

A SACRED DIALOGUE ON RACE AND PACIFISM

"An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity."

Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr

Preaching Points 18 May 2008



Genesis 1.26-28

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

Preaching Point

The creation story is a great story to have on the "Sacred Day of Dialogue on race". The verses listed above talk about the creation of humankind in the image of God. It is an interesting concept to look at the diversity of images displayed in the human family and to realize that according to our scriptures, they are all the image of God. Another way to think about it is that the image of God is a wide and diverse spectrum and can only be fully realized as we all look at each other as truly fashioned and formed in God's image.

In the human family, there are definite hierarchies (economic, social, gender, etc.) Genesis 1.28 gives humankind dominion over "the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." There is nothing in this text that gives humans dominion over other humans. What does that mean for the relationships that we have with each other?

Matthew 28.16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all

We envision a church where all people are equal, at all levels, as God intended!

nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Preaching Point

Sunday mornings are often described as the most segregated hours of the week. As humans we work together, sometimes live in neighborhoods where we see folks who look and live differently, go to school with a variety of people and yet worship times are often segregated by race, class or economics. That separation can lead (and has led) to difficulties in churches “making the transition” when the neighborhood changes. The cultural traditions and ways of being church and the way we see those who are different from us can keep us from being able to “go and make disciples of all nations.” A preaching point on this could be “what is it that makes us church? And what keeps us from being church where we are?”



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