



***“Full of Grace –
Seasoned with Salt”***

Dealing with Difference

Part One – Genesis 1-2

Friday, June 5, 2009

2:05 p.m.



Dealing with Difference

Postmodernism in its most strident forms maintains that there simply is no truth; we're just going to have to learn to get along without truth.



Dealing with Difference

In other words, how do we engage in conversations that are full of grace and yet seasoned with salt in a world which, increasingly, says that there is no truth?

Dealing with Difference

We seem to be prone to two opposing tendencies, or we tend to line ourselves up on opposite ends of the unity-diversity spectrum. We're either whole-hearted advocates of diversity, ignoring elements of unity that are necessary for life together in the society or the Synod, or we're whole-hearted advocates of unity, ignoring or minimizing the kinds of differences among us which should be maintained and encouraged.



Dealing with Difference

On the one hand...

The glamorizing of diversity is wreaking havoc in our society as we divide ourselves into differing and often antagonistic special interest groups.

Dealing with Difference

On the other hand...

For some of us, even the word “diversity” has acquired a bit of a bad reputation. It’s become kind of a dirty word. Some of us view all difference, particularly in the church, as suspicious or even evil.



Genesis 1:26

“Let US make man in OUR image, in OUR, likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

Genesis 1:26

By observing the nature of God we see the goodness and the necessity of unity and diversity. There can be nothing inherently wrong or contradictory about unity and diversity existing among us in natural complementarity. We see it in the most fundamental characteristic of the Triune God, in the unity of substance and the diversity of persons.

Genesis 1:27-31

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’

Genesis 1:27-31:

Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground – everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.' And it was so.



Genesis 1:27-31:

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning—the sixth day.

Genesis 2:18-25

“The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’ Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

Genesis 2:18-25

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

Genesis 2:18-25

The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.'

Dealing with Difference

- ***Unity and diversity are inherent in God himself.***
- ***Because God created humans in His own image, we can also observe the importance of unity and diversity in God's creation of human beings.***
- ***We can discern a similar pattern in God's creation of all other things***
- ***The One God, through His one Word, creates a vast diversity of things***



Dealing with Difference

There's no biblical basis for the contention that unity is better than diversity and that all forms of diversity should be harmonized. To do so would distort God's creation, which, because it is a reflection of God himself, would also be a distortion of God.