

Resembling Heaven
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When we accept Jesus into our hearts we are saved. The word for this is 'Sozo' (originally from Greek) it means 'to save, deliver, heal, and preserve', that is a part of the meaning, the rest of it means 'wholeness and deliverance' as well. Not just in the life to come, but for also here in the earth. Jesus knew this so well that he included it in what we call the Lord's prayer as a model of how we can pray.

Mathew 6:9-10 [NIV]

⁹ "This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

There is no racism in heaven. All nations, tribes, languages and people groups are around the throne with one voice on one accord.

Revelations 7:9a [NIV]

⁹ After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.

John 13:35 [NIV]

³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

5 Keys to break down racial barriers

1. Get God's perspective
 - a. How does God view race? What does God say about race in the bible? He doesn't. Race as we know it (black, white, yellow, brown and red), is not God made but it is manmade.
 - b. When God talks about people He puts them into nationalities – Ishmaelites, Amorites, Hittites. He calls them Jew or Greek, saved or unsaved. But He never uses race how we use it.
 - c. There is only one race = the Human race. That race has many different colors and nationalities and cultures that we can enjoy, but we are of the same race. We are all Homo sapiens. We are same species, same race.

Acts 17:26 [NIV]

And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings...

Galatians 3:28 [NIV]

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

2. Swim upstream - go against the current
 - a. God has called us out of the world, so that we don't think like the world or behave like the world.
 - b. There are times we need to not react and pray.
3. Don't be weird about it
 - a. The only way to not be weird is that we have to be wise.
 - b. Wisdom happens when we have the ability to see things from another person's perspective.
4. Be intentional
 - a. Diversity does not just happen accidentally.
 - b. Someone has to use the love of God and reach beyond the race barrier.
 - c. Ask questions about other cultures.
 - d. Educate yourself to what people have been through and where they are going.
 - e. We should go out of our way to embrace people that are not our same race or culture. There is power in diversity and that we are better together.
5. Forgive & Repent
 - a. Forgive – means to let go or releaser something.
 - b. Repent – change your mind and change your direction.

Discussion Questions:

1. Would you like to experience heaven on earth?
2. What is heaven like?
3. How can the local church be the hope of the world?
4. How can we forgive in our daily lives?
5. How can we repent in our daily lives?