

Multicultural Ministry—The Practice *

By Caleb Rosado

In the first part of this two part series, I presented the “model” or theory of multicultural ministry. In this second part, I want to suggest the “modeling ” or practice of multicultural ministry. The latter is not possible without an understanding of the former, yet the former needs to move beyond theory to praxis. How does one move from model to modeling?

The setting out of which this material arises is not some hypothetical construct, not some what-if. It is not an academic exercise, but one based on actual experience, the experience of the All Nations Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan, where I served as the founding pastor from 1979 to 1987. It was a first of its kind, to say the least, but nevertheless one that touched the various bases of ministry in a context of diversity, with over 65 different ethnic groups comprising the church membership. Though mistakes were inevitable, being a first, much was learned about what to do and not do in a real church-life situation, from which others can benefit in order to avoid “reinventing the wheel.”

One of the constants that we all work with in society is that while “change is inevitable, growth is optional” (1). This is because we don’t always understand change, and therefore have a hard time accepting it. As long as an action satisfies our needs, we will not change. Michael Fullan, from the University of Toronto, humorously suggests that: “Change can be likened to a planned journey, through uncharted waters, in a leaky boat, with a mutinous crew, and the enemy shooting at you.” I believe he is right. Though the church’s journey into the 21st century is spiritually charted, *socially* it is not. It is in this realm where much of the structural conflict resides, even theological conflict, which often arises out of a desire for power and conflicting value systems. The practice of multicultural ministry will go a long way to ease this conflict, while in some ways giving rise to other types of conflict.

The practice of multicultural ministry begins with a closer examination of the “Seven Ps”, the factors which make a church multicultural introduced in the first part of this two-part series. The Seven Ps are:

- Perspectives
- Policies
- Purposes
- Programs
- Personnel
- Practices
- Power

The Practice of Multicultural Ministry—2

These Seven Ps or factors are to implement the following four imperatives :

- (1) Reflect the heterogeneity of the church membership;
- (2) Be sensitive to the needs of the various groups comprising the church;
- (3) Incorporate their contributions to the overall mission of the church;
- (4) Create a cultural and social ambiance that is inclusive and empowers all groups in the church.

These four imperatives form the basis of multicultural ministry. In other words, each of the Seven Ps respectively implements these imperatives. How? It is here where we find the core of the practice of multicultural ministry. Before I take these Seven Factors and Four Imperatives apart, there is one additional “P” that first needs to be discussed—*the Pastor*. This P holds the key to the interrelatedness of the other two components—the Seven Ps and the Four Imperatives.

The Pastor:

The crucial element for the effective implementation of multicultural ministry is the pastor. Without a knowledgeable pastor one has chaos in the local church. In most situations of church ministry a local pastor is necessary. In some situations, as is the case in many fields, especially outside North America, where church growth is exploding, the role of the pastor in the direct day-to-day administration of local churches is almost unnecessary due to rapid growth. In such fields the pastor is primarily an evangelist.

When it comes to multicultural ministry, at least presently, in the formative stages of the development of multicultural ministry throughout the church, the presence and role of the pastor is most vital. The best analogy to describe the role of such a person is that a “coach”—one who guides the play on the field.

Why is the pastor the central player in multicultural ministry (MM)? I suggest two reasons. The first is because MM is a recent, innovative method of ministry that is entering uncharted waters. All Nations was the first church *deliberately* established to reach out across cultures with an inclusive model of ministry. There are few successful models out there. And yet this is the direction much of the church is going, especially in urban centers and around SDA institutions. Secondly, such ventures cannot be left to chance. They need strong direction, focus and leadership. Left to local church boards, or a laissez-faire style of leadership, the church will never move beyond the basic level of exclusivism. It is not that people are deliberately racist—though

many good Christians are—it's just that people tend to be more comfortable with "their own kind" (2). This is what Gordon W. Allport called, "The Principle of Least Effort" (3). This is an exclusionist style of life, based on an economy of hate, that pares down one's world to a small 'safety island' of affiliation, where the least effort is expended in forming group affiliations, because only those groups that share one's expectations and values are deemed worthy of existence. People tend to gravitate toward those groups that require the least amount of effort for interaction, thereby enabling them to expend the least amount of cultural capital in order to get along. But one reason for this is that Christians simply haven't been exposed to models of ministry different from traditional, homogeneous types.

In view of this, what kind of pastor is needed? First of all, one who has experienced a *paradigm shift*—a different mindset that moves away from old explanations that no longer explain reality, resulting in a redefinition of taken for granted boundaries due to the emergence of a new model or paradigm, which returns everyone back to zero—equality. It is the old problem of new wine and old wineskins. MM is new wine that requires new wineskins, both in terms of mindset and methodology. A pastor that seeks to launch into MM without a new paradigm—a new way of perceiving reality—will bring in old wineskins that will crack under pressure. Let me make it plain. The pastor cannot be racist, classist, sexist (Galatians 3:28), or ageist. Meaning that the pastor cannot favor one group, either by race/ethnicity, social class, gender or age over another. Neither can the pastor select his or her battles, choosing to deal with racism, but not with sexism, addressing the needs of families, but neglecting the needs of singles. S/he needs an *inclusive* rather than an *exclusive* approach to ministry, which cuts across *all* human needs.

A second quality as to the kind of pastor needed is one that is *open to change*. The pastor cannot be like the dog in the Arab proverb, that woofs, woofs while the caravan moves on. In an increasingly educated congregation, the pastor needs to be sharp, relevant and in touch with people's changing needs. She or he cannot be in the position of saying: "There go my people, I must follow them, for I am their leader." This does not mean that everything from the past is not of value, for the opposite is true. Around the turn of the past century, a period also marked by dynamic change, the great Spanish-American philosopher, George Santayana, wrote about how people should respond to change. "Progress," wrote Santayana, "far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. . . . and when experience is not retained, . . . infancy is perpetual." Infants and children have no memory of the past since they have no past to remember. This is why they make so many mistakes because they cannot call on memory, on "retentiveness," to avoid making the same blunders. Only mature adults can pull from the past that which allows

them to avoid the same errors in the future. Santayana then goes on to declare perhaps his most famous lines, the dictum: “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it” (4). The pastor’s openness to change is based on the fact that the same old mistakes of the past, because of exclusivism, cannot be repeated as we enter into the 21st century.

A third quality as to the kind of pastor needed is one who is *willing to share power*. Multicultural ministry requires that power be shared in the church across the various groups. Power (the 7th P) is the most seductive force in the world today. Who holds power in a church, and is this power shared is a crucial factor in the success of any ministry, but especially multicultural ministry. And a pastor who tends to hoard power is taking a quick, short step to destroying any kind of effective ministry. Thus pastors need to park their egos and experience a genuine oneness of inclusiveness with their people.

Fourth is the need for a pastor who has a *positive image of self in terms of ethnic identity*. This is a most vital quality, since a pastor who has a poor sense of self-acceptance with regard to his or her racial/ethnic identity, may have a difficult time accepting others who might be different or similar to him or her. Much of the violence in today’s society is a result of self-hate (5). A pastor with a poor ethnic self-image may lean toward negating his/her cultural heritage and seek to pass as someone or something else. When such a person is placed in charge of a multicultural church problems such as ethnocentrism, exclusion and subtle racism will emerge. The pastor who is still struggling with his/her own identity as a result of racism, will not be of much value to the many members who are also struggling with the same concerns, especially the youth. This is because *racism is the outward manifestation of an inward system of values deliberately designed to structure privilege by means of an objective, differential, and unequal treatment of people, for the purpose of social advantage over scarce resources. This values system gives rise to an ideology of supremacy which justifies power of position by placing a negative meaning and value on perceived or actual biological/cultural differences*. Racism is thus an intentional action in the church perpetuating conflict and disunity.

Why is all this important? Because to the extent that I hate or belittle myself, to the same extent I will hate or belittle another. After all, didn’t Jesus give us the operating principle of self-acceptance when He said: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39)? If all I feel toward myself is self-hate and rejection, what am I going to feel toward you? The same! Its the old psychological adage: “I’m not okay, you’re not okay”; which needs to be turned into an “I’m okay, you’re okay.” We live in a society that in part measures the social worth of people by the color of their skin, as well as by their social

class. Because of this many people, especially People of Color, get caught up negating their true identity. Leonard Harman Robbins describes it this way.

How a minority
Reaching majority,
Seizing authority,
Hates a minority!

Pastors are not exempt from such racial/ethnic denial. I know many a pastor and church leader who has created havoc for others because of their low ethnic self-image and a desire to “pass.” When such a person is placed in charge of a multicultural church problems such as ethnocentrism, exclusion and subtle racism will emerge. The pastor who does not have a handle on his/her own problems of acceptance in this area, will not be of much value to the many members who will also be struggling with the same concerns.

Just because a person is of color does not necessarily mean they are multicultural—some are most exclusive. There is nothing about a person’s skin color that suggests that with color comes an innate knowledge of culture, compassion, caring, or cross-cultural sensitivity. Racism is not about color; it is about *Power!* It can thus afflict anyone of any color, community, culture, or country, who craves power above the need to respect the other. Since most people in the world live in segregated existences, most people have very little understanding of the way of life of others, and thus tend to be biased toward their own group. When such people, because of social conditions or the gospel, seek to come together in a multicultural situation, problems will immediately emerge. A pastor who does not have it together in terms of his/her own ethnic identity, will exacerbate things. As Derrick Bell from Harvard reminds us: “The ends of diversity are not served by people who look black and thinks white” (6). Keep in mind that conversion to Christ does not always resolve this problem. This was Peter’s problem with Cornelius (Acts 10) and in Antioch (Galatians 2), (7). However, realizing that Christ accepts me as I am, and that God does not make ugly, will go a long way in enabling a person to accept the racial/ethnic self God has created (8).

A fifth quality in a pastor is the need for *understanding the sociocultural reality* behind ministry in today’s society. Most pastors are quite knowledgeable about theology, biblical issues, church history, church polity, administration, sermon preparation, pastoral care, etc. But many do not always understand interhuman relations, especially across gender, racial, ethnic, social differences, nor the social changes that are impacting our world society. Check out your personal library. If as a pastor you have more books on theology,

biblical studies, preaching, and church related issues, than on psychology, sociology and anthropology—that which enables you to understand the people to whom the message is addressed, their society and culture—than your knowledge base is skewed and unbalanced. You have a one-sided understanding of ministry. You therefore need to understand interhuman relations, especially across gender, racial, ethnic, socio-economic differences, as well as the social changes impacting our world society.

It is in these areas where more of the pastor's time is spent rather than on theological issues, areas that need an understanding of compassion and sociocultural sensitivity. Here is where church administrators have to wrestle with some of the most sensitive and divisive issues the church is currently facing. The action at the 56 General Conference Session in Utrecht, Holland, July 5, 1995, with regard to the ordination of women, is an example of the church wrestling with change. But this often has more to do with the realm of sociology and social psychology, areas in which pastors get little to no training (9). With these qualities in hand, how does a pastor go about the practice of multicultural ministry? The answer is the Seven Ps.

The Seven Ps:

The first step in developing an effective MM program is the implementation of *Perspective*—grasping a vision, a sense of direction, a new paradigm of where the church is headed. Here is where the church needs vision, for “*without vision a people perish*” (Proverbs 29:18). Vision is a most essential dynamic an organization needs to have, for from it proceed everything else. An organization can have a good *internal climate*: clear goals, well shaped programs, and skilled workers who relate and communicate well, and still cease to function properly if it has not taken into account its *external climate*, the ways in which it is being influenced by the larger society of which it is a part, and the other environmentally impacting systems within it.

This is the role of vision. The problem is we don't always know what is meant by “vision.” Vision answers the “Where?” question: Where are we headed? It focuses on the direction society and the organization is headed. *Vision is the bifocal ability to see what lies ahead (farsightedness), as well as the various impediments in the present (near sightedness), and how to avoid them in order to arrive at the future.* It must be bifocal, for focus on the future at the expense of the present, or vice versa, will result in loss and in a detour in the mission of the church. This entails having an understanding of where society is headed, how our cities are changing, the demographic shifts in the neighborhood, the membership shifts in the Adventist church, both in the local and global dimensions (10). If an

organization is not aware nor has an understanding of the social forces impacting change, such as the political climate, economic conditions, demographic changes, and the social environment, it can quickly become a historical, social and religious anachronism.

I need to stress again, that multicultural ministry is not an exercise in “church bussing”—forced integration! It is the acceptance and free expression of the rich diversity in the church. It is appropriate to give a clear definition of diversity at this point: The concept of “diversity” refers to the biological, cultural, physical and socio-economic differences (such as race/ethnicity, age, gender, disabilities, socioeconomic, education, and values) that people bring to the church body, which have the potential of giving rise to conflicts, but if managed well can result in a synergetic unity in diversity, where the effect of *all working together* is greater than the sum total of all the parts working independently. The key to this understanding of diversity is Respect. Respect is the process whereby the “other” is treated with deference, courtesy and compassion in an endeavor to safeguard the integrity, dignity, value and social worth of the individual. *It means treating people the way they want to be treated.* It is a lack of respect for others, no matter their position or the differences they bring to an institution, which gives rise to most of the conflicts in organizations. All of this is part of the Perspective factor, which is implemented with the Four Imperatives in mind, which take into account the diversity of the church.

The second factor is *Policies*. Policies answer the “What” question: What are we becoming? It focuses on the end behaviours—the Values—that an organization needs to reflect. In view of its vision a multicultural church needs to develop operational policies that take into account the Four Imperatives. The reason for these policies is that the church must make a *conscious and deliberate* effort to model the gospel principles of inclusiveness in its approach to ministry and the behaviours it desires to model. Such efforts will not come by coincidence, for the societal influences of unconscious prejudice and discrimination are too strong. Thus, while some members may not see themselves as prejudiced, for others who are sensitive in this area, their behavior will surely appear discriminatory. It is not that members are deliberately discriminating. It is just that such behavior is so much a part of the social fabric of our society, that people unconsciously discriminate without realizing it. Thus, an inclusive church must be *consciously sensitive* in all its actions, until which time the principles of God’s Kingdom have been internalized within the body of believers, and their actions, unconsciously, reflect the practice of the Kingdom of God.

In order to bring this about, several policy actions need to be taken. First, guidelines should be developed which govern the selection of

committees. When the first Committee to Select the Nominating Committee was chosen, I gave them guidelines in the selection of the Nominating Committee, so that this latter committee would reflect the church in terms of: age, ethnicity, gender and social class. The reason behind this was that if committees are to represent the thinking of the church, they should be a microcosm of the church. A Board of Elders, all male and white, for example, for sure is not a reflection of any church, except a monastic order. Thus, the Nominating Committee of the church should not only be multicultural, but should also see to it that people from different age, ethnic and gender groups are placed in the various offices and departments of the church. This action is not so much on the basis of representation but on qualification. Representation is the basis of the old paradigm, which one must take into account, but not make the foremost criteria for leadership. The elders of the church should also reflect the heterogeneity of the church, both in gender, age and ethnic makeup.

Other policy matters included the following:

1. Leaders as servants.
2. The elders, as spiritual leaders of the flock, are to be selected from among the spiritually mature of the congregation. Such selection of elders should be sensitive in representing the church in the areas of age, gender and ethnicity. (At All Nations we also had some youth serving as elders, as well as women—seven women the first year in 1979).
3. No stratified divisions between clergy and laity resulting in *status-positions*, but rather, distinct *role-functions* based on an egalitarian unity in diversity in Christ.

What this latter one meant was that titles, such Dr., Elder, Pastor, Brother, Sister, etc., were discarded. In the Seventh-day Adventist Church status is often achieved through education. And around academic communities, people like to flaunt their degrees and titles. At All Nations we told people to leave their egos and degrees in the parking lot, for inside the church, we were one family. A sense of family was fostered, since no one person was seen as having a more important position than another person, only one with greater responsibility, but not importance. This seemed like a little matter at first, but it made a tremendous difference in the way people related to one another. The point was to reflect the Gospel.

The third "P" is *Purposes*. Purposes answers the "Why" question: Why do we exist? This addresses the issue of Mission. The mission of the church can only be understood in light of where the church and society is headed and the values it seeks to emulate. Most churches just focus on their mission. If they have a Statement, it is usually a Mission Statement, but no Vision or Values Statements. Yet, without both a Vision and Values Statements, a Mission Statement will have

very little significance. Mission, the *raison d'etre* of an organization, is built on an understanding of where society and the institution are headed and the kind of values or behaviours it is desirous of implementing. Without this the Mission of the church simply become a self-serving agenda, where the church is focused on itself, with little understanding of the direction it should go. Mission statements are *dynamic* documents not *static* statements. They are working documents, continually under review, not museum pieces to be memorialized on walls.

The fourth factor is *Programs*. Programs answer the "How" question: How shall we do it? It is here where all Four Imperatives especially need to be implemented. First, *the worship service* should be sensitive to the different cultural expressions and styles of worship, and provide an outlet for these, such as in the music, people praying in their own language with translation, and in the preaching of the Word, giving opportunity for women and persons of different ethnic backgrounds to address the congregation. As part of the worship service, then, creativity in worship ought to be encouraged instead of stifled. "Worship me in any cloth," God tells us, "for I am not tailor-made. Who told you that I was?" (11). An inclusive ministry will see to it that the leaders of the morning worship service also reflect the heterogeneity of the body, across boundaries of sex, class, gender, race and age. At All Nations we had a Sabbath evening Vespers Service where we celebrated the cultures of All Nations, a different one each month.

The Sabbath *morning sermon* in a multicultural church is a special occasion to instruct the church in the basic principles of the Gospel in harmony with the Kingdom of God, which militate against the various "isms" that create friction and division in the church. At All Nations Church I would preach series of sermons on various themes to tear down the dividing walls of hostility, thereby giving the Gospel a new dimension rarely discussed on Sabbath. The result was a new understanding of the mission and ministry of the Person of Jesus Christ. Those messages eventually became the three books I published (12).

To keep the mission of the church ever before the people, in 1979, the year the church was established, I inaugurated the All Nations Lectures on Church and Society. Its purpose was to "address issues of societal importance that impact the mission of the church." For the most part, the majority of the speakers were non-Seventh-day Adventist Christians who were of national renown and doing something of significance for the Kingdom of God. Among them were some of the biggest names in the religious world—John Howard Yoder, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Dennis Goulet, Desmond Tutu's daughter (Naomi Tutu-Sievers), Enrique Dussel, the late Orlando

Costas, Justo Gonzalez and Samuel Betances (who inaugurated the series), as well as leading Adventists. The Lectures took place twice a year, in the Fall and Spring, and greatly impacted the community and university. This is an idea that any church can implement effectively. Our purpose was to also cross the barriers of religious exclusivism, quite prevalent in Adventism. Our goal was to learn from what God was doing among God's other children. It also became an opportunity for many of these folk to hear about Adventism under most favorable and positive circumstances. The lectures were quite successful.

Because of the strength of the social forces of prejudice, racism and sexism in the larger society, the clear mission of what a multicultural church needs to be like should constantly be kept before the people. Otherwise, the old biases will take over. As I told my members on a regular basis: "In the midst of a rapid moving stream one cannot tread water, for the current will carry you away. One must go against the current, not always head-on but at an angle, in order to make progress."

Because of the potential for intercultural conflict in a multicultural congregation, a church ought to set up a Human Relations Council, which is called as needed to deal with sources of conflict before these become major problems. Workshops on non-racist and non-sexist approaches to early childhood, youth and adult education should be designed in conjunction with the Human Relations Council, to educate department leaders and church officers for a better understanding of one another. This committee was an active committee at All Nations Church.

At every step of the process the following four key questions have to be answered:

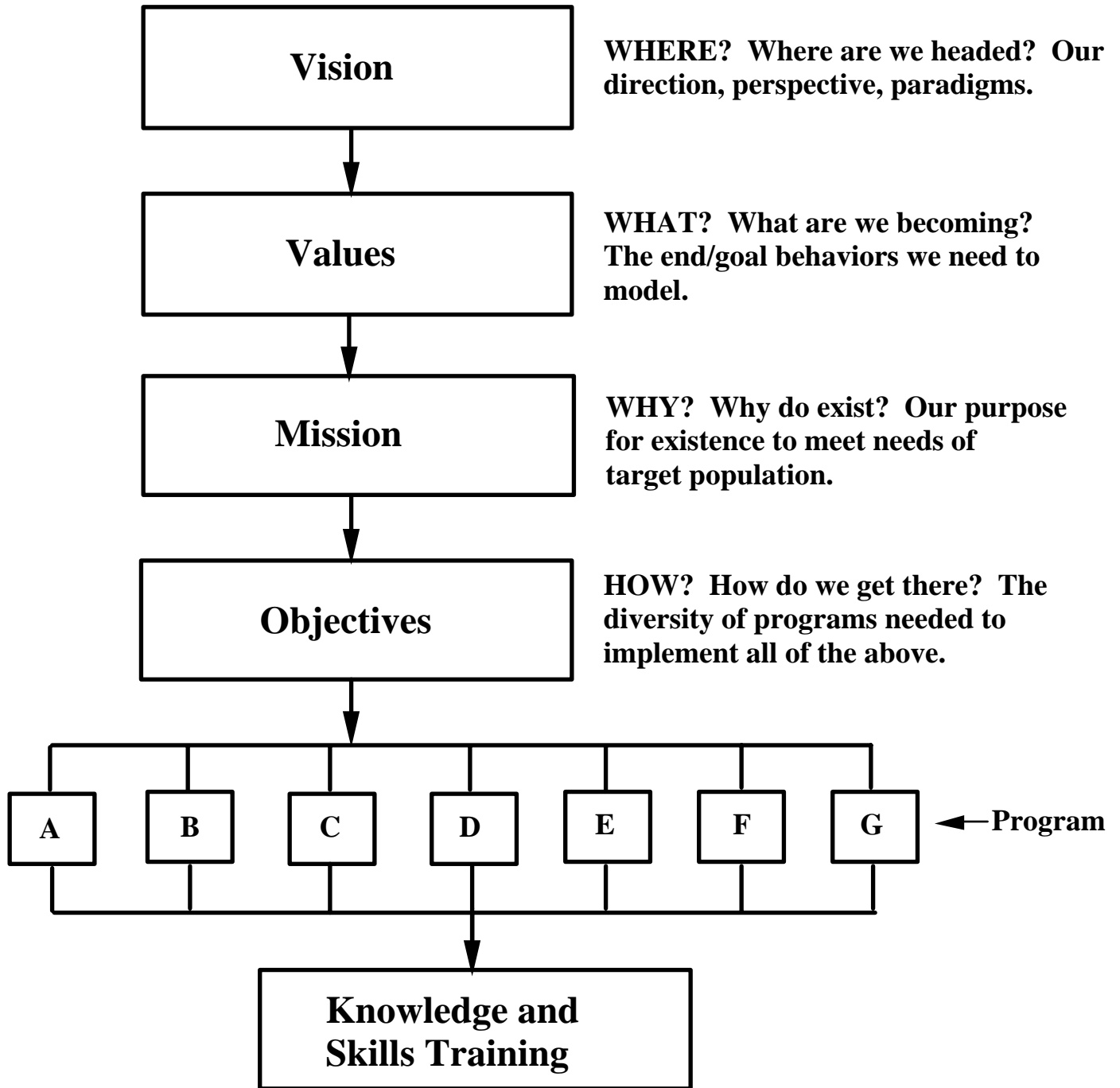
THE FOUR CRUCIAL QUESTIONS

- The **Where** Question —**Vision:** *"Where are we headed?"*
- The **What** Question —**Values:** *"What are we becoming?"*
- The **Why** Question —**Mission:** *"Why do we exist?"*
- The **How** Question —**Programs:** *"How do we get there?"*

In the following graphic (see adjoining chart) these four questions are laid in order of their development. For an organization to effect change, these four questions need to be answered in their proper order, for each builds on the other. To jump to programs without first addressing vision, values and mission is to incur disaster. Churches often develop programs that are functionally autonomous, in that while the programs may be good in themselves, they are not related to the mission of the church, nor to the values it endeavors to model.

And neither of these is remotely related to the vision of where society and the church is headed. The result is a local or world church functioning in society totally oblivious to what is happening in the world it is seeking to reach. Once these questions are answered than appropriate training, giving people the right knowledge and skills to implement programs can be undertaken. Thus the mission of the church must be consistent with its vision and values.

PROCESS FOR EFFECTING CHANGE IN AN ORGANIZATION



The process for developing a Vision Statement and Values Statement differs from the one used for a Mission Statement.

Developing the Vision Statement is the responsibility of the pastor, with the assistance of the Board of Elders or Church Board. On the other hand, the Values Statement and the Mission Statement are developed by the entire church membership working together in small groups. The importance of the three is that the first (vision) is where the pastor gives the church a sense of the direction it needs to go in view of changes in the society. With this vision in mind, the church members, under the leadership of the pastor, go on to develop a Statement of Values that helps the church model behaviors reflective of the Gospel and a Statement of Mission that depicts their purpose for existence, both of which they can take ownership (13).

Why does a church need all three statements, addressing vision, values and mission? Lewis Coser's statement in the first article gives the rationale for this. Coser declares: "The greater the structural or cultural diversity of those who unite in a coalition, the more their interests other than in the immediate purpose are likely to be divergent if not antagonistic" (14). The value of this statement will be seen immediately by anyone who has been involved in multicultural ministry. Groups differ in their interests. When the differences are due cultural/racial diversity, the greater will be the potential for antagonism within the group. This is why the McGavran School of Church Growth has advocated the Homogeneous Unit Principle: "Men [its not only racist, but sexist] like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic or class barriers" (15). A homogeneous group, in terms of race and class, is a potentially less conflictual group than a heterogeneous one. However, the Gospel does not save people *in* their sins, but *from* sins of segregation, racism, and exclusivism. The "dividing wall of hostility" (Ephesians 2:14) between ethnic groups that Jesus broke down, and which society still maintains, must be torn down again in the Church (16).

Advocates of the Homogeneous Unit Principle are really operating on the basis of the old Supreme Court law, prior to the Civil Rights Movement—"separate but equal," where the emphasis is more on the separate than on the equal. God's ideal must become the practice of the Church. Thus, the Heterogeneous Unit Principle must become the *modus operandi* of the Church (17). Simply stated, the principle is: *The Gospel challenges and empowers people to accept Christ across all social barriers*. If the Gospel means anything, it means *change*. We cannot accept Christ and still continue in our old ways of behavior.

Coser tells us where the solution is to be found. "Such a coalition, if it is not to fall apart, must attempt to keep close to the purposes for which it was formed" (18). The only way to keep a culturally diverse group from focusing exclusively on its differences is by enabling it "to keep close to the purposes for which it was formed." If there is any group

that must know up front why it exists, it is a multicultural congregation. Without this purpose for existence clear in everyone's mind, differences will creep in which will divide and deviate the group, much as what happened to the Early Church in Acts 6, where the Hellenist widows were being neglected in the distribution of goods. Thus, the need for a clear Mission Statement based on a singular Vision and kingdom Values.

I personally believe that it is virtually impossible to maintain over an extended period of time a multicultural congregation without a precise Statement of Mission based on a clear Vision and a set of operational Values reflective of God's kingdom, different from the values of this world, which tend to be exclusive and exploitative. A church without Vision, Values and Mission Statements is like a ship without a rudder, with no destination port in mind, tossed here and there by the forces in the environment where it finds itself. A multicultural congregation, by its very nature, will find itself in potentially more turbulent waters due to its ethnic makeup, and the influence which a socially divided society will have on the members within. This is the reason for a different set of operational values, which continually place before the church the question: "What are we becoming?" Without a Vision Statement, a Values Statement and a Mission Statement—the first gives the church direction, the second gives it character, the third keeps it on course—the possibility of shipwreck and self-destruction is an ever-present reality. Thus, the Vision, Values and Mission Statements need to be regarded as dynamic working documents and not museum pieces merely to be displayed. The All Nations' Mission and Values Statements, for example, were printed on the backside of the Sabbath bulletin for all to reflect on its message.

The fifth factor is *Personnel*. An inclusive ministry will see to it that the leaders of the church also reflect the heterogeneity of the body, across sex, class, gender, race and age, in all the various departments and positions. The Nominating Committee ensured this. This meant that women as well as men were elected to the offices of elders and deacons, *and ordained*. The first seven women elders were ordained in 1979, when the first Nominating Committee recommended the first officers of the church. In multicultural ministry, one cannot be selective of the areas one wants to do battle against. Evil must be attacked at all levels, and not just focus on one's favorite causes. This includes sexist language in all aspects of church life. Thus, the church was trained in the correct usage of inclusive language, which was then modeled in the various areas of church life. Some changes were: Chairperson for chairman, deacon for deaconess, humankind for mankind. This all was part of the personnel factor, making sure that all members in the family saw themselves included in all areas of the church. This is because the pew needs to see itself reflected in the pulpit and in the programs.

Women not only served as elders, but also as Head Elders. Children, youth, the disabled, and the elderly were all given a part to play, in the various committees, leading out in worship, and contributing to the overall success of the church. The goal was for the personnel of the church to reflect the Four Imperatives in a natural and not strained manner.

The sixth factor is *Practice*. This is the most crucial of the Five Factors or Ps, for it is here where everything can fall apart. One way of doing this, in addition to what has already been mentioned, is by incorporating into the very structure of the morning service the experience of fellowship. The act of worship in a multicultural congregation should take on a new dimension structured around the concept of “one family” experiencing fellowship. When one belongs to a congregation which is racially, culturally, socially and educationally diverse, the experience of worship must be approached seriously so as to be sensitive to the needs of the worshippers. Such a congregation should take to heart the words of the Apostle John—“so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3). Fellowship at All Nations was made an integral part of the worship experience in the following manner:

1. Emphasizing in every aspect of congregational life the concept of “family.”
2. Placing before the people a written program that gives a “we” emphasis to the service—We Gather, We Praise, We Proclaim, We Respond, We Fellowship, We Believe.
3. Treating all first-time visitors not as guests, but as friends about to be initiated into the family.
4. Giving the entire congregation at the beginning of the worship service the opportunity to move out of their seats into the aisles and, in whatever manner each is comfortable, exchange signs and words of God's peace as an expression of fellowship and caring.
5. Spontaneous singing led out by the pianist during the gathering of the offering and prior to the children's story.
6. Not dismissing people at the close of the service in an orderly manner, but encouraging them to linger awhile to “pass the peace” and share with each other the worship they have experienced.
7. Addressing each other on a first-name basis, without the use of titles, which tend to create class and social divisions within God's family, while maintaining distance and separation.

The Seventh and final factor is *Power*. What is power? Power, in its essence, is—*the capacity, ability, and willingness to act*. “One does

not have power until one has all three,” declares Robert C. Linthicum. There are three forms of power:

1. *Power as Force*: The capacity to act in a manner that influences the behavior of others even against their wishes. This is the classic definition of power derived from Max Weber.
2. *Power as Choice*: The capacity to act in a manner that influences the behavior of others without violating free moral choice.
3. *True Power*: The capacity to know that you can, but you don't.

Jesus expressed both power No. 2 and No. 3. So must the pastor. If power No. 1 is expressed the result will be force, which belittles, degrades, and dehumanizes. The ability to share power, and to know when, where, and how to use it, and with whom, is a hallmark of leadership.

Such a deliberate structuring of fellowship into the worship experience of the church creates the basis for Christian service in the community. At All Nations Church there is a sign above the main entrance door as people exit into the outside that reads: “You are now entering the mission field.” As the church moves out of its door to enter the mission field, serving the community becomes a “natural,” for the members have just experienced a worship service where real needs were met.

Once in the community such a congregation will serve with ease all peoples, whether black, brown or white, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, for it has come out of an experience of acceptance, where there is neither black nor white, rich nor poor, male nor female, but oneness in Jesus Christ.

All of these factors are what make an inclusive ministry a living reality. And a church that approaches its mission from an inclusive manner, will have no difficulty becoming a successful multicultural congregation.

A New Paradigm:

What these “Seven Ps” are demanding is a new paradigm, not simply a new package. For too long when change has been needed, organizations tend to merely repackage themselves and thus give the “appearance” of change and of sensitivity, but not the reality. *Its still the same old box*, only the wrapping has changed. The box—the exclusive structure—stays the same no matter the outward appearance. It is this very situation which gives rise to conflicts in organizations that are diverse, for people want more than cosmetic

changes. Thus, organizations tend to give “the illusion of participation, but , , , no sharing of power” (19).

If the Seventh-day Adventist Church is going to live consistently with the Gospel demands of inclusiveness and equality, it will have to, as Karl Mannheim suggests, “resort to breaking up the existing social structure” within the church in order not “to fall short of his own nobler motives.” For example, the present structure which minimizes the role of women, even excluding them from many positions of leadership, is not consistent with the new order of redemption of the Gospel in Galatians 3:28. Our present segregated conferences structures, as reflected in separate White and Black Conferences, while they may have been appropriate at one time, no longer reflect the needs of a changing society nor the multicultural market to whom the church is seeking to minister. But let me make it very clear: *As long as our present semi-exclusive structures continue to persist, there will always be a need for separate conference structures.* Yet some feel we need to get rid of Black Conferences. Why is the onus of the responsibility for change placed on African Americans, as if they were the ones who created segregated existences? Black Conferences came into existence because White structures were exclusive, especially when it came to leadership. Let me reiterate, as long as these structures continue to exist, even Latinos may soon be demanding their own structures. *It is the best that can be done under present conditions!* But, is this the way for the church to go into the 21st century? Absolutely not! A new age demands new methods, new models and new paradigms. Are we now ready for a “better way” that God promised us through Ellen White? (20). I think so, and I believe multicultural ministry is the model that points the way.

There are three methods of implementing change that the church can take, each one more inclusive than the next (21).

1. The introduction of diversity modules into an existing structure—the Normative method—where the old paradigm of exclusion is left intact.
2. The addition of diversity as a total dimension of existing structures and processes—the Reformative method—where the old paradigm remains but with new attitudes.
3. The reconceptualisation of the total culture/structure of an organization according to the *modus operandi* of diversity—the Transformative method—resulting in a new paradigm of inclusion.



These three methods are not sequential, they are either or methods. One simply decides which one to implement, and goes with it. The first method is one where diversity is accommodated within the present structures. No effort is made to change the wineskins, the structures, since these are regarded as *normative*, the traditional way things have always been done. The only difference now is that one makes token concessions to “accommodate” dissenting and disgruntled groups, which gives the illusion of change, by introducing diversity modules. It tends to be paternalistic, and gives people a sense of, “Hey, be happy with what you got.” The existence of Black and White conferences is an example of the first method. The approach here is to put a new wrapping on the same old box; nothing else changes. The old paradigm of exclusion is left intact, since the concern is with maintaining as normative an internal resistance to sharing power, while desiring to look multicultural from the outside. This is First Order Change or Linear Change, where the concern is with fine-tuning, adjusting, fixing, and improving a system which, in itself, remains essentially the same.

The second method is slightly better but not by much. It looks at the overall structure and recommends making diversity an integral part of the total dimension of what presently exists. In this sense it is *reformative*, in that it is an improvement which on the surface looks good, since it seeks to make diversity part and parcel of the whole structure. The current concern with diversity and the integrating of minorities and women into leadership positions, and with women’s ordination, are both examples of the second method. Here, the approach is to remove the lid of the box and change the contents within the box, along with a new wrapping, but to leave the box structure itself unchanged. Thus the basic structure of the organization has not essentially changed, it is still the same old paradigm—the same old box with new wrappings and new contents. It has merely been added to, it has been reformed, with a new attitude about diversity and inclusiveness. The vast majority of the efforts of organizations to work with diversity today fit here. Both of these methods merely place new wine in old wineskins. The fact that spillage results should not surprise anyone, but because of a short-sighted vision and a wrong set of values it usually does. This is Second Order or Circular Change, where the focus is on adding selected elements of more complex thinking by “talking the talk”

without fully "walking the walk" and then returning to the base system when stressed.

The third method is an effort to step back take a good look at where society is headed (vision statement) and then look at the organization and ask, "What values does our behavior reflect?" (values statement), and "Where do we fit in all of this?" (mission statement). For the church it also means looking at the Gospel seriously in terms of its demands. It means looking at the box, cracked and warped because of the contents, and asking oneself: "How can we completely redesign this thing to be consistent with the challenges faced?" "If we were to start fresh from the ground up, in what way would our organization be different from what it presently is, in order to meet the new demands of change?" With this information in hand, the third method necessitates examining the total structure and culture of the church (local, national, as well as global), and then transforming it in harmony with the new paradigm of inclusion, "unity in diversity in Christ" as an expression of *The Principle of Inclusiveness—Since we are one with God, we are also one with each other, equal before both* (John 17:23; Acts 10; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:14-22). No amount of social tinkering will do to fix it. It means creating a structural and cultural power shift, which will give rise to a new way of doing ministry, consistent with the times and with the Gospel. This is Third Order Change or Spiral Change. It is the awakening of the next level of thinking to reframe the conditions and re-align human systems consistent with their vision and values. As John Edser says, "Life is not a cycle, it's a spiral, with quantum steps."

What the Gospel demands is this Third Order approach. This does not mean forced integration, but a new way of experiencing the grace of God. It may very well be that this idealism will not be achievable this side of heaven, but the church should nevertheless strive for it. Anything short of this is merely a reworking of the old paradigm of exclusion. What the church needs is a restructuring according to the Principle of Inclusiveness of the Gospel—new wineskins to handle the new wine. It thus becomes one where there are no Black or White Conferences, but multicultural ones; no male and female positions, but positions based on spirit-filled capabilities; no exclusive congregations, but inclusive ones that welcome and value the diverse family of God with all its gifts.

One way of bringing about this structural equality may be through technology. Michael Crichton, in *Disclosure*, brings out this possibility, when he suggests that, technological firms today are "selling" what both religion and revolution have promised but have not been able to deliver—*freedom!*—freedom from the body, freedom from race, gender, country and nationality. Religion has been a force

that, while proclaiming the oneness of the human creation, has been the most pervasive factor in society in creating and maintaining exclusion. Revolutions have been no better, proclaiming the need for change, but often ending up as the biggest opponents of change. Technology will move learning “from print to digital displays to virtual environments.” Thus, computer technology may very well be the means by which to bring about a restructuring of society, with a level playing field for all.

A more Gospel-directed method is consider the following five guiding questions for all planning and decision-making in the church:

1. Does the action taken or about to be taken reflect the Gospel?
2. What would Jesus do in this situation?
3. Have the people who will be effected most by this proposed plan or decision, been consulted for their input.
4. Without regard to age, culture, disabilities, ethnicity, gender, race or seniority, is this the *best* person for the job?
5. Which form of power is being promoted by this plan or decision?
 - a. The power of my self?
 - b. The power of my group?
 - c. The power of the Holy Spirit?

What would happen to the church if we lived and operated by these five questions and used them as a litmus test for all church action? Would this move the church more toward reflecting the character of God or that of the prince of this world? You decide.

This is what the Early Church did. When the Early Church faced a similar problem of inequality between Palestinian Jews and Hellenist Jews in Acts 6, due to ethnic prejudice, the church merely restructured in line with the Gospel. The results of this restructuring of labor, in order to preserve the unity of the church, was an immediate increase in the number of converts to Christ. Notice an interesting change in situation. Prior to the restructuring, the Lord “added” to the church daily. “And the Lord *added* to their number day by day those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). But after the restructuring, the Bible declares: “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples *multiplied* greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7). Amazing results!

Acts 6 is the model for the church in the third millennium. What is at issue here is not just sensitivity to other cultures and racial/ethnic groups that are marginal to the dominant culture, but an entire *paradigm shift*—a different mindset—which gives rise to a whole new way of seeing the world, as inclusive. It brings a change in all dimensions of church-life, so as to create a Christ-centered

environment inclusive of all, safe for differences and one where everyone benefits. Paul Kivel reminds us that, "If any policy, practice or program labeled multicultural increases exclusion, tokenism, false representation or the unequal distribution of resources, then it is not an effective strategy for reducing racial injustice" (22). Thus the basic measure of how well we are managing diversity is this: "If when all is said and done, you look around and notice that everyone looks like you, you have done it wrong!" (23).

The Competition Is Over:

One of the things that I enjoy most in viewing the Olympics, is the contrast between the opening and closing ceremonies. In the opening ceremonies the athletes come parading into the stadium by countries, under their separate national flags, beginning with Greece and ending with the host country. In the closing ceremonies, the athletes once again enter the stadium, but this time as *one group*, under the Olympic flag, with no national divisions. Why? *Because the competition is over!*

This is what the world does not realize, and the church has failed to manifest, that because of Christ, the competition is over. Christ has competed on our behalf, the gold has been won, we are all winners and now *one* in Christ under the blood-stained banner of the Crucified. This is the message the world desperately needs to hear, that in Christ, *the competition is over!* The opportunity to convey this message to the world through multicultural ministry, comprises the frontier of mission for the church in the 21st century. May the church have the courage to enter this new frontier.

References:

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[1] Michael Fullan, School of Education, University of Toronto.

[2] See C. Peter Wagner, *Our Kind of People* (Atlanta: John Know

Press, 1979).

[3] Gordon W. Allport,

[4] George Santayana, *Reason in Common Sense*, Vol. 1 of "The Life of Reason," (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1980 [First published in 1905]), p. 284.

[5] See Caleb Rosado, "Violence—Power With an Attitude," *Message* May-June 1994; also published in *Christianity Today* as "American the Brutal," August 15, 1994. See also Nathan McCall, *Makes Me Want to Holler* (New York: Random House, 1993).

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[7] See Caleb Rosado, "The Sin of Saint Peter," *Ministry* June 1994.

[8] See Caleb Rosado, "In Search of Identity," *El Centinela*, Special Bilingual Issue, September 1990; also "The Significance of Galilee to the Mission of the Church," Lake Union *Ministerial Digest*, Volume 3. No. 2, Spring 1985.

[9] For a discussion of the socio-psychological factors that influence our interpretation of Scripture with regard to women's ordination, see Caleb Rosado, "How Culture Affects Our View of Scripture," *Spectrum* 25:2, 1995.

[10] For a broad discussion of the societal changes and major paradigm shifts impacting our global society, see Caleb Rosado, "Challenges of Change and the Church Mission," in Delbert W. Baker, Editor, *Make Us One: Celebrating Spiritual Unity in the Midst of Cultural Diversity*, (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1995, pp. 39-59.

[11] A poem Wintley Phipps shared with me. The author is Richard Harris, and comes from "There Are Too Many Saviours On My Cross", a dramatic spoken reading written and performed by Richard Harris on his album, "Slides", copyright 1971 by ABC Records. It concerned the fighting in Northern Ireland.
http://www.sdanet.org/steve/best/Too_Many_Saviours

[12] The three books are: *What Is God Like?* (Review & Herald, 1988); *Broken Walls* (Pacific Press, 1990); and *Women/Church/God—A Socio-Biblical Study* (Loma Linda University Press, 1990). I am currently working on publishing the original series that gave rise to the basic nature of the church in a manuscript tentatively titled: "Jesus, His Character, Mission and Ministry."

[13] I have developed a do-it-yourself manual, *The Mission Statement: A Manual for Developing a Process of Mission for the Church*, 1988, based on what we did at the All Nations Church. Copies are available by writing to the author.

[14] Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict*. (New York: The Free Press, 1956), p. 144.

[15] Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1970), p. 198.

[16] See Caleb Rosado, *Broken Walls* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1990)

[17] Francis M. DuBose, in his book *How Churches Grow in an Urban World*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1978), also speaks of a 'heterogeneous principle.' However, he never clearly defines what he means by it. He just uses the term in a rather vague manner. No clear workable definition of the term is ever given.

[18] Coser., p., 144.

[19] Paul Kivel, *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*, (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1996), p. 218.

[20] Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church, Volume 9*. p. 206.

[21] These three methods are adapted from Hedley Beare and Richard Slaughter, *Education for the Twenty-First Century*. London: Routledge, 1993, pp. 122, 123.

[22] Kivel, p. 214.

[23] Samuel Betances, "Harness the Rainbow: Diversity and the Bottom Line," 1992 video lecture presentation. Distributed by United Training Media, 6633 W. Howard Street, P. O. Box 48718, Niles, IL 60714-0718.

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