

Different Colors. One people- Wie Gott die Welt erträumt (Gen. 1: 26-31)

Die Gnade des Herrn und die Gemeinschaft des Heiligen Geistes sei mit euch allen.

Intro:

Appreciation and gratitude

I would first and foremost express my thanks and appreciation to the organizers of this service for inviting me to deliver the sermon at your university Service.

I and my church community are very pleased to participate at this service with you today. This is our second service, as we already had our service at 10 am this morning. This shows how far we went to be here today.

During our joint preparation of this service at your faculty last on Tuesday we had a very interesting and lengthy discussion on the topic and the text. I could see that you have in your own ways dealt with the topic and the text. Your feedback and impulse were very inspiring to me. Thanks you for having me in your seminar.

I was encouraged to see that you tomorrow's scholars in Theology and perhaps future Pastors of the Lutheran church are already engaging yourselves with the phenomenon of Racism and its manifestations in our today's society.

Racism in everyday Life:

You have indeed chosen a very serious and emotional topic for your University services- with the underlining Team -Bye Bye White Pride. I must applaud you for your courage in facing this demon in our society.

Racism a system whereby people based on their otherness are categorized and classified as either superior or inferior.

We are living in a very racist society that is a reality for all of us. We are either perpetrators, by stand-byers or victims. We are all affected by the many manifestations of Racism in our world today. Mostly people who look different or perceived to be different than us are marginalized, discriminated, attacked or murdered.

Over my 30 years stay in Germany I have encountered racism in many forms. From latent Racism, to Racial profiling. From discrimination on the job market to discrimination on the search of Apartment. The list goes on.

As a Pastor I am aware of the struggles people who look like have to face in this society. ***I am not here to put my finger in the wound but to look for ways where we can be sensitized and move to action to diminish racism in our society.***

Daily Racism (Alltagsrassismus) in all its facets must not go unabated and it has basically no place in the body of Christ. The Bible as the Word of God is very clear that God detests racism.

Nelson Mandela stated and I quote:

“Niemand wird geboren, der eine andere Person wegen der Farbe ihrer Haut oder ihrer Religion hasst. Die Menschen müssen lernen zu hassen, und wenn sie lernen können zu hassen, kann ihnen das Lieben beigebracht werden, denn Liebe kommt für das menschliche Herz natürlicher als das Gegenteil. (Nelson Mandela)”

Understanding the Text

The Bible on many places abhors Racism. Today we are going to look at the book of Genesis and learn how God intended the world to be.

In our text today (**Gen. 1: 26-31**) it is categorically clear that God created the Mankind in His image.

So that means for me when I see all of humanity with its diversities as the image of God.

Lucky Dube the late South African Reggae musician. And I must say Here-I must say my favorite musician. Put it clear in his song, Different colors one People.

The lyric:

*Hey you government, never try to separate the people,
Hey you politician never try separate the people.
They were created in the image of God. And who are you to separate them.
Bible says He made man in his image. But didn't say (Black or White)
Look at me (You see black)
I look at you (I see white)
Now is the time to kick that away. join me (in my song
Different colors (one People)
Different Colors (We are one people)*

When we see a black man we must see the image of God, when I see an Indian, I see the image of God. when I see a white man I see the image of God. We are all the images of God in the different pigmentations of our skin.

As Nelson Mandela puts it clear in the quotation I just made: no one is born with the inclination to hate. It is learnt as we grow up. If we can learn to hate then we can learn to love, which is the most natural thing to do. So God created man in his image and likeness and we human being began to categorize the different type of human beings and even determining the intelligence of others based on the anatomy of their Skull.

We as followers of Christ must endeavor to learn to live in love and acceptance of the others as they are. God had a plan for this world and He created this world according to His plan.

He is a God of Diversity. In his essence of Three persons in One God (Trinity) he teaches us that we too must live in relationship with others.

The Ubuntu philosophy states: **I am because we are.** Man is a social being as has such, man is ordained to live in community. In communities where love is nurtured and enhanced not a community of segregation, discrimination and racism.

God dreamt the world to be a diverse world, with different people and different nations and tongue, not to consider others as inferior and ourselves

superior but to complement ourselves and make the best use out of the God's given beautiful creation.

We cannot flourish and attain our God given vision if we live in segregation. The body of God cannot be divided. St. Paul presents a clear picture for us in 1. Corinthians 12:27- Comparing the body of Christ to the human body with its different parts. Each part has its specific role to play in the body is a very important for the overall function of the whole body. **We all belong to the body of Christ as we are.**

That is the good news for me I don't have to bleach my beautiful skin color to look White and hope to be more beautiful. No I can look the way I was created and still belong to the body of Christ. **Praise the Lord!**

Gen 1: 31; God saw all that he had made and it was very good.

God created the world perfect and it was very good. We who were called to be stewards and care takers have created our own world and made our own vision based out of our human sinful nature

See what we have done to the world- as a result of our poor stewardship, our planet is faced with destruction, we are faced with climate change which threatens our very own existence.

We have deviated from the original plan of God.

God can never fit in our human categories.

God is bigger than what we can ever think. If we discriminate against God's creation, we are practically telling God that his creation of man in his image was a mistake. We are not created in his image so we can determine who is inferior and who is superior. This mentality has caused so much pain and suffering in human history from Slavery to Colonialization, from the Second World War to neocolonialism.

Beloved the Bible in many places is very clear on the topic of racism. God created the world colorful and it was good. Diversity is the original plan of God for humanity. We should be engaging on Diversity management! Seeing Diversity as advantageous for everyone rather than dangerous!

We are called to appreciating the otherness and seeing the difference not as hindrance but opportunities of building bridges. Bridges of Love and hope. Especially in this seemingly hopeless world.

In Matt. 25: 40. Truly, I say as you did it to the least of these my brethren of mine, you did it to me. Here Jesus identifies himself with the vulnerable and weak. With everyone!

In Rom 10:12.. For there is no distinction between Jews and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all bestowing his riches on all who call on him. Amen.

We all have the same heavenly father, who is Lord of All. Why do we segregate and discriminate against god's children?

We are all called to be prophets of our times and as such are invited to be the extension of God's helping hands- called to be being active against this diversion on God's original plan for mankind.

Life Application

I end my sermon with a Quotation from Michelle Obama: which reminds us all about our role in combatting this demon in our society.

Rasse und Rassismus sind eine Realität, mit der so viele von uns aufwachsen und lernen, einfach nur damit umzugehen. Aber wenn wir jemals hoffen, daran vorbeizukommen, kann es nicht nur an farbigen Menschen liegen, damit umzugehen. Es liegt an uns allen,- Schwarz, Weiß, jeder- egal wie gut wir uns fühlen, die ehrliche, unangenehme Arbeit zu leisten, es auszurotten.

(Michele Obama).

And may the peace of God which surpasses all human understanding guide our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Amen