

Read the Notes

The Church in Antioch

- Acts 13:1 - "Now in the church in Antioch there were prophets and teachers. Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul."
- We see a massive unreached city with a multicultural team.
- When building an international team we need to ask the question, 'What are we trying to achieve here?'
- The goal should always be to see local leaders raised up. An example from Andy was an international team when they went to the Middle East to plant.
- They had the goal of seeing local leaders coming through in due course.
- In a multicultural team there will be four significant areas of difference. How these look will be different in every context, as it is not an exact science! As a result, how you lead in each situation will be different.

1. Differences In Power

- We have to be aware that it's not a level playing field for everyone in the team.
- Not everyone is thinking the same.
- For example, Americans don't have a sense of status, but other cultures do in terms of gender or class.
- Brits don't often think about history or the impact that once 85% of the world was ruled by the British Empire.
- It may be that a leader from an ex-British colonial country may take a step back when a British person is around.
- In, 'The Meeting of the Waters' by Fritz Kling, he says that observed cultural memory was a most important factor in this power difference.

2. Differences In Language

- The Bible celebrates the diversity of languages.
- In Acts we see a multiplicity of language.
- Language is power, and meetings being in the local language empowers locals, but shifts power for those to who it is a second language.
- Ask the question of which language we are going to meet in.

3. Differences In Cultural Preferences

- Different people expect different things from meetings and team.
- For Italians, they are looking for temperature - are we being physical, loud, passionate and active.

- Germans want precision - an accurate team.
- Turkish people want it loud, with everyone talking and giving opinions.
- Brits don't like conflict, and want productive meetings. They have one eye on the clock and one eye on the agenda - it's a sin to have an unproductive meeting!
- Japanese want to ensure nobody in the room loses face.
- For Americans, they want to get on and do something - they want punch!
- Australians have humour and a relaxed team as a high value.
- These examples are of course all caricatures to illustrate that different cultures are after different things.
- If you are building a multicultural team then you need some multicultural glue people to make things successful.
- Andy gave the example of an Italian worker in the team and how the team had been so successful because the Italian worker had kept everyone happy and together when they felt down.
- If anything is to be learnt, it is that you need some kind of warm, humorous, managing personality in the mix.
- Women are really good in multicultural teams, as they are great at reading the non-verbal cues and body language, among other things.
- Multilingual people can empathise with others more easily, and can be good chairs of multicultural meetings.
- The best book on cultural diversity is '**When Teams Collide**' by **Richard Lewis**. It opens up the cameo of how different cultures respond to team.

4. Differences In Honour

- Different cultures respond to honour in different ways.
- The English listen to others because of their success or gift.
- In many cultures, respect or honour is because of age, so it could be difficult for an older man from one culture to follow a younger leader.
- For some it would be about position.
- In some cultures the sons take on the family role from the father, but in Britain this could be seen as nepotism.
- In Turkey, those with the ability to argue or speak well are worthy of honour.
- You need to think about how honour is shown. Is it direct or indirect?
- In some cultures it is more about the team winning together than an individual outshining the others. It results in others having to tone down their success to ensure all win together.
- You have to ask how we make a team where we honour and support one another.

- One of the challenges in the Christian world is that we like things to be the way we know or believe to be right. We don't like differences in the church. However we need to be learning from other cultures and their differences.
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Q&A

1. Do you have advice in leading a church plant in a Western city where the majority expect meetings to be punctual but team members from East Africa don't see it as important?

- You need to decide which order you prioritise your values - which is most important to you?
- We would all say community is important and holding the meeting is important. The challenge is to decide which is most important to you.
- In a Western context it tends to be task first.
- In Christianity, it is not the weak who should change but the strong.
- Apply this into this context, who are the weak and who are the strong?
- Maybe you could try to go to where people are, and make it culturally accessible to those you are trying to reach.

2. When someone is taking a step back because of the power difference, how can you draw them out and empower them?

- You need to be constantly honouring people and drawing them out.
- Humble yourself and be vulnerable yourself.
- We need to do both in order to raise people up.
- English people really need to work on being emotionally open.

3. How do you challenge people from a different culture to grow without seemingly imposing your own culture?

- It is a huge challenge.
- Jesus often told a story and then left the end open for you to decide what happened.
- There are ways of challenging people without shaming them.
- For example, Nathan the prophet challenged King David by telling him a story without shaming them.

4. If you are leading in a different culture from your own and are in the minority, how easy is it for you to fully adapt to the new culture?

- We need to encourage people to work hard to learn the new culture and language.
- No one should ever go completely 'native'. People can become a trusted 'guest'.

- It is difficult for a guest to criticise the host. You need to be legitimised by the host in order to comment.
- Jesus spent 30 years learning people before he spent 3 years talking.

5. How important is the language of your host culture, and that we don't come with all the answers?

- The big challenge is to understand that everyone has their Christianity mixed in with their culture.
- We need to de-Westernise our Christianity, and so not come with our models of how things should be shaped.

6. What can you do in your multicultural team so that you can incorporate everyone's preferences?

- In the purest sense it is impossible, but we need to decide what is our highest value together.
- What is your mission that brought you all together?
- Often the controlling value system is the team leaders, so it's important to try and get away from it.

7. How can you identify the 'glue people' in your team?

- You are looking for faithfulness in your leadership team, you are looking for warmth, a 'hospitality' type of gift, and not just high-energy charismatic people.

8. What are the sort of things we can do to realise how we've mixed our culture with Christianity?

- It's good to talk to people from other cultures and ask them other questions.
- Travel to listen, and not just to teach in other cultures.
- Also read books by people from other cultures.

9. Do you think that in British churches we should be intentional about establishing multicultural leadership teams even if the other cultures are in the minority in that church?

- Yes! Because we are supposed to reach the unreached, and we need to bring through leaders from other cultures as it will make your church more accessible.

10. In an inner city church, what changes would you make to draw in other cultures?

- A visible diversity is important, and in our preaching we need to broaden the gospel to not just address guilt, but also to address shame.

11. Can you recommend any books that would be helpful to read?

- 'The 3D Gospel' by Jayson Georges - It looks at three different types of culture: guilt, shame and fear.
- 'The Global Gospel' by Werner Mischke