

COMMUNITY

GETTING BETTER

JIMMY SMITH

“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’”
(Revelation 7:9-10)

One of the wonderful things about heaven is that it will be filled with believers who are all the same but also different. We will all be the same in purpose and in status. We will be different because there will be people represented from all walks of life and many diverse cultures. It will be the ultimate expression of unity.

“The same but different” is true here on earth. Unless you live in a cave, you will quickly notice that the Allen area includes several diverse cultures and backgrounds. The world has literally come to Collin County. Hundreds of countries are represented in our community. It’s exciting to see the diversity in our city and even in our church. We are different and that is something to celebrate. Jesus’ prayer was that God’s will would be done on earth as it is heaven. Revelation told us that in heaven all tribes, nations, peoples, and languages will be present.

We are different but we are all the same. We are all created by God. We are all created for a purpose (Ephesians 2:10). We are all sinners in need of a savior (Romans 3:23). Jesus died for all (I John 2:2). We will all have to account for our lives before God (Romans 14:11-12). We are all called by God to love (I John 4:7-8).

So how can we show unity here on earth as it is in heaven?

Get to know the people around you.

Unfortunately, some people see different as being “bad”. We predetermine things about people based on how they look, what they wear, and where they come from. The Bible tells us that God looks at the heart (I Samuel 16:7). The only way you can know someone’s heart is to get to know the person.

Get out of your bubble.

We tend to flock to people we know. There’s nothing wrong with that unless you never step outside of that circle. Sometimes we act like kids...we want to stay in our cliques. But just like we teach our kids to branch out, we should also branch out, too. Greet different people at church. Sit by someone new at church. When you’re out and about, introduce yourself to someone you see on a regular basis but to whom you’ve never spoken. Sit by someone different at lunch.

Continued on back.



Get busy serving.

Our church has some great ministry opportunities for you to meet people from all diverse backgrounds. You can serve in our food pantry, you can serve in our ESL classes, you can be a part of our Great Commission Outreach, or you can serve in our outreach to several elementary schools here in Allen.

Get busy praying.

One of the best ways to reach out to someone you don't know is to start with care. Ask how you can pray for them. And when they tell you, make sure you do it. Most adults have never had another adult pray out loud for them before. Make sure to follow up with them and see how things are going.

My hope and prayer is that FBC Allen would lead the way in celebrating the differences we see in our community, in helping others to feel accepted and loved, and to be “over-the-top” in showing God's love and care to ALL the people in our community. Being a follower of Jesus means we love what He loved and we know that He loved the world and sacrificed His life so that the world would not have to spend an eternity separated from Him (John 3:16). Let's be like Jesus. Let's love the world that is right here in our backyard.

