

Unity and Uniqueness, according to the Holy Scriptures

Introduction: Proponents of the current socio-political movement of “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” may be shown by God’s Word that God’s purpose for His creation is one of Unity and Uniqueness, by which the individual is honored as a unique masterpiece of God’s united creation and the whole world, together fallen into Sin, is united by the good news of God’s redemptive love, to be distributed to the unique individual by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.

Unity and Uniqueness in God’s Creation

God’s perfect creation was highlighted by its unity and good order. Within God’s good order, all living things of the earth were made “according to its kind” (Genesis 1:11-12; 1:21; 1:24-25). Even the pinnacle of God’s creation, humanity, could be said to have been made according to its kind, so that St Paul says in Acts 17:26, “From one man, he made every nation of **mankind**” – so that there is, by God’s design, one united human race. All are children of Adam and Eve, and every family lineage traces its history to them.

Contrary to Scripture, Darwinian evolution teaches that the living creatures were not created “according to their kinds,” but that various races of humanity evolved over millions of years, with the logical conclusion that some groups of humans evolved with superiority to other groups of humans. Darwin’s most famous work, *Origin of the Species* (full title, *Origin of the Species by Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races In the Struggle for Life*) may be argued to legitimize and institutionalize false notions of racism, which the Holy Scriptures and the Christian faith reject and condemn. Where Darwinian evolution theory advocates a low view of creation’s chaotic evolution leading to a diversity that breeds racial competition, claims of racial superiority, and institutions of slavery, the Scriptures proclaim the high and glorious truth of God’s well-ordered creation that would procreate a unity and homogeneity of mankind.

But the Scriptures speak even more gloriously of the unity of mankind in creation, for Genesis records the momentous truth that “God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female He created them.” (1:27-28). This is reiterated four chapters later: “When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female He created them. And He blessed them, and named them Man when they were created.” Within this beautiful unity of mankind’s divine creation is also a complexity of oneness among humanity. Male is not female, but rather “male and female he created *them*.” Thus, the Scriptures also extol the rich beauty of all individuals as wonderfully created by God: “You formed my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:13-14). Thus, the Scriptures call us to look upon every individual with no discrimination of ethnicity or ‘race,’ but as one who has been fearfully and wonderfully made by God within the unity that is God’s pinnacle creation - mankind, the one human race.

Unity and Uniqueness in Condemnation

Yet, sadly we may not say that *any* individual from the generations of Adam has been conceived and born according to God’s image, for Genesis 5 specifies the tragic effects of the Fall into Sin: “When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his *own* likeness, after *his* image” (5:3). St. Paul reiterates this to the Romans: “As one trespass led to condemnation for all men” (5:18) and to the Corinthians, “As in

Adam all die..." (15:22). Thus, the Church's hymn confesses: "All mankind fell in Adam's fall; one common sin infects us all."

Sin is objectively defined by its contrariness to God's Holy will (as He Himself summarizes in the Ten Commandments). What is common to us all in the mirror of this Holy Law is manifest in a variety of ways, and any one sin may break more than one commandment (Racism breaks the Fifth and Eighth commandments, and therefore also the First). Sometimes, these individual sins may be systemically championed by a society, such as millenia have seen with racism and abortion. Other times, even when society systemically rejects these sins, sin still lies in an individual's heart. Thus, while we acknowledge it may be impossible to "end racism" as it resides in the hearts of individuals, we expressly abhor any institutionalization of that which the Holy Law of God condemns. Moreover, *every* manifestation of Sin among all institutions and individuals is to be called to repentance. And, under this universal call to repentance, we again find the commonality of mankind: "For there is no distinction: all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Interestingly, Sin's universality among men actually is responsible for the fracturing of the ethnicities. Genesis 4 records Cain's murder of Abel and, with it, the truth of sin: that hatred among men is among brothers one to another! Genesis 11 records the occasion of the Tower of Babel, in which Mankind – unified in his sinful desire to reign as God – is rebuked by God and sentenced to a confusion of tongues. These accounts raise the important question of how to carefully articulate when "diversity" is part of creation's beautiful complexity of oneness or when "diversity" echoes the confusion of Babel and the hatred of brothers: Where a richness of culture and arts and music flows from God's beautiful complexity of oneness in His creation, God be praised! But when the "diverse groups" are pitted against one another as competing brothers, this is the result of murderous and prideful hearts (Sin), not of God's creation.

Of these manifestations of sin, all men are to be called to account before God. That "unifying" call that spares no sinner but "stops" every prideful heart echoes throughout the Scriptures – the prophets, John the Baptist, the apostles... even Christ Himself! Jesus' first recorded word in his messianic ministry is "Repent!" And yet, the call to repentance is not left alone, but "Repent!, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"

Unity and Uniqueness in Redemption

In Christ Jesus, the kingdom of heaven is at hand for all sinners, that all might repent and hope in His righteous substitution on their behalf. The saving work of Christ Jesus upon the cross is accomplished for all mankind: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son" (John 3:16a) and "He is the propitiation... for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2), and "Christ died for sins once for all" (1 Peter 3:18).

This saving work conquers the unity man shared in the Fall and gives birth to a unity mankind shares in the cross: "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive;" and "As one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men;" and "There is no distinction, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified by His grace as a gift which is in Christ Jesus... to be received by faith."

And that saving work re-unites all mankind through faith in Christ Jesus: the confusion of Babel is reversed by Christ's Word on the day of Pentecost, as his apostles preach clearly the gospel of repentance and forgiveness of sins for all hearts. The murderous hearts between brothers give way to hearts that love one another, so that St Paul can say "there is no longer Jew nor Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28); and, as a Jew, Paul says to the Gentiles,

"Now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:13-20).

St Paul does not preach universalism; Christ Jesus does not "accept everyone as he/she is," for such would be to accept the sin of the racist or murderer rather than to separate and redeem the sinner from his/her sin. Indeed, this salvation is for all mankind, but – by Christ's commission – is distributed to each individual to restore that which was uniquely and wonderfully created by God before the Fall. As Christ desires his gospel to "make disciples of all nations (Greek: *ethnei*)," it does so through baptism and the teaching of His Word. Thus, on the unifying day of Pentecost, all nations are invited to benefit from Baptism "for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is for you and for your children and *all* who are far off, whom the Lord our God calls to Himself." And, the individual beneficiaries then rejoice in their unity, "And all who believed were together and had all things in common" (Acts 2:44).

This unity not only creates a clear conscience before God, but also fervent love toward one another, so that the early Church created auxiliary offices of 'deacon' (and, later, deaconess) to ensure all were loved, no one was overlooked, and any in need were served (see Acts 6). Moreover, the Church rejoices in the beautiful tapestry of diverse gifts given by the Spirit to the baptized as they live with faith in God and fervent love toward one another. And yet, these varieties and diversity of gifts bend the knee to the unity of love (1 Corinthians 13), as it points one another to Christ Jesus. For, he alone is worthy and able to bring everlasting unity and harmony to sinners. St John records for all of us the *new* song of heaven, which praises Christ for ransoming people for God and drawing us out of the competing diversity of the old creation into the heavenly unity of "a kingdom" that shares in the eternal equity and 'utopia' of the New Creation:

And they sang a new song, saying,

"Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation,
and you have made them **a kingdom** and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:9-10; emphases added).

Responding to the Use of Terms

Diversity: The diversity of the group is celebrated at the expense of the uniqueness of the individual and the unity of God's creation and Christ's Church. The 'diversity of the group' was effected at Babel and overcome at Pentecost.

Equity: Equity is a promised equal share in a fallen world – an earthly utopia, “heaven on earth.” Where the fallen world cannot even perfectly provide equal opportunity for each unique individual, it certainly cannot provide utopian equity for each unique individual. The belief that such may be achieved is the goal of a false gospel, the “social gospel.” True equity is found in Christ – “all are one in Christ” – and in the equal share and inheritance of Christ's eternal victory.

Inclusion: Inclusion is code for “acceptance of all without regard to morals, the negation of the Ten Commandments.” It thereby replaces the Holy God's Ten Commandments with Man's moral law, which is authorized to exclude the excluders, thereby not itself being inclusive.