

From Every People & Nation

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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of man had built. And the Lord said, behold, they are one people, and they all have one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they proposed to do will now be impossible to them. Come, let us go down and there, confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.

Therefore, its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth.

[1 : 33] And from there, the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth. May God bless the hearing and the preaching of his word this morning.

May God bless the hearing and the Lord. On August 28, 1963, after leading a march for civil rights through Washington, D.C., Martin Luther King, Jr.

stood at the foot of Lincoln Memorial and famously said, I have a dream. I have a dream, he said, that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.

I had a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. Most memorably, he said, I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

Regardless of whether you sit on the right or the left, whether you see MLK as a hero or a flawed liberal, we can probably agree that MLK's dream has not yet completely come about.

[2 : 59] Disagreement and division over race and racism continue to dominate our daily headlines. We don't have to think long or hard to remember.

Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Ferguson, the Charleston Nine, George Floyd, Ahmed Arbery. The names have become symbolic of the questions they raise and the accusations they make.

The Charlottesville rally and the surfacing of a passionate alt-right white nationalism. The continued removal of Confederate memorials throughout the country.

Game day kneelings that began in protest of racial injustice in the NFL and have now continued, though I guess less and less, in almost every sport.

The many best-selling books the last couple years on race, *Between the World and Me*, *The New Jim Crow*, *White Fragility*, *How to Be an Anti-Racist*, and more.

[4 : 03] In response, everybody's off in their opinions and their solutions. Some say white people need to repent and listen. White people need to admit their privilege and their guilt.

They need to admit their silent agreement with the structures of American society that reward them and punish minorities. They need to pay back for their crimes. Others say black people and minorities need to realize racism's over.

Get with the program. They need to get a job. Take responsibility and stop complaining. The two sides seem to be hopelessly deadlocked.

Get locked. But how are we in the church to think about race? What is race? Race is notoriously hard to define. Is it based on physical appearance, language, religion?

What is it? Regardless of how exactly we define race, how do we live in a world created and ruled by one God, but divided into many peoples and nations?

[5 : 08] Why is the world like this? How are we supposed to think about it? What are we supposed to do about it? This morning, we come to the most fundamental passage on race in the Old Testament.

Last week, we studied the sin of Noah and how the passage was misused over the years by the church to defend slavery. Today, we come to the story of the Tower of Babel. But before the story of the Tower of Babel, there's a long list of the sons of Noah in chapter 10, often called the table of nations, not because they all sat at a table, but because it lists out.

It's a table, a list. And then after the story of the tower, there's another list of the sons of Shem all the way to Abraham. Now, this section is carefully crafted.

It's primeval history is what the smart guys say. But the whole section is seeking to draw our attention to the reality that the God of the Bible is not just the God of Israel.

The God of the Bible is the God of the nations, of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. So where we're going in this tightly structured section is let us long and labor for the gospel of Christ to reach every people and nation.

[6 : 33] Let us long and labor for the gospel of Christ to reach every people and nation. So firstly, we're going to handle chapter 10. First point, all people are united as one by the blessing of God.

All people are united as one by the blessing of God. You have a copy of the scriptures. Look at 10, verse 1. It says, these are the generation of the sons of Noah.

Shem, Ham, and Japheth. You know, as we've said, these are the generations function like a formula that separates Genesis into 12 sections.

This section is all about the sons of Noah. All about what happened to the family that came out of the ark and the three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. In fact, the whole chapter is structured around those sons.

Look in verse 6. The sons of Ham. Or actually, verse 2. The sons of Japheth. And then it continues through all those sons. Verse 6.

[7 : 34] The sons of Ham. Then it continues through all those sons. Verse 21. To Shem also. And then it continues through all of his sons. So it's all structured around the family of Noah.

It's capturing the line of Noah, just like we saw the line of Adam in Genesis 5. But there's several important things we need to notice about this list. First is, though chapter 10 comes before chapter 11 in our Bibles, it comes after chapter 11 in history.

So chapter 10 is telling us what happened after chapter 11. Like somewhat like a movie where you might see an intro that gives you a flash of the future of the scene that helps you piece together the information as you move through the passage.

So, too, he gives us chapter 10 to help us rightly understand chapter 11, which I'll come back to that in time. But the important thing is it comes before.

Also, unlike all the other genealogies we've seen so far, this genealogy does not just include names of individuals. Now, we saw that with Adam in Genesis 5, where it just listed out the ten generations all the way to Noah.

[8 : 55] But this one does include individuals. Look at verse 2. Gomer, Magog, Medi, Javan, Tubal, Meshach, and Tiras. It includes these names of individuals, but it also includes the names of peoples, people groups, tribes, countries, cities.

You see that in verse 6 with the mention of Cush, a people group. Or verse 19, mention of the Canaanites. You see that in verse 17 where he talks about the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Gergashites, the Hivites, the Archites, the Sinites, the Arvidites, and the Zemurites, and the Hamathites.

So it's these tribes. And it also lists countries. It lists Egypt and Assyria. It lists cities, Nineveh, Sodom, and Gomorrah. So it's not just a list of names.

It's doing something different. So what's the purpose? You know, on the one hand, Genesis chapter 10 is saying something that Genesis has already said.

All people come from Adam and also now, after the ark, through Noah. Look in verse, we have it for you. Genesis 9, 19, right before it had Noah's bad scene.

[10 : 14] It said, these three, talking about his sons, were the sons of Noah. And from these, the people of the whole earth were dispersed. So if your son or daughter says, did all people really come from Adam?

Did they all come from Noah? Well, the Bible's answer is yes. This was written to a diverse world. And it's saying all people came from him.

Just like Acts 17, Paul picks up this very reality. But it's also saying all peoples and nations come from Adam and now from Noah.

So it's not just saying all people generally, but all peoples, all ethnicities in specific, are from Adam and Noah.

Look with me there. So after he goes through these names, he continues this refrain. Look in verse 5. From these sons of Japheth, the coastland people spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans in their nations.

[11 : 28] After he went through the sons of Ham. Look at verse 20. He says, these are the sons of Ham. By their clans, their language, their lands, and their nations.

Continues with the sons of Shem. Traces through there, 21 to 30. And then look at verse 31. These are the sons of Shem. By their clans, by their languages, by their lands, and by their nations.

What it's saying that all peoples, all nations, and I'm not really talking about different sovereign nations. Talking about all nationalities, though, are from Noah.

You know, like race. Race is a hard thing to define. Notoriously hard, is what I said a moment ago. It's often defined socially. Defined more by race.

But a better biblical word is ethnicity. To capture the diversity with which they define a people. But the idea of what Genesis 10 is telling us, is that all ethnicities are from one people.

[12 : 34] In addition, there's the repeated reference of sevens. There's sevens that run through this genealogy. Seven sons of Japheth. Seven grandsons of Japheth.

Seven cities of Nimrod. Seven sons of Egypt. More importantly, if you added up all the names in this table, there will be 70 total names. What it's trying to say, seven means the number of completion.

So 70 means the whole earth is accounted for right here. So the takeaway is that all people are united as one by the blessing of God.

Daniel Hayes says, One central theological point of Genesis 10 is clear. The stress on the common origin of all nations. Beneath all the different clans and languages and lands and nations and ethnicities, there's a unity.

All the peoples are equally made in the image of God. Martin Luther King once said, very beautifully, There's no gradations in the image of God.

[13 : 45] Every man from treble white to bass black is significant on God's keyboard. Every pianist enjoyed that metaphor. Precisely because every man is made in the image of God.

So all people are equally made in the image of God, but all peoples and nations are united as one that belong to him. Now, why would Moses write this to the people of Israel? Now, we've argued that Moses wrote this to the people of Israel while they're in Egypt, before they went into, or before they fled Egypt and into the promised land.

Why would he write this to them? Why would he write? We've said that Jesus is written to remind the people of God who they were while they were still suffering. So why would he want them to know that all peoples and nations are united as one by the blessing of God?

Well, here's what it is. There is no exceptional clan, language, land, or nation. What he's trying to tell them, there's no clan, language, land, or nation that God loves more than all the others.

There's no ethnicity, however it's defined, that God loves more than all the others. And this type of speech is what God continues to say to the people of Israel.

[14 : 53] Look in Deuteronomy 7. He says, It's not because you are more in number than any of the other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you. For you are the fewest of all people.

But it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath he swore to your father. So it's not because of you. It's not because of your lifestyle, your religious background, whatever defined the people of Israel.

It was not. That was not the reason he set his love upon you. So he didn't choose them because they were great. Didn't choose them because of their ethnicity. Not because of their certain clan, language, land, or nation. The Lord chose them because he was keeping his promise.

So, the same must be clear to us. There's no exceptional clan, language, land, or nation. There's no distinction before God between the different peoples and nations of the earth.

There is no purer race. There is no higher race. The old song says, red and yellow, black and white. [16:00] They are all precious in his sight. To affirm otherwise is racism. Racism rejects the clear teaching of scripture.

Racism, as I would define it, is any time one race is elevated above the other, whether explicitly in words or actions or implicitly underneath our words and actions in prejudice, bias, or partiality. The important thing in that definition, racism is not, therefore, a skin problem. It's a sin problem. It's a fruit from the tree of partiality that we're commanded to reject all throughout scripture, but explicitly in James 2.

Now, you're not a racist because you're white, but many of us who are white and raised in the South must do a personal reckoning with racism.

Do you laugh at racial jokes and slurs? Do you stereotype or profile or prejudge anyone because of the color of their skin? Do you think you're white and if so, you need to repent?

[17:09] Years ago, I mean, I grew up in South Carolina. I think it was the state that flew the rebel flag until whatever, 98 or something. That type of deep-seated stuff was all over my family.

I had to repent years ago. A profile. Profile. But unlike much of the teaching right now in our culture, racism is not a white problem or a majority culture problem.

It's a sin problem. I am interracially married. My kids actually like to point out that I'm the only white person in the family.

They do say I'm 2% Asian because I like the food. So I'll take that. I read when we were getting married that a white man, an Asian woman is the most accepted form of interracial marriage. Interracial marriage was legal in my home state for a long time. The problem is, so that's just focused on the white side.

[18:29] But interracially married, even among the Asian culture that I've interacted with, doesn't mean they're pleased with it. Sometimes you can tell they're struggling with me.

I'm not here to judge them. But that's what happens. There's racism. There's also reverse racism. Both are condemned in Scripture.

I can say one more thing. In focusing on our unity, this passage, it warns us about an inordinate focus on race and ethnicity.

This passage relativizes race a bit. Our race, our ethnicity, is not the most important thing about us, is what this passage says.

If we focus on it too much, it could be dangerous. One commentator, Kenneth Matthews, says, Genesis 10-11 shows that a disproportionate consideration on races, as in our modern world, forfeits an inherent unity and may lead to a primitive tribalism that fosters war.

[19:38] So there's a danger in ethnicity becoming too pronounced and failing to understand the unity across all races. That makes sense. In fact, in some ways, I think America has its own check.

America is the melting pot. Some people claim they're Scotch-Iris roots. Well, yeah, maybe through a lot of different mutt-like stuff going on, you might be Irish.

We're a melting pot. All the colors are blending together. I think it's a beautiful thing. My family is a melting pot. I think it's a beautiful thing.

God seems to be mixing up all the races for a reason. So we wouldn't miss the point of ethnicity.

It's meant to communicate the beauty and the wonder of God. Point two, all people are divided into many peoples and nations by the judgment of God.

[20:42] All people and nations... All people are divided into many peoples and nations by the judgment of God. As I've already said, chapter 10 comes after chapter 11.

So chapter 11 is the theological explanation for why all people are dispersed throughout the earth in different clans, language, lands, and nations. Chapter 11 is a story of Babel.

The Tower of Babel. We've all colored the leaning tower of Pisa looking things in our journals probably as we were kids. We've heard about this story. It was a time after Noah when the whole earth was united as one.

This unity theme is pressed home throughout this pageant. Look at verse 1. Now the whole earth, the whole earth had one language and the same words.

Clearly this is before it was dispersed into different lands and languages. They had one language. Look at verse 2. And the people migrated from the east.

[21:52] They found the plain and land of Shinar. Now it migrated from the east. Now some buzzers should be going off in your head. They came from the east. East is a big direction.

In Genesis, Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden east of Eden. Cain, when he went and settled, it was east. East, Abraham and Lot, when they divide up their lots, Lot goes to the east. Bad things happen in the east. And I happen to love east Tennessee, so I don't know what to do with that. I don't think it applies in the same way there. But in Genesis, bad things are happening in the east.

And so we should be alerted. Something's going on. And the crowds, they gather. They say, let us build a city and a tower. They all join forces. Let us make a name for ourselves.

R.C. Sproul says, nothing attracts greater crowds than the practice of idolatry. Crowds gather as one when they yell, crucify him.

[22 : 55] Gather as one when they worship the golden calf. They gather as one here. Not all unity is good unity. The story, though, comes off a bit like a kid's story, you know.

I mean, it's a big deal. What's so wrong with what they're doing? Well, Moses is very specific. If you notice, if you run through the passage, it communicates place again and again and again.

I think it's four times it says there. But look in verse 2, it says, They went to the east. They found the plain and settled there. They settled there.

Look in verse 4. They said, let us build a tower lest we be dispersed. So they found a place where they wanted to stay and hang out.

But God said, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. What's going on? They're disobeying the command of God. Now, contrary to what some people might say about this passage, God's not against the big city.

[24 : 06] He's not like anti-city, anti-skyscraper. It's not the point of this passage. God is against people that are refusing to be fruitful in the ways he commands. So they're going to what's comfortable for them.

And they're disobeying God. But they're also seeking glory for themselves. Verse 4, they say, let us make a name for ourselves.

This creature is created in the image of God. Instead of seeking to reflect and represent him, bringing him glory, they seek glory for themselves. Building a tower to the sky.

This is less like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. More like a ziggurat that's going up into the sky. This idea that if we get high enough, the gods will come down and gods will go up through it.

So it's just this name for themselves. A wonder of the world that everybody would come to and say, look at what you did. But that desire that's driving them is one of the most common desire that drives men.

[25 : 08] The desire to make a name. To be known for something. To be recognized. To be commended. To be applauded.

When I was a kid, I was in the choir before it was cool. Just kidding. But I want, you know, at one point I wanted to be a good tenor. If you don't know what that means, there's four parts typically. Soprano, alto, tenor, bass. In our school, we would go and compete in what is called Allstate. So I would get ready. We were singing something by Mozart or whatever. And we would go to Allstate and compete.

So we had a big choir, 150 voices. But, you know, I didn't merely want to be a good tenor. I wanted everybody to know I was a good tenor. And so at one point we did a, they brought our quintet.

That's five people. They brought them up to perform before the whole class. 150 people in the room to come and perform before the whole class. So you've got to remember what was driving my little heart.

[26 : 08] And so I went up there. I started to get red. And my heart started beating a little bit. I was holding some music. I don't really have paper with me. But I was holding this sheet music. And it's folded nice and crisp.

And gradually, as we started singing, my hand started shaking a little bit. Like you might shake and give somebody something. And you're a little nervous about it. But my hand started going like this. The music is just flapping, flapping.

As I'm trying to sing. And the choir director does not stop me. I think he's laughing at me. I'm trying to make a name for myself. And I just made a fool of myself. And so often we can all be the same way.

We just want to be known. Have a good golf swing. Or good chocolate chip cookies. Or going on the best vacations that are the envy of everybody around. Or the authority on Pokemon card.

All we want is to be known for something. This desire, this craving is what the Bible calls pride. But things get worse.

[27 : 11] It's not just desire to be known. It's desire to be known as the best. Proud person. It's not enough to be good. It's only enough if we're better. That's why the proud person is always looking down on someone or something.

But the proud person doesn't realize someone's always looking down on them. The whole story is structured in a way to emphasize how the Lord looks down on human pride.

The story, this story uses a literary device called a chiasm. Named after the Greek letter that we would write with an X. The idea is that X marks the spot.

So just like an X kind of has like a triangle that leads to a point. And another triangle that leads to the point. So it's a literary device in which the whole triangles of the text are leading to a specific point to emphasize something.

And as we'll see what it's emphasizing. So the idea is, if you look down there with me, verse 1 and 9 relate. Verse 1, they had one language. Verse 9, the Lord confuses the language of the earth.

[28 : 24] Verse 2, the people migrated from east and they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.

That's one of our words, there. Verse 8, so the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth. Verse 3 and verse 7.

Verse 3, they say, come let us build or make bricks and burn them thoroughly. So they're appealing to one another. Join me in this. And so too, in verse 7.

The Lord says, come let us go down. And confuse their language. Appealing to all the heavenly hosts to come down. Verse 4 and 6 go together as well.

Verse 4, come let us build a city and a tower. And then verse 6. And the Lord said, behold, there are one people in one language.

[29 : 22] This is only the beginning. Nothing they will do will be impossible for them. So let us undo what they're beginning. And so we must scatter them to prevent that.

And then all of that, the idea is the structuring down to verse 5, which is the heart of the passage. So look there with me. The Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of man had built.

All of the passages building down on the Lord's response on what he sees. Now we may be tempted to think this is a little silly. God seems a little puny.

He's the God of the heavens and he's cared about this little tower where we're missing the point.

Verse 5 is saying, the people got bricks and they came together and built a city and a tower.

But the Lord has to come down to see it. Like, to see that little tower. It's filled with irony.

[30 : 26] That little verse is filled with irony. Their tower, their great tower is so puny. So small. So pitiful.

So pathetic. Laughable. Psalm 2 says, he who sits in the heavens laughs. He holds the wicked peoples in derision.

Many of us grow up with this sentimental view of God. And this offends us. When the peoples lay out their plans for global unity and all these things, the Lord sits in the heavens and laughs.

Not the smug snicker of someone who thinks they're better than you, but the belly of laugh of someone who knows they are. You know? And he's laughing about something that is truly puny and pathetic.

Like, you know, one of the best parts of parenting, more than one child, is having your older children see how silly their temper tantrums were when they were younger. You know, they're watching like little brother.

[31 : 31] Not that you don't adjust these things. That's what the parenting class is all about. But they're watching little brother or little sister, whatever it is, kind of throw this temper tantrum. And they slam their fist down on the ground with their face to the ground.

And the older kids just think it's the funniest thing in the world. Did I look like that? And the answer is yes. That's what's going on.

Their great tower is puny and pathetic. And the Lord confuses their language. He gives them a name. They wanted a great name. And the Lord gives them the name of Babel, which means to mix or confuse or mingle.

The takeaway is all people are divided into many peoples and nations by the judgment of God. All people are divided into many peoples and nations by the judgment of God. The different lands and tribes and languages and nations, they all come from this, all come from the judgment of God.

[32 : 36] Now this is sobering if you've read history. This division is costly. The story of history is bloody.

The division among peoples and nations brings disagreement, conflict, and many wars. Not just in the Bible. Pages in the New York Times.

Wall Street Journal. Point three. Those from every people and nation will be united again by the salvation of God.

Those from every people and nation will be united again by the salvation of God. Our passage doesn't end with the Tower of Babel. The next section begins with the generations of Shem.

Look in verse 10, chapter 11. These are the generations of Shem. That's that formula again. It's telling you about.

[33 : 47] Much like Genesis 5, it has a careful pattern. When so-and-so was so many years old, they fathered so-and-so, and they lived so many years after they fathered so-and-so, and then came so-and-so.

You know, that pattern goes through. And like Genesis 5, it only includes 10 generations. The idea, it's closing the bracket, so to speak, from Genesis 5. There were 10 nations from Adam to Noah.

Or 10 generations. 10 generations from Adam to Noah. And now 10 generations from Noah to Abraham. So it's helping us to put our Bibles together.

10 from Adam to Noah. 10 from Noah to Abraham. What it's doing is preserving the line of the promise. Now, we see these lists, and we don't know what to make of them, but it's preserving the line of promise.

And there's a bit of a play on words with Shem. The word Shem means name. So the people were setting out to make a name for themselves, but God was setting out to make a name for himself.

[34 : 59] To make a great name for himself throughout the earth. He is the name above all names. And I just love that. And so the takeaway from this and how it fits in the rest of the canonical scriptures is that those from every people and nation will be united again by the salvation of God.

So this passage, if we could put together all that we learned, is a bit of a paradox. All people are united as one by the blessing of God. All people are divided into peoples and nations by the judgment of God.

And yet, even though it was because of sin, it was according to the purpose of God so that God would be praised by the peoples of every nation under God. Do you see?

Even though the sin of the Tower of Babel is couched in such a way in Genesis 10 and then the line of Shem to help us see that it is part of the purpose of God to take the gospel to the nations.

And gather together a people of every tribe, tongue, and nation under Jesus Christ. The rest of the Bible tells the story. God makes a promise to the people of Israel to be their God and for them to be his people.

[36 : 07] Yet, threading throughout the Old Testament continually, he said, I didn't just come for you. I came to be a light to the nations. I'm coming to something. You're going to have, just like you told Abraham, your offspring is going to be as numerous as the sand on the seashore.

I'm coming to do something more dramatic. The plan of God for the nation is not completely clear, though, until the book of Acts. When Jesus ascended on high, you remember before he ascended, he said, I'm going to send forth my spirit.

So don't leave Jerusalem until power comes from on high. And then all the disciples, Acts 2, they gathered in one place.

Where were they all gathering in one place before? In Genesis 11, they gather in one place. They pray unto the Lord.

Suddenly, the Spirit of God fills the house and rests on each one of them. And they're filled with the Spirit of God. They begin to speak in tongues and other languages.

[37 : 14] But the wonder continues. The feast of Pentecost has brought people from every nation under heaven. It's what Acts 2 says. When the Spirit falls, they come together and they hear the mighty words of the Lord in their own language.

Look in Acts 2. It's describing the people. They're amazed and astonished, saying, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear each of us in his own native language? Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and the residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene. And visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytites, Cretans, and Arabians. We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God. So before we get off on tongues, what is going on in this passage?

Well, what's going on is that the division of the Tower of Babel is being broken down from the power of the gospel. One language is split into many in Genesis 11 because of the judgment of God.

[38 : 27] And yet many language bring down into one in Acts 2 because of the salvation of God. What he's saying, Jesus did not come merely to reconcile you to God.

Wonderfully, we proclaim, Jesus came to reconcile you to God. There's one mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus. If you do not repent of your sin and trust in him, you will not be reconciled to God.

It's like jumping across the Grand Canyon. You're never going to make it. But wonderfully, he came not merely to make peace between you and God, but peace between you and your brother.

Peace in a body. Ephesians 2 compares what Jesus did as breaking down a wall of hostility. For many years, I've traveled to South Korea to visit our friend Sangwon Kang, who will be with us actually on November 12th.

You'll mark that day in your calendar. Maybe he'll beat somebody and ping pong again like he did a couple of years ago. Sangwon and his wife, Miran, just a wonderful couple that I've been able to partner with.

[39 : 47] We've been able to partner with in Seoul, South Korea. But if you know the history of Korea, you know it's a history divided by war.

Right now, it's divided along the 38th parallel. There's a massive DMZ, demarcation zone between South Korea and the tyranny of North Korea.

Nearly every time I've gone to South Korea, I've gone to the DMZ. Their Sangwon always leads us in prayer for the wall to come down.

For the families to be reunited. This is in the 50s. For the families to be reunited with their loved ones. For the atrocities to end. For Korea to be one.

Sangwon will not even allow you to call Korea, Seoul, Korea, South Korea. That's what the world calls it. He calls it Korea because he longs for this unification.

[40 : 57] Well, the wall of hostility, it is the ultimate wall that has divided us has come down in Jesus Christ.

The way for us to be reunited as one is not through imagining a world with no heaven like John Lennon said. Or working for a world without war. Merely.

Or working for a world without liberals. Or conservatives. The way for us to be reunited as one is through the gospel of Jesus Christ. It's the gospel that brings the wall down so that people of every tribe, tongue, and nation will hear.

I remember when I first got saved, you know, they say you should be locked up in a cage for six months after you get saved. Because everything's going nuts and you're trying to figure out how to relate to this world.

I remember one of my friends I grew up with, he had a little MX-6, Mazda MX-6. On the front, he had a bumper sticker that said, every tribe, tongue, and nation. First of all, I didn't know the scriptures.

[42 : 05] I was like, what in the world does that mean? That's really kooky and weird. But I, you know, I started thinking about it now. I love that. What he was saying is what God has done in Jesus Christ is going to the end of the earth.

He was longing for it. And so, too, must we long for it. You know, we long for a world of diversity, a world of diversity, not merely for diversity's sake.

For hell will be very diverse. We're not after diversity for diversity's sake. We're after diversity so that every tribe, tongue, and nation might be represented before the throne of Jesus Christ.

To give him the glory that he alone deserves. And so, until that day, the church is the outpost of heaven. The place where all the titles and all the ethnic pride come off so that we can celebrate our pride in Jesus Christ.

That's the idea. It is an outpost and it is an ambassador to heaven, to the end of the earth. The vehicle to take this gospel to the end of the earth.

[43 : 11] To be joined with every tribe, tongue, and nation until Jesus Christ comes. That's what we need. That's why I want us to labor and long. Long and labor for the gospel of Christ to reach every people and nation.

And I want to conclude asking the Lord to help us do it. Luke 11 says, Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you'll find. Not going to be opened to you.

For everyone who asks receives. The one who seeks, find. The one who knocks, it will be opened. What father among you, if the son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent? If he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask? So I want to ask God to pour out his spirit on our midst.

I want us to ask God to throw off some tribal affinities to have a tribe of Jesus Christ that we proclaim, that we love, that we long for. And I want to ask you to ask God with me.

[44 : 21] So if you would, I want to ask you to stand and open your hands up and pray with me. And I'm going to pray for us. We want to be like the disciples that wait for power from on high.

So if you're open to it, open your hands. Father in heaven, we call upon you. We worship you and praise your name. We praise you that you are Father, Son, and Spirit, perfect in unity, in diversity, and beauty.

We praise you, Father, for sending forth your Son and sending forth your Spirit on the church. Lord, our longing is that we would labor for the bride, that we would labor for more to know.

We'd labor for those that are not among us. So we pray that you would pour out your Spirit on our midst. I pray for a spirit of power.

I pray for a spirit of unction. I pray for a spirit to refuse the ordinary of conversation and press into the things of life.

[45 : 28] I pray for a spirit of distinction. That we would be a people that bear the fruit of the Spirit. Wouldn't bite and devour one another, but those who have the fruits of love, joy, peace, and patience.

Kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control. I pray for a spirit of unity. The unity that we share in the gospel of Christ.

We know the Spirit longs to create. Lord, I pray against any titles and divisions. Any secret societies within this body.

Any cliques. Lord, let them fall. That we be united. Brothers and sisters longing. I pray for a spirit of wisdom to discern the times and the days we're in.

That we would walk wise. Having our powers of discernment trained through constant practice. I pray for a spirit of joy. Lord, I want to be known as a church that just doesn't know the right things, but loves the right things.

[46 : 30] Lord, let this church die if we just know the right things. Let us love what is true, what is good, what is perfect, what is peaceable, what is lovely.

Let us be known for it. You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.

For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com. Thank you. you