

NFL Player-Turned-Pastor Calls for End to Church Segregation

Former NFL player and current pastor Derwin Gray spoke in Monday's convocation at Liberty University about "God's dream" to see salvation for the world and unity in the church amongst different nationalities and races.

"At the core of the dream is you, me and humanity," Gray said. "There has never been a moment where God has not thought about you or His purpose for you. That purpose is found in His story that is about His glory."

Gray shared his personal story of salvation. As an NFL football player, one of his teammates was a Christian and consistently shared the gospel with him in the locker room after practice. Growing up on the west side of San Antonio, Gray said "football defined [him]," but after talking with his teammate, he realized "God's dream" for his life was to know and love Him.

"I fell head over heels for Jesus because he was head over heels for me," Gray said.

After playing five years with the Indianapolis Colts and one year with the Carolina Panthers, Gray began pursuing ministry.

As a new Christian he noticed that many churches were "segregated" and not multi-ethnic while the neighborhoods and cities had a diverse population. He said most churches in America are 95 percent mono-ethnic and segregation occurs 10 times more on a Sunday morning than any other time.

"God's eternal dream is to see Jews and Gentiles as equals and a part of the same body," Gray said. "In John 17, Jesus says

the world will know my Father sent me by your unity.”

Gray’s desire is to live out this mission. In 2010 he founded and now pastors Transformation Church, “a multi-ethnic, multi-generational, mission-shaped community” located in Indian Land, S.C., just south of Charlotte, N.C. He said his desire for the church is to be biblically based and to live out God’s dream of unity amongst believers from “every fabric of society.”