

INTRODUCTION TO INTERCULTURAL WORKSHOP

A. TWO FOCAL QUESTIONS

1. Can you distinguish *international* and *intercultural*?
2. Can you distinguish *multi-cultural* and *cross-cultural*?

B. PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS

1. *Intercultural* living is radically different from living in an *international* community.
 - It describes specifically, the way we live out our *faith/discipleship*.
2. There can be no faith *in theory*; only existentially: it must be lived.
 - Faith is expressed *in practice*, as discipleship (“lived faith”).
3. But faith can *only* be expressed through culture, culturally.
 - Contexts and persons are specific; as they change, so must our lived faith.
4. *Intercultural* living is authentic discipleship lived by culturally different people together.
 - The language – *cultural, multi-cultural, cross-cultural* – needs to be clarified.
5. *Intercultural living* is not a *problem* but a *challenge (opportunity)*; not *theirs* but *ours*.
 - Impossible in an US/THEM world (opposed) but only in a WE world (integrated)
6. Intercultural living is not natural but it is possible: perhaps “supernatural.”
 - It is unequivocally *faith-based living*, not just acquiring new techniques.
7. It is not easy but it is desirable [God desires it] and urgently needed.
 - If one culture is not to dominate, *everyone* is called to conversion.
8. It needs full commitment and hard work; good will is not enough.
 - Historically, religious “good will” alone has perpetrated disaster and injustice
9. It requires compromise, real dialogue, and a clear and common vision.
 - Intercultural community cannot be built on autocratic, dogmatic leadership.
10. Intentional intercultural living is *something new* for most people.
 - The overwhelming majority of humans are monocultural [we explore this later].
11. Intercultural living is the future of international religious life.
 - Unless international communities become intercultural, they will not survive.
12. Intercultural living is not only for international communities.
 - It constitutes a challenge for everyone in ministry to “the other.”
13. This requires/produces a revolution in religious life (living): both *new* and *obligatory*.