

**The Story Series
Diversity
11/25/23
Newport News**

Opening

-Favorite dish you had this week?

-Who are my cranberry out of a can people?

-Until the variety we love to celebrate at our table extends beyond the food we eat, we will never be the credible witness for The Gospel that people crave!

Introduction

-final week in our series...

-(promote resource)

-Four core values here at City Life...

-Ministry...our best effort!

-Generosity...our boldest gift!

-Community...our strongest bond!

-Diversity...our warmest welcome!

-The two most common comments from visitor: Welcome and Diverse

-Early next year we are going to do a series on each of them...but for tonight, I want us to explore diversity.

-You can't read very far into the book of Acts and not see ALL four of these values being central to the first century church!

Why diversity matters...Amplified

Rupp Arena, Lexington, KY, 2017, 126.4 dB (23,500)

Also known as the Big Blue Nation for the sea of blue the fans create in the stands, Kentucky Wildcats supporters have long been known for being among the loudest fans in the US college basketball. It was a reputation they more than lived up to for the record attempt, after managing to create insanely loud 126.4-decibel measurement. The 126.4 dB measurement set the World Record for loudest **INDOOR** crowd noise on January 28, 2017, breaking the previous indoor record set by the Sacramento Kings 4 years earlier. But as they say...Records were made to be broken!

-Aircraft Carrier Deck = 140

-Eardrum rupture = 150-165

-If you measured each of those 23,500 people individually...not even close...**being together amplifies our voice!!!**

-Building A Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church by Mark DeyMaz...

-Ephesians 3:1-6 in NASB

- The mystery is NOT reconciled to God
- The mystery IS reconciled to one another
- Chapter 4 unity in the church
- Chapter 5 unity in the home
- Chapter 6 is warning against spiritual attack!

- *Devil knows the credibility of our message cannot be overcome...so the next best option is to destroy the credibility of our witness!*

- Revelation 12:11

-Revelation 2:2-4 (NASB)

How diversity is achieved...Recognized

-Diversity defined...

- Personalities
- Doctrinal Beliefs

- **Spiritual Gifts**
- **Worship Preferences**
- **Politics**
- **Ethnic Cultural Norms (Arroz Con Gondules & Flan)**
- **Generational Values**
- **Socio-Economic Concerns**
- **Life Experiences**
- **Perspective by Education**

Imago Dei...are we rejecting a part of God that we don't understand? (recognizing!!!!)

-each of us bring a resemblance of God to the world!!!!

-We have ALL of His Spirit at salvation but God's image and likeness is apportioned to each of us differently.

-We love Jesus' plan for us to be in Heaven with Him but do we love His plan for who we are supposed to align ourselves with on the way there?

-John 19:26-27 (reference only)

When diversity is working...Contextualized

-Acts 2:21 (KJV)

-If you don't think contextualizing the message of the Gospel matters then you have never spent time talking to a missionary or likely have never been on a missions trip!

-When we are a diverse church, we learn how to speak to people from all different walks of life!

-(recap Peace Child)

-Acts 2:5-12

>so much here...but for sure, this is God reminding us that people need to hear the Gospel in a "language" they can understand!

-They struggled with diversity too!

- Acts 6:1-7 (ref. the Grecian widows)

- Acts 15 (ref. the Judaizers in Antioch)
- Galatians 2:11-13 (ref. Paul confronts Peter)

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Band

-He saw the unseen

>let's make sure we see people beyond the service they provide

-He united the irreconcilable

>let's heed the Biblical mandate: be slow to speak and quick to listen

-He forgave the unforgivable

>let's be as generous with our grace toward others as God is with us