be similar, hence causing reluctance for dialogue participation that will lead different cultures to reunite.[79] A few contrary findings show that since racial reality is silent inviting people of all colors into the church reinforces normality of a church with majority of one race.[80] If the church can manage to break the ethnic rift then the unity of the Body of Christ will be more apparent, hence influencing society to go in the direction of reconciliation.[81]

There continue to be considerable challenges in creating multicultural identities, and this is worsened by the U.S.'s uneven nature, ongoing residential segregation and evidence that educational, economic, and social life still evinces along racism witnessed during slavery. Literature has indicated that Americans continue using old racial categories to evaluate one another. Schoeman and Conway revealed that within most churches, congregants preferred private expressions of religion with little engagement with external communities and with strong bonds within the congregation.[82] As per Ganiel's study, old identity categories are changing; however, the power differentials embedded in the racialized world constrains it.[83] Multicultural churches can demonstrate how they are actively engaged so as to address the racial discrimination and the attached power imbalances, to ensure everyone enjoys an equal voice and

---

[79] Michel Elias Andraos, "Engaging Diversity in Teaching Religion and Theology: An Intercultural, De-Colonial Epistemic Perspective," *Teaching Theology and Religion* 15, no.1 (2012): doi:10.1111/j.1467-9647.2011.00755.x.

[80] Joseph R. Barndt, *Becoming an Anti-Racist Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011).

[81] Korie L. Edwards, *The Elusive Dream: The Power of Race in Interracial Churches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[82] Melissa Steyn and Conway Daniel, "Introduction: Intersecting Whiteness, Interdisciplinary Debates," *Ethnicities* 10, no.3 (2010): doi:10.1177/1468796810372309.

[83] Gladys Ganiel, "Religion and Transformation in South Africa? Institutional and Discursive Change in a Charismatic Congregation." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 63, no. 1 (2007): doi:10.1353/trn.2007.0018.

seat at the church without de-emphasizing structural realities. Thus, the authors urge that teaching theology and religion should start by encouraging would be ministers to move past "personalism" mentality, that is a kind of social engagement which recognizes the existence of social and political issues but fails to address them at socio-structural levels. The researchers state, "Ensuring durability for an overarching identity should start from the curriculum, which should incorporate structural changes that resolve the power differentials that have long been embedded in old races."[84] Such an attempt would theoretically deepen the understanding of students' construction of the occurrence of identity at the collective, structural and individual levels.

Certain scholars view multicultural congregations as the only way to eliminate racism. For instance, "racially diverse religious organizations are racialized institutions which essentially cater to the white's racial sensibilities."[85] The authors continue to state that despite the best intentions, many multicultural churches still focus on white experiences and expect blacks to greatly sacrifice to adjust themselves to these norms. As a result, these churches have largely remained social spaces where white hegemony societal characteristics are not challenged but regenerated within the church although they have a number of cultural categories attending services. The matter is influenced by how racial categorization and race are understood. Research shows that "white" and "black" identities are not parallel; the actual problem is how our varying cultures came to where they are historically, what they represent, and what they structurally and materially mean.[86] As such, it would be important for the church to recognize

---

[84] Ibid.

[85] Brad Christerson, Korie L. Edwards, and Michael O. Emerson, *Against all Odds: The Struggle for Racial Integration in Religious Organizations* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

[86] Richard Jenkins, *Social identity*. (London: Routledge, 2014).

that religion was used in justifying oppressive acts during colonialism in America. It must be pointed out as well as that colonization, involving colonized minds in the deeper and ever-lasting form of colonial powers is more challenging and subtle to identity, resist and transform. Theology education should clearly indicate that whiteness is not just a challenge of one racial group that mistreats the other; rather, it entails how white identity itself emerged via constructing systems that categorized and subjugated indigenous people, people of color, and the world at large. Such an understanding would enable them to be aware of the social constructs leading up to the current state of racism.

Critical for Christians to encounter are relationships across race and cultures; however, they are inadequate to completely end racism. Education should emphasize the need to broadly view racial relations between cultures. More than superficial multiculturalism that narrows to demographics, Camacho indicates that theological and religious teaching desperately requires Christian practice, which is decolonial and liberative, and exercises long-term memory while attending to structural realities.[87] Undoubtedly, dealing with cultural and racial integration is tremendously complex, particularly when an individual takes into consideration the pronounced silence of churches on the issues of power and race at play; however, it will be important for congregations to consider how to deepen social integration as religious organizations still have an integral part in playing in social change. National theological and religious teaching could potentially explore how churches model social definitions of us/we around multicultural diversity instead of focusing on the social divisions. Teaching could also demonstrate the relationships between identity development and social practices, as well as provide highlights on

---

[87] D.J. Camacho, *Do Multicultural Churches Reinforce Racism?* (2016). http://www.danieljosecamacho.com/blog/2016/2/9/do-multicultural-churches-reinforce-racism

the process of change transpiring within the religious organizations' micro-level, thereby stimulating discursive discourses on personal identity formation, congregational identity, and diversity and difference dynamicity with American churches.[88]

Theological Foundations

The essence of ethnic diversity in the church is that it can give the local congregation and the individual believer a sense of belonging and cohesion. However, if the aspect of ethnicity is considered as one of the main definitions of identity there is a big risk of marginalizing ethnic minorities. To look deeper into this context, you can observe the twin principles of diversity and unity to explore the need for the church to evangelize to various races and multicultural ethnicities in order to grow in diversity in the congregation.[89]

There are various instances in the Bible touching upon the issue of diversity and this is an indication that God intended for people to be free with one another as they worship Him. A good example is that all descends from common parents, Adam and Eve, who symbolizes the need for people to reclaim their unity despite the cultural difference that they possess. Another hidden aspect of diversity is shown through the marriage of Moses, where he wedded Zipporah, a black African Cushite.

From the perspective of the unity principle, it becomes very difficult for people to understand the meaning of being a member of another ethnicity.[90] On the other hand, it is more difficult for major ethnicities to imagine the feeling of being a minority. Our consciousness is

---

[88] Ibid.

[89] Sujit Sivasundaram and C. T. Ma., "Unity and diversity: the church, race and ethnicity," 2008, http://www.jubilee-centre.org/unity-and-diversity-the-church-race-and-ethnicity-by-sujit-sivasundaram/.

[90] Sujit Sivasundaram and C. T. Ma., "Unity and diversity: the church, race and ethnicity," 2008, http://www.jubilee-centre.org/unity-and-diversity-the-church-race-and-ethnicity-by-sujit-sivasundaram/.

sometimes influenced by race and how people think about it. In this regard, the Christian community needs to awaken their consciousness and reflect on their actions, words, and thoughts. Instead of denying the fact that sometimes people stereotype others based on ethnicities, Christians have the obligation to take practical and positive steps to recognize and appreciate the wonderful unity represented by the Body of Christ. According to the Holy Scripture, humanity is one and is unified. According to the gospel of Paul, God made all nations from one man (Acts 17:26); thus, the context of human diversity arises from the scriptures. In Genesis 1:27, the Bible explains the creation of a one-person race and calls for the culturally diverse nation by the mention of being fruitful to fill the earth.[91]

Christians as individuals can make friends with both believers and non-believers from diverse ethnic communities. This can be done in various ways, including undertaking community programs that incorporate everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from. It is through these contacts with the locals, both believers and non-believers, that the church can win their trust in totality and embrace the Body of Christ. Through talking to Christians having totally different backgrounds, it becomes a possibility to renew our faith, as well as become consciously aware of a number of failures and low cultures that have led to the distortion of the gospel of Christ.[92] It is worth noting that on many occasions, Christians have followed the model of friendship as followed by the secular world, which is based on seeking individuals with common interests. This trend is somehow natural but in this globalized world, people tend to

---

[91] Fergus J. King, "Mission-Shaped or Paul-Shaped? Apostolic Challenges to the Mission-Shaped Church." *Journal of Anglican Studies* 9, no. 2 (2010): doi:10.1017/s1740355310000264.

[92] Sujit Sivasundaram and C. T. Ma., "Unity and diversity: the church, race and ethnicity," 2008, http://www.jubilee-centre.org/unity-and-diversity-the-church-race-and-ethnicity-by-sujit-sivasundaram/.

have more opportunities to encounter and befriend people hailing from other backgrounds just to ensure that the gospel reaches the right people.

Through the practice of twin principles of unity and diversity it should be noted that even the church befriends other ethnicities as well as other Christians, it is also an opportunity to identify individual heritages. For example, consideration of what it means to be a White English Christian, or a Black African Christian can be a way of appreciating the unique ways through which God formed our respective cultures manifested through language, music and history, and how these differences are applicable in defending our Christian Faith.

Believers in the local congregation of the church need to seek to live and adapt within the tension surrounding unity and diversity. Thus the church can initiate corporate worship characterized with the coming together of diversified background with regard to ethnicity to give glory to God and be of help to each other to follow in the footsteps of Christ.[93] The coming together of the church with other people from outside the congregation thus will have to observe sacrifices manifested through preaching, and styles of singing. But keen interest should be taken to ensure that there is no segregation of the congregation. In this regard, the congregation will need to find a balance between unity as presented by the gospel and how God is calling us despite having different identities.

As God had embraced diversity, which is evident in the Bible, the church in a bid to incorporate diversity in the congregation needs to have leadership that reflects the face and multiple backgrounds of its surrounding community. This follows the fact that there are multiple churches around the world that have put this approach into practice and are thriving. Good

---

[93] Sujit Sivasundaram and C. T. Ma., "Unity and diversity: the church, race and ethnicity," 2008, http://www.jubilee-centre.org/unity-and-diversity-the-church-race-and-ethnicity-by-sujit-sivasundaram/.

examples of such big churches include Kensington in London and Times Square Church in New York.

In conclusion, the need for diversity in the church is very positive as it represents the totality of God towards humanity in addition to ensuring that the Gospel of Christ reach more people. It is through the practice of evangelism that the Christian church can easily meet the diversified community and consequently diversify the ethnicity of the congregation.

Theoretical Foundations

The concept of evangelism which is one of the ways that the church can achieve diversity has been researched by many people undertaking theology. The discussion around this issue has been through the reference to the concept of multicultural ministry which according to Berry, was officially used at the World Mission and Evangelism conference in 1996 and carried out by the World Council of Churches (WCC).[94] The concept afterwards came to be very common and has been used all around the world. Its usage, therefore, has been aimed at primarily referring to programs that are essentially meant to address diversity and cultural backgrounds.

For instance, as observed by Ng, Eddy and Isabel Metz churches that are found in developed countries such as Australia and Canada where the practice of multiculturalism is a government policy, have put in place ways of exploring the deeper vision of multiculturalism.[95] The churches have therefore realized that more dynamic and proactive efforts involved in cross-cultural boundaries beyond mere appreciation and tolerance associated with the practice of

---

[94] John Berry, "Diversity and equity," *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management 23,* no. 3 (2016): doi:10.1108/ccsm-03-2016-0085.

[95] Eddy S. Ng and Isabel Metz, "Multiculturalism as a strategy for national competitiveness: The case for Canada and Australia," *Journal of Business Ethics 128*, no. 2 (2014): doi:10.1007/s10551-014-2089-8.

multiculturalism were very much needed. In this regard, the use of the term cross-cultural to unite churches in these countries is an implication that it is a proactive movement across the barriers of culture to form a relationship that is closer and authentic. On the other hand, there is another interrelated concept of inter-cultural, as used by other countries, that results in the practice of reciprocity and mutuality in church relationships.

There are a number of theories that have been researched with regard to ethnic diversity in the church. The first and most common is the socio-political theory which touches on the concept of white supremacy. White supremacy, in this context refers to the extent to which the whites have increasingly become invisible to replace the "hegemonic race-relations paradigm."[96] In this regard, it is considered to be a paradigm shift reinstating racial subordination and dominance. The other theory that has been explored in this respect but has not been fully debunked is social theory. The implicit ontology of this theory does not acknowledge the fact that the subordination of race of nonwhites can be predicted based on their being treated and perceived as subhuman.

The theory touching on the church both affirming ethnicity yet keeping it from becoming a growth hindrance is identity theory. This theory clarifies the different levels of identities as observed by Christians. A good example that demonstrates how some Christians would rank their ethnic identity can involve a Christian White young lady dating a Black Christian young man. Then, the parents of the lady say that they would rather their daughter be married to a non-Christian White man than being married to the Black man. In this regard, the ethnic identity of the parent is considered to be deeper than their Christian identity. The other theory touching on

---

[96] Katalina Tahaafe-Williams, *A Multicultural Church? Multicultural Ministry as a Tool for Building the Multicultural Church* (2012).

42

the concept is the enlightenment theory which focuses more on race theories as well as work related to cross-cultural anthropology. The concept of enlightenment theory is also referred to as talking about the age of reason which according to the reasoning of its proponents was good in addressing diversity. Among the four theories, socio-political theory remains to be the one that has been well established as far as diversity in race and ethnicity and its practices have been fully explored.

Along with the aspect of social theory, in looking at how the concept of diversity in the church has been tackled, social ministry comes to play. In this regard, those who are holding ethnic identity higher than their Christian identity tend to emphasize social ministry and justice over evangelism. In his book, *Understanding Church Growth*, McGavran (1970) talked about social ministry and presence. In this regard, he had the belief that if Christians would diligently serve, other people, upon seeing the service, would respond positively to the gospel.[97] In this regard, he went on to argue that the presence of Christians void of proclaiming the gospel is incomplete. However, he exempted some instances, such as where there is great persecution. Based on his reasoning the aspect of evangelism is an indication that the church can still apply the practice of evangelism in reaching out to people in its locality to increase its diversity.

Social ministries have the advantage of reaching out to everyone, regardless of their ethnic background or beliefs and therefore pose a good chance of winning more diversity in the congregation.[98] On the other hand, it has the disadvantage that it can be misunderstood for something else by the target group. For instance, since social ministry is not implemented as

---

[97] Jeff K. Walters, "Effective Evangelism" in the City: Donald McGavran's Missiology and Urban Contexts" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011) 13.

[98] Robert Joseph Taylor, Dawne M. Mouzon, Ann W. Nguyen, and Linda M. Chatters, "Reciprocal family, friendship and church support networks of African Americans: Findings from the National Survey of American Life," Race and Social Problems 8, no. 4 (2016): doi:10.1007/s12552-016-9186-5.

missions or evangelism, it can be a challenge for the target population to become part of the church, since whatever they associate with the church is the social services they get and not Christian teachings to have them become part of a church's congregation. Based on this reasoning, the practice of evangelism to reach a diversified target group is appropriate to have the church consolidate an ethnically diversified congregation. It can, therefore, be combined with social ministries and missions for more positive results to be realized.

Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed to present an extensive review of the literature and particularly covered a number of aspects related to the thesis, including critical multiculturalism and religion, racial inequality, multiculturalism in the church, reinforcement of racial ideologies and reconciliation, deliberate reconciliation, and teaching religion and theology. Overall, from a historical perspective, racism dates back to the era of slavery. African Americans were belittled as having less capacity to advance intellectually and the church is believed to have supported its development in colonial America. Since then, reconciliation to end it has remained a public concern in American society. The tendency of the church to concern itself with its own survival, as well as disunity within the congregational ranks and the minimal developments advanced in ecumenical relations has continued to disqualify the church for the actual reconciliatory task. Religious organizations, like other social institutions, have had much to respond to the organizations implicated in both the oppressive history and the constant struggles to address it. This chapter demonstrated that some American multicultural churches have attempted to show relatively harmonious practical actions and racial relations to address racial discrimination. Multiculturalism in religion may potentially make contributions toward social change by

developing an inclusive identity, including constructive dialogue, theological discourses, internal

structuring, and intentional practices, which could greatly assist to dismantle communities'

racially aligned power structures.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Growth, as is envisioned in the corporate world, is also needed within the context of the church. The church often strives to ensure that they communicate to more people with the gospel especially those who are non-believers. In urban contexts, there are people from diverse cultures the church can connect with as part of their developmental plans.[99] The significant intervention is the focus on multiculturalism and the recognition that different races may have different needs and approaches in their outreach programs. This chapter focuses on the intervention and implementation strategies that the Church may utilize in their reach-out strategies.

Intervention Design

Intervention is a planned process and set of actions used in a given situation to help improve an area of need. A proper response is supposed to help solve an issue and at the same time, be designed in a way that can be traced to measure the progress in dealing with the issue at hand. Different issues require interventions in church ministries all over the world. The ministry problem that requires intervention in this study is the problem of lack of diversified multicultural ethnicities and races in the congregation in the Truth Missionary Church. The church needs to evangelize to the people in the community to increase diversity in their group.[100] Development and creation of a multicultural church is a challenge affecting the majority of groups across the globe, as it calls for the fusion of several cultural entities into a single church. It is also crucial because it is written in the Bible that the kingdom of God belongs to a "vast multitude from

---

[99] Randa A. Kayyali, "Race, Religion and Identity: Arab Christians in the United States," *Culture and Religion* 19, no. 1 (2017): doi:10.1080/14755610.2017.1402797.

[100] Ibid.

every nation, tribe, people, and language that could not be counted by a single person." Thus, having a diversified congregation means that the church is a representation of the kingdom of God. The intervention proposed in this study is for the church to teach and preach about diversity.

With an increasingly globalized world, the majority of places consist of more than one culture, race, or ethnic group; meaning that the church should be a reflection of the demographic composition in the world. The issue of multiculturalism in religion is a complicated matter, but its definition depends on the social contexts in which it occurs. The Truth Missionary Church is located in the United States; the discussion is more likely to focus on race, ethnicity, and immigration, as they are the major issues contributing to multiculturalism in the community. In the United States, the effect of religious diversity, pluralism, and multiculturalism are deeply connected to the history of the nation, its culture, as well as legal arrangements. Thus, multiculturalism and religion are complex and essential in the United States, especially when it comes to freedom of religion and the increased Protestant nature of the church.

Further, when it comes to the issue of religion and race, different researchers have analyzed the concept of identifying that religion plays an essential role in construction, deconstruction, and infringement of racial identities and restrictions. According to research, race is a concept and means of classification of individuals in society.[101] In the United States, the differences between races and racial identities can be dated back to the encounters of the native Americas, the Europeans, and Africans which led to the natural and inherited differences. The majority of religion and race narratives are focused on the issues of slavery, white supremacy,

---

[101] Marylee C. Taylor and Stephen M. Merino. "*Race, Religion, and beliefs about Racial Inequality.*" *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 634, no. 1 (2011): 60-77.

and the civil rights movements. With such topics, one tends to focus on the Whites, the Blacks, and the Reds in the society. However, there are other small ethnic communities in America, such as Mexican Americans, Latin immigrants, and Asian, among others that must be considered while creating a diverse multicultural congregation.

It should be noted that race was viewed in America as a means of classifying people. The main problem associated with such classification is based on the fact that different churches and ministries were formed around the concept of race. However, the congregation of the church should be multiculturally diverse to represent God's creation.

Additionally, race is a socially constructed concept, and it changes as racial classifications change with new ideologies. In America's history, before the civil rights movement, religious diversity was linked to more lynching compared to regions where there were fewer racial groups in the congregation.[102] In other words, the people of the United States never supported variety in churches, which is reflected in current churches. In particular, churches that had more blacks, including their leaders, experienced violence at a greater magnitude. Racial ideologies touch on religious formation throughout the United States.

However, the need for deliberate reconciliation and promotion of oneness in society under one true God will uplift the church. When reconciliation and togetherness evolve in the community, they can increase diversity and multiculturalism in the congregation. Note that the Bible talks of the vast number of individuals "from every nation" according to Revelation 7:9 which means that issues such as race, gender, and ethnicity cannot separate people in the eyes of God. In the book of Corinthians 9:22 and 10:23, the Bible encourages corporation with other

---

[102] Timothy L. O'Brien and Shiri Noy, "Traditional, Modern, And Post-Secular Perspectives on Science and Religion in the United States," *American Sociological Review* 80, no. 1 (2015): doi:10.1177/0003122414558919.

cultures as long as his commandments are followed. Thus, the intervention to teach and preach about diversity is likely to be the only antidote that can be used in creating a culturally diverse congregation.

The first step to take up is engaging the congregation, especially those who hail from different cultural and racial contexts. The next step is to prepare a questionnaire that will be used in data collection to gather data on how the different races would feel integrated into the activities being carried out in the church. The third is the review of the current programs being conducted by the church and the vision that they have to reach out to more people.[103] The efficacy of the current strategies and the unmet goals are part of the information that the church may need in shaping their plans and interventions that need to be undertaken.

Data Collection

The data collected will mostly be gathered from the congregants and the active participants in the various ministries within the church with the motive of determining how the church would include all the races.[104] The participants will complete a questionnaire based on their knowledge and personal experiences. The participants will then participate in a four-week seminar. An attendance to the four-week seminar is paramount for building awareness of diversity of race, ethnicities, culture, and Biblical worldview.

---

[103] Fergus J. King, "Mission-Shaped or Paul-Shaped? Apostolic Challenges to the Mission-Shaped Church." *Journal of Anglican Studies* 9, no. 2 (2010): doi:10.1017/s1740355310000264.

[104] Gerardo Marti, "A Mosaic of Believers: Diversity and Innovation in a Multi-ethnic Church." *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 10, no. 3 (2007): doi:10.1525/nr.2007.10.3.122.

Ethical Considerations

The data collected will enable the church to determine the racial composition of the church and the interests of various congregants to participate in the activities that are designed by the church. Confidentiality of the information is essential in ensuring that the data collected is only used for the study. Informed consent is another ethical undertaking that will be undertaken by the church. The participants in the survey will be informed of the objectives of the study and the reason for their participation in the process.

The intervention by the Truth Missionary Church is teaching and preaching about diversity in the church, as well as in the community as an essential part of multiculturalism in the church. Education about racial diversity in the church is a crucial element and focus of the church sermons. Groups like Sunday school classes and youth groups are a significant part to ensure that preaching and teaching on ethnic diversity in the congregations' curriculum help increase the church's multiculturalism. Working with other pastors, sharing pulpits during weekends and worship services are essential in growing multicultural congregations.

The vision of the church is to increase diversity in the congregation to 50% of the current population. To achieve this vision, the leaders in the church can impart the importance of race, diversity, and multiculturalism not only in society but also in the church.[105] In this case, church leaders will furthermore learn and understand the importance of having a diversified congregation, which is a foundation of the heavenly congregation according to God's will. Only individuals with sufficient knowledge on the issue of multiculturalism in the church would help

---

[105] Marylee C. Taylor and Stephen M. Merino, "Race, Religion, And Beliefs about Racial Inequality," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 634, no. 1 (2011): doi:10.1177/0002716210389537.

improve diversity in the congregation. Once the church congregation understands the importance of diversity and race in the community, they would be used as ambassadors in society to help in evangelizing the Word of God to other communities. In other words, the people who understand and gain knowledge on the issue of diversity and multiculturalism in society will be used to teach other people, as well as evangelize the Word of God to the surrounding communities.

Further, Truth Missionary Church leaders and the congregation can see the vision and importance of multiculturalism in the biblical perspective. The society and church have to live as ambassadors of multiculturalism in the community. The intervention is therefore essential as it would eventually help increase the composition of the church by 50% within four months. The more sermons focus on uniformity, the more the church can realize God's creation, as the Bible says that every human being was created in the image of God. This indicates that there is no difference between the subjects compared to the Supreme Being that they worship. These teachings will provide a neutral ground as far as the relationship with God is concerned.[106] The church has a job to promote universality in the congregation.

The platform and media used as a foundation should depict diversity. Various materials are used to spread the gospel, such as the print media made up of journals, books, etc. The pastors are also used to interpret the teachings prevalent in the Bible. Through the first component, which is the integration of different print media, the church materials promoted can provide an understanding on depicting diversity. For example, pictures of individuals from

---

[106] Richard J. Perry, "Book Review: Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church: Mandate, Commitments and Practices of a Diverse Congregation," *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 63, no. 4 (2009): doi:10.1177/002096430906300432.

different races can be included in the print materials. These materials are bound for critique, as they are readily available to the public.[107]

The interpreters of the teaching ought to emanate from different categories of society. The pulpit presentation would represent every subgroup is represented. Pastors from various ethnic groups and races would be given equal chances of spreading the gospel. This will diffuse the differences predominant in the church.[108] The church can also collaborate with neighboring cultures in the ministration of the gospel. This will provide a forum through which various individuals will be able to interact as they share the resources available. Through the process, a representation of God's love will be indicated, showing that there are no differences in the eyes of the Lord. All human beings are treated as equal, and they should, therefore, praise Him together. Through love, the church will be able to connect with different cultures as the love of God will join all races in heaven.

Universality in the gospel should be encouraged. Through the spread of the gospel, depending on the medium, which is dependent on diversity, a church may unknowingly promote the growth of a particular culture, race, etc. To avoid such instance, church leaders have to enforce the unity that is found among Christians brought together by the firm belief in Christ. Language of instruction is a medium that is commonly used to neutralize the differences present.[109] The common language that everyone is conversant with should be used in the church. This will be an indicator that racial discrimination is not part and parcel of that church.

---

[107] Ibid.

[108] Gerardo Marti, "A Mosaic of Believers: Diversity and Innovation in a Multiethnic Church," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 10, no. 3 (2007): doi:10.1525/nr.2007.10.3.122.

[109] Ibid.

Relationship mentors and accountability personnel in the church will be made up of individuals from different races. They are a crucial component in the church, as they determine the relationship existing in the church. Theirs is a platform that is used to promote harmonious relationships among the church members, therefore, they are indicators of harmony. Incorporating different persons will promote peaceful relations by doing away with the differences.

The congregation's inner demographic look can be divided into cronies made up of diverse individuals. Through this platform, the members will interact, sharing the differences and commonalities and coming together with a thoughtful conclusion. Discussion of essential matters of the church has to be based on these groups, as they will promote equality and the interaction among the members will lead to neutralization of the differences prevalent. Patience is an essential virtue that each church leader and member should possess. Differences exist in human nature; their elimination calls for cautious actions that will not provoke the subjects. The church should be prayerful and wait for God's works that will aid in the dilution of the differences.

The Implementation of the Intervention Design

Intervention means putting a plan into practice or execution to achieve the expected goals. The Truth Missionary Church leaders understand the importance of a multicultural congregation and the proposed intervention would assist in promoting cultural diversity. It was identified that teaching and preaching about diversity is a significant intervention that is likely to help the church increase its congregation to represent one under God.[110] The church will

---

[110] Fergus J. King, "Mission-Shaped or Paul-Shaped? Apostolic Challenges to the Mission-Shaped Church." *Journal of Anglican Studies* 9, no. 2 (2010): doi:10.1017/s1740355310000264.

participate in a four-week seminar. The seminar will be led by the pastor and spearheaded by guest speakers from NAACP, Compassion International, and U.S. Army Chaplains of different races and ethnicity. Upon the start and completion of the seminar, the participants will complete a questionnaire and reflect on results throughout of the study. The implementation process details strategic planning, research, and approvals from the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and dissertation mentor. Prior to the four-week seminar, approval must be granted through the Liberty University IRB. The IRB will provide a written approval letter. Two weeks leading up to the seminar, the project will be communicated through flyers, program bulletins, and from ministry leaders. Participants who sign up for the project will be given a consent form to confirm they are volunteering to participate as part of the research project. The table below shows the general seminar outline.

Figure 3.1: General Seminar Outline

Time	Activity
Week 1	Introduction. (Questionnaire issued to participants) Purpose of building awareness of diversity of race, ethnicities, and culture with a Biblical worldview. NAACP guest speaker will address the mission of the NAACP which is to secure political, educational, social, and economic rights to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons.
Week 2	Army Chaplain (White) will focus on the cultural gaps from their race/cultural perspective. The Chaplain also will incorporate the Biblical perspective placing importance on unity of all.

	Compassion International guest speaker will focus on the mission of their organization.
Week 3	Army Chaplain (Hispanic) will focus on the cultural gaps from their race/cultural perspective. The Chaplain will also incorporate the Biblical perspective placing importance on unity of all. Army Chaplain (Asian) will focus on the cultural gaps from their race/cultural perspective. The Chaplain also incorporated the biblical perspective placing importance on unity of all.
Week 4	Keynote address message "One Church." (1 Corinthians 12:12-26). (Questionnaire issued to participants)

Chapter Summary

In conclusion, the promotion of a diverse congregation heavily relies on the operations of the church. All actions that are taken should be sensitive to diversity as in one way or another they should not promote the well-being of a particular group while the other one is discriminated against. This eventually leads to segregation as a specific group may feel discriminated against. Church leaders should ensure that there is universality in the congregation where all races, ethnic groups, and cultures are represented in the congregation and ministerial staff.

The intervention and implementation process are premised on the need to integrate multiculturism in the activities of the church. However, the interventions that are sought by the organization should be analyzed based on the church's vision and their effectiveness in meeting

the goals outlined by the church. Importantly, all the congregants need to be involved in the

activities to be implanted by the church.

Chapter Four: Results

Introduction

The results chapter presents the findings of the Questionnaire and the educational value of the four-week seminar and includes the relationship to the existing literature. Hence, the results chapter provides a significant link between the research objectives and the conclusions of the study. This was achieved through a discussion of the statistical results. The chapter was organized into five sub-sections; Part I: Who are we; Part II: What kind of world do we live in; Part III: What is wrong; Part IV: What is the answer. These are followed by the Cultural Background Examination.

Part I: Who Are We?

A. Distribution of the respondents along Ethnic Origin

The study revealed that a majority of the respondents were African Americans (16, 48.5%). The other two groups of respondents were Asian (5, 15.2%) and White (12, 36.4%), (see Figure 4.1). The study showed that more African Americans were concerned about multiculturalism and the recognition that different races may have different needs and approaches in their outreach programs than people from other ethnic backgrounds in the United States. Research by Parker, Horowitz, and Mahl (2016), observed that there were profound differences between African Americans and White adults in their views on racial discrimination, barriers to African Americans' progress, and the prospect for change. In their report, Parker, Horowitz, and Mahl (2016) noted that more African Americans (43%) than people from other races (11% for White) said African Americans were treated unfairly across different realms of life, such as police use of excessive force and difficulties in applying for a loan or mortgage.

Figure 4.1

Distribution of the respondents along Ethnic Origin

Asian
15%

White
36%

Black or African
American
49%
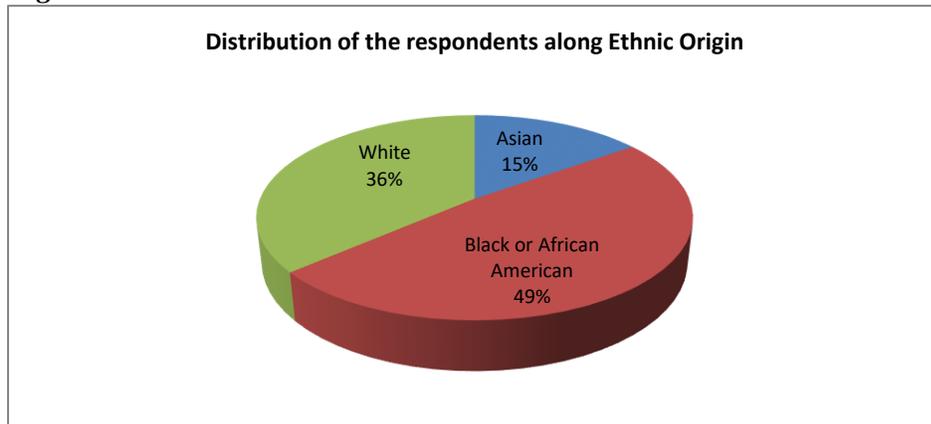
B. I was made in the image of God.

The Asians held a firmer belief than African Americans and Whites on the claim that

they were created in the image of God. The analysis revealed that all Asians agreed to the claim,

with four strongly agreeing and one agreeing to the claim. However, while bigger proportions of

African Americans strongly agreed (11), a significant proportion did not agree that they were

created in the image of God, with frequencies equal to three for those who weren't sure and one

who disagreed. Whites had the biggest proportion of persons not believing that they were created

in the image of God, with a frequency of seven for those who were not sure about the claim

(Figure 4.2). In support of these findings and using the available literature, Jacobsen and Kumar

(2018) observed that in addition to Asia being the largest and most populous continent, it is the

birthplace of many religions including Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism,

Taoism, Sikhism, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Confucianism.

Faith in God is slowly declining among Whites compared to among Blacks or Asians.

Faith among whites started to decline mainly because of two reasons: The end of the Cold War

and 9/11.[111] At the time of the Cold War, the faith dominated U.S. was engaged in a battle with the non-faith dominated Soviet Union. The end of Cold War resulted in the end of unity among Americans in the name of nationalism or patriotism. Moreover, the 9/11 incident forced Whites to think that all religions were destructive in nature. Blacks and Asians faced plenty of hardships in the past and they use such hardships as an occasion to cement their faith in God. In short, the extent of faith in God forces Whites, Blacks and Asians to take different views regarding the notion that humans are made in the image of God.

I was made in the image of God.				
Figure 4.2	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Strongly Agree	4	11	3	18
Agree	1	1	2	4
Not Sure	0	3	7	10
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0
Disagree	0	1	0	1
Total	5	16	12	33

C. My ancestors being brought over to this country as slaves is part of my story.

The respondents presented different views on history related to their ancestors and the slave trade. All the Blacks viewed the claim that their ancestors being brought over to the country as slaves was part of their story as true with a frequency of 16 (100%), respectively. On the contrary, all Asians disagreed with the claim with proportions with frequencies of 4 (80%) and 1 (20%) saying the statement was false or they were not sure. Whites expressed a mixed

---

[111] Derek Thompson, "Three Decades Ago, America Lost Its Religion. Why?" *The Atlantic*, September 26, 2019. https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/09/atheism-fastest-growing-religion-us/598843.

view with proportions with frequencies of 3 (25%), 6 (50%), and 3 (25%), giving a true, false, and not sure response about their ancestors being brought over to the country as slaves as part of their story (Figure 4.3).

African Americans in the U.S. still face much discrimination in their social life. Many of the White Americans still consider them as slaves or second-class citizens although law has abolished racial discrimination decades before. The 101 black teens participated in a study by Amy Harmon said that they experienced more than 5,600 incidents of racial discrimination within a period of two weeks.[112] Asians do not have such feelings since many them migrated to U.S. over the last few decades. White Americans enjoy their freedom and liberties in the U.S., and they are not bothered to inquire about how their ancestors enter the country.

Figure 4.3	My ancestors being brought over to this country as slaves is part of my story.			Total
	Ethnic Origin			
	Asian	African American	White	
True	0	16	3	19
False	4	0	6	10
Not Sure	1	0	3	4
Total	5	16	12	33

D. Growing up with my family significantly impacted my views of other ethnic groups in a positive way.

Growing up with one's family was found to impact views of other ethnic groups in various ways among respondents from different ethnic origins. A majority of Asians (4, 80%)

---

[112] Amy Harmon, How Much Racism Do You Face Every Day? *The New York Times*. January 20, 2020. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/racism-african-americans.

agreed that the impact was positive, while one respondent (20%), disagreed strongly, respectively. Similarly, a majority of African Americans (10, 63%) strongly agreed that the impact was positive against proportions equal to 2 (13%) and 4 (25%), who were not sure and strongly disagreed. For the Whites, the frequencies were equal to 2 (17%), 7 (58%), and 3 (25%) for those who strongly agreed, agreed, and strongly disagreed (Figure 4.4).

Educational communities are the primary learning place for youth to learn, and family is the second learning place for children. Family plays a vital role in shaping the attitude of children towards other ethnic groups. In fact, family is the first line of defense for survival, health, education, development, and protection in the case of most of the children.[113] Elders in one's family usually advise children how to behave with people from other cultures. They usually advise the younger generation in the family to keep a positive attitude towards other ethnic groups.

---

[113] Reeta Sonawat. "Understanding Families in India: A reflection of social changes". *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa*, (2001), vol.17 no.2.

Growing up with my family significantly impacted my views of other ethnic groups in a positive way.				
Figure 4.4	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Strongly Agree	0	10	2	12
Agree	4	0	7	11
Not Sure	0	2	0	2
Strongly Disagree	1	4	3	8
Disagree	0	0	0	0
Total	5	16	12	33

Part II: What kind of world we live in?

A. The best jobs go to someone of a different ethnic group than mine.

The study revealed that people from different ethnic origins had different views regarding the kind of world in which we live. Discrimination against some individuals was highly evident in various areas. The study showed that some people felt discriminated against during job recruitments and employment processes. According to the study, Asians were moderately discriminated against in hiring practices with proportions equal to 3 (60%) and 2 (40%) agreeing and being not sure, respectively, about the claim that the best jobs went to people of different ethnic groups than theirs. African Americans felt highly discriminated against in employment opportunities with 9 (56%), 6 (38%), and 1 (6%) strongly agreeing, agreeing, and not sure, respectively, about the claim that the best jobs went to people of different ethnic groups than theirs. Whites were not discriminated against as far as employment was concerned. The analysis produced frequencies equal to 2 (17%) and 10 (83%) for those who were not sure and who strongly disagreed, respectively, with the claim that the best jobs went to people of a different ethnic groups than theirs (Figure 4.5).

A study by Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan found that resumes with white-sounding names get 50% more callbacks in the U.S. than those with black-sounding names.[114] With this view, many of the employers in the country have the inclination that whites have better capacities of thought than Blacks. At the same time, many major American companies such as Microsoft and Google have Asian CEOs at present and therefore Asians cannot accept the aforementioned statement fully. It is evident that some White employers have strong dislike towards African Americans, although their dislikes towards Asians are not as severe in nature.

Figure 4. 2
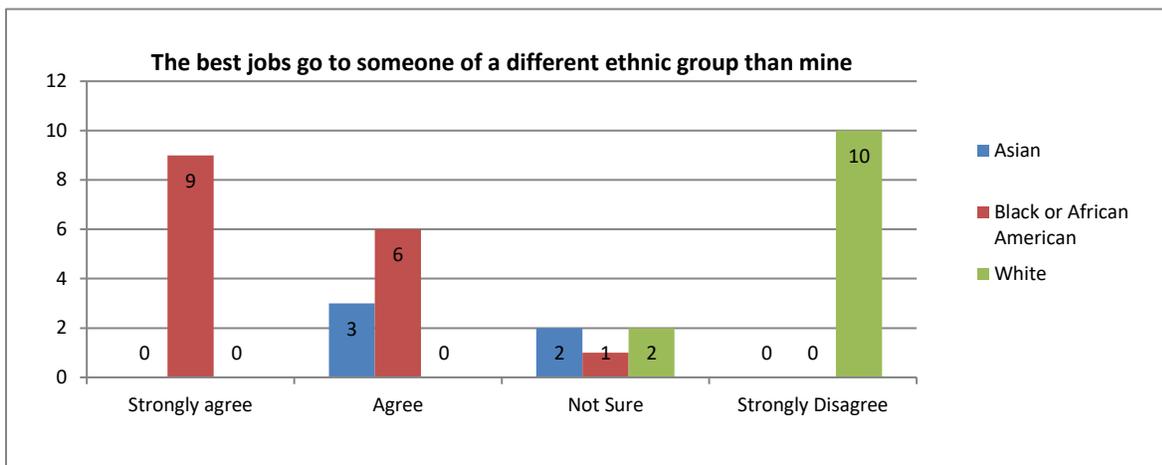
B. I have had privileges and access to quality education and business opportunities, and I have not lived in poverty.

The study showed that persons belonging to different ethnic origins had different views on the privileges and access to social amenities. Asians, Africans, and Whites showed moderate levels, low levels, and high levels, respectively, of privileges and access to quality education and

---

[114] Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan. "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination." *The American Economic Review* (2004), vol.94, no.4. p.991-1013.

business opportunities. For Asians, the responses were distributed as 2 (40%), 2 (40%), and 1 (20%) for agree, not sure, and disagree, respectively. The results for Blacks showed that the responses were distributed as 1 (6%), 4 (25%), and 11 (69%) for the agree, not sure, strongly disagree, respectively. On the contrary, the results for Whites showed that the responses were distributed as 9 (75%), 1 (8%), and 2 (17%), for the strongly agree, agree, and strongly disagree (Figure 4.6).

As in the case of employment opportunities, Blacks have strong feelings that they have less privilege, less access to quality education, and less business opportunities. According to Darling-Hammond, the hired teachers with low qualifications or those who failed to meet the teaching certification standards are usually assigned to teach the most disadvantaged Black students and White students get the services of highly qualified teachers most of the time.[115] As a result of that, White students will be able to improve their academic achievements and thereby improve their job potentials. Poor academic achievements prevent Black students from getting decent jobs and they are forced to live in poverty as a result if they are not afforded the opportunity.

Figure 4. 3

Figure showing bar chart titled "I have had privileges and access to quality education and business opportunities, and I have not lived in poverty" with categories Strongly agree, Agree, Not Sure, Strongly Disagree, Disagree for Asian, Black or African American, and White groups.
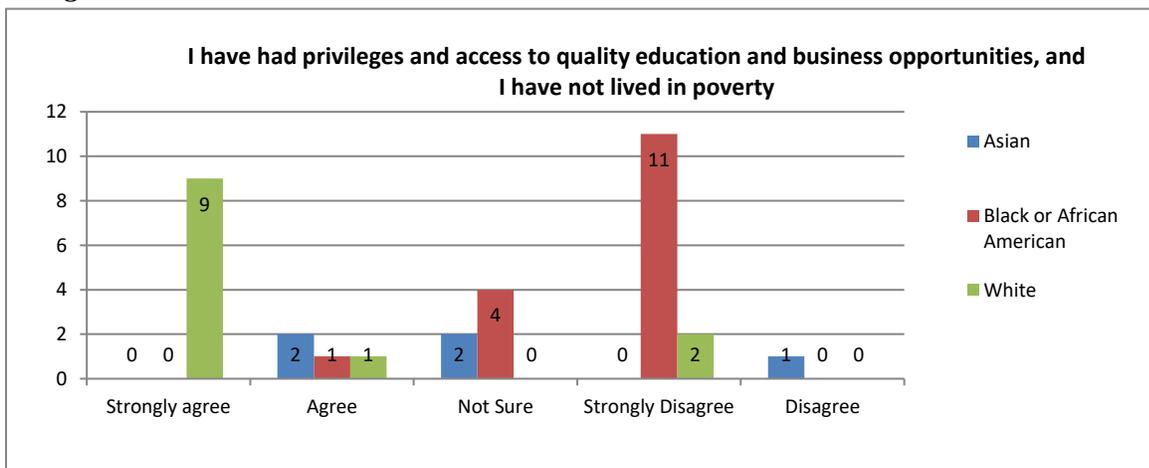
[115] Linda Darling-Hammond. Unequal Opportunity: Race and Education. *Brookings.* https://www.brookings.edu/articles/unequal-opportunity-race-and-education.

C. The struggle for a sense of acceptance and a place in American life is a part of who I am.

A critical aspect describing the kind of world we live in was the sense of acceptance, which varied significantly across ethnic backgrounds. Asians and Whites with frequencies of 5 (100%) (2=not sure and 3=strongly disagree), and 12 (100%) (5=not sure and 7=strongly disagree), respectively, did not see the struggle for a sense of acceptance and a place in American life as part of who they were. On the contrary, proportions of Blacks with frequencies of 12 (75%) and 3 (19%) strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that the struggle for a sense of acceptance and a place in American life was part of who they were (Figure 4.7).

The struggle for a sense of acceptance and a place in American life is a part of life for many Black people in the U.S. American society usually assume the label of an open and egalitarian society in which all people get equal opportunities irrespective of their skin color, cast or religious belief.[116] However, the reality is that Black people are forced to work twice as hard as their counterparts to get half of the income earned by Whites. The achievements of Whites are usually exaggerated and accepted well in society. However, the achievements of Blacks often go unnoticed. Asians do not have such, feelings since they get ample opportunities and recognition in American society.

---

[116] Elijah Anderson, This is what it feels like to be black in white spaces. *The Guardian*, June 09, 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/09/everyday-racism-america-black-white-spaces.

| The struggle for a sense of acceptance and a place in American life is a part of who I am.				
Figure 4.7	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Strongly Agree	0	12	0	12
Agree	0	3	0	3
Not Sure	2	0	5	7
Strongly Disagree	3	1	7	11
Total	5	16	12	33

D. I believe that I understand the lifestyles and motivations of people of the minority culture.

The study showed that people from different ethnic origins understood the lifestyles and motivations of others from the minority culture differently. From the sample, proportions of Asians equaled to 3 (60%) and 2 (40%) agreed and were not sure, respectively, that they understand the lifestyles and motivations of people of the minority culture. Proportions of Blacks equal to 10 (63%), 2(13%), and 2 (13%) strongly agreed, agreed, and we're not sure, respectively, they understood the lifestyles and motivations of people of the minority culture. Further, proportions of Whites equal to 6 (50%), 3(25%), and 3 (25%) strongly agreed, were not sure, and strongly disagreed, respectively, that they understood the lifestyles and motivations of people of the minority culture (Figure 4.8).

Whites showed mixed response in their ability to understand the lifestyles and motivations of people from the minority culture. Blacks showed more eagerness in understanding the lifestyles and motivations of others compared to Asians or Whites. For example, domestic violence is common among most of ethnic minority groups. However, a recent study has shown that only 33% of Whites and 67% of Blacks consider it as a serious

matter.[117] The number of Blacks who try to learn the life styles of others is more than double the number of Whites who try to do so.

Figure 4. 4
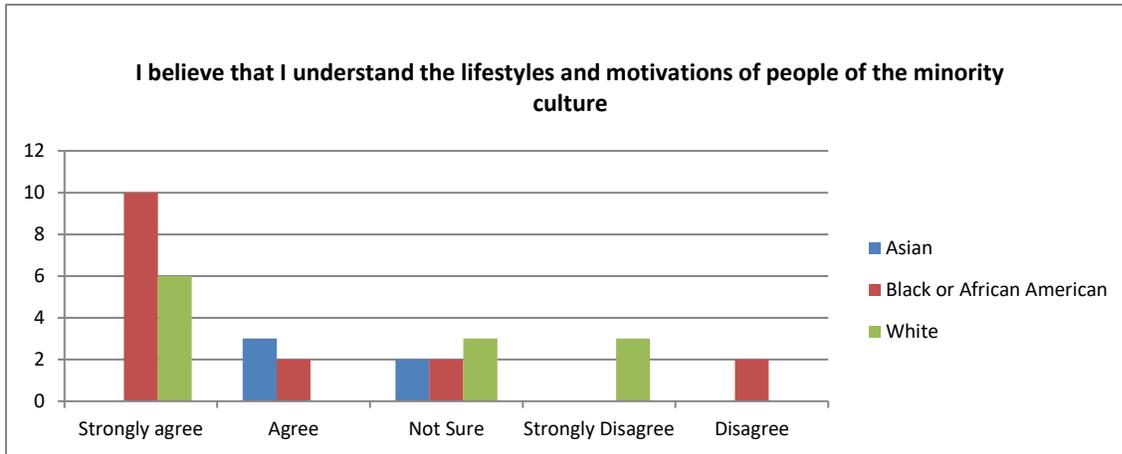
Part III: What is Wrong?

A. True Freedom and opportunity is only available to a selected race or ethnicity.

The study identified biased freedom and opportunities as a significant problem. This issue was highlighted by respondents across the three ethnic origins. The frequencies obtained for Asians were 4 (80%) and 1 (20%) for strongly agree and agree, respectively, regarding the claim that true freedom and opportunity is only available to a selected race or ethnicity. Similarly, the frequencies obtained for Blacks were 12 (75%), 2 (13%), and 2 (13%) for strongly agree, agree, and not sure, respectively, regarding the claim that true freedom and opportunity is only available to a selected race or ethnicity. The frequencies obtained for Whites were 9 (75%)

---

[117] Sophia Tesfaye. "New study: White people lack empathy across the socioeconomic spectrum". *Salon*. September 19, 2017. https://www.salon.com/2017/09/19/new-study-white-people-lack-empathy-across-the-socioeconomic-spectrum.

and 3 (25%) for strongly agree and agree, respectively, regarding the claim that true freedom and

opportunity is only available to a selected race or ethnicity (Figure 4.9).

Along with Blacks and Asians, Whites also have no doubt in accepting the notion that

true freedom and opportunities are available only to a selected race or ethnicity in the U.S.

"Color" was deeply intertwined with legal status and citizenship rights of the people in the U.S.

during the Revolutionary and Antebellum periods."[118] Although the scenario has changed over

the years, even Whites in America can claim that the minorities in the country enjoy the same

liberties, freedom, and opportunities as they enjoy.

True freedom and opportunity is only available to a selected race or ethnicity.				
Figure 4.9	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Strongly Agree	4	12	9	25
Agree	1	2	3	6
Not Sure	0	2	0	2
Total	5	16	12	33

A graphical presentation of the above results was done using a comparative bar graph.

The graph revealed that the biggest proportions from the three groups of respondents, namely the

Asians, Blacks, and Whites, strongly agreed with the claim that true freedom and opportunity are

only available to a selected race or ethnicity (Figure 4.10).

---

[118] Anthony Daniel Perez and Charles Hirschman. The Changing Racial and Ethnic Composition of the US Population: Emerging American Identities. *Popul Dev Rev*. (2009), vol.35, no. 1.

Figure 4.10

True freedom and opportunity is only available to a selected race or ethnicity

(Bar chart showing responses by ethnicity: Asian, Black or African American, White, with categories Strongly agree, Agree, Not Sure)
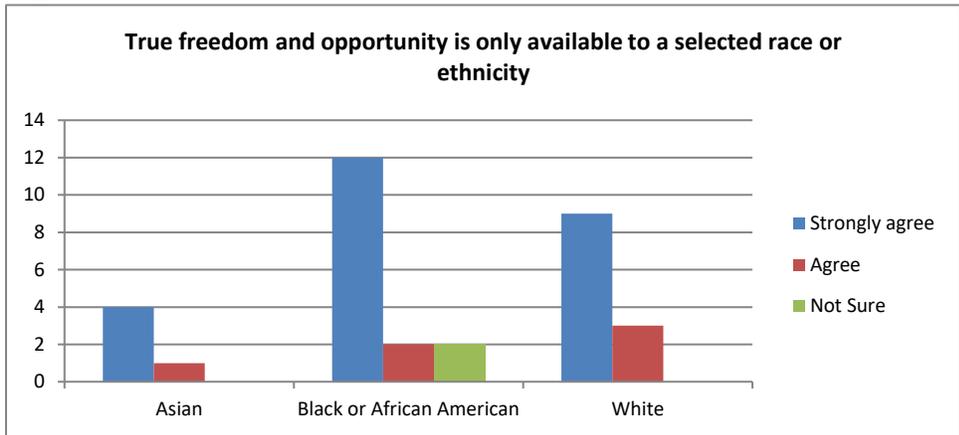
B. I have a prejudice against another race or ethnicity.

Prejudice was viewed as another problem within society. However, the levels of prejudice among people were found to differ across their ethnic backgrounds. A significant majority of Blacks with proportions equal to 12 (74%), 2 (13%), 2 (13%) strongly agreed, agreed, and disagreed, respectively, that they have a prejudice against people from other races or ethnicity. Similarly, a significant majority of Whites, with a proportion equal to 9 (75%), 2 (15%), 1 (10%), strongly agreed, were not sure, and strongly disagreed, respectively, to have a prejudice against people from other races or ethnicities. To the contrary, a majority of Asians did not agree to the statement with frequencies equal to 3 (60%) and 2 (40%) for the not sure and strongly disagree, respectively. These results were presented using a bar graph, and it was evident that the levels of prejudice against other races among people were found to differ across their ethnic backgrounds (Figure 4.11).

Compared to Asians, Whites and Blacks have strong prejudices against other races. Asians normally rate people based on their capabilities rather than skin color. They have no problems accepting outstanding works of others without worrying about the skin color of the persons who performed such works. Whites may keep some reservations while rating such

outstanding works. The handling of the ongoing COVID-19 attack by the Trump administration is an example for the deep prejudices inherited by Whites. Initially, the Trump administration handled the attack lightly because of the prejudice that this attack may not cause any damages to Americans because of their superior health systems.[119] Now, President Trump speaks about the possible death of more than 200,000 because of the aforementioned attack. President Trump believed that the death toll in other countries is increased because of their inferior abilities to fight against this pandemic. However, he has realized the mistake lately and is paying the price for the prejudice he kept regarding the capabilities of Whites and that of other ethnic groups across the world.

Figure 4.11

I have a prejudice against another race or ethnicity

Legend: Asian, Black or African American, White
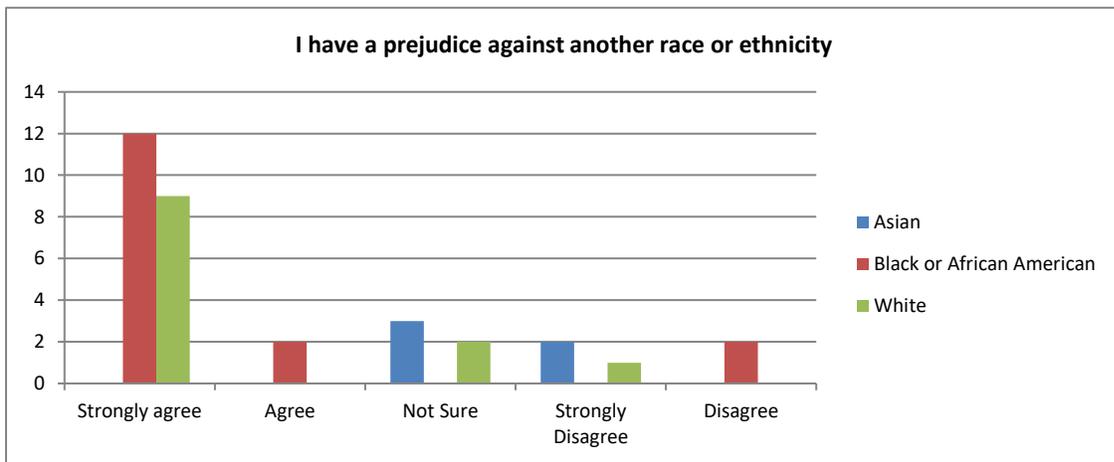
C. Because of history, the various races and ethnicities will never be equal.

History was found to create biases towards various races and ethnicities. This claim was supported by respondents from the three ethnic backgrounds who participated. According to the study, proportions of 2 (40%) and 3 (60%) of the Asians strongly agreed and agreed,

---

[119] Haley Edwards, The Trump Administration Fumbled Its Initial Response to Coronavirus. Is There Enough Time to Fix It? *Time. M*arch 19, 2020. https://time.com/5805683/trump-administration-coronavirus.

respectively, that because of history, the various races and ethnicities would never be equal. Similarly, more significant proportions of 14 (88%) and 2 (13%) of Blacks participants strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that because of history, the various races and ethnicities would never be equal. Also, a bigger proportion of Whites, with a frequency of 11 (92%), and 1 (8%), strongly agreed and was not sure, respectively, that because of history, the various races and ethnicities would never be equal (Figure 4.12).

History plays a vital role in creating the perception that various races and ethnicities can never be equal. According to Van Leuwen, social inequality is transmitted from one generation to another.[120] People have a tendency to obey the norms of the previous generation. That is why many Americans still consider blacks as slaves although the constitution provides equal status to citizens irrespective of their culture, religion or skin color.

Because of history, the various races and ethnicities will never be equal.				
Figure 4.12	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Strongly Agree	2	14	11	27
Agree	3	2	0	5
Not Sure	0	0	1	1
Total	5	16	12	33

D. The laws of the land were not created in favor and people of my race and ethnicity receive more severe punishments than other races and ethnicities.

A significant majority of Blacks claimed that the laws of the land were not created in their favor, arguing that people of their race and ethnicity received more severe punishments than other races and ethnicities, with 14 (88%) and 2 (13%) strongly agreeing and agreeing,

---

[120] Marco H. D. Van Leuwen. "Social inequality and mobility in history: introduction". *Community and change*. (2009). Vol. 24, no.3.

respectively. On the contrary, Asians and Whites had moderate agreement levels with their largest proportions of frequencies equal to 4 (80%) and 9 (75%), respectively, having neutral responses about the claim (Figure 4.13).

In the U.S., Blacks and Whites receive different types of punishments, even if they commit crimes of a similar nature. The criminal justice system in the country keeps some prejudices and biases while dealing with crimes committed by people of different skin colors and ethnicities. For example, Marcus Dixon, an 18-year-old Black male, was sentenced to 10 years for sexual relations with an underage White girl, whereas another 15-year-old Black male, got a five-year prison sentence for stealing a pair of shoes.[121] The aforementioned criminals would have received a lighter sentencing if their skin color was White.

The laws of the land were not created in my favor and people of my race and ethnicity receive more severe punishments than other races and ethnicities.				
Figure 4.13	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Strongly Agree	0	14	3	17
Agree	0	2	0	2
Not Sure	4	0	9	13
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0	1
Total	5	16	12	33

[121] Jesse J Holland. Some blacks see a racial double standard in Kavanaugh case. *AP News.* October 03, 2018. https://apnews.com/d37d9f67cbd54682906403e375b88b83/Some-blacks-see-a-racial-double-standard-in-Kavanaugh-case.

Part IV: What is the Answer?

A. The path to a fair shake in this world depends on how the church stand together.

As revealed in the methodology chapter, growth, as it is envisioned in the corporate world, is also needed within the context of the church. In the urban context, there are people from diverse cultures with whom the church can connect as part of its developmental plans.[122] The significant intervention is the focus on multiculturalism and the recognition that different races may have different needs and approaches in their outreach programs. Hence, the church should be supported as it strives to ensure that they reach out to more people with the gospel, especially those who are unreached. Several suggestions were provided by this study as answers to the current problems that were identified as wrongs. This study observed that the path to a fair shake in this world depends on how the churches stand together. The three groups of respondents had their larger majority agreeing to this claim with overall results showing frequencies of 12 (36%), 10 (30%), 2 (6%), and 9 (27%) for the responses on strongly agree, agree, not sure, and strongly disagree, respectively (Figure 4.14).

Unity among churches is important in achieving a fair deal of equality in this world. Although all churches accept Jesus as their savior and believe in Biblical teachings, interpretation of Bible varies throughout different churches. Such a scenario has developed doubts regarding the credibility of Christianity among people of other religions. For example, the Roman Catholic Church considers Mary, the mother of Jesus, as "Queen of Heaven."[123] Protestant churches do not give any importance to Mary. It is necessary for churches to avoid

---

[122] Randa A. Kayyali, "Race, Religion and Identity: Arab Christians in the United States," *Culture and Religion* 19, no. 1 (2017): doi:10.1080/14755610.2017.1402797.

[123] Klaus Kramer. The main differences between Catholics and Protestants. April 21, 2019. https://www.dw.com/en/the-main-differences-between-catholics-and-protestants/a-37888597.

misinterpretation of the Bible and assemble under a common umbrella of faith guided by Jesus

Christ.

Figure 4.14	The path to a fair shake in this world depends on how the church stand together.			
	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Strongly Agree	1	6	5	12
Agree	4	6	0	10
Not Sure	0	0	2	2
Strongly Disagree	0	4	5	9
Total	5	16	12	33

B. Ethnic diversity in the church is an important focus.

Similarly, the study observed that ethnic diversity in the church was an important focus. A

majority of Asian participants, with a frequency of 4 (80%) agreed to the idea, while ten Whites

participants supported the idea, with (7 (58%) and 5 (25%) for strongly agree and agree,

respectively). Similarly, more Blacks participants, with frequencies of 7 (44%), 4 (25%), and 5

(31%) for strongly agree, agree, and not sure respectively, supported the idea that ethnic

diversity in the church was an important focus (Figure 4.15).

The need for ethnic diversity in churches is well accepted by all communities in

Christianity. Although many people are not ready to give equal status to minorities in social life,

they are ready to do so in their spiritual life because of the teachings of Jesus. Jesus once said

that he came to this world not for the rescue of saints but for the rescue of sinners (1 Timothy,

1:15). Moreover, he said once that those who consider themselves as superiors will be inferiors

in the kingdom of God. Those who consider themselves as inferiors will be regarded as superiors

in the Kingdom of God. Under the above circumstances, it is logical to assume that Jesus honors

those who show love to their neighbor rather than basing love on origin or skin color.

Ethnic diversity in the church is an important focus.				
Figure 4.15	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Strongly Agree	0	7	7	14
Agree	4	4	3	11
Not Sure	1	5	0	6
Strongly Disagree	0	0	2	2
Total	5	16	12	33

C. I am comfortable sharing my faith with people who are not like me.

Sharing one's faith with people from different backgrounds is an important step towards finding a solution to the current problem. A majority of Asian respondents with a frequency of 4 (80%) agreed that they were comfortable sharing their faith with people who were not like them. Similarly, a majority of Whites (8, 66%) agreed that they were comfortable sharing their faith with people who were not like them. On the contrary, a majority of Blacks, (12, 75%), failed to either agree or strongly agree that they were comfortable sharing their faith with people who were not like them. The results, presented using the bar graph below, showed that sharing faith with different people was viewed differently across ethnic background (Figure 4.16).

Blacks are more religious compared to whites in America. Sharing of faith is common among whites and Asians. For example, three-quarters of Black Americans have religious faith compared with Whites (49%) who have faith in God.[124] At the same time, Blacks are more reluctant to share their faith compared to Whites or Asians. This could be because of their feelings of inferiority or lack of confidence in their ability to convince others.

---

[124] David Masci. 5 facts about the religious lives of African Americans. Pew research centre. February 07, 2018. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/02/07/5-facts-about-the-religious-lives-of-african-americans.

Figure 4.16

I am comfortable sharing my faith with people who are not like me
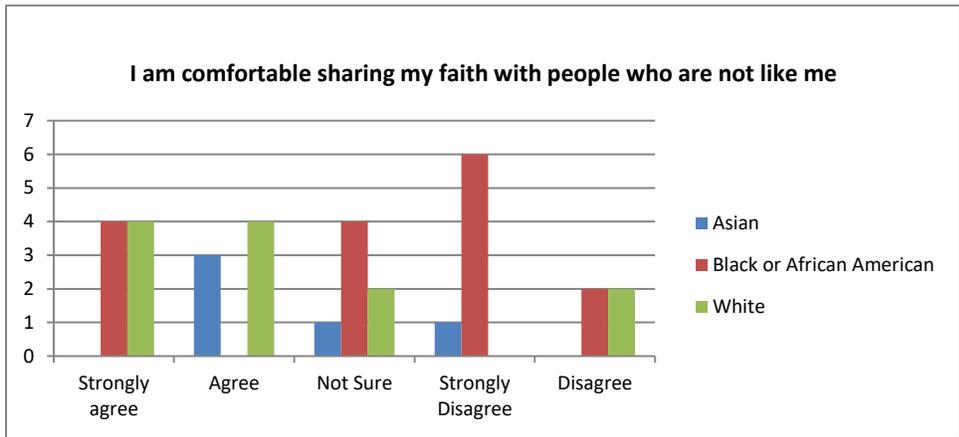
D. It has been said that Sunday morning is the most segregated time in America. How do you feel about that?

A majority of the Asians (4, 80%) were indifferent about Sunday morning being the most segregated time in America and did not really care. On the other hand, significant proportions of Blacks significantly regretted this claim and thought there was nothing they could do about it (6, 38%), and others felt that they needed to take steps to change this in their church (6, 38%). For Whites, a majority felt they needed to take steps to change this in their church (7, 58%) (Figure 4.17). Since Sunday for most is an off day from working in the U.S., all people like to celebrate that day in different ways. Highly religious people use Sunday morning for attending Sunday masses at churches, whereas nonreligious people try to use it for other activities. However, the trend is changing gradually as the percentage of multiracial churches in the country has been increasing.

It has been said that Sunday morning is the most segregated time in America. How do you feel about that?				
Figure 4.17	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
I think it is ok	1	2	2	5
I regret this fact and I don't think there is nothing we can do about it	0	6	2	8
I am indifferent about it and don't really care	4	0	0	4
I don't believe it's that important	0	2	1	3
We need to take steps to change this in our church	0	6	7	13
Total	5	16	12	33

Cultural Background Examination

A. I have had positive interactions with person of other races or ethnic groups.

The study gathered information from a sample that had varying levels of positive interactions with persons of other races or ethnic groups. However, in general, the majority were those who extremely often and fairly had often positive interactions (8, 24%) and (12, 37%), respectively. This was an indication that the sample was chosen from a population that had sufficient information about the study topic (Figure 4.18).

Most Americans like to have positive interactions with people of other races. However, Whites and Blacks usually stay away from mutual interactions, to a larger extent. The quantity and quality White and Black interaction depends on propinquity.[125] With that being said, Whites and Blacks like to interact only in unavoidable circumstances or when their relations become stronger. They have no problems interacting with people of other cultures. The major reason for

---

[125] Lee Sigelman, Timothy Bledsoe, Susan Welch and Michael W. Combs, Making Contact? Black-White Social Interaction in an Urban Setting, *American Journal of Sociology* (1996), Vol. 101, No. 5 p. 1306-1332.

the reluctance for mutual interaction among Whites and Blacks is their experiences of such interactions in the past.

Figure 4.18

I have had positive interactions with persons of other races or ethnic groups

- Extremely often 24%
- Fairly often 37%
- Rarely 27%
- Very rarely 12%
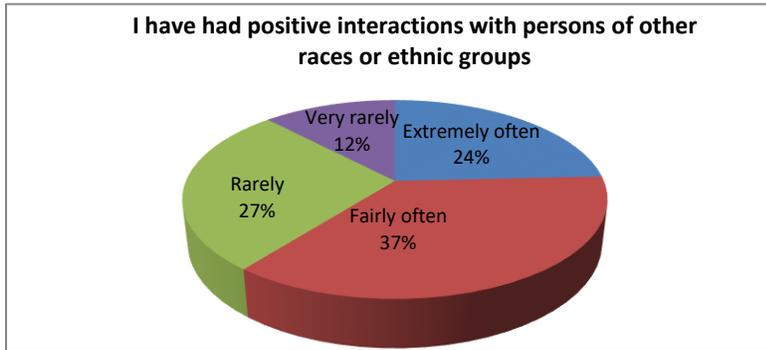
B. I have had negative interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups.

On the contrary, having negative interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups was experienced by Blacks and Whites more so than Asians. For Blacks, the study obtained frequencies equal to (15, 94%) and (1, 6%) for those who had had extremely often and fairly often negative interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups, respectively. For Whites, the study obtained frequencies equal to (8, 67%) and (2, 17%) for those who had had extremely often and fairly often negative interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups. The frequencies for the Asian respondents were (2, 40%) and (3, 60%) for those who had extremely often and rarely often negative interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups, respectively (Figure 4.19).

African Americans and White Americans have negative interactions with other ethnic groups quite often compared to Asians. The dominating nature of Whites seems to be the major reason for Whites' negative interactions with others.[126] Blacks' emotional and communication problems force Blacks to interact negatively with people of other cultures.

I have had negative interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups				
Figure 4.19	Ethnic Origin			Total
	Asian	African American	White	
Extremely Often	2	15	8	25
Fairly Often	0	1	2	3
Rarely	3	0	2	5
Total	5	16	12	33

**C. I am most comfortable around people of other racial and ethnic groups when.**

A majority of the study respondents claimed that negative interactions with people from other groups happened to them mostly because of misunderstanding or lack of communication. However, the most significant reason why people were comfortable around people of other racial and ethnic groups was when other people were the ones initiating the conversations (12, 36%). Other reasons included when the particular person had to initiate the conversation, when people went out their way to make us feel welcome and comfortable, and when we talk about things other than differences and disagreements with frequencies equal to (9, 27%), (5, 15%), and (7, 21%), respectively (Figure 4.20).

Most Americans become more comfortable dealing with people of other cultures when they initiate the conversation. This is because of the inability of people to read the readiness of

---

[126] Jacqueline L. Scott, New ads ask, "Do white people dominate the outdoors?" *The Conversation*. October 26, 2018. http://theconversation.com/new-ads-ask-do-white-people-dominate-the-outdoors-105566.

others to engage in a communication process.[127] When people get a positive signal from others, they will develop more comfort in dealing with them. If the signal is negative, people will usually stay away from interacting with others.

Figure 4.20

I am most comfortable around people of other racial and ethnic groups when

- They initiate the conversation
- I initiate the conversation
- They go out of their way to make me feel welcome and comfortable
- We talk about things other than differences and disagreements
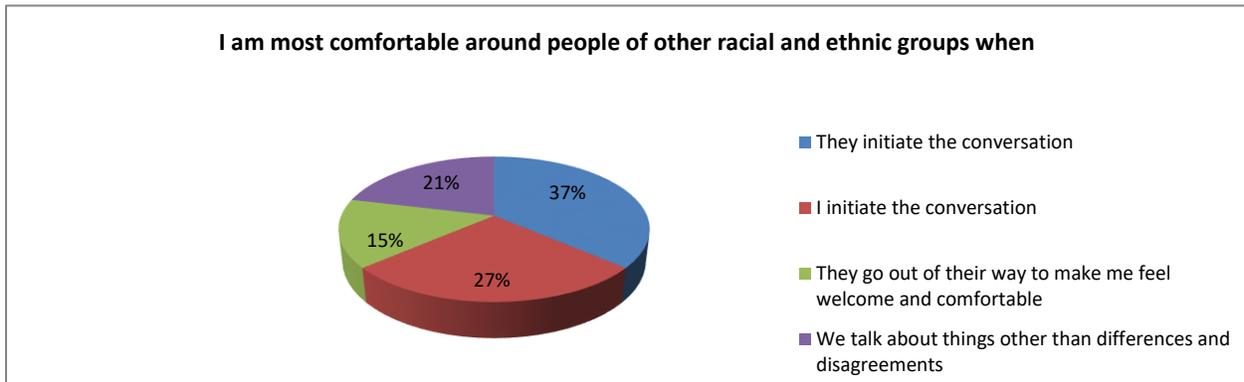
D. Racial and cultural diversity is important for the church because.

Racial and cultural diversity was viewed as an essential aspect for churches because it demonstrated that people are open and welcoming to others, (13, 39%). Other significant reasons highlighted by the study included the ability to point to the future time when peace and harmony will dwell on the earth, showing the world how broad the love of God is, showing how different people are relevant, and enriching people's lives, with frequencies equal to (4, 12%), (5, 15%), (2, 6%), and (8, 24%), respectively (Figure 4.21).

Racial and cultural diversity is important for churches because God has created only the human race, rather than Whites, Blacks, Asians, Roman Catholics or Protestants. In God's

---

[127] Kendra Cherry, "Starting a Conversation When You Are Socially Anxious." *Verywell Mind*. July 20, 2019. https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-start-a-conversation-4582339.

Kingdom, all people are equal.[128] God will look for the activities of the human race rather than skin color or ethnicity on judgement day. Therefore, no churches can consider that people of one ethnicity are superior to people of other ethnicities.

Figure 4.21

Racial and cultural diversity is important for the church because

- It demonstrates that we are open and welcoming to others — 40%
- It points to the future time when peace and harmony will dwell on the earth — 12%
- It shows the world how broad the love of God is — 15%
- It is currently popular to celebrate diversity, so this shows that we are relevant — 6%
- It enriches my life — 24%
- Other — 3%
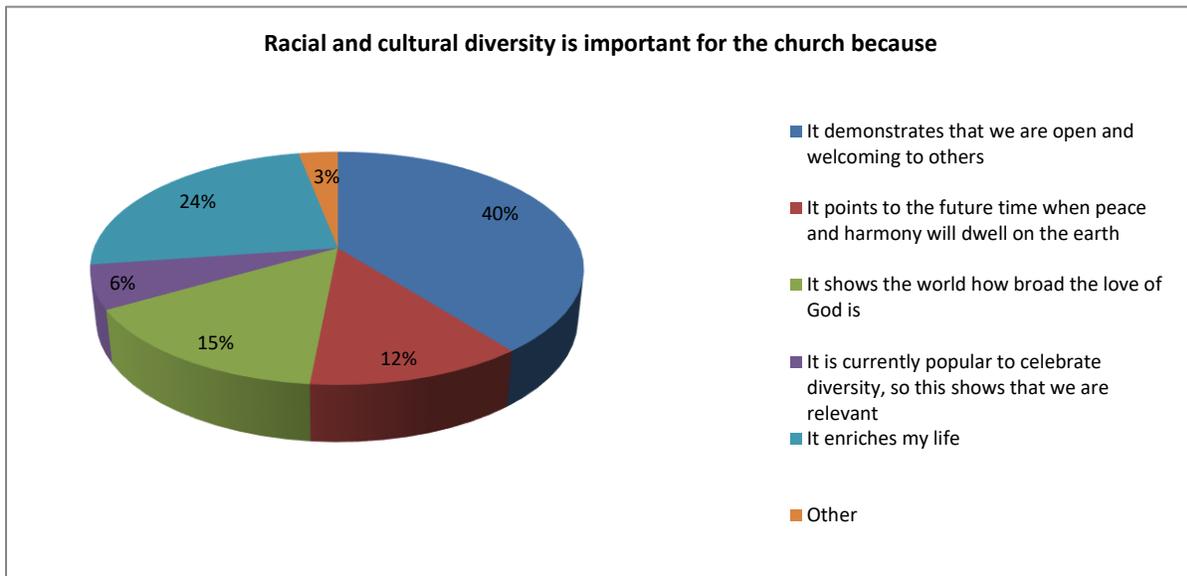
E. The biggest fear I would have if I tried to share what Jesus means to me with, someone of another racial or ethnic cultural group is.

The biggest fear highlighted by this study that many people would have if they tried to share what Jesus means to them, with people from another racial or ethnic-cultural group was that they would misunderstand the gospel due to cultural differences, with a frequency of (13, 39%). Other fears were that the audience would not listen to them because of their racial/ethnic background, they would laugh at me or jeer because they feel superior to me and the gospel, they would laugh at me or jeer because they feel superior to me and the gospel, and they would think I

---

[128] Michael Kruger, "25 Top Bible Verses About Equality and Race - Inspiring Scripture." *Salem Web Network*. https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/bible-verses-about-equality/.

had the wrong motive, with frequencies equal to (12, 36%), (6, 18%), and (2, 6%), respectively (Figure 4.22).

The major reason for the reluctance of people to share their experience with Jesus is their concerns regarding their ethnic background and their ability to convince the listeners. Some people are afraid of the questions asked by the listeners and their ability to answer such questions in a convincing manner.[129] Such people may think that it is better to stay away from sharing their experiences to others especially to nonbelievers.

Figure 4.22
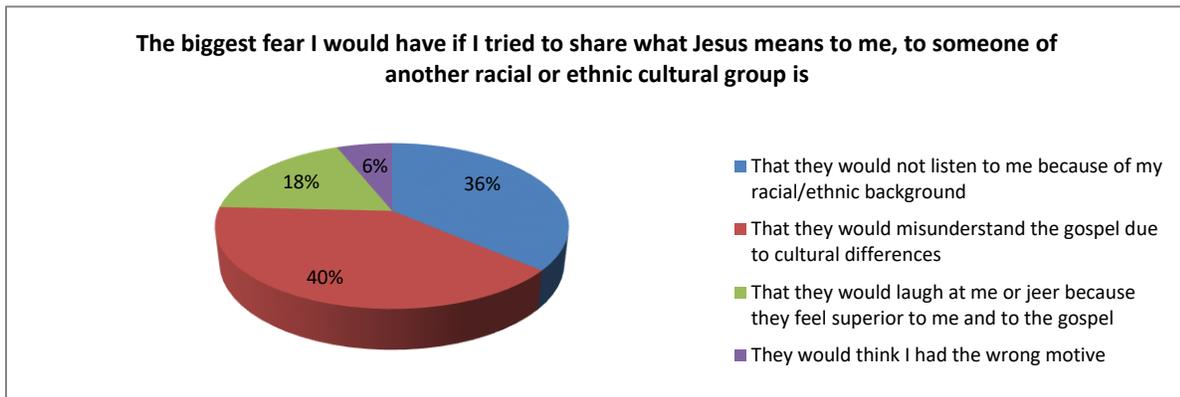
The biggest fear I would have if I tried to share what Jesus means to me, to someone of another racial or ethnic cultural group is

- 36% — That they would not listen to me because of my racial/ethnic background
- 40% — That they would misunderstand the gospel due to cultural differences
- 18% — That they would laugh at me or jeer because they feel superior to me and to the gospel
- 6% — They would think I had the wrong motive

F. The main barrier to me being comfortable sharing my spiritual needs and struggles with persons of another race or ethnicity is.

Feeling inferior was highlighted as the main barrier to a majority of people, especially Asian and African Americans, being comfortable sharing their spiritual needs and struggles with persons of other races or ethnic groups, (11, 33%). Other barriers included feeling that other people think one was inferior, not wanting to admit that one was not perfect in front of other

[129] Jesus Film Project. 4 Reasons People Give for Not Sharing the Gospel. October 26, 2017. https://www.jesusfilm.org/blog-and-stories/4-reason-not-sharing.html.

people, and failing to trust other people to take one's concerns seriously enough to pray for or with, with frequencies equal to (3, 9%), (10, 30%), and (9, 27%), respectively (Figure 4.23).

The feeling of being a sinner and having an inferiority complex prevent people from sharing their spiritual needs and experiences with others.[130] Such people may think that they do not have the right to preach, as they have committed plenty of sins in the past. However, Jesus has said once that there are no saints in this world. Under such circumstances, there is no point in waiting for the arrival of a saint for preaching the gospel. In other words, even sinners can preach the gospel if they are capable of interpreting the teachings of Bible and Jesus properly.

Figure 4.23

The main barrier to me being comfortable sharing my spiritual needs and struggles with persons of another race or ethnicity is

- I feel inferior
- I feel that they think I am inferior
- I don't want to admit that I am not perfect, in front of one of them
- I cannot trust them to take my concerns seriously enough to pray for or with me

27%   34%   9%   30%

---
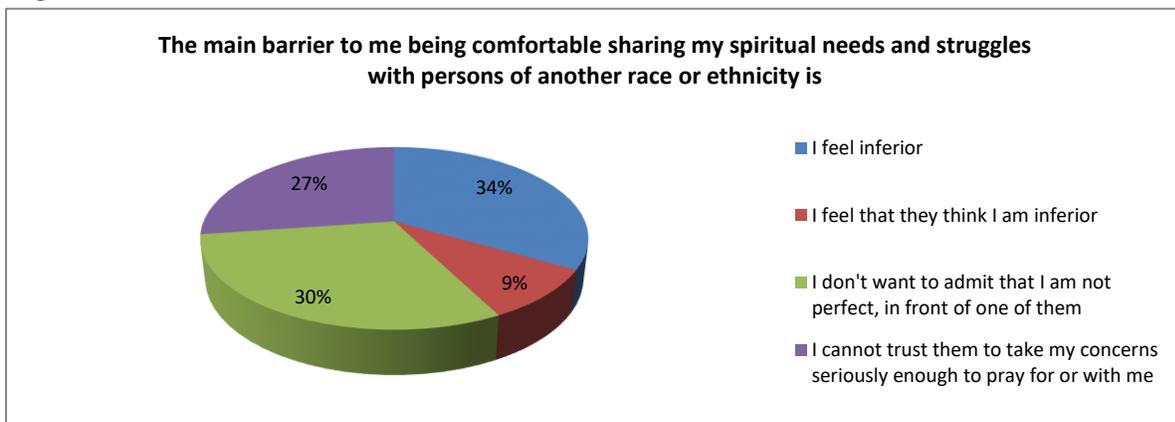
[130] John Piper. My Sin Feels Good in the Moment, Why Stop? May 22, 2017. https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/my-sin-feels-good-in-the-moment-why-stop.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Introduction

This study reveals that the ethnic and racial differences among communities create a lot of conflicts and misunderstandings between people of different ethnicities. In order to get over these issues, it is very important for the church to come up with interventions that can eliminate these differences and ensure a peaceful community in America. A church can use passages from the Bible and give examples of the just attitude of Jesus Christ to get over these prejudices. The concept of Biblical equality is evident in Christianity. Biblical equality is the concept that all human beings are equal in the eyes of God. Every human being has equal rights and has "equal responsibility to use their gifts and obey their calling to the glory of God."[131] Both the Bible and Jesus Christ preaches equality of every person irrespective of caste, creed, color, nationality, gender, age, and so on.

This chapter provided a summary of the conclusions made following the analysis of the gathered data. Also, the chapter helped in filling the research gap that was identified in the introduction chapter. The chapter further provided recommendations based on the study findings which would help in mitigating the current problem in the today's church.

Knowledge Gained from Research

Part I: Who Are We?

A. Distribution of the respondents along Ethnic Origin

The study asked Asians, white Americans and African Americans about their views on racial discrimination in America. The results show that African Americans felt that they were

---

[131] Padgett Alan, G. "What is Biblical Equality? A Simple Definition Needs Further Discussion, not Least because of Misunderstanding." *Priscilla Papers* (2002), p. 22.

being demeaned in social, economic and professional domains. Here, we see 43% of African Americans and 11% of Whites confessing that African Americans face unfair treatment. The African Americans responded positively maintaining that they acknowledged the differences of other cultures and respected diversity. However, they also affirmed that these differences were used as a basis of prejudice against them in different domains of social life. For instance, the police often give more severe punishments to African Americans than to White Americans. All this basically points to the important role of the church to guide people to remain humble and be kind to each other. Philippians 2:3 states: "In humility, consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

In congregations, such utilization of scripture, which encourage the interests of others should be taught. This would help in imbedding the concepts into the minds of the people that instead of considering other people as "others," they should perceive them with a just and humble eye. For instance, people can be taught with rhetorical sentences such as "Are you a man? Stand up for the rights of women. Are you a woman? Stand up for the rights of racial minorities. A minority? Stand up for kids. Young? Stand up for the elderly. Elderly? Stand up for the disabled."[132] Such statements basically give the authority to every person that any minority group or any inferior person should not be ignored in times of need. Whenever a human being sees another human being suppressed, the stronger or confident person should stand up for the victim with the intent of stopping the harassment or suppression.

---

[132] Karl Vaters, Seven steps for bringing biblical equality to your church. Mutuality Fall 2004, p. 20.

B. I was made in the image of God.

God has maintained in the Bible that humans have been created in his image, yet the research shows that many Whites showed a skeptical attitude to this verse and maintained that they did not believe in such a thing. In Genesis 1:27, God clearly says that, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Commenting about humans being made in the image of God, African Americans and Whites were on the same page maintaining that they did not believe that humans are the image of God but the Asians believed that humans were created in the image of God. This lack of belief of some groups clearly shows that some people in America are not even aware of the basic tenets of Christianity.

It is very important that the church plays a role in teaching Biblical principles to the people in a proper manner. Instead of making things complex, they should first teach the basic tenets of the Bible, which are all about equality, ethics, kindness, and the like. This is important because the research shows that religion seems to be greatly flourishing in Asian countries through different systems of belief, such as Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism, Taoism, Sikhism, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Confucianism; however, it seems to be declining in White populated areas especially after the Cold War and 9/11 where Whites began to believe that religion is causing the conflicts that result in wars. Not only Christianity, but all religions of the world are based on ethical tenets, "such as the duty to widen the bounds of good-neighborliness and the obligation to meet human need in the broadest sense."[133] The precept that one should love one's neighbor is an important part of Christianity

---

[133] Krishnaswami, Arcot. "Study of discrimination in the matter of religious rights and practices." *NYUJ Int'l L. & Pol.* 11 (1978): 227, p. 1.

and this precept includes people of every color, race and ethnicity and not just Whites or people of our own respective communities.

C. My ancestors being brought over to this country as slaves is part of my story.

The African Americans participating in the study confirmed that their ancestors were brought as slaves, while the Asians rejected that such events happened in their case. White participants gave a mixed response, where some thought that their ancestors were brought as slaves, but others maintained that this was a false thing to claim. Having an understanding of one's ethnic roots and heritage adds value to your purpose and culture. All ethnic groups have a legacy and should leave an everlasting impression for the next generation to witness and live by.

D. Growing up with my family significantly impacted my views of other ethnic groups in a positive way.

Most Asians agreed that their views about others were impacted by their family. The majority of African Americans also affirmed that family plays a vital role in changing one's perception about people of other ethnic origins and plays a positive role, as well. The response from White participants was a mix in that they chose strongly agree (2), agree (7), and strongly disagree (3), respectively. The bible tells us in Proverbs 22:6, that we should raise a child up in the way they should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it. The Bible provides tools and references of how much one's family impacts the life of an adult.

Part II: What kind of world do we live in?

A. The best jobs go to someone of a different ethnic group than mine.

The study shows that people of different ethnic groups viewed discrimination in jobs in different ways. African Americans feel highly discriminated against, Asians feel moderately

discriminated against, while Whites do not feel such biases. The inequality that rages in America not only occurs in social interaction, but also in other domains, such as education, law, job opportunities and the like. In Proverbs 22: 2, God clearly maintains that, "The rich and the poor have a common bond, The LORD is the maker of them." This verse is very important because it shows that no matter how many differences there are among people of a community, there is one thing that should unite them and that is their Lord. He created them all in different manners so that they can be distinguished from each other. Imagine a world where every person was THE same. Or if every person was Black, had the same features, heights, eyes and the like. What then would be the purpose of living in this world and how could one person be distinguished from another?

The second part of this study dealt with the perception of the respondents about the world in which they live. In the overall questions asked in this part, it seemed that the African Americans felt that they confronted bias while the Whites remained on the other extreme, maintaining that they did not experience prejudice while the Asians responded in-between. This is the same case with employment, access to quality education, better business opportunities, and privileges. America has always been considered a melting pot of different ethnic groups. However, the study reveals that in reality the people of races other than White, especially the Blacks, often face problems in feeling a sense of acceptance from others. This points towards the importance of a multicultural church environment, where people of different ethnicities merge. When the people of different groups integrate in a congregation, religion serves as the tool that can unite them. Christianity provides a basic foundation of similarity. They can hold on to Christianity as the base for oneness and equality. Such equality was also encouraged by Jesus who got angry over people who tried to extricate others of lower social status. "The Gospels

show Jesus living a life of openness, where he breaks down barriers with those who are normally separated from each other."[134]

In order to eradicate the differences, the church can play a vital role whereby they can follow the footsteps of Jesus and try to integrate as many people in the church as is possible. People of all social classes should be brought together and lessons of the piety of Jesus should be given to them. Even in this study, the different respondents also affirmed that church could play a vital role in eliminating the differences. It can play a major role in creating a multicultural environment. However, there are certain differences in the different religious sects of Christianity that might cause conflicts as well. The respondents are of the view that ethnic diversity in the church can play a major role in eliminating the differences of culture.

B. I have had privileges and access to quality education and business opportunities, and I have not lived in poverty.

The results of the study again showed a different perception of this phenomenon and were similar to those concerning job opportunities. In terms of education and business opportunities, African Americans showed experience of high-level discrimination, Asians showed moderate experience of bias, while Whites affirmed that they were getting privileges in the variables defined. This shows that American society is hierarchal. Churches need to gather congregations to which examples of Christ's equality should be taught. "Jesus teaches in the Gospels that Christians are to love God and to love their neighbors as themselves, whether the neighbor be friend or enemy."[135] This point towards the reality of Christianity. It is a religion

---

[134] Yang, Meewon. "Ways of Being a Multicultural Church: An Evaluation of Multicultural Church Models in the Baptist Union of Victoria." PhD diss., 2012. P. 12.

[135] Owens, E., For God and Country? Thinking about Religion and Citizenship, p. 15.

where everyone should take care of one another so that they feel included and wholesome. Even the enemy should be treated kindly.

C. The struggle for a sense of acceptance and a place in American life is a part of who I am.

It is very important for a person's well-being to feel accepted in the world where he/she is living. In this study, it was revealed that the contributions of Blacks are seldomly acknowledged while the works of Whites are highly accepted and acknowledged. On the other hand, the works of Asians are noticed in a moderate way they are neither neglected nor exaggeratedly accepted. However, clergymen need to impart the knowledge that Christianity is a religion of service. It is the religion that teaches others that they should serve others for the sake of God. "Put simply, Christians believe that any work that serves the neighbor and the community—the "common good"—also serves God. Virtually any labor can become an extension of Christian faith."[136] The thought of getting blessings from God can encourage people of diverse cultures to look after the needs of groups of other cultures, creeds, and classes.

D. I believe that I understand the lifestyles and motivations of people of the minority culture.

People from different ethnic origins have a different view about their desire for understanding the lifestyle of other cultural groups. The study revealed that Blacks showed a strong desire to understand the lifestyle of other groups while the Whites and Asians showed little or no interest in this case. This reveals a strong need for a multicultural church. The clergy needs to work hard to bring together people of different origins and encourage them to interact with each other. They should make sure that the dominant cultures do not impose their ideas over

---

[136] Ibid.

90

the other ethnic groups, otherwise the minority groups feel appeased and a sense of abhorrence

towards the dominant group.[137] They should openly discuss their ideas with each other.

Part III: What is Wrong?

A. True Freedom and opportunity is only available to a selected race or ethnicity.

In terms of freedom and opportunity in life, the study shows that some respondents do not

feel that they are living a free life in America. All the groups affirmed that opportunities for a

better lifestyle and freedom in life was bestowed mostly to the whites while other groups

struggled to get such emancipation. Christianity talks again and again about taking care of one's

neighbor. However, dominant groups often try to suppress the other groups. In America, Whites

usually try to appease the Blacks, and this leads to the idea that freedom is only available to

certain groups. It is very important that the church congregation includes discussions about

dominant and secondary cultures. "It is simply not the willingness to recognize a dominant

culture that is important for the health of a multicultural church. The secondary cultures within

the church also need to the valued and recognized."[138] Such discussions would help the people

become aware of the differences among these groups.

B. I have a prejudice against another race or ethnicity.

One of the problems faced in American society is the issue of prejudice. This study

reveals that all the respondents confirm that they feel prejudice against other groups, but the

intensity of the prejudice differs for them. Asians feel prejudiced to some extent under certain

---

[137] Stephen D. Campbell, "How to Become a Multicultural Church," *Reviews in Religion & Theology*, 26(2), (2017) pp.222-224, p. 85.

[138] Ibid.

circumstances, but the Blacks and Whites reported that they feel excessive bias toward each other. They judge each other on the basis of their skin color while Asians judge others on the basis of accomplishments in life.

Every year, multitudes of immigrants come to America to build a better life. This makes America an important place where people of other ethnicities have the opportunity to live freely and happily. Seeing the diversity of groups in America, it is very important that those people are taught the values of Christianity. If the church plays a significant role in making Americans better and kinder human beings, then foreigners would not only migrate here for a better lifestyle but also for better people, who practice religion of peace and humility. "The combination of culturally attuned spiritual comfort and material assistance heightens the attractions of membership and participation in churches for new immigrants to the United States."[139] There are many verses from the Bible that can be used by churchmen to convince people that they should live in peace and without any ethnic biases. In Hebrews 12:14, God maintains that we should "Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord." This verse clearly indicates that God has asked his people to live in peace with each other. Peace comes from love and eradication of differences. God asks his people to get over all kinds of prejudices and maintain peace. This is further clarified in Mark 12: 37, which says: "The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." This verse clearly shows that God wants us to treat others in the same way as we treat ourselves and our families.

C. Because of history, the various races and ethnicities will never be equal.

---

[139] Charles Hirschman, "The role of religion in the origins and adaptation of immigrant groups in the United States 1." *International Migration Review* 38, no. 3 (2004): 1206-1233, p. 1208.

History seems to be an important factor in creating the divide between various ethnic groups. The majority of the respondents from all the groups confirmed that social inequality seems to have been transferred from one group to another. History seems to show that men themselves have created chaos on the surface of the world and the same attitude appears to continue even now. "While most religions and beliefs are imbued with a sense of the oneness of mankind, history records more instances of man's inhumanity to man than examples of good-neighborliness and the desire to satisfy the needs of the less fortunately placed."[140] It is not the church that has created chaos in the world but human beings, themselves. Hence, people who have been made skeptical by wars should be aware that their perspective about religion is wrong. This would not only help the skeptic learn the true nature of Christianity but would also help them view people of other religions with an open-minded approach, and hence, they would interact in a better manner.

D. The laws of the land were not created in our favor and people of my race and ethnicity receive more severe punishments than other races and ethnicities.

Blacks strongly agreed to the idea that laws have not been created in their favor while Asians and Whites moderately agreed. This points towards the importance of a multicultural church environment, where people of different ethnicities merge. When the people of different groups integrate in a congregation, religion serves as the tool that can unite them. Christianity basically gives them the foundation of similarity. They can hold on to Christianity as the framework for oneness and equality. Such equality was also encouraged by Jesus, who got angry over people who tried to extricate people of lower social status. "The Gospels show Jesus living

---

[140] Arcot Krishnaswami, "Study of discrimination in the matter of religious rights and practices." *NYUJ Int'l L. & Pol.* 11 (1978): 227, p. 1.

a life of openness, where he breaks down barriers with those who are normally separated from each other."[141] In order to eradicate the differences, the church can play a vital role whereby they can follow the footsteps of Jesus and try to integrate as many people in the church as is possible. People of all social classes should be brought together and lessons of the piety of Jesus should be given to them. Even in this study, the different respondents also affirmed that church could play a vital role in eliminating the differences. It can play a major role in creating a multicultural environment.

Part IV: What is the Answer?

A. The path to a fair shake in this world depends on how the church stand together.

Christianity has been divided in different groups and sects, which makes the unity of the church very difficult. If the church stands together, they can work in a better manner to integrate people of different ethnicities. The three groups who participated as a sample also strongly agreed that if the church stands together, it can contribute to the development of society and result in the elimination of disparity and discrimination. Theologically speaking, human beings are considered the property of God. He is the creator of all human beings so there is no reason why certain groups should feel superior to others. "This entails that persons are entitled to God-given rights that protect their basic properties; it also implies the correlating duty to respect similar properties of other individuals."[142] As the creation of God, it is important that human beings interact with each other irrespective of their differences. Interaction can be encouraged by

---

[141] Meewon Yang, "Ways of Being a Multicultural Church: An Evaluation of Multicultural Church Models in the Baptist Union of Victoria." PhD diss., 2012. P. 12.

[142] Vorster, Nico. "A theological perspective on human dignity, equality and freedom." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 33, no. 1 (2012): 1-6. P. 2.

the clergy and such concepts should be taught so that the reluctance between the groups is eradicated.

B. Ethnic diversity in the church is an important focus.

The study reveals that despite the prejudices that different groups feel for each other, they are ready to go to an ethnically diverse church where people of mixed races gather together. It seems that people want to mix with people of other ethnic groups within the spiritual domain if not in the worldly domain. When people meet strange people, there is an increased chance that they will start becoming less indifferent to strange people and show kindness to each other. God preaches hospitality and there are many instances in the Bible reiterating the lesson. "In Genesis, the story of Abraham and Sarah's hospitality to strangers becomes the welcoming of angels of God. In the Gospel of Luke, the risen Jesus was revealed as a stranger, a stranger with needs. Those who welcomed the stranger welcomed Jesus. The hospitality of God, as a way of inviting and including those who are different, has a strong message showing authentic ways of being a multicultural church." If such incidents are mentioned in the congregation, it is evident that the people are going to start focusing on those near them but unknown to them. New friendships will be formed, and distances would be bridged. In America, most people like to celebrate the day in different ways, but there are also many who spend the time in religious activities. Congregations give people of different ethnic groups the opportunity to interact with other groups and this results in positive interactions. However, it seems that Whites and Blacks try to stay away from each other fearing some clash might occur. Yet, they like to interact if the person from another ethnic group tries to talk to them. African Americans often have negative interactions with people of the other groups, as compare to Asians. It seems that the dominant nature of Whites often results in negative interaction with others. The respondents maintained that they believed

that God has created everyone equally and that there should be no discrimination on the basis of any difference. Everyone is equal in the eyes of God.

C. I am comfortable sharing my faith with people who are not like me.

Most of the respondents also answered that they feared that if they shared their ideas and perception about Jesus with other people, they might be ridiculed. This is a main hurdle in preventing them from having proper interaction with each other in terms of religion. "Religion and politics can be polarizing, precisely because they deal with important matters that are deeply personal and close to our passions. But these discussions do not have to be polarizing or combative."[143] This idea is also often encouraged by different people that controversial subjects such as religion and politics should not be discussed in any meeting. This concept should clearly be eradicated. This not only decreases the chance of critical thinking but also decreases the chances that people would talk openly with each other about their faith and eradicate misunderstandings. People can greatly help others by narrating beautiful verses from the Bible to each other so that they can teach other about its goodness and piety. The church can play a role in encouraging the idea of freedom of speech and religious debate along with tolerance for each other.

D. It has been said that Sunday morning is the most segregated time in America. How do you feel about that?

The respondents were also asked if they felt Sunday to be the most segregated time in America to which they responded that they often considered it a holiday; however, this day can be converted into a time when multicultural congregations gather and people of every class,

---

[143] James Lankford, "The Real Meaning of the Separation of Church and State." Time, P. 1.

creed, and color come together. In doing so, the clergy needs to make sure that the dominant groups are taught that the segregation of the church needs to be ended. For this, it is very important that the dominant groups are convinced "why the marginalized groups should be included… we need to convince the marginalized groups to come to our church."[144] Instead of excluding and marginalizing the lower groups, the higher groups need to know that as privileged people, they are more duty bound to help and include the poorer people.

Cultural Background Examination

A. I have had positive interactions with person of other races or ethnic groups.

The study also reveals an interesting point, namely that people who meet in religious gatherings usually have positive interaction with people of other ethnic groups. Yet, Blacks and Whites still try to prevent meeting each other, fearing that some clash might occur. This shows that different people are willing to interact with each other; thus, this research can be shared with pastors of different churches, who can be assured that they should encourage people of different ethnic groups to hold discussions with each other. Pastors and other clergy need to be trained in rhetoric of inclusion and equality.[145] The people should be taught that instead of feeling low, they should work together and use each other's talents to empower each other.

B. I have had negative interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups.

However, whenever some negative interaction might have occurred, this was strongly experienced more by Blacks and Whites than Asians. Usually African Americans and Whites

---

[144] John T. Ford, "Becoming a Multicultural Church–By Laurene Beth Bowers." *Religious Studies Review* 33, no. 1 (2007): 34-34, p. 23.

[145] Lee Jones, Pastoral Leadership Skills for the Multicultural, Multiethnic Church a case study of south east Asians in an American church. (2010). Xlibris Corporation. P. 12.

have such negative interactions and many African Americans say dominant attitude of the Whites is reported to have caused such issues. In America, Whites control most of the churches and maintain the idea that as they are running the churches and maintaining them, they should be the ones in control of its system and the people who come here.[146] This dominant attitude is appeased through the norms of Christianity itself, which encourages the idea that every human being is equal in the eyes of God and no person is superior to another in any way.

C. I am most comfortable around people of other racial and ethnic groups when.

The study also reveals that people of different ethnic groups, especially Whites and Blacks, want to have interaction with each other but due to their fear of conflicts, they do not take an initiative. However, when people of one group take an initiative, the other person hardly feels any reluctance. Again, this problem can be solved with the help of pastors and other clergymen who can encourage the idea that instead of making each other powerless because of their fears and differences, the different groups need to interact with each other to empower each other and their beliefs. An environment should be created where people should be encouraged to speak their minds and a moderator should intervene to overcome any conflict.[147] This will decrease the fear of interaction.

D. Racial and cultural diversity is important for the church because.

The study also reveals that the different respondents strongly agreed that they want churches to have a multicultural environment. In the church every person feels a duty to God and one of the duties is to accept people of other cultures. Social interactions among people of other

---

[146] John T. Ford, "Becoming a Multicultural Church–By Laurene Beth Bowers." *Religious Studies Review* 33, no. 1 (2007): 34-34, p. 23. P. 26.

[147] Lee Jones, Pastoral Leadership Skills for the Multicultural, Multiethnic Church a case study of south east Asians in an American church. (2010). Xlibris Corporation. P. 12.

groups will help them feel united. It is not a new idea that churches should consist of multicultural people. This is an old idea but seems to have decayed with the passage of time. "Racial diversity is essential to the urban experience, as an expected component of city churches."[148] This would help people interact and eliminate all kinds of differences.

E. The biggest fear I would have if I tried to share what Jesus means to me, to someone of another racial or ethnic cultural group is.

The respondents reported that they feared discussing their faith and religion with other people because they were of the view that the difference of perception and cultural misunderstandings might lead to some conflict. Some also feared that they will be ridiculed by others for having limited or no knowledge. In order to get over these fears, it is important that discussions are made in which the speaker remains as neutral as possible and ask the masses to share their views. "Cultural elements, like symbols of diversity, can contain many subjective and ambiguous interpretations. Congregants and staff may rely on the same symbol or trope without necessarily agreeing with what it signifies."[149] In case someone feels that a person is speaking something out of context, the mediator can intervene with a euphemistic speech.

F. The main barrier to me being comfortable sharing my spiritual needs and struggles with persons of another race or ethnicity is.

Feelings of inferiority were reported by Asians and African Americans as barriers to communication of spiritual needs, especially to people of other ethnic groups. These, again, occur because certain groups feel that they are more superior than the other groups. In order to

---

[148] Jessica M. Barron, "Managed diversity: Race, place, and an urban church." *Sociology of Religion* 77, no. 1 (2016): 18-36, p 33.

[149] Jessica M. Barron, "Managed diversity: Race, place, and an urban church." *Sociology of Religion* 77, no. 1 (2016): 18-36, P 32.

get rid of such views, the White clergy need to encourage the idea among other White people that as God's people, they are equal and should not adopt a snobbish attitude, as it leads to others feeling low and inferior.[150] This is not the aim of Christianity.

In conclusion, it can be said that America might be having a lot of prosperity and success, but deep down, there are layers of suppression and prejudices that need to be addressed. For this, the church can play a vital role by encouraging the ideals of Christianity and teaching people all those verses that would make them know that for God, every person is equal and no one is superior to the other on the basis of caste, culture or creed.

---

[150] John T. Ford, "Becoming a Multicultural Church–By Laurene Beth Bowers." *Religious Studies Review* 33, no. 1 (2007). P. 32.

Bibliography

Adams, Marilyn Mccord. "Forgiveness." *Faith and Philosophy* 8, no. 3 (1991): 277-304. doi:10.5840/faithphil19918319.

Adcock, Robert. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 03 (2001): 529-46. doi:10.1017/s0003055401003100.

Afa'ese, Uatisone A. "Multicultural Strategies for Developing a Church with Intentional References to Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Structure as Modeled by the All Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1979-2012," (2013).

Anderson,Elijah. "This is what it feels like to be black in white spaces." *The Guardian*, June 09, 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/09/everyday-racism-america-black-white-spaces.

Andraos, Michel Elias. "Engaging Diversity in Teaching Religion and Theology: An Intercultural, De-colonial Epistemic Perspective." *Teaching Theology & Religion* 15, no. 1 (2012): 3-15. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9647.2011.00755.x.

Avis, Paul D. L. *Reshaping Ecumenical Theology: The Church Made Whole?* London: T & T Clark, 2010.

Baker, Coleman. "Social Identity Theory and Biblical Interpretation." *Biblical Theology Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture* 42, no.3 (2012): 129-138. doi.10.1177/2F0146107912452244.

Barron, Jessica M. "Managed diversity: Race, place, and an urban church." Sociology of Religion 77, no. 1 (2016): 18-36.

Barndt, Joseph. *Becoming an Anti-Racist Church*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.

Beaumont, Justin and Christopher Baker. *Post secular Cities: Space, Theory and Practice*. New York: A&C Black, 2011.

Berry, John. "Diversity and Equity." *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management* 23, no. 3 (2016): 413-30. doi:10.1108/ccsm-03-2016-0085.

Bertrand, Marianne and Sendhil Mullainathan. "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination." *The American Economic Review* (2004), vol.94, no.4. p.991-1013.

Bevans, Stephen and Katalina Tahaafe-Williams. *Contextual Theology for the Twenty-First Century*. Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2011.

Campbell, Stephen D. How to Become a Multicultural Church, *Reviews in Religion & Theology*, (2017), *26*(2), pp.222-224.

Camacho, D.J., *Do Multicultural Churches Reinforce Racism?* 2016, http://www.danieljosecamacho.com/blog/2016/2/9/do-multicultural-churches-reinforce-racism.

Cetinkaya, Kenan and Semanur Kodan. "Ahiska Turks in Philadelphia: Keeping cultural identity and religion in a multicultural environment." *International Journal of Social and Human Sciences* 6 (2012): 398-403.

Cherry, Kendra. "Starting a Conversation When You Are Socially Anxious." *Verywell Mind*. July 20, 2019. https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-start-a-conversation-4582339.

Cho, Hyuk. "We Are Not Alone: Historical Journey of the United Church of Canada's Response to Become an Intercultural Church." *International Review of Mission* 100, no.1 (2011): 1-5. doi:10.1111/j.1758-6631.2011.00056.x.

Christerson, Brad, and Michael Emerson. "The Costs of Diversity in Religious Organizations: An In-Depth Case Study." *Sociology of Religion* 64, no. 2 (2003): 163. doi:10.2307/3712369.

Christerson, Brad, Korie L. Edwards, and Michael O. Emerson. *Against All Odds: The Struggle for Racial Integration in Religious Organizations*. New York: New York University Press, 2005.

Cilliers, Johan and Ian A. Nell. "Within the Enclave, Profiling South African Social and Religious Developments since 1994." *Verbum Et Ecclesia* 32, no. 1 (2011). doi:10.4102/ve.v32i1.552.

Cuyjet, Michael et al. *Multiculturalism on Campus; Theory, Models, And Practices for Understanding Diversity Creating Inclusion*. Virginia: Stylus Publishing LLC, 2016.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. "Unequal Opportunity: Race and Education." *Brookings*. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/unequal-opportunity-race-and-education/.

De Gruchy John, and Steve De Gruchy. *The Church Struggle in South Africa*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

Dennis, R. M., and Albert J. Raboteau. "Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19, no. 3 (1980): 308. doi:10.2307/1385875.

Deyoung, Curtiss Paul. "Arguing the Case for Multiracial Congregations." *United by Faith*, 2003, 128-44. doi:10.1093/9780195152159.003.0009.

Dougherty, Kevin D. "How Monochromatic Is Church Membership? Racial-Ethnic Diversity in Religious Community." *Sociology of Religion* 64, no. 1 (2003): 65. doi:10.2307/3712269.

Dougherty, Kevin D., and Kimberly R. Huyser. "Racially Diverse Congregations: Organizational Identity and the Accommodation of Differences." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 47, no. 1 (2008): 23-44. doi:10.1111/j.1468-5906.2008.00390.x.

Duran Sr, Damon C. *Intentionally Diverse: Raising Awareness in the Life360 Church Network of the Multiethnic Community in the Springfield, Missouri Metropolitan Area*. Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2017.

Edwards, Haley. "The Trump Administration Fumbled Its Initial Response to Coronavirus. Is There Enough Time to Fix It?" *Time*. March 19, 2020. https://time.com/5805683/trump-administration-coronavirus.

Edwards, Korie L. *The Elusive Dream: The Power of Race in Interracial Churches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Emerson, Michael O., and Christian Smith. *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Ford, John T. "Becoming a Multicultural Church–By Laurene Beth Bowers." *Religious Studies Review* 33, no. 1 (2007): 34-34.

Ganiel, Gladys. "Religion and Transformation in South Africa? Institutional and Discursive Change in a Charismatic Congregation." *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 63, no. 1 (2007): 1-22. doi:10.1353/trn.2007.0018.

Gilman, Sander L. *Multiculturalism and the Jews*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Grant, Ryan. "When Sunday Morning Is No Longer the Most Segregated Time of the Week." *Dallas News*. July 24. https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2018/07/24/when-sunday-morning-is-no-longer-the-most-segregated-time-of-the-week/.

Guba, Egon G., and Yvonna S. Lincoln. "Competing paradigms in qualitative research." *Handbook of qualitative research* 2, no. 163-194 (1994): 105.

Harmon, Amy. "How Much Racism Do You Face Every Day?" *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/racism-african-americans-quiz.html.

Hirschman, Charles. "The role of religion in the origins and adaptation of immigrant groups in the United States 1." *International Migration Review* 38, no. 3 (2004): 1206-1233.

Holland, Jesse J. "Some blacks see a racial double standard in Kavanaugh case". *AP News*. October 03, 2018. https://apnews.com/d37d9f67cbd54682906403e375b88b83/Some-blacks-see-a-racial-double-standard-in-Kavanaugh-case.

Howell, Brian M. "Multiculturalism, Immigration and the North American Church." *Missiology: An International Review* 39, no. 1 (2011): 79-85. doi:10.1177/009182961103900109.

Jacobsen, Knut A., and Pratap Kumar, eds. *South Asians in the diaspora: histories and religious traditions*. Brill, 2018.

Jenkins, Richard. *Social identity*. London: Routledge, 2014.

Jesus Film Project. "4 Reasons People Give for Not Sharing the Gospel." October 26, 2017. https://www.jesusfilm.org/blog-and-stories/4-reason-not-sharing.html.

Johnson, Evelyn Mercado. "Design for Church-Based Ministry to Evangelize, Educate, and Empower Latino (a) s/Hispanics in the Predominantly Black/African American Membership of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Hampton, Virginia." PhD diss., Regent University, 2018.

Jones, Lee. Pastoral Leadership Skills for the Multicultural, Multiethnic Church a case study of south east Asians in an American church. (2010). Xlibris Corporation.

Kayyali, Randa A. "Race, Religion and Identity: Arab Christians in the United States." *Culture and Religion* 19, no. 1 (2017): 1-19. doi:10.1080/14755610.2017.1402797.

King, Fergus J. "Mission-Shaped or Paul-Shaped? Apostolic Challenges to the Mission-Shaped Church." *Journal of Anglican Studies* 9, no. 2 (2010): 223-246. doi:10.1017/s1740355310000264.

Kramer, Klaus. The main differences between Catholics and Protestants. April 21, 2019. https://www.dw.com/en/the-main-differences-between-catholics-and-protestants/a-37888597.

Krishnaswami, Arcot. "Study of discrimination in the matter of religious rights and practices." *NYUJ Int'l L. & Pol.* 11 (1978): 227.

Kruger, Michael. "25 Top Bible Verses About Equality and Race - Inspiring Scripture." *Salem Web Network*. https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/bible-verses-about-equality.

Kuhlman, Nathan. "Developing a Mentor-Method of Evangelism at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rolla, Missouri." (2018).

Lamme, Margot Opdycke. *Public Relations and Religion in American History: Evangelism, Temperance, and Business*. Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 2014.

Lankford, James. "The Real Meaning of the Separation of Church and State." Time.

Marti, Gerardo. "A Mosaic of Believers: Diversity and Innovation in a Multi-ethnic Church." *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 10, no. 3 (2007): 122-123. doi:10.1525/nr.2007.10.3.122.

Martin, Philip A. "Equipping Members at New Salem Baptist Church of Rural Newton County, Missouri, For Outreach." (2018).

Martinez, Brandon C., and Kevin D. Dougherty. "Race, Belonging, and Participation in Religious Congregations." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 52, no. 4 (2013): 713-32. doi:10.1111/jssr.12073.

Masci, David. "5 facts about the religious lives of African Americans. Pew research Centre." February 07, 2018. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/02/07/5-facts-about-the-religious-lives-of-african-americans.

McNeal, Reggie. *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011.

Moodley, Roy, and Stephen Palmer. *Race, Culture and Psychotherapy: Critical Perspectives in Multicultural Practice*. London: Routledge, 2014.

Nagel, Caroline and Patricia Ehrkamp. "Immigration, Christian Faith Communities, and the Practice of Multiculturalism in the US South." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 1 (2017): 190-208. doi.10.1080/01419870.2016.1229489.

Naidoo, Marilyn. "An Ethnographic Study on Managing Diversity in Two Protestant Theological Colleges." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72, no. 1 (2016). doi:10.4102/hts.v72i1.3509.

Naidoo, Marilyn, and Stephan De Beer. "Diversity: Negotiating Difference in Christian Communities." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72, no. 1 (2016). doi:10.4102/hts.v72i1.3525.

Naidoo, Marilyn. "The Potential of Multicultural Congregations in Supporting Social Reconciliation." *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 73, no. 4 (2017). doi:10.4102/hts.v73i4.4622.

Netland, Harold. *Christianity & Religious Diversity: Clarifying Christian Commitments in a Globalizing Age*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015.

Ng, Eddy S., and Isabel Metz. "Multiculturalism as a Strategy for National Competitiveness: The Case for Canada and Australia." *Journal of Business Ethics* 128, no. 2 (2014): 253-66. doi:10.1007/s10551-014-2089-8.

O'Brien, Timothy L., and Shiri Noy. "Traditional, Modern, and Post-Secular Perspectives on Science and Religion in the United States." *American Sociological Review* 80, no. 1 (2015): 92-115. doi:10.1177/0003122414558919.

Ortiz, Manuel. *One New People: Models for Developing a Multiethnic Church*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Owens, E., For God and Country? Thinking about Religion and Citizenship.

Pace, Serena Alexandria. "Young Adults Leaving the Church: The Tie to Intentional Spiritual Mentoring Among Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Teens Through Youth and Confirmation Ministry," (2015).

Padgett Alan, G. "What is Biblical Equality? A Simple Definition Needs Further Discussion, not Least because of Misunderstanding." *Priscilla Papers* (2002).

Parker, Kim, Juliana Horowitz, and Brian Mahl. *On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and Whites are Worlds Apart: About Four-in-ten Blacks are Doubtful that the US Will Ever Achieve Racial Equality*. Pew Research Center, (2016).

Perry, Richard J. "Book Review: Building A Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church: Mandate, Commitments and Practices of a Diverse Congregation." *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 63, no. 4 (2009): 433-434. doi:10.1177/002096430906300432.

Perez, Anthony Daniel and Charles Hirschman. "The Changing Racial and Ethnic Composition of the US Population: Emerging American Identities." *Popul Dev Rev*. (2009), vol.35, no. 1, p.1–51. p.2.

Phillips, Christopher. "The Crime Against Missouri: Slavery, Kansas, and the Cant of Southerness in the Border West." *Civil War History* 48, no. 1 (2002): 60-81. doi:10.1353/cwh.2002.0008.

Piper, John. "My Sin Feels Good in the Moment — Why Stop?" May 22, 2017. https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/my-sin-feels-good-in-the-moment-why-stop.

Pope, Stephen J. "Equal Regard" versus "Special Relations?" Reaffirming the Inclusiveness of Agape. *The Journal of Religion* 77, no. 3 (1997): 353-79. doi:10.1086/490020.

Sanders, Ryan and Trey Grant. "When Sunday morning is no longer the most segregated time of the week". *The Dallas Morning News*. 24 July 2018. https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2018/07/24/when-sunday-morning-is-no-longer-the-most-segregated-time-of-the-week.

Scott, Jacqueline L. "New ads ask, 'Do white people dominate the outdoors?" *The Conversation*. October 26, 2018. http://theconversation.com/new-ads-ask-do-white-people-dominate-the-outdoors-105566.

Sigelman, Lee., Bledsoe, Timothy., Welch, Susan and Michael W. Combs. "Making Contact? Black-White Social Interaction in an Urban Setting," *AAmerican Journal of Sociology* (1996), Vol. 101, No. 5 p. 1306-1332.

Smith, R. Drew, William Ackah, and Anthony G. Reddie. *Churches, Blackness, and Contested Multiculturalism Europe, Africa, and North America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Sonawat, Reeta. "Understanding Families in India: A reflection of social changes." *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa*, (2001), vol.17 no.2.

Sur, Sang W. "Church Growth Through Discipleship in Small Groups." PhD diss., United Theological Seminary, 2018.

Stark, Rodney and Roger Finke. *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

Steyn, Melissa, and Daniel Conway. "Introduction: Intersecting Whiteness, Interdisciplinary Debates." *Ethnicities* 10, no. 3 (2010): 283-91. doi:10.1177/1468796810372309.

Sivasundaram, Sujit, and C. T. Ma., "Unity and diversity: the church, race and ethnicity," 2008. http://www.jubilee-centre.org/unity-and-diversity-the-church-race-and-ethnicity-by-sujit-sivasundaram/.

Tahaafe-Williams, Katalina. *A Multicultural Church? Multicultural Ministry as a Tool for Building the Multicultural Church*. 2012.

Tahaafe-Williams, Katalina. "Churches in Ecumenical Transition: Toward Multicultural Ministry and Mission." *International Review of Mission* 101, no.1 (2012): 170-194. doi.10.1111/j.1758-6631.2012.00093.x.

Taylor, Marylee C., and Stephen M. Merino. "Race, Religion, and Beliefs About Racial Inequality." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 634, no. 1 (2011): 60-77. doi:10.1177/0002716210389537.

Taylor, Robert Joseph, Dawne M. Mouzon, Ann W. Nguyen, and Linda M. Chatters. "Reciprocal Family, Friendship and Church Support Networks of African Americans: Findings from the National Survey of American Life." *Race and Social Problems* 8, no. 4 (2016): doi:10.1007/s12552-016-9186-5.

Tesfaye, Sophia. "New study: White people lack empathy across the socioeconomic spectrum." *Salon*. September 19, 2017. https://www.salon.com/2017/09/19/new-study-white-people-lack-empathy-across-the-socioeconomic-spectrum.

The Main Differences between Catholics and Protestants | DW | 21.04.2019. 2020. *DW.COM*. https://www.dw.com/en/the-main-differences-between-catholics-and-protestants/a-37888597.

Thompson, Derek. "Three Decades Ago, America Lost Its Religion. Why?" *The Atlantic*, September 26, 2019. https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/09/atheism-fastest-growing-religion-us/598843.

Tucker, Westerfield Karen B. "Making Room at the Table: An Invitation to Multicultural Worship Edited by Brian K. Blount and Leonora Tubbs Tisdale Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 2000." *Theology Today* 58, no. 3 (2001): 436-38. doi:10.1177/004057360105800319.

Vaters, Karl. Seven steps for bringing biblical equality to your church. Mutuality Fall 2004.

Van Leuwen, Marco H. D. "Social inequality and mobility in history: introduction." *Community and change*. (2009). Vol. 24, no.3.

Vorster, Nico. "A theological perspective on human dignity, equality and freedom." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 33, no. 1 (2012): 1-6.

Walters, Jeff K. "Effective Evangelism in the City: Donald McGavran's Missiology and Urban Contexts" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011).

Warner, R. Stephen. "Religion, Boundaries, and Bridges." *Sociology of Religion* 58, no. 3 (1997): 217. doi:10.2307/3712214.

Williams, Scott. *Church Diversity: We Are Church Diversity!* Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 2011.

Winter, Ralph D., Steven C. Hawthorne, and Darrell R. Dorr. *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2014.

Wright, Elliott A. "Religion in American education: A historical view." *Phi Delta Kappan* 81, no. 1 (1999): 17.

Yang, Meewon. "Ways of Being a Multicultural Church: An Evaluation of Multicultural Church Models in the Baptist Union of Victoria." PhD diss., 2012.

Appendix A- Race, Ethnicity, & Culture with Purpose Questionnaire

This Questionnaire serves to help evaluate your understanding of a multicultural environment and understanding of worldview. The answers should be based on one's race, cultural background, and experiences both individually and as part of an ethnic group. Your understanding of how the Bible influence your understanding of these issues should be considered as well.

Definition of Terms

Race is a powerful social category forged historically through oppression, slavery, and conquest.[151]

Ethnicity denotes groups of people that share a common identity-based ancestry, language, or culture.[152]

Culture denotes the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group.[153]

Answer the following questions in reference to your race, ethnicity, cultural group and worldview.

Part I (Who Are We?)

1. Ethnic Origin

    A) American Indian or Alaska Native

    B) Asian

    C) Black or African American

    D) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

    E) White

2. I was made in the image of god.

    A) Strongly Agree

    B) Agree

    C) Not Sure

    D) Strongly Disagree

    E) Disagree

3. My ancestors being brought over to this country as slaves is a part of my story.

    A) True

---

[151] "Race & Ethnicity." Race & Ethnicity, Gendered Innovations. Accessed July 15, 2019. https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/terms/race.html.

[152] Ibid.

[153] Ibid.

B) False

C) Not Sure

4. Growing up with my family significantly impacted my views of other ethnic groups in a positive way.

   A) Strongly Agree

   B) Agree

   C) Not Sure

   D) Strongly Disagree

   E) Disagree

Part II (What kind world do we live in)

5. The best jobs go to someone of a different ethnic group than mine.

   A) Strongly Agree

   B) Agree

   C) Not Sure

   D) Strongly Disagree

   E) Disagree

6. I have had privileges and access to quality education and business opportunities, and I have not lived in poverty.

   A) Strongly Agree

   B) Agree

   C) Not Sure

   D) Strongly Disagree

   E) Disagree

7. The struggle for a sense of acceptance and a place in American life is a part of who I am.

   A) Strongly Agree

   B) Agree

   C) Not Sure

   D) Strongly Disagree

   E) Disagree

8. I believe that I understand the lifestyles and motivations of people of the minority culture.

   A) Strongly Agree

   B) Agree

   C) Not Sure

D) Strongly Disagree

E) Disagree

Part III (What is Wrong?)

9. True freedom and opportunity is only available to a selected race or ethnicity

   A) Strongly Agree

   B) Agree

   C) Not Sure

   D) Strongly Disagree

   E) Disagree

10. I have a prejudice against another race or ethnicity

    A) Strongly Agree

    B) Agree

    C) Not Sure

    D) Strongly Disagree

    E) Disagree

11. Because of history, the various races and ethnicities will never be equal.

    A) Strongly Agree

    B) Agree

    C) Not Sure

    D) Strongly Disagree

    E) Disagree

12. The laws of the land were not created in my favor and people of my race and ethnicity receive more severe punishments than other races and ethnicities.

    A) Strongly Agree

    B) Agree

    C) Not Sure

    D) Strongly Disagree

    E) Disagree

Part IV (What is the Answer?)

13. The path to a fair shake in this world depends on how the church stand together.

    A) Strongly Agree

    B) Agree

    C) Not Sure

D) Strongly Disagree

E) Disagree

14. Ethnic diversity in the church is an important focus.

   A) Strongly Agree

   B) Agree

   C) Not Sure

   D) Strongly Disagree

   E) Disagree

15. I am comfortable sharing my faith with people who are not like me.

   A) Strongly Agree

   B) Agree

   C) Not Sure

   D) Strongly Disagree

   E) Disagree

16. It has been said that Sunday morning is the most segregated time in America. How do you feel about that?

   A) I think it is ok

   B) I regret this fact and I don't think there is nothing we can do about it

   C) I'm indifferent about it and don't really care

   D) I don't believe it's that important

   E) We need to take steps to change this in our church

Cultural Background Examination.

1. I have had positive interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups

   a. Extremely often

   b. Fairly often

   c. Rarely

   d. Very rarely.

2. I have had negative interactions with people of other races or ethnic groups

   a. Extremely often

   b. Fairly often

   c. Rarely

   d. Very rarely.

3. Negative interactions with other groups happen to me mostly because
    a. I am closed to them
    b. They don't like the group I belong to
    c. We have misunderstandings/lack of communication.
    d. Other _____

4. I am most comfortable around people of other racial and ethnic groups when
    a. They initiate the conversation
    b. I initiate the conversation
    c. They go out of their way to make me feel welcome and comfortable.
    d. We talk about things other than differences and disagreements
    e. Other _____

5. Racial and cultural diversity is important for the church because
    a. It demonstrates that we are open and welcoming to others.
    b. It points to the future time when peace and harmony will dwell on the earth.
    c. It shows the world how broad the love of God is
    d. It is currently popular to celebrate diversity, so this shows that we are relevant.
    e. It enriches my life.
    f. Other _____

6. The biggest fear I would have if I tried to share what Jesus means to me, to someone of another racial or ethnic cultural groups is
    a. That they would not listen to me because of my racial/ethnic background
    b. That they would misunderstand the gospel due to cultural differences (I might make a mistake due to not knowing how to communicate with them).
    c. That they would laugh at me or jeer because they feel superior to me and to the gospel.
    d. They would think I had the wrong motive.
    e. Other _____

7. The main barrier to me being comfortable sharing my spiritual needs and struggles with persons of another race or ethnicity is
    a. I feel inferior
    b. I feel that they think I am inferior
    c. I don't want to admit that I am not perfect, in front of one of *them.*
    d. I cannot trust them to take my concerns seriously enough to pray for or with me.
    e. Other _____

Appendix B- Institutional Review Board Approval

Dear Jamar R. Mabry,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

> (2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if…the following criteria is met:
>
>> (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office