



REFLECTIONS

July 3, 2022, Refreshed from the Archives of July 8, 2012

The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them."

Genesis 11:6-7

A Common Language

We felt honored by Palestinian Christians from a little Anglican church in a small Israel town who extended an invitation to join their weekly worship service. Their open arms and broad smiles greeted our small contingent of American tourists like long lost brothers and sisters.

We worshiped in their native tongue before they repeated it graciously for us in English. But they always read the liturgy and sang the hymns in our respective languages simultaneously.

To outsiders it would have sounded like the unsynchronized noise of an orchestra in warmup—that is until the final word of the liturgy and the last lyric of the musical score ended in near perfect unity. Only then did we feel the depth of its beauty. We had spoken the same words but in different languages; sung the same lyrics but in different tongues; had come from different cultures but worshiped the same Lord. Through Him we became one.

It took me back to the first Pentecost after the resurrection:

All of [us] were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in [our respective] tongues as the Spirit enabled [us.]

When they heard this sound, [we] came together in bewilderment, because each one heard [the other] speaking in his own language. (From Acts 2:4, 6-7)

We were struck that day by the familiarity of the worship service and the hospitality extended to us. We found the congregants surprisingly youthful, passionate for Christ, and the number of children actively participating in the service impressive. Given the thousands of miles that separate our homes and the cultural differences that lead to political divide, our hearts were warmed to discover that together we were one people speaking a common language to send the good news of Jesus Christ.

With Jesus Christ as a common language, nothing would be impossible.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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