

# **Healing Our Broken Humanity**

## **Chapter 6: Reactivate Hospitality**

All over the world cities, towns, and rural areas are rapidly becoming multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual. This cultural diversity is not limited only to language and ethnicity. Our cities, towns, and rural areas have become “melting pots of religions, worldviews, sexualities, and lifestyles. The world is changing, and our cities and rural areas are changing. The world is only going to become more diverse and pluralistic due to immigration, refugees, and globalization.”

These changes present fresh opportunities for the church to be the welcoming and hospitable community it is called to be by God. Instead of responding with fear to this this diversity or mourning the loss of cultural homogeneity, we can chose to be “a people of every nation, and tribe, and people, and tongue. We can choose to worship as one body, the one who calls women and men together from every nation in every part of the globe. We can be hospitable.”

Welcome and hospitality to all people is one of the centerpieces of Christian communities that are committed to being the new humanity in Christ (see chapter 1 for the development of this concept). New humanity churches make at least four commitments related to hospitality:

“First, they move away from ethnic segregation and foster diverse, multiethnic, or intercultural churches.” These communities have seven core commitments: 1) they depend on the Spirit to help them be diverse; 2) they take intentional steps to be multiethnic; 3) they empower diverse leaders; 4) they develop crosscultural relationships; 5) they pursue crosscultural competence; 6) they promote a spirit of inclusion; 7) they mobilize for impact.

Second, these new humanity communities intentionally “foster cultural intelligence among their leadership and in their congregation. Cultural intelligence (often abbreviated as CQ) is the ability to understand different cultures and function effectively in situations of cultural diversity. The Cultural Intelligence Center says that cultural intelligence requires four skills: (1) CQ drive: a passion and confidence to adapt to multicultural settings; (2) CQ knowledge: an understanding of the similarities and differences between cultures; (3) CQ strategy: planning for multicultural conversations, relationships, and interactions; and (4) CQ action: seeking out multicultural relationships, and adapting when relating and working interculturally.”

Third, they “commit to welcoming, fostering, and relishing diversity in all its forms: gender diversity, socioeconomic diversity, theological diversity, physical diversity, ethnic diversity, and so on. They are hospitable”

Fourth, they “are led by people who are committed to diversity and hospitality. These are lifelong learners about such things as leading multicultural teams, building multiethnic churches, and doing mission and ministry in pluralistic, diverse situations. This is transformative leadership. It refuses to accept the status quo. It is satisfied with nothing less than a diverse congregation and leadership team that reflects the new humanity in Jesus Christ.”

“Hospitality is challenging. We need the Spirit’s help to welcome and embrace the other. This requires many conversations...Hospitality involves our relationship to our home, to the earth, and to a local place. How we treat people needs to be extended to all of creation. We need to take these things seriously to be welcoming and hospitable, and to relish the diversity of God’s extraordinary banquet table.”

“Our hospitality needs to be free, generous, and active. John Chrysostom, the fourth-century bishop of Constantinople (in modern-day Turkey), charges the church to *be given* to hospitality. We welcome people into our homes in hopeful anticipation of our ultimate home. In welcoming them, we welcome Jesus Christ.”

### **Practices, Challenges, and Activities for Small Groups**

*Do the eight-week small group curriculum about multiethnic conversations.* As a small group, read and take-part in a study of the book *Multiethnic Conversations: An Eight-Week Journey Toward Unity in Your Church*. This will help you grow in your understanding of biblical principles behind diverse, multiethnic congregations as well as issues of race, class, and culture. It will help you move toward becoming a multiethnic and multicultural group and congregation.

*Consider doing a faith-based cultural intelligence (CQ) assessment.* The Cultural Intelligence Center offers faith-based cultural intelligence assessments. Their surveys include questions designed to trigger reflection about religious issues and concerns and they provide online assessments and personalized feedback reports.

*Listen to a selection of GlobalChurch Project videos and/or podcasts, and use the free small group discussion guides that go with each video.* The GlobalChurch Project invites often unheard voices from around the world to enter into powerful conversations about the shape and future of the church in the twenty-first century.

## Discussion Questions

In a recent book, *The End of White Christian America*, Robert Jones explains how a seismic change is happening in American Christianity because America is no longer a majority white nation, culturally or demographically. The fastest-growing Christian groups in America today (and in other parts of the West) are minoritized, diaspora, and immigrant groups. How does this make you feel? What challenges and opportunities arise from this change?

The authors quote Mark DeYmaz as saying “If (since) the kingdom of heaven is not segregated, local churches on earth, whenever possible, should not be either.” Do you agree that we need to move away from ethnically and racially segregated churches and foster diverse, multiethnic, or intercultural churches? Why or why not?

What is cultural intelligence (QC)? How can your church (and your ministry team) become more culturally intelligent?

How do diversity and inclusion make us a fuller, richer, and more Christlike people?

What needs to change for your church to reactivate hospitality while cultivating unity in diversity?

What steps will you take to apply this practice fully and in the long term?