

## Bob Goodman - God Loves Diversity

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Our thoughts this, this morning are entitled God Loves Diversity, and we're going to look at the diversity of God's creation and then see how that so nicely melds in with his overall plans and purposes for mankind. Now, when we look at the word diversity, it's a noun, and it means the quality or state of having many different forms, types, or ideas. So a lot of different things, and with regards to people, it's a state of having people who are of different races or have different cultures or groups in an organization.

And what we find is that, you know, especially in our modern organizations, that when we have diversity, we actually have different ideas that come in and together we come up with very creative solutions. So we want to see. We want to look at creation and we want to look at the scriptural account of diversity to see what should our opinion be of diversity, and how do we know that God loves diversity? Well, to start with, we can exercise our five senses, sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

And we're just going to briefly look at these five and, you know, by the evidence of nature, see what kind of diversity there is there. First, with sight, this is the spectrum that the human eye can see. So you go all the way from the low range of reds all the way up to the violets in the high range. Now, within God's creation, a dog's eye would see this same spectrum much differently, and so we realize even amongst creation, there are different capabilities and different perceptions.

There's a lot of diversity there, and when we look at the overall electromagnetic spectrum, we have things that are much lower in the spectrum than wavelengths of light, like X rays and ultraviolet and so forth, and then we have things that are higher, like microwaves and FM and AM and then very long waves as well. So we realize that there are. There's a wide diversity in how we can perceive things.

But of course, we're showing you the visible spectrum according to our eyes, and if we look at that in comparison, let's say to a bird, what you notice is that a bird can see a lot better in the darker end of the spectrum than we can and that they see different spikes. So this is kind of interesting. So we see diversity even amongst God's creation, and it's particularly adapted so that, you know, they can survive and they can fit in the ecosystem in their niches, and then we can look at the audio spectrum.

So what we actually hear and human auditory field is actually relatively narrow. But we realize that elephants, moles, and most insects communicate on a subsonic level that we can't hear. It's too low frequency, and then of course, we've all seen a dog whistle, and you blow the whistle, you don't hear anything.

And the dog alerts, and then on up to dolphins, whales and bats. They go up to ultra high frequency sounds. So we see once again that there's a tremendous diversity in how things are perceived, not just from our own standpoint, but within nature, and then of course, we have diversity and taste.

And these are the six categories of taste on here. You can go around the wheel. You know, look at fat, sweet, sour, bitter, salty, and umami, which is a kind of a mellow taste. You find that in cheeses. You find it in mushrooms and meats as well.

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And if we look at an oyster flavor, for instance, we also take into the aspects, not only taste, but texture and finish as well, and so you see there's tremendous diversity, and this is one of the things that gives human creation great pleasure in eating and trying new foods and so forth and smelling the flowers and so forth. So we see God has created tremendous diversity there. Well, and then we have our sense of smell, which is complementary to our sense of taste.

And there are all of these different smells, and of course, compared to a dog, our smell is very, very limited. So there's some additives and some animals that have a very acute sense of smell. Sharks can smell blood from miles away in the water. Polar bears can.

Can smell their prey for miles away as well. So we realize our perception is somewhat limited, but yet we have all of these capabilities of smell that God has given us, and if we just take the example of coffee, for instance, it's got all of these different descriptors as to the taste of the coffee, and we know, you know, if you go to a coffee store, there are any number of coffees you can get that have these particular.

These particular characteristics, and so you can kind of shop to your taste. But you see all of these things, and this is just with smell, and then, of course, we have the sense of touch. We not only sense hot, cold, but vibration and texture, pressure and stretching, and then pain and pleasure as well.

So combine these, these characteristics really show us that there's tremendous diversity within the human experience as well, and it's important to note that not all human perception is identical either. So, for instance, some people are colorblind, some people don't have a good sense of taste or smell, and so even the perception within human beings is very, very diverse. But where else can we look for evidence to exercise our senses?

Well, of course, we can look to the Scriptures, and really, for the remainder of this, of our thoughts, we're going to reference Scriptures and then we're going to look at some different aspects of God's creation with regards to those scriptures. In Psalm 86:10, we read, for thou art great and doest wondrous things. Thou art God alone, and I think this is a very wonderful description of God's greatness.

There's none like him, and he does wondrous things, and you know, we see the wondrous things in the sense of a newborn baby all the way to elderly age in all aspects of our lives. It's just so wonderful. That's the joy of living. Part of the joy of living is discovering and experiencing all of this diversity that God has created.

So where else can we look for evidence? And we're going to look just briefly, once again, we're going to take a tour of the heavens, and we know that God created the heavens, so we're going to look at some of the diversity we see there as well. In Genesis 1:16 and 17, it says, and God made two great lights. He made the stars also.

And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and God saw that it was good. So it's describing the heavens and in all the firmament as well, and who has not seen a beautiful sunset or the moon rising over the mountain? A full moon in a clear sky.

And you can see the details of the moon as well. You know, it goes well beyond just these, the, the earth and the moon. In First Corinthians 15:41, we read, there's one glory of the sun and another of the moon and another of the stars. For one star differeth from another star in glory, and we can

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look at just some of the stars.

And of course, most of these pictures will be galaxies, so there'll be billions of stars. But they're made of stars for sure. In Isaiah 40:22, we read, it is he God that sitteth upon the circle of the Earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in, and this reminds me just this week of the SpaceX Inspiration4 mission, where they had a cupola where they could look out and see not only the heavens, but they could see the earth, and you have to.

They would look down, and one thing they said is, there are no borders in space. Such a beautiful sight, and this is kind of the Picture where God is sitting above and looking down, and all the inhabitants are tiny in respect. You know, who of us has not seen the beauty of the Milky Way on a dark and clear night?

Or looked at some of the pictures from the Hubble space telescopes of galaxies far, far away, Beautiful rings of billions and billions of stars, and even the galaxies are so particular and unique in their formation. Some are flat, some are round, some are swirls in space. It's just amazing when we look at the diversity and the beauty, and really that Hubble Space Telescope has opened up the heavens as never before to see the beauty that God has created.

And yet when we go back to Genesis, it says he created the heavens and the Earth, and now we're getting a little glimpse of his beautiful creation. Every color, every shape. Wow. Swirling galaxies.

The. I think this is the Cat Eye galaxy, galaxy nebula. Just beautiful. So we see tremendous diversity in the universe, and you see the Horsehead Nebula, you can see it in the very middle of the screen.

The Horsehead. God created all of this, and he really created it for man. The beauty of the heavens is really inexplicable. This is a picture from Hubble Space Telescope, and what they decided to do was to look at the darkest spot in the heavens.

It's as though you. You held a grain of sand at your arm's length and you found the darkest spot in heaven. That's how big this picture was, and they left that telescope stationary for a couple of weeks. They were expecting to see the edge of the universe.

Instead, what they saw was thousands and thousands of galaxies as far as they could see. Wow. That's the beauty of the heavens, and you know, the amazing thing is that as it says in Psalm 147, 4, 5, he telleth the number of the stars, he calleth them by their names. Now, there are billions of stars in every galaxy, and there are billions of galaxies.

And yet the heavenly father, notice his understanding is infinite. He has named every single one. Wow. That's how important they are to him, and so we see that the universe is diverse on an incredible scale.

On an incredible scale, and then we can go the opposite way. Instead of looking large, let's look small. Let's look at the atomic level, and we all remember from grade school or high school or college when we talked about the atom.

And of course, we had a nucleus and we had neutrons, protons and electrons, and that was at the time I was being educated. That was pretty much it. But we went on to understand that there are quarks within that make up these elements, these neutrons and protons and so forth. So subatomic

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particles came out.

And then later there's a theory called subatomic strings that links everything together. This takes space, time, gravity, and explains how all of these interact with each other, especially under extremes, and we're just starting to get a glimpse as to what this means. This is amazing. So our God is on a.

On a tremendous scale, and then he goes down to a super finite scale as well. So the universe is, is diverse on a miniscule scale as well. Where else can we look for evidence? Well, I think we can look for evidence a little closer to home, and so we're going to look at some of the diversity within the earth.

In Genesis 1:9 and 10, it says, and God said, let the waters under the heaven be gathered together in one place and let the dry land appear, and it was so, and God called the dry land Earth, and he gathered together the waters and called them his seeds, and God saw that it was good.

In Jonah, he says, the Lord, the God of Heaven, who made the sea and the dry land, and so let's look at the Earth and look at the sum of the diversity there.

When we look at the different biomes or different classifications of land on the Earth, we go from everything from mountains to deserts to temperate grasslands and so forth. Savannas, tundras, tropical rainforests. There's great diversity in the Earth, and if you've been privileged to travel as we have, you've gotten to see some of that. In fact, we made a couple of trips to Australia, we made one trip to New Zealand, and the thought came, where can we go where everything is very compact?

So the south island of New Zealand is 200ths of 1% of the world's land surface, and yet look at all of the different zones that they have in that one area, and you know, of all of our travels, whether it be Europe or Asia, Australia, North America, Africa, I think New Zealand, south island may be the most compact island with so many different zones. So let's just take a look and we're going to show you pictures on the South Island. Now you can literally drive from the North End to the South South End in about a day, and you can drive across in four or five hours, depending on where you're going.

So it's not very large, but notice the diversity and from our aspect, notice the beauty that God has created. This is on the eastern part of the south island, and it's a caldera, so it's a volcanic.

It's the center of a volcano that collapsed and it goes out to the sea, and it was wonderfully green. The pictures really don't do it justice. It looked like Ireland, bright, vivid green, and there were many sheep grazing all around.

And then we went from west, we started to go east towards the Alps on the southern island, and of course it was this big coastal plain where it was lush and green and it was watered by the glaciers from the mountains. We went over to the west side of the island and here was the sea that between Australia and New Zealand, and to the south was Antarctica, and along the way God had created this beautiful, beautiful stratified rock that.

And here's a glowing hole.

And of course, because of the karst topography, there were caves as well, very beautiful places, and we took a little hike and here we have a tropical forest with a beautiful waterfall and river. The

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next morning we went over to the coast and we were on a coastal flat, beautiful coastal flat. Really could be like a coastal plain almost anywhere, and there were some seals on the beach as well.

And then we looked to the north and there was this tropical looking sound there. Finally we got down to the fjords, and this collection of fjords is one of the largest on earth besides Norway. Very beautiful. Later that same day, we went out to Mount Cook. So you see, in a very small area we had this tremendous, tremendous diversity.

And so here we're seeing alpine glaciers, we're seeing beautiful mountain streams and mountain scenery as well, and here you can see the evidence of where the glacier cut through and some of the moraine that was left. The next day we went to the north. We're now in the coastal flats where there are vineyards and there are cattle and sheep, and we saw a beautiful rainbow.

On the northern part, we found a river that had glacial runoff, so it has that beautiful look as well, and then we visited a spring, a crystal clear new spring gushing out of the earth once again. This is on a very small island. Later that day we went up a little bit higher to a volcanic area that looked over a tropical bay, and in that tropical bay there was a peninsula with sand dunes and beautiful, beautiful scenery.

And then the bay at low tide. So you see tremendous, tremendous diversity in a very, very small area, and this is kind of the way that the Lord designed it, isn't he? And now we're on the far west coast a little bit north, and off the coast there's a deep ocean trench and there's whales and seals and so forth.

All the little black dots you see on that peninsula are seals. Very beautiful, lush area, and so we see that the Earth is diverse on an immense scale. But where else can we look for evidence? Let's look to God's creation.

And God said, let the earth bring forth grass and herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind whose seed is in itself upon the earth, and it was so, and the earth brought forth grass and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit whose seed was in itself after his kind, and God saw that it was good, and so he's talking about plants.

And it looked, and God said, let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, the fowl that he may fly above the earth in the open firmament of the heaven, and God created great whales and every little creature that moveth upon the waters which brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind. Have you noticed the pattern? God is saying that like begets like.

He's talking about the animals, and then he said, and out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called him every living creature, that was the name thereof, and Adam gave names to all of them. You notice that God has named every star in the universe, in the heavens.

And he gave that same privilege to Adam to name all of the animals, and so man was given an edict to investigate and name the animals, and that continues even down on Friday, and so there's a. This is the relative number of named species.

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So these are the ones we've identified of different categories. Very, very interesting, and Adam has, and his progeny have done exactly what God said, and so we have vertebrates and invertebrates and then the different categories.

And then under that, there's been names, and to date, this, this is probably dated at this point. There's almost a million and a half living things have been cataloged by mankind. Now, it's important when we look at the Genesis account, we keep on having this, this phrase appearing over and over again, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind and every fowl after his kind.

And so what you notice is there's this after his kind thing which is saying that they are. They reproduce amongst themselves. They are their own species. You know, current species estimates, according to the UN in 2011 was about seven and a half million. According to some other things, it may be up to 14 million species on the earth.

So we have just begun to understand the millions and millions of species on the earth. Well, how diverse is man's thinking in comparison to God's? Well, if we look at the car companies, and this is, this is 48 car companies, this is not all of them, we realize that mankind's idea of diversity is pretty, pretty limited compared to God's, isn't it? God created billions of species, and when we look at it, what percentage of the species are alive today?

Well, only about 1%. So it's interesting, they now predict that 99% of species that have existed are now extinct. Wow, and so the estimate was that there's over 5 billion species existing and God designed it, each after his own kind, and God wrote it in their very plan, their DNA. So life is diverse on an immense scale that even though we are in nature every day, it's hard for us to comprehend the diversity of life.

And God codes this. Now we know in their own DNA. Well, how does DNA work? Well, it's a double helix. It splits and reproduces.

It's got its own check mechanism, and basically the genetic material in one cell contains a plan for the entire organism. Now that is incredible. That is incredible. So it's got, it's a self defining map within every single cell.

And the human body has over 50 trillion cells. That's amazing. This is a electron microscope scan of a single strand of DNA and you can see the spiraling and you can get a little, a little idea of what that helix looks like. Now the way, one of the ways that God enforces each after its own kind is by the number of chromosomes in a cell, and you'll notice among different species there are different numbers.

So this is one of the ways that God enforces each after its own kind, and of course we realize within our own species we have 46 and with reproduction appropriation, that the mother and the father each contribute 23 chromosomes and that looks like this. So each individual is unique and yet you see characteristics that are very much the same. When you look at this couple, the couple looks very much different. But when you look at the children, you can see which children resemble their father or their mother more closely.

And that's the nature. So God loves diversity. So life within the species is diverse as well. You know, within the church it's important to understand that there is not just diversity, there is unity. There is neither Greek nor Jew, there's neither Jew nor Greek.

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There's neither bond nor free. There is neither male nor female. For Ye are all one in Christ Jesus, and we need to stress that last place. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

You are have one purpose. So what he's saying is we're going to have tremendous diversity within our ranks, every race, every creed, male and female, but we're all one in Christ. So there is unity of faith, and you know, In Revelation chapter 5, we read and they sung a new song saying, thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou was slain and has redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and thou hast made unto our God kings and priests.

And we shall reign on the earth out of every people and nation. So diversity and yah. Unity, purpose and unity in doctrine as well. So God requires diversity, he seeks diversity, and we realize that an ecosystem is very diverse and it's only healthy if it is diverse.

So when you lose too many species, the ecosystem goes out of balance. So they require diversity to remain healthy. So if God loves diversity, does that mean anything goes? Well, let's look once again to the, to the psalms. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

And you know, science is all about understanding the principles of God's creation. So God's rules are found in natural law, and you know, we think about it, there are different sciences and disciplines, but they all follow God's rules, and if you understand these rules and laws and you follow them, then you can exploit them, and when you talk about the increase in knowledge, it's when all of these understandings also increase so that we could create the things that we have in the world today.

In Jeremiah we read, but this command I gave them, obey the voice of God, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people and walk in the way that I command you, that it may be well with you. So what this is really saying is if you follow God's rules, you will be blessed. But if you break his rules, you'll be stressed, and this is kind of a key that I find helpful in my own life. So when we are in conformity with God's rules, we'll be blessed.

You know, the groaning creation right now is at odds with God. They don't even understand what's going on. But we've been blessed where we see these things, and the Lord says, behold, to obey is better than sacrifice. So joyful conformity will be the rule in the ages to come.

Just like the church is in Joyful conformity. Now, just like the church studies and makes the truth their own, and be clear, the Lord says there is one truth, so we need to come into conformity with that, and we need to continue as Bible students to try to understand God's plans and purposes and to stand strong in the faith. That's conformity.

Unity of faith is now for the footstep followers. But we realize in the ages to come and in the kingdom, all will have to come into conformity. So there'll be tremendous diversity in his creation, and yet there will be conformity, conformity unto the faith once delivered unto the saints. In Second Peter, we read, nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

That is only possible when those who are brought back align themselves with God's plans and purposes, and there's only one way to do that, through Christ. In first Corinthians, we read, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. So God will give them

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bodies, and they will be diverse once again, and yet they will be unified in their conformity to God.

So man will embrace diversity and conformity. God loves diversity and God desires loving conformity, and that's what we have to do now, loving conformity, not out of ignorance, but out of. Out of understanding of the faith once delivered unto the saints. So we've got some closing questions.

How do you feel about diversity? You have problems with different cultures, different races, different financial groups, men, women. How do you feel? God loves diversity and expects us to embrace it as well. How do you feel about conformity?

Well, we're getting a test right now with COVID I think we have to conform. We're told to conform to what the government tells us to do. Are we fighting that or are we going with that? And are we conforming, conforming ourselves? More importantly than anything in the world is our conformity to the faith once delivered unto the saints.

And holding fast to that. What are you doing to promote diversity? What are you doing to embrace conformity? You know, diversity will ensure that man continues to learn forever, and conformity to God's rules will lead to everlasting life.

Enjoy. We thank our Heavenly Father for from him and through him and to him are all things. To God be the glory forever.