

The Great Multitude

Scripture Reading — Revelation 7:9-12

Before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing be-fore the throne and before the Lamb.

—Revelation 7:9 —

At an outdoor worship service last summer we had a small foretaste of the apostle John's vision described in Revelation. He saw "a great multitude that no one could count," people from every tribe, nation, and language. The service we at-tended had people from different cultures and countries participating and speaking in different languages. We were re-minded that this is God's goal for his church today, to be per-fected when he comes again.

The church on earth today is meant to include all kinds of peo-ple. In the parable of the great banquet (Luke 14:15-24), the master tells his servants to go out and "bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame." The Lord calls his church to welcome "all who believe" (Romans 3:22).

Perhaps your church needs to ask itself some questions: Do we go out of our way to invite people from different back-grounds? Do we accommodate people who seem different from us? Do we use different languages in worship, if only to remind ourselves we are a church of all nations? Do we go to our local missions and invite the residents to join us at our church? And when they come, do we make them feel at home?

Is your church a small portrait of the multitude in Revelation 7?

Prayer

Lord our God, forgive us for not going out of our way to invite people who may seem different from us. Help us to be willing to welcome all who need to meet you. Amen.

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