

Incarnate Word Tract Series #28 **From One—Every Nation**

More than any other single factor, the attitude of many Americans concerning race has caused our nation to look stupid and hypocritical to other countries.

Each American (Christian and non-Christian) should examine his ideas and feelings again and again in the light of an almost unanimous judgment of all other nations against our racial beliefs and prejudices. Each citizen should ask: "How do I feel?" "How do others feel?" "Could I be wrong?"

In addition to these questions, the Christians must also ask:

1. What does God teach in His written Word?
2. What has the Church taught in all generations of its existence?

These two questions must always come first. It is not what I think or feel, but rather what is biblical and what is catholic.

The Negative

Some misguided people were taught (or think they were taught) that the Bible says that one race is better than another, or that one race should be separate from another.

A few quote Genesis 4:15 and guess that the "mark" God placed upon Cain was a dark (or light) skin, although the Scriptures do not state what the mark was, nor was the mark hereditary.

Some refer to Genesis 9:18-27, and they think that Ham and his descendants were cursed to be inferior because Ham made fun of his father, Noah. Careful reading will show:

1. The Bible does not teach that Ham made fun of his father.
2. Noah did not curse Ham, but Canaan, one of Ham's sons, whose offspring never settled in Africa but in Palestine.
3. Noah's curse, uttered when Noah awoke from being drunk, is never given God's approval.
4. The curse did not come true. Most of the Canaanites were killed, not enslaved.

Still, some others refer to Genesis 11:7-9, in which the peoples were divided at Babel, but by language, not by race.

The Positive

Instead of teaching the division of races, the Bible and the Church speak of the *unity* of mankind. Genesis stressed that Adam and Eve were the father and mother of *all* humans. Saint Paul sums up this point by saying that God made "from one, every nation," so that all nations, races, and peoples are from one source. Saint Augustine adds

that the purpose of God was to “bind mankind by the bond of peace, through blood relationship, into one harmonious whole.”

Ever since the revolt of Adam and Eve against God, sin and selfishness have passed down to all nations and races equally. All people are equally condemned by God’s Law.

At the same time, the Father sent Christ, His only Son, down to earth to rescue the entire human race through His life, death, and resurrection. With the coming of Jesus Christ, God’s Spirit attempts to work in all people the same faith, unites all believers into one Church, cleanses them in one Baptism, and nourishes them by the same Holy Communion in Christ’s Body and Blood.

Concerning those outside the Church, the Scriptures and the Creeds proclaim that God wants “all to be saved,” and within the Church, God does not discriminate between persons or races.

Finally, the Bible and the Church clearly teach that we are to have the same mind and attitude which God has. With the exception of individuals in the Bible, and groups of men within the Church’s history who favored certain classes or nations, the Church has never harbored ideas of racial superiority and discrimination.

If you call yourself by the Name of Christ, if you hold the Bible as God’s Word, and if you consider yourself a member of God’s Church, then pray for the same attitude of Christ, for obedience to the word of Christ, and for unity with the whole Church of Christ, and you will truly be on the way toward loving all human beings and practicing that love which is without discrimination.