

Cultivating our Culture
Redefining Equality

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Redefining Equality:

The Declaration asserts that:

“we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”

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Redefining Equality:

The Greek word for equality is isotes = proportionality, fairness

II Cor. 8:13 For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness [14] your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness.

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Redefining Equality:

By substituting the Declaration of Independence language regarding equality for the Biblical language of equality we are:

- *Distorting how God really views equality*
 - *We are losing the grandeur of God's creative design in this area*
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Redefining Equality:

Doing my search for literature – found the idea of equality only dealing with:

- 1) *Reconciliation angle*
 - 2) *Oppression angle*
 - 3) *Reparations (how to make people whole)*
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Redefining Equality:

So this morning let's tackle this in a couple ways:

- 1) Why is it so problematic to buy into the American concept of equality?
 - 2) What does God have to say in each of these areas?
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Redefining Equality:

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a) *Flattens the differences between us*

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We are uniquely created & our differences are celebrated (i.e. we are not the same)

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Oneness gains its real beauty from difference

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 - *Moses – arguably the greatest leader in the History of Israel & the crucible of his leadership development was being caught between his Jewish lineage & his Egyptian upbringing*
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 - *Esther – God elevated this Jewish woman as queen to a Persian king & utilized her to prevent Jewish genocide, & this only happened AFTER Mordecai challenged her to remember her cultural roots...meaning her differences from the Persians*
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 - *Daniel – was a Jewish boy brought into Babylonian captivity, & somehow he held onto his Jewish heritage, his uniqueness, & was able to navigate his cultural identity in legendary ways*
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 - *Jesus – Birthed from a Jewish mother to fulfill the promise God made to Abraham to save the world thru the Jews, He wore a Yamaka, He wore a Tzitzit (a small robe with tassels), He wore a tefillin which as a small box containing the Shema on his forehead and forearm*
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a) *Flattens the differences between us*

b) *Fundamentally individualistic*

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Yedidia Stern – Prof. of Law at Barllan Univ. in Tel Aviv

“People seek to imbue their lives with meaning & purpose. Radical liberalism does not address this basic human need. It guarantees the rights of the individual; “you” and “I” are well protected, but we are like separate atoms moving along independent tracks, revolving around ourselves in a vacuum.”

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It is about being ONE while remaining completely different from each other

Eph. 2:14 *“For He Himself is our peace, who has made us both (Jew & Gentile) one and has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility.”*

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Gal. 3:26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. [27] For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. [28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. [29] And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

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Col. 3:11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

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Eph. 3:6 This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

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1 Cor. 12:4 Now there are *varieties* of gifts, but the same Spirit; [5] and there are *varieties* of service, but the same Lord; [6] and there are *varieties* of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. [7] *To each* is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. [8] *For to one* is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and *to another* the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, [9] *to another* faith by the same Spirit, *to another* gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10] *to another* the working of miracles, *to another* prophecy, *to another* the ability to distinguish between spirits, *to another* various kinds of tongues, *to another* the interpretation of tongues. [12] For just as the body is one and has *many members*, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. [13] For *in one Spirit* (i.e. not in equality) we were all baptized into one body— Jews or Greeks, slaves or free— and all were made to drink of one Spirit. [17] If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?

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 - b) *Fundamentally individualistic*
 - c) *It plays directly into the hands of the enemy*
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*We are made in the Image of God
An image represents or resembles the one it pictures*

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Gen. 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." [27] So God created man in his Own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. [28] And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

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Matt. 24:6 *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. [7] For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,*

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And what does God say?

One day God will bring us all together as one with our differences intact & He will then celebrate our differences side by side

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Rev. 21:22 *And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. [23] And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. [24] By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, [25] and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. [26] They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.*

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Rev. 7:9 *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, [10] and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*
