

Prejudice About Differences

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 2:14-18

His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. — Ephesians 2:15-16

Prejudice can be pictured as a circle that separates “us” from “them.” The people inside the circle are “normal” people, who are most like ourselves—similar skin color, ethnicity, values, abilities, language, gender identity, and so on. Because “we” inside the circle are “normal,” everyone outside the circle is “abnormal”—people different from “us” in ethnicity, abilities, and so on.

The ancient Israelites thought of themselves as normal people and everyone else as abnormal. In fact, they thought that they alone were selected to receive God’s favor.

But through the prophet Isaiah God told them that the promised Savior was coming for all people. “I will . . . make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6).

The actor Whoopi Goldberg once quipped, “Normal is nothing more than a cycle on a washing machine.” Praise God that Jesus came to destroy the sinful distinction we make between “normal” and “abnormal” humans. He is creating a new humanity. Jesus came to put to death the hostility of prejudice and to create a new community of mutual love—no normal or abnormal people, no “us” and “them.” Just us in all our diversity. Hallelujah!

Prayer

Father, Son, Spirit, so -united in love, teach us to revel in the wonderful diversity you have created among us. Make our love reflect yours. In Jesus, Amen.

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