1-1-2011

Multicultural and Racial Reconciliation Efforts Fail to Attract Many in the Black Church

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MULTICULTURAL AND RACIAL RECONCILIATION EFFORTS FAIL TO ATTRACT MANY IN THE BLACK CHURCH

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abstract

The Racial Reconciliation (RR) movement of today fails to attract the Black church. Pastors express the need to value Black monocultural churches. The push by RR adherents to suggest churches "should be" multiracial may be more harmful than helpful. Distinguishing race and culture exposes the reality that most multiracial churches are monocultural. Research of Black college students reveals the desire for monocultural settings. Historical research of the first century church gives biblical validity to monocultural fellowships. Unity will not occur if motivation is reduced to color. Monocultural and multicultural fellowships are needed to reflect an infinite-faceted God.

The Racial Reconciliation (RR) movement of today continues to run into conflict with the Black church at large. It seems ironic that the Black church would not fully embrace a movement wanting to rid the body of Christ of racial injustice and division. Is it that Black churches want to keep racism and division alive? Is it that they are so into their own culture that they do not appreciate other cultures? After more than thirty years of living and ministering in the Black community, my experience is neither. In writing this article, I consulted with a number of Black

pastors from around the U.S., and each expressed a genuine desire for relationships across racial lines. It isn't that Black church leaders are hesitant to embrace RR, but some Black leaders sense RR proponents may lack awareness around the barriers yet to be conquered for reconciliation to truly occur. Pastor O'Hara Black says, "There are huge societal, social and racial barriers that have not yet been overcome . . . The social context with which we minister and evangelize is still one of racial division."[1] Pastor Brian Herron Sr. wonders if the RR agenda is really willing to honestly tackle those barriers mentioned by Reverend Black. Pastor Herron states, "If we are really going to have racial reconciliation the discussions and conversations must be had. We can start with the easy things of what and where we all agree but we also must have honest dialogue, so we can get past our pain, anguish, and frustration."[2] Pastor Brian Edmonds notes the need for the Black church when he says, "The issues facing the black community cry out for an organization that will focus on them from a Christ-centered paradigm. The black church has done this by fighting for social justice and seeking to be the hands and feet of Jesus."[3]

Charles Gilmer, president of the Impact Movement, points out problems that many Blacks have with how RR adherents handle Scripture and make various analogies to the texts. He is especially troubled when they use Ephesians 2 and apply the Jew-Gentile teaching to Black-White relationships. All too often, he points out, "blacks are cast in the role of Gentiles."[4] The formerly favored Jews, God's people, have now opened the doors and extended a hand. "Come join us, and we'll let you sing some of your songs and you can bring your soul food to the pot-luck after church." Gilmer is troubled that White organizations, including multicultural churches, seldom greet Black churches as equals. There often seems to be a "catch" when a hand is extended with an expectation to either join or be friends in the name of RR. Such initiatives feel artificial and self-centered. Gilmer says,

> The implicit devaluation of Black Christian entities, institutions, and their leaders that is communicated by such an expectation is problematic. The White "inviter" seems to assume that since they have more resources, larger numbers

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[1] O'Hara Black, Senior Pastor of Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist church, Orlando, FL, quoted from personal response via e-mail, October 2010.

[2] Brian Herron, Senior Pastor of Zion Baptist Church, Minneapolis, MN, quoted from personal response via e-mail, October 2010.

[3] Brian Edmonds, Pastor of Discipleship at Macedonia Church, Pittsburgh, PA, quoted from personal response via e-mail, October 2010.

[4] Charles Gilmer, *A Cry of Hope a Call to Action* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House Publishers, 2009), 99.

of participants, or a longer tradition of theological reflection, that Blacks should want to be a part of their organization.[5]

Gilmer is not proposing segregation. He is a firm believer in the unity of the body of Christ and the value of all cultural expressions of faith, including the dominant culture's expression. Standing together should not require one to leave a monocultural expression of faith and thereby diminish one's influence within one's cultural tradition. Gilmer asks the question, "Do White Christians respect the leadership of Black Christian leaders and their spiritual tradition, and that of cultures other than their own?"[6] All too often Black church leaders are not brought to the table as equals, but rather as endorsers or tokens. They are expected to go along with the already determined agenda. Rather than setting the agenda, they are usually expected to give credence to it with their respective constituencies.

The biblical concept of racial reconciliation picked up steam in evangelical circles in the late 1980s championed by Bill McCartney through Promise Keepers. However, it never garnered the same enthusiasm in the Black church at large. Senior Pastor Jason Barr from Macedonia Church in Pittsburgh articulated one of the reasons he felt it wasn't as well received. "It was evangelical Christianity that embraced the cultural norm to discriminate against Black people. The Promise Keepers movement was a byproduct of evangelical Christianity in America."[7] Not all Black pastors feel the same, however. A number have come out of and/or have joined the evangelical, dominant-cultured push for multicultural churches, much to the delight of those in the RR movement. Dwight Perry writes, "Perhaps our measure of success should rest not only on the people being won to Christ but the diversity of the group they are being won into."[8] Perry and other RR advocates make the assumption that if there are several cultural groups represented within the local fellowship, this is a sign of a biblically healthy church. This thinking led to the book *United by Faith,* which states what has increasingly become the RR position: "Christian congregations, when possible, **should be multiracial.**"[9] (emphasis mine)

However, churches that desire a multicultural environment must be careful not to drive an artificial form of measurement that is not found in the Scriptures. The spiritual well-being of a church that pleases God is not derived from the cultural composition but from the character and nature of Christ being lived out by its

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[5] Ibid., 100.

[6] Ibid., 101.

[7] Jason Barr, Senior Pastor from Macedonia Church, Pittsburgh, PA, quoted from personal response via e-mail, October 2010.

[8] Dwight Perry, ed., *Building Unity in the Church of the New Millennium* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2002), 114.

[9] Curtiss Paul DeYoung, Michael O. Emerson, George Yancey and Karen Chai Kim, *United by Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 2.

members. An undue focus on trying to be diverse or homogeneous is misplaced. Bishop Josephus Johnson would like to see churches be multiracial, but he qualifies that by saying, "My agreement does not mean that I believe churches should attempt to coerce people into a multicultural situation. I believe this should develop naturally, through love and inclusion."[10]

The impression by many in the Black church is that the RR movement fails to create unity and unintentionally promotes subordination. It devalues precious and authentic cultural worship of God. A multicultural church can experience a form of a particular culture of worship, but rarely is that form truly expressed as in its monocultural setting. Pastor Eric Moore explains why there is a need for Black monocultural fellowships.

> A significant part of the Black (or African American) community has found its identity in the Black church. A Black person may work or live in a multicultural environment, but that same person still finds his/her identity in the Black culture. Since church deals with the core of who a person is, Blacks tend to want to sing black, worship black, talk black, complain black and relate black. They don't want the non-black culture changing what is a core value to them.[11]

I can already hear the cries, "That's the problem; our identity shouldn't be in our culture but in Christ." Truth is, culture is how we live life, and as a Christian, although we find our identity in Christ, how we live out that identity is through our culture. Everyone has a culture. The more cultures there are, the more cultural expressions of faith and worship. Each cultural expression adds to our understanding of a new and greater dimension of who God is. God is in, through, and over every culture. Even in heaven God has ensured that all of creation's tribes, tongues, and peoples will continue to exist in their cultural forms (Revelations 7:9). The challenge for believers this side of heaven who are one in Christ but are of many different cultures is to show love by demonstrating value for, working with, and giving deference to those cultures different than their own. This is why Bishop Johnson states, "If we, the Church, are who God created us to be, we should draw and love many different kinds of people."

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[10] Josephus Johnson, Bishop of The House of the Lord church in Akron, OH, quoted from personal response via e-mail, October 2010.

[11] Eric Moore, Senior Pastor of Tree of Life Bible Fellowship, Detroit, MI, quoted from personal response via e-mail, October 2010.

cultural groups that merge produce a hybrid "new" culture

Sociologist James Lull points out that when two or more cultures come together, a new and different culture will form—which may have elements of the represented cultures but is really unique in and of itself.[12] For example, a group that has a Black, White, and Latino cultural mix may have elements of each culture in the group. However, to make room for all three expressions, the group's culture will differ from a group that had one primary cultural expression. A multicultural group cannot experience the same cultural expression of worship that a monocultural group experiences. The multicultural group experiences a hybrid version and creates its own culture. To demand that all cultural expressions merge together will only, over time, diminish and eliminate those cultural expressions.

most multiracial groups are monoculturally white

A 1998 study by Mark Chaves found that more than 96 percent of churches in America that were not in the middle of transition had more than 80 percent of their gathering represent one racial group.[13] This leaves just four percent of American churches with multiracial environments, and it is likely that most of these have a dominant culture that determines the way things are done. Most churches called multicultural are monocultural churches (usually White-cultured) with a multiracial membership. Confusing race and culture provides the seedbed for the dominant culture of the group to subordinate other participating cultures.

The culture of a group is reflected by the leadership's values, attitudes, and approach to ministry. An African American was invited to a church that was promoted as multicultural. He was asked at the conclusion of the service what he thought. The inviter was shocked when his friend said, "That was a good experience. I've never been to a White church before." Even though one-third of the congregation was non-White, his response was not based on the color of the worshippers but the cultural style by which things were done.

On the ABCs of the ethnicity continuum, our African American friend above would be a "C." The ABCs of ethnicity continuum have been created for those of the dominant culture to better understand where on the cultural spectrum a person of color (non-White) might be at any one point in time.

ABCs of Ethnicity: **A**ssimilated   ⟷   **B**i-cultural   ⟷   **C**ontextualized[14]

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[12] James Lull, *Media, Communication and Culture,* 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 242–245.

[13] Mark Chaves, *National Congregations Study* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona, 1998).

[14] Gilmer, 87–90.

A person of color will be along this continuum, whether that is assimilated into the dominant culture (A); bi-cultural, having developed cultural fluency both in the dominant culture and his own culture of origin (B); or, culturally contextualized, where the person primarily functions within his own culture of origin (C).

research reveals the need for culturally contextualized ministries

The growing racial plurality of our country coupled with the push for multiethnic churches has caused many culturally White churches to focus on the ethnicity of its members. There are more attempts to create multiethnic churches than at any other time in the past. However, there still appears to be as large a divide as ever. Beverly Daniel Tatum's question in her book, *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria* is still as much a reality today as it was when she penned it in 1997.

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The insistence that multiracial churches are God's ideal may contribute to the problem. Such thinking fails to create unity in the body of Christ and unintentionally devalues and subordinates monocultural expressions of faith and worship.

My research has validated the significant need for the existence of Black contextualized churches and ministries like the Impact Movement (one of few national parachurch ministries) that solely ministers specifically in the Black student community on college campuses across the nation.[15] An African American student at the University of Minnesota after visiting numerous Christian groups when she finally came across the Impact Movement said, "I finally found a Christian group where I didn't need to check my 'culture' at the door."

I surveyed 1,053 Black college students spanning 174 colleges and universities across the nation. I also surveyed 29 Christian campus ministries on five campuses (University of Minnesota, University of Missouri, University of South Carolina, Duke University, and the University of Rochester NY) to determine how they attempted to attract Black college students. As I analyzed what the students and student group leaders reported, I discovered that the reason so few Black students participated with predominantly White and multiethnic groups is not a lack of spiritual interest but having to hurdle the dominant-cultured (White) trappings that have become so intertwined with that culture's expression of faith. Most campus ministries count it a tremendous success to have ten percent of the group

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[15] Dirke Johnson, 2010. "Determining the Most Effective Racial Model to Reach College Students of African Descent for Christ," abstract, D. Min. diss, Bethel Theological Seminary.

be Black, yet, the survey revealed that only 4.1 percent of Blacks actually preferred to compose ten percent or less of a group's ethnicity. In fact, when asked to select a group culturally similar or non-similar to themselves, 88% chose to be involved in a group culturally similar. The motivating desire was to find a group in which they could culturally remain themselves—a group where they felt culturally safe. Pastor Edmonds would agree. He believes "many African American Christians are looking for a safe space in the culture where they don't have to explain their race, habits, or experience and don't have to be on guard against racism."

My research identified four reasons why culturally contextualized ministries (in this case, culturally Black) are needed:

1. To provide an environment to reach those who are more attracted to a Black cultural setting.
2. To provide increased Black leadership opportunities.
3. To provide a contextualized venue of equal cultural merit where other cultures can interact with and learn from.
4. To provide a safe cultural environment that is esteeming each member as an equal and a significant contributor within the culture and the larger society as a whole.

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three racial models examined

I compared and contrasted the following three racial models for churches and ministries: the dominant-cultured model, multicultural model, and culturally-contextualized model. The dominant-cultured model is led from a White value system and organizational structure. It is usually marked by two-thirds of its membership being White. The second model (multicultural) attempts to value each culture represented and integrate them as one in an expression of unity. The third model (culturally-contextualized) is led from a Black cultural value system and organizational structure. It is usually marked by two-thirds of its membership being Black. The table below contrasts the three models with the four reasons for a culturally contextualized model.

The survey results clearly indicate that **the culturally-contextualized model is needed to effectively reach the majority of the current and future generations of Black students.** All three models are biblically acceptable and needed. Each is used by God and will reach individuals who are not attracted to the other models. The research study concluded that the body of Christ will represent God in greater ways when diverse groups (monocultural and multicultural) partner, rather than solely focusing on the diversity within a single group.

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If the goal is to reach the most number of Black students, the culturally contextualized model is most effective. If the goal is to be diverse, then the multicultural model is most effective. Most groups called multicultural are dominant-cultured with a multiracial membership and a White cultural style of operation. Both multicultural and monocultural groups are needed for the same reason. They each provide a cultural expression of faith that reflects a facet of God's nature.

One of the arguments for multicultural groups is greater exposure to different cultural worship styles. However, is the goal of worship to have exposure to other styles? Or, should one find the best cultural environment where one can authentically connect with God at the heart level, be that multicultural or monocultural? When multicultural church promoters eloquently and passionately argue that a multicultural church is what God wants, it is like throwing a hand grenade on a monocultural fellowship. It is saying, "You're less than." Charles Ware states that monocultural churches are not following God's blueprint for a multiethnic local church because they are choosing to "value culture above the commands of Christ."[16] Where does this thinking come from, that monocultural churches are "less than" because they are not multiethnic?

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biblical and historical basis for monocultural gatherings

Bruce Fong, in his critique of Homogenous Unit Principle, used the terms "peoplehood" (an equivalent term for "culture") and the theological mandate of biblical unity. Fong believed accepting monocultural fellowships prioritizes a particular culture above unity in the body of Christ. He says, "Regardless of the value placed on peoplehood, it cannot replace the importance of theological priorities for the church."[17] Consequently, in the name of unity, cultures (peoplehoods) must subordinate. By Fong's dichotomy, unity is to be prioritized over peoplehood. For Fong, and many RR adherents, one of the theological priorities of the church is to discourage monoracial gatherings and increase multiracial gatherings. They arrive at this conclusion by how they define biblical unity and what they believe "one in Christ" should look like. What they fail to grasp is that most multiracial churches become their own culture and produce no more a reflection of biblical unity than a monocultural church, for they have become their own hybrid monocultural church. One cannot separate the value of

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[16] Charles Ware, *Prejudice and the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001), 131.

[17] Bruce W. Fong, *Racial Equality in the Church: A Critique of the Homogenous Unit Principle in Light of a Practical Theology Perspective* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996), 151.

culture from biblical unity. To devalue anyone's culture is to show partiality and to break the royal law of loving your neighbor (James 2:8–9). A person's culture is a part of who he is. To ask him to lay aside his cultural expression of faith or be asked to merge it, is more likely to hurt versus build up the body of Christ. When I speak of valuing culture, I am not suggesting acceptance of behaviors that violate God's Word and commands, which should never be tolerated. However, biblical unity can never be a reality if the culture of a person is not valued and encouraged.

Monocultural settings are not selected out of animosity toward other cultures but usually because one feels they best connect with God and that particular family of believers. A study done in 2000 by Emerson and Smith revealed that prejudice is not a motivator for Blacks to attend predominantly Black churches. They identify the culprits that encourage monocultural gatherings as social and religious pluralism. The American religious system is designed on choice and competition.[18] The implication is that the majority of people choose monocultural gatherings for positive and not negative reasons.

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With the addition of the various Gentile cultures, the apostles wanted to ensure that the gospel would be received culturally unhindered. This concern prompted the decisions made at the Council of Jerusalem. The underlying principle expressed at the council was, "We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God" (Acts 15:19 NIV). The Council of Jerusalem's decision may speak louder by what they did not say than by what they did say. The Gentiles were given permission to *not* adopt a Jewish cultural expression of faith, and the Jewish believers are *not* asked to change their cultural expression of faith either. This would seem to have been the opportune time to identify exactly how Jews and Gentiles would exhibit their oneness in this new relationship in Christ. Rather than identifying their oneness by a particular way of doing things, or insisting they do them together, there is freedom of ecclesiology that allows distinct cultural practices of Christianity. It is this same understanding in which the Jew-Gentile "tearing down the wall" (Ephesians 2:14, Galatians 3:28, Colossians 1:21–22, Romans 7:4) passages should be understood. They relate to access to God for all cultures. They are not a mandate to restrict, but rather to enable both monocultural and multicultural expressions of faith.

Eric Law, an Episcopalian priest who consults for multicultural churches and organizations says, "The church needs to encourage people of color to gather in communities of their choosing."[19] The body of Christ needs all of its members, including those in monocultural gatherings, present and valued. The apostle Paul

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[18] Michael Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 136.

[19] Eric Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1993), 49–50.

in 1 Corinthians 12 admonishes believers to care for all parts and functions within the body. Unity in the midst of diversity is necessary. All gifts, abilities, talents, and kinds of people, including cultural expressions of worship, are to be valued and appreciated.[20] Paul makes clear that believers are "baptized into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13). He is speaking of the universal church. Baptism is used metaphorically to refer to the Spirit's work within believers to unite them to the body of Christ. If "body" refers to a local church or fellowship, there would need to be a new baptism if they were to move and attend a new local body of believers. There is need for only "one baptism" because there is only "one body" that they have been baptized into (Ephesians 4:5). When a local church baptizes new believers, they are being baptized into the universal body of Christ.[21] Paul is implying that a local fellowship would be part of the aggregate body of Christ since all the parts within that local fellowship are part of the aggregate body of Christ. A monocultural group, whether it has many assimilated colors of people or predominantly one color, is part of the body of Christ. Therefore, that part should not be spoken against, demeaned, or devalued because its part has a culturally different expression of faith. In the same way, multicultural gatherings as part of the body should be valued and encouraged because they reflect another expression of faith in God.

Theologian Carl Braaten points out that Scripture does not suggest a particular cultural model for a fellowship to resemble.

> What we have learned from the New Testament that is normative for ordering the ministry of the church today is the priority of Jesus Christ as God's gospel of reconciliation, and the authority of the apostolic witness as the keystone of the church's ministry. . . . There is no normative biblical church order into which they all fit.[22]

Braaten also speaks of the danger of attempting to replicate and, even worse, "absolutize" particular structures and forms that churches and fellowships should follow today. He suggests that freedom was given to the early church to change and improvise under the direction of God's Spirit.[23]

James Dunn in *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* argues that there was great diversity of worship styles among Christians of the New Testament church. He says there was a mix of cultural church communities such as Jewish Christians, Hellenistic Jewish Christians, Greek non-Jewish Christians, and charismatic

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[20] Brenda Aghahowa, *Praising in Black and White* (Cleveland: United Church Press, 1996), 7.

[21] Frank Thielman, *English Standard Version Study Bible,* 2010. [Study Notes, 1 Cor.12]

[22] Carl E. Braaten, *The Apostolic Imperative: Nature and Aim of the Church's Mission and Ministry* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1985), 132.

[23] Ibid., 131–132

Christians, as in Corinth, and each community had its own form of worship.[24] Mapson describes the same diversity.

> In a sense, it is misleading to speak of the New Testament church; rather, it is more accurate to speak of the churches of the New Testament. The New Testament reveals not one form of worship but several. Distinctions in worship forms existed among the early Aramaic-speaking community, the Hellenistic Jewish community, the early Gentile community, and the sub-apostolic period. This multiplicity of forms suggests that not only between churches but also within each church existed a freedom and spontaneity, devoid of the formality and rigidity that would later characterize Christian worship.[25]

Hahn says, "[We must] think in terms of great freedom and variety in the structuring of worship."[26] Aghahowa notes, "Paul seemed to affirm the diversity he found, while speaking out on various excesses, intolerances, abuses of liberty, and practices that tended to heighten division rather than increase harmony within congregations."[27] The Lausanne Committee also said it is clear that in the early church there were homogenous Jewish and Gentile churches as well as mixed assemblies of Jews and Gentiles.[28] The history of first-century church planting by the apostles reveals no concerted effort to insist on a mix of Gentile nations in every local assembly. The RR insistence by some that multicultural churches were the apostle's aim is at best speculation.

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It is amusing to watch many of the churches today ferociously fight to increase the racial mix in their congregation just so they can say they are multiracial (as if that makes them more pleasing to God or more spiritual). Since someone's racial ethnicity does not necessarily mean a particular cultural orientation, the emphasis on getting members of different colors is puzzling. In *Reconciliation Blues,* Edward Gilbreath quotes David Anderson, a pastor of a multiethnic church, describing this reality. "I believe there's a difference between being 'multicultural' and 'multicolored.' . . . You can have different colors and still have a black church or a white church."[29] If Pastor Anderson is correct, as I believe he is, then there really is no more merit in having members who have physically different ethnic features than it is to have members who have different colored hair. Can you imagine a church arranging an outreach plan to increase the number of redheads in its congregation? Where the attention needs to be directed is not the color of the

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[24] James D.G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977).

[25] J. Wendell Mapson Jr., *The Ministry of Music in the Black Church* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1984), 32.

[26] Ferdinand Hahn, *The Worship of the Early Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), 2.

[27] Aghahowa, 19.

[28] Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization , *The Pasadena Consultation—Homogeneous Unit,* (Pasadena: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization Archives, 1978), 4–5.

[29] David Anderson, quoted in Edward Gilbreath, *Reconciliation Blues* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 165.

members but the culture or cultures within its membership. Wanting to increase cultural diversity in a fellowship is not wrong, but usually the church is just as monocultural after these attempts of assimilation as it was before. A culturally White church with twenty percent of its non-White members as cultural type A's is still as culturally White as a church with no non-White members. Though Pastor Moore believes the existence of the Black church is important, he says what many Black pastors believe. "Every church should create an environment where everyone is welcomed regardless of race. Every church should be willing to work with other racially different churches for the cause of Christ." True unity of the Spirit in the body of Christ is best reflected when fellowships reach out and say, "What can we do to help you, and what can you do to help us? We have things we need to learn from you, and what things do you need to learn from us?" The motivation should not be for racial reconciliation but for biblical reconciliation (Matthew 5:23–24). Regardless of race or culture, the biblical responsibility of the Christian is for the love, welfare, and justice of others.

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Clarence Shuler expresses his dislike for the name "Racial Reconciliation." He believes the term is defined inaccurately. When the goal is to have relationships with other cultures, it has no real direction. Why have those relationships? Is it for the appearance of unity? When Shuler explains what he believes is true relationship across racial lines, people always ask him, "What name would you recommend using instead of Racial Reconciliation?" Shuler's answer is, "Why do we need a name for it?" He states, "I realize that one culture seems to feel much more secure if it has a name for everything. Therefore, I would propose that the term racial partnership symbolizes what most Christians want to see in the area of race relations."[30]

True unity will never occur if the motivation is tied to color. Both multicultural and monocultural fellowships are necessary because each becomes its own unique cultural expression that glorifies God. They are necessary because people will be won to our Savior by the attractiveness of each cultural environment that has been produced. They are necessary because they help fill out the body of Christ and offer gifts and strengths to other fellowships in ways that no one cultural fellowship can offer. Neither the forced merger of cultural expressions of faith nor the separation and isolation of them will show off God's glory to its fullest.

God has so constructed the world that life cannot be lived independently from either Himself or from one another. People will stop and take notice when both mono and multicultural churches reach out to meet real needs within the Black community without expectation to join congregations or publicly promote their

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[30] Clarence Shuler, *Winning the Race to Unity* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2003), 157–158.

racial reconciliation efforts. We need each other to make a difference in our world for the glory of God and the expansion of His kingdom. We need each other because each cultural expression is its own reflection of the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. To the degree we lack one cultural expression, we lack a complete picture of our marvelous, unfathomable, and majestic Creator God. May God increase our knowledge of the breadth, length, height, and depth of His great love for every person and every cultural expression of faith in Him!

Compares Three Models with Four Sociological Reasons

	Dominant Cultured Model	Multicultural Model	Black Contextualized
Provides a more attractive environment to reach those who prefer a Black cultural setting.	No, fails to provide an attractive cultural environment to the majority of Cultural Type Bs and most Cultural Type Cs.	No, fails to provide an attractive cultural environment to some Cultural Type Bs and most Cultural Type Cs. In the best multicultural model, it will have elements of Black culture but will diminish a fully Black cultural expression of faith.	Yes, it provides an environment that will be attractive to the majority of cultural Type Bs and all Type Cs.
Provides more Black leadership opportunities.	Very limited opportunities when Blacks represent a very small percentage of the group's membership.	Limited opportunities for Black leadership depending upon the Black percentage of the group's membership.	Many opportunities to lead and provide role models when the group is majority Black and its culture is not subordinated.
Provides a venue of equal cultural merit that others can interact with and learn from.	Very unlikely, unless Black culture is intentionally highlighted, valued, and not subordinated. A dominant-cultured group cannot provide a Black environment to interact with and learn from.	May be valued in a group that does not subordinate Black culture, but it is limited in its ability to provide a genuine appreciation for a Black contextualized environment since a multicultural group by nature is not contextualized to a particular culture.	Yes, provides an environment that is culturally valuable to its members and allows others to come in from the outside and experience a fully Black contextualized expression of faith.

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