

**Life Group Notes**  
**Sunday 05 May 2019**

**Speaker:** Sean Green  
**Series:** INVITED  
**Title:** Everyone's Invited  
**Passage:** Acts 13:1-8

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**Read Acts 13v1-4**

**Leadership at Antioch of Syria:** Notice the diversity of leadership: we have 3 Jews and 2 Gentiles among the prophets and teachers of the church. Or cut it another way, we have 2 black Africans, 2 west Asians and one European. God has always desired a diverse people and we see this intention right at the beginning of the story of God's people.

**It begins with Abraham:** The story of God's diverse people starts with Abraham in Genesis 12v1-3. As it progresses Joseph feeds Egypt; non-Israelite's are added at the Exodus; then Moses' brother in law is added, then Rahab the Canaanite, Ruth the Moabitess and Obab-Edom the Edomite. This pattern continues right up to the arrival of Jesus. Initially He mostly preaches to Israel, but he keeps inviting unexpected people. His final command was '*Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations*'. Everyone is invited.

Having said all this, we don't really have diversity yet. They were to imitate Jews. You can come with us if you become like us. That is not diversity. That is conformity. But in Acts we start to see Jesus' desire for diversity: He sends His Spirit who brings One-ness and Many-ness. Two analogies can help us understand this:

**An Orchestra:** An orchestra is a large ensemble of classical musical instruments playing one overarching piece of music, each section playing differing parts. The alternatives are not pleasant: A hundred people playing the same tune on a recorder is One-ness without many-ness. Its conformity but not enjoyable to listen to! Many-ness without One-ness, lots of different instruments but no togetherness, is a loud cacophony! Diversity is to be like an orchestra, all playing different sounds but with an overarching piece of music and sounding beautiful. This is what we begin to see in the book of Acts. But Diversity is difficult. Sometimes the instruments clash, sometimes the many-ness collides with the One-ness. The church has to figure out what to do about our preferences and prejudices in light of the cross.

**The Amazon River:** The second analogy is that the people of God are like the Amazon river. At its source in the mountains of Peru, it is a tiny trickle of water. But as it flows it grows, until it reaches the rainforest of Brazil where many other tributaries join it. It grows and swells until it is the mightiest river on earth. So an old man and woman in Gen12 are the source of God's blessing to the nations. As this river winds its way through the bible it grows. Then the book of Acts happens! The Holy Spirit descends and rapidly adds in other nations and this is still happening today.

**Suggested questions:**

Diversity is glorious: How does a diverse church display God's wisdom?

Diversity is difficult: Preferences and prejudices are hard to see and harder to yield ... discuss!