

When Your Culture Clashes With God's Kingdom

Hebrews 12:28 "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us be gracious, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

One of the most challenging things to change in ourselves is the culture in which we were raised. Our culture is so much a part of our DNA, that we do not even recognize the strength of it until we live in another country, marry someone or try to understand those of another culture. Churches all over the world are predominantly of the same color, race or creed, because we struggle so much to change the culture in which we were raised.

I lived in Malaysia for 9 consecutive years. When I first got there, I did not realize how American I was; I did not recognize how law-abiding I was; how Christian I was; how much I wanted them to become like me, even though I was in their country, their culture. I chose to move to Malaysia, no one made me live there, yet I was so ingrained with my culture, that I wanted them to become like me and to do things my way. This lasted about 2 years, but it finally dawned on me, they were not going to change: this was their culture, their country and they had no intention of changing. So, for me, this was my first official culture clash.

American culture is not as well liked as we may think around the world. They see us as loud, opinionated, big, and immoral. They want our money, they want our power, they want our influence, but honestly, they do not want their people to adopt what they perceive as our bondage that we call freedom. To them to have a voice is dangerous, to speak out against your president is unacceptable, to elevate women is destructive, and to be democratic is undesirable. They want to

keep their value systems, while they take over our land, our money, our influence.

This is true for other cultures and countries, but it is also true for Christians. Many Christians, who have voluntarily accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior did not realize how American they are, how Asian they are, how African they are, how Australian they are, how European they are. Until they came into the kingdom, they did not realize how anti-Christ they really are, for in this kingdom, there is only one King and there's only one culture.

No matter how much we try to change the kingdom of God to be American, African, Australian, European or Asian, we find that the kingdom demands us to conform to its image. But many are not willing to conform, so they seek to take the land, the money, the power, the influence of this kingdom, but they are not ready to adopt the values of this kingdom.

Many are in a battle, for no other reason than they refuse to conform to the kingdom culture.

The kingdom of God is not like America: it does not conform to other cultures, allow for sub cultures and change laws based on people's personal values, whims or desires. The kingdom of God is an unshakable kingdom. If you do not want to conform to it, you will never succeed in it, and the truth is, no matter how hard you try you can't have the blessing of it, unless you submit to it.

Unless I was willing to learn to take on the Malaysian culture, I was not going to succeed in that culture, for it was not changing for me, I had to change for it. The same is true in the kingdom, you will never succeed as a Christian, until you conform to the kingdom culture, which is an unshakable kingdom.

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