

Building a True Rainbow Coalition Demands Biblical Philosophy

Much has been made in this nation around the issue of race, perhaps more than any other nation in the West.

As Christians we need to honor the fact that God loves and has made His creation diverse, including within the species called the human race. Truly, God is not colorblind. He made groups of black, white, yellow and brown people to form a beautiful mosaic of humanity.

Furthermore, biblically speaking, there is only one human race because we all came from one blood (Acts 17:26). This pulls the rug out from racism because ethnic superiority only has ideological weight within a Darwinian philosophy. This is because, according to Darwin, the Negroid, Caucasoid and Mongoloid races all evolved as separate groups; thus, some groups could be more advanced on the evolutionary scale. This leaves the door wide open for racism based on the notion of racial superiority a la Adolf Hitler and Nazism.

Unfortunately, as our nation, the church and individuals fall more and more away from the Christian worldview our identity becomes more rooted in our ethnicity than in Christ. This paves the way for a syncretism called multiculturalism, which leads to polytheism because culture involves religious beliefs—not just ethnicity, language, food and a common economy.

Before we can work together we have to relate together. This is the conclusion we had in 1997 when I led a two-day retreat of key Hispanic, white and black clergy. After hours of dialogue, debate and **prayer** we concluded that we needed to develop personal relationships for racial reconciliation to

take place. Truly, the kingdom of God is built upon relationships, not ministry. For example, Mark 3:14 reports that Jesus called His disciples first to be with Him before He sent them out to preach. Thus they had to know each other before they could work together.

We can have all the racial reconciliation events in the world but if ethnic leaders don't develop relationships on a personal level there will be no real unity.

Biblically speaking, in the Gospels Jesus told us to pray for His kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. Thus if heaven is our model then there is no reason in the world for 11 a.m. on Sunday to be the most segregated hour of the week.

One of the great signs that Jesus was sent by the Father to the world is that His body would be one as Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Jesus (John 17:20-23). Revelation 7 and Daniel 7 show how one day every tribe, kindred, tongue and nation will be together before the throne of God.

Of course some will use this to teach segregation because, they will say, how can there be different ethnic peoples in heaven if we all intermarried and assimilated into one another? That is another issue altogether. But I believe it is not for us to divide ourselves for preservation when it comes to marriage and ministry. We are called to be together in whatever way the Lord calls us, especially if we have a common nation and purpose in the kingdom! I can see no biblical reason why we should not relate and work together!

One Hispanic political leader disagrees with me on this. He has told me personally that the blacks, whites and Hispanics should do their own work politically because it is more effective since the world looks at ethnic demographics when it comes to votes and policy. I told him I disagree because my blueprint comes from the Bible, not from politics! In this day

of racial tension, one of the greatest evangelical witnesses can be when the world sees different ethnic leaders and congregations loving one another, working together and being one powerful political voice together!

It is my opinion that to establish an effective rainbow coalition we need to first determine the Christian values regarding public policy that we can all agree upon. We have done this with City Acton Coalition, having delineated five main values we can gather around and focus upon. If we go into areas other than these common values it may divide us and destroy our unity. (After we have been working together around these five main issues and gain more cohesion and victories, then we will be open to having dialogue and debate regarding other areas such as immigration, affirmative action, entitlements, tax policy, and other important issues we are not yet ready to coalesce around.)

The five main values that bring us together:

1. Religious liberty and freedom of speech (the First Amendment)
2. Sanctity of life (before and after birth)
3. Traditional marriage
4. Racial reconciliation
5. We advocate for faith-based nonprofit entities to serve communities and meet the needs of humanity

This template has served us well. We have had perhaps the most diverse and largest coalition in New York State since 2003, with the leaders of the Empire Baptist Missionary Convention (85 percent of the Black Baptist churches in New York State), CONLICO (17 Hispanic denominations and organizations), Converge (many Haitian networks in New York City), Latino Pastors Group (100 pastors in Long Island), Christ Covenant

Coalition (a network of networks that I oversee), as well as numerous other unaffiliated churches and leaders that work closely with us. Our coalition is always expanding and recently added many new key leaders and their networks.

Thus, we have been working together with many in this coalition for almost 10 years. Our unity is getting stronger and stronger.

It is my **prayer** that before we leave today we will form a coalition of coalitions so that we will have a national **prophetic voice** that this present administration will have to take seriously!

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