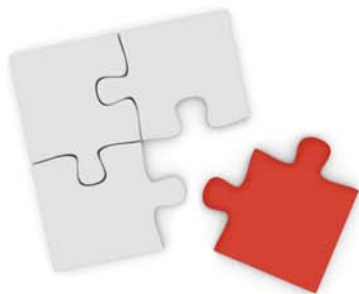


The Type of Leader Your Organization Needs to Become Multiethnic

RIGHT
COLOR
WRONG
CULTURE

A LEADERSHIP FABLE



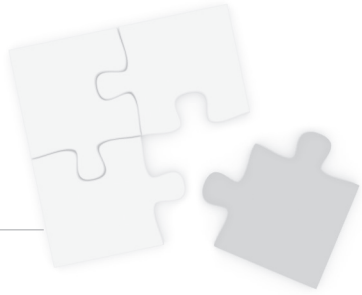
BRYAN LORITTS

Part 5

Ice Cube



Chapter 22



The door to the conference room opened and in walked a tall, slender, commanding man in his fifties with gray hair at his temples and a kind smile. His appearance went beyond the norm of what the white, affluent East Memphian was accustomed to. His bold, blue suit with the oversized suit coat appeared to be custom-made. His suit's breast pocket had a yellow handkerchief prominently displayed. His shoes matched his suit, and Peter knew immediately the outfit could not be found in any of the stores frequented by the people seated around the table.

"Pastor Mitchell, great seeing you again," Gary said as he stood and embraced him. He then turned to the group, who had also stood. "This is Octavius Mitchell, senior pastor of the Greater Zion Church."

"Always great being with you, Dr. Kirkland," Pastor Mitchell responded and then nodded a greeting to the rest of the group. His eyes moved around the room until they

landed on Peter. His eyebrows raised slightly and his smile widened.

“You know Gary?” Jackson asked as he moved forward to shake the candidate’s hand.

“Oh yes. Once a month it is my joy to get together with Dr. Kirkland,” Pastor Mitchell said.

“Your name is so unique, Oc-ta-vi-us. What does it mean?” Jackson asked, apparently failing to catch the subtle point against using Gary’s first name.

“*Eight.*” Pastor Mitchell pronounced the number as though he were humoring a child. “I’m the youngest of eight children.”

“Nice shoes, Octavius,” Janice said as she pointed to Pastor Mitchell’s blue shoes, which appeared to be made out of exotic reptile.

Pastor Mitchell appeared uncomfortable but forced a smile.

“I tell you what,” Gary jumped in. “I know in our culture it’s no big deal to call each other by our first names, but let’s refer to our friend as *Pastor.*”

“I’m so sorry if I offended you,” Janice said quickly.

“No offense taken,” Pastor Mitchell said and smiled kindly. “And thank you, Dr. Kirkland, for offering that up. My culture tends to have a different way of addressing and treating their pastors.”

Gary pointed to an empty chair, so Dr. Mitchell could have a seat. Then the team sat awkwardly and quietly.

Peter decided to hang back and watch how the team would respond to this new candidate. Jackson picked up Pastor Mitchell's resume and looked it over.

"Pastor Mitchell, I see that you graduated from Morehouse College with a bachelor's in religion," Jackson said.

"Yes, sir, I sure did."

"Isn't Morehouse an all-African-American school?"

Peter smiled inwardly at the question. Jackson was trying to mimic the question Peter had given to Ronald about the racial makeup of his education.

"Yes, it is."

"How does that work, exactly? Are whites allowed to attend schools like Morehouse?" Jackson asked.

Pastor Mitchell gave a hearty laugh. "Of course!" His laugh seemed to ease the mood of the room.

"Forgive my ignorance, Pastor Mitchell, but is it really okay to have an all-black college? It seems segregationist to me," Wilson asked.

"Oh, you're not ignorant at all, and I understand your point. Actually I get that question a lot from white folks. What you may not know is that many historically African-American colleges and universities were funded by whites

who were legitimately concerned that African Americans receive a quality education.”

“Seriously?” Thoreau jumped in.

“Seriously,” Pastor Mitchell replied. “Take Spelman, our African-American sister school, for instance. Do you know whom it’s named after?”

When no one answered, Pastor Mitchell explained. “It’s named after John Rockefeller’s wife. Her maiden name was Spelman. The Rockefellers were the major benefactors of the school. Many of my white brothers and sisters believe that historically African-American colleges and universities began on their own because we didn’t want to be a part of their schools, when in fact it was our white brothers and sisters who, out of both a concern for our education and a commitment to institutionalized segregation, funded these schools.” He smiled politely again.

“Never knew that,” Thoreau replied, shaking his head in wonderment. “But while I see the thinking behind doing this in the 1800s, why does it continue today?”

“Well, because there is still a need to provide rich educational environments where the faculty, staff, and administration reflect and teach our history and values. What other school can I go to that will not only substantively educate me in the African-American experience but do so with professors, a president, and leadership council that

look like me?” He nodded his head in respect and chuckled lightly. “I don’t think I would’ve found this at institutions like the University of Tennessee or Ole Miss. Those are great schools, but they didn’t soothe the cultural longing I had. And most certainly, on a high school level, Poplar Christian Academy would not have scratched that itch, if you’ll forgive my bluntness.”

Peter smiled to himself. *This is getting good*, he thought.

With each question the committee asked, Pastor Mitchell answered in calm, dignified tones, putting the team at ease. Peter noticed they became so comfortable that they continued to probe deeper into his racial worldview.

Finally they moved to Pastor Mitchell’s preaching.

“We’ve all listened to some of your sermons online, and while I can’t speak for the team, I found them to be very inspiring,” Jackson said.

“Thank you.”

“You seem to end your sermons as if you’re very, what’s the word I want?”

“*Animated?*” Thoreau offered.

“That’s it,” Jackson said, pointing in agreement to Thoreau. “It seems as if you’re singing at the end of your messages. Is that typical?”

Pastor Mitchell crossed his legs comfortably. “I don’t know if I’d say typical. African-American preachers have a

very different style from what you're used to. But to your point, in the traditional African-American church many of our preachers tend to be animated, as you say. We have a word for how you describe the way my sermons end: *whooping*."

"Whooping?" Jackson said. "Well—"

Gary coughed lightly. Peter figured he was expressing his concern about Jackson's nonexistent self-edit button.

Not taking the clue, however, Jackson forged ahead. "Well, I guess my question is, do you imagine whooping, as you say, at our church, if you take this position?"

Pastor Mitchell tilted his head and wore a mixture of seriousness and stilted politeness. Peter could tell he wanted to be respectful, but Octavius Mitchell *was* a pastor *and* older than many of the people in the room.

"Well, Mr. Chairman, I've learned years ago that God made only one me, and He expects me to be me. What you see is what you get. Do you anticipate that being a problem?"

Jackson sat up a little straighter, surprised by the reply. "For some it will be. We're not a very emotional church; we tend to be more on the *intellectual* side of things."

Gary turned red at Jackson's misstep. Peter eased back in his chair, twirling the pen between his fingers, now boldly wearing an outward smile.

“Mr. Chairman,” Pastor Mitchell stated, still maintaining a polite manner. “Whooping is not anti-intellectual. My sincere hope should be that you learned something about God and His Word in every sermon that I preached.”

“Oh yes, I did. I’m not trying to say your sermons aren’t intellectual—”

“Allow me to offer an example. From the looks of things, I would imagine you like gravy.”

Here it comes, Peter thought. He wondered how Jackson would react to this blatant weight comment. He was surprised when Jackson laughed and patted his stomach.

“You better believe it,” Jackson said.

“Well then, you know what my grandmother said is true: great meat always makes great gravy. When the meat of the Bible has been presented, and Christ exalted, good gravy is sure to follow. Do you see what I’m getting at, Mr. Chairman?” Pastor Mitchell was smiling sincerely.

“Got it,” Jackson said.

“I believe that it was the Greeks who said that great messages were composed of *logos* and *pathos*—content and passion. Dr. Robert Smith Jr., the great professor at Beeson Divinity says in his book *Doctrine That Dances* that the preacher must be committed to both the cognitive and the cardiological—the head and the heart. Jesus said we are to love God with the totality of our being, head and heart.

The body of my sermons always informs the head, but my conclusions inspire the heart, and that's why I whoop, Mr. Chairman. My whooping gets to the heart—and the feet, I guess one could say, causing the people to dance.”

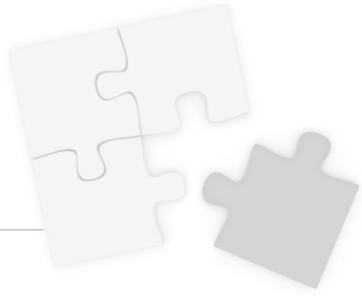
“We don't dance much around here,” Wilson said. The room erupted in laughter.

“Sure we do. Put that Tom Jones back on, Peter,” Thoreau said looking at Jackson. They laughed again.

“I see your point, Pastor,” Jackson said, sobering up. “But the cement on Poplar Bible's DNA dried years ago. We are who we are, and to be painfully honest, I'm not sure that your style of preaching would fit. If you were a guest speaker, we would play along, but once the novelty wore off, I'm telling you, our people wouldn't go for it.”

“So you want to build a multiethnic church, but I've got to become white to be part of it?” Pastor Mitchell asked.

Chapter 23



I see you've been at your church for six years," Gary said, switching gears to a less-sensitive topic.

"Yes, sir. Celebrated my sixth anniversary just this past Sunday in fact."

"Congratulations. Did you all do anything to celebrate?" Thoreau asked.

"Of course. Actually, every year the church takes a Sunday to celebrate my pastoral anniversary."

"*Every year*, huh?" Gary said for emphasis, looking at the rest of the team as if to say they needed to take notes.

"Oh yes. In the African-American church, the pastor's anniversary is a big deal. Every year."

"Aren't you worried that making such a big deal will create a kind of celebrity culture?" Jackson said.

"Not really. The Bible is clear that people like Dr. Kirkland and myself need to be honored. The apostle Paul said that those who preach the Word of God are worthy of double honor, and we see *honor* as not just a pat on the

back followed by, ‘Good job.’ We see it as rewarding a pastor with money. I’m not in the ministry for the material benefits, but I believe in being honored in material ways. Remember what Paul said to the congregation in 1 Corinthians 9:11: ‘If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?’”

“Curious, if you don’t mind me asking,” Janice cut in. “What did your church do for you at your anniversary?”

“They gave me a very generous financial gift and provided an all-expense paid vacation to Maui. It was their way of showing honor.”

“Well, needless to say, we need to grow in that area,” Janice said.

“Preach it, sister,” Gary teased.

Pastor Mitchell laughed. “Whatever I can do to help my fellow pastor.”

“Would you expect something similar at our church?” Janice asked delicately.

“Not to the same extent, because I would not be the senior pastor. However, as a leader, and one who teaches the Word, I would expect the first lady and me to be honored and appreciated by the flock.”

“First lady?” Thoreau asked.

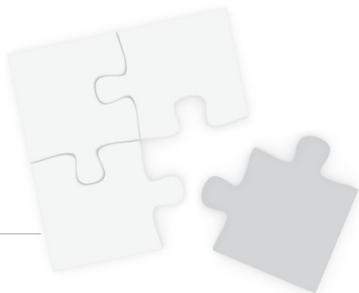
“That’s what they call the pastor’s wife in their church,” Gary said.

Thoreau's expression betrayed his pessimism.

"Forgive me for asking," Janice said, "but it sounds like you have it really well at your church. Why would you even consider leaving an environment like that to come to our church—especially going from senior pastor to an associate position?"

"Good question, Sister Janice." Pastor Mitchell uncrossed his legs and leaned forward. "When I heard Dr. Kirkland share with our pastors' fellowship a while back that you wanted to take this church in a new direction, I felt God nudge my spirit. I look around at Greater Zion and I'm sure God is doing a great work in our church, but I also realize it's not a reflection of what the kingdom is to look like. And if I could be used by God to be part of something that looks more like heaven, you know multi-ethnic, then that's what I'd love to do. I'll still be preaching the Word. I'll be bringing in African Americans—but without the pressures of being the senior pastor." He nodded respectfully to Gary. "You want to make this congregation multiethnic. I know that I can help you make that happen. *That's* why I'm here."

Chapter 24



I want to be respectful of your time,” Jackson said.

“You’re fine, Mr. Chairman,” Pastor Mitchell responded.

“I do have one last question for you. What’s your relationship like with the elder board at your church?”

“Oh, we have some wonderful men at Greater Zion, really seasoned saints. I’ve been blessed. These men take the vision God has given me and they run with it.”

Jackson furrowed his brow. “How do you reach a compromise? For instance, when they don’t agree with something you want to initiate?”

“That doesn’t happen.” Pastor Mitchell raised his hands gently. “Let me explain. In the first year or two of my ministry, they gave me a bit of pushback, but that was to be expected. We were just getting to know one another after all. But then we clarified everyone’s role.”

“So no pushback?” Thoreau asked amazed.

“At all?” Wilson added.

“No,” Pastor Mitchell said, shaking his head. “As I study

the Bible I don't see any case for a collaborative, or what some might call an *egalitarian* approach to leadership—

"You mean," Janice interrupted, "where the team gets in a room and collectively figures things out."

"Yes. But that's not how we operate at Greater Zion." He looked at Gary. "I assume you . . .?"

Before Gary could respond, Jackson broke in. "How *do* you operate?"

"God tells me and I tell the people," Pastor Mitchell responded in a gracious but resolute way.

As soon as Pastor Mitchell's words hit the air, Peter knew this would shock every team member's ear in the room. Throughout Poplar Bible's history no one had led like this and remained to talk about it. That kind of "renegade" approach to leadership would have landed a pastor out of a job faster than he could have found Genesis 1:1 in a Bible sword drill. Poplar Bible was a well-oiled machine, maintaining a complex system of checks and balances that ensured pastoral accountability. In political speak, while Poplar Bible was a democracy, Greater Zion was a benevolent dictatorship.

"What's your biblical precedent for your leadership philosophy?" Thoreau asked.

"Moses on Mount Sinai when he received the Ten Commandments and gave them to the people. The Old

Testament prophet who heard a word from the Lord and spoke that word to the community. Jesus with the twelve disciples. I don't think there was much collaboration going on there," Pastor Mitchell answered with his first touch of gentle sarcasm.

"Yes, but what about Paul's instructions to Timothy and Titus about the need to set up elders? Doesn't that assume collaboration?" Jackson responded.

"That's your perspective seen through your cultural lenses. The way I look at those passages is that I begin with the question, '*Whom* was Paul writing to?'"

"Timothy and Titus," Jackson said.

"And what were their roles in the church?"

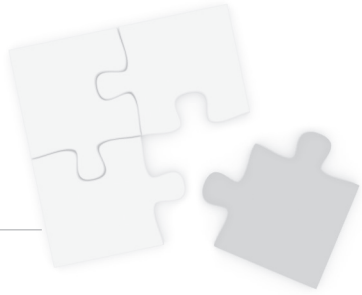
"They were the pastors."

"Exactly. So here you have an apostle, having received a word from God, telling local church pastors how to set up their elder board. The way I read it is that the elders were responding to the visionary of the house, which is the senior pastor. Paul's not writing to a collective body of men telling them to figure out their leadership structure. It's the pastor who has received a vision from God through an apostle, now telling other men, 'Here's what's going to happen.' Nothing in the text suggests that Timothy was like, 'Hey, guys, I got this idea about having elders. What do you think? And oh, let's vote on it.' Again, I'm not trying to

offend. I'm just offering my cultural view." And with that Pastor Mitchell reached for the bottle of water sitting in front of him.

"Are there any other questions for Pastor Mitchell?" Gary asked. When no one commented, Gary rose, followed by the rest of the group, thanked Pastor Mitchell, and escorted him from the room.

Chapter 25



Wasting no time, Peter rolled up his sleeves and moved to the whiteboard. “So what did you think of Pastor Mitchell?”

The team was quiet for a moment. Peter sensed they were trying to form the appropriate words.

“Great guy,” Thoreau finally said, while the group nodded in affirmation. “Interesting guy. . . . He’s just not *our* guy.”

“Why do you say that?” Peter asked.

“Well, I don’t think his philosophy of leadership would work here,” Thoreau answered.

“I agree,” Janice said. “His view of elders is just unbiblical, to be honest.”

“How so?”

“His whole bit about God telling him and then he tells the people sounds slightly cultish. A little weird.”

“Okay. Could it be that it’s just different?” Peter asked. “Can you be a Christian and have a different philosophy of

leadership or church governance?”

“I guess so,” Thoreau said reluctantly.

Janice peered at Peter over the edge of her glasses, looking perplexed.

“Don’t tell me *you* think this is our guy?” Jackson asked incredulously.

Peter wanted to see how much they’d learned from his discussion about the different cultures. “Maybe, maybe not,” Peter said with a grin as he watched Jackson’s mouth drop slightly. “What else stood out to you about Pastor Mitchell?”

“It wasn’t one thing for me,” Wilson said. “It was a lot of little things.”

“Like what?” Peter asked.

“Okay, call me an old fogey, but his gangster-looking suit and blue alligator shoes were just inappropriate.”

Peter picked up the black dry-erase marker and wrote, “Alligator shoes/Gangster suit” on the whiteboard. Then he turned back to Wilson. “What else weirded you out?”

“They call him ‘Pastor Mitchell’ thing.”

Peter wrote, “Pastor Mitchell” on the board as Wilson talked.

“And then the fact that his preaching style had this singing thing at the end of his messages. That’s really foreign to our people.”

“Preaching style,” Peter repeated as he wrote the words

on the board. “This is good, keep going.”

Wilson picked up Pastor Mitchell’s resume and looked at it. “Nothing on his educational resume suggests that he has related to, or knows how to relate to, whites,” he said.

“Yes!” Peter practically yelled as he slammed down the marker, and marched over to Wilson to give him a hug. The shock of Peter’s action made Wilson sit back in his chair and pat his chest. Then he began to laugh a deep, understanding laugh.

“Pastor Mitchell went to all black schools,” Peter said, standing next to Wilson’s chair. “Nothing’s wrong with that per se, but what this job requires is not just competence, but the ability to relate to different cultures. I don’t see it on his resume, do you?” He could see the team was starting to get it now. They all sat straighter in their chairs or leaned in toward Peter. Their faces showed an openness and enthusiasm for the discussion.

“Look at the board,” Peter said. He turned toward the whiteboard and began to read the words he’d listed there.

Alligator shoes/Gangster suit

“Pastor Mitchell”

Preaching style

Leadership style

Black schools

“Now, hear me on this, team, none of these items is right or wrong. In fact they’re all cultural. The way Pastor Mitchell is addressed, preaches, leads, and even what he wears is a home run in his urban culture. But they are huge disconnects here at Poplar Bible.”

“Yeah, Pete, but this seems so petty to say that someone’s not the right guy because the *way* he preaches or leads is culturally different,” Jackson said confused.

“I totally see and agree with your point, but this isn’t ultimately why I believe Pastor Mitchell is not our guy. Remember when you and he were talking about preaching style?”

Jackson nodded.

“And you told him that you had hesitations about him being a good preaching fit stylistically? What was his response; do you remember?”

“Yes, he shot back and wondered if we were trying to make him white.”

“Yes!” Peter said. “That’s the problem, Jackson. It’s not that he’s culturally different, it’s that he’s *culturally inflexible*. Pastor Mitchell is what we would call a C3. C3s are people who are firmly entrenched in their ethnicity and culture and refuse to assimilate or adjust to another culture or ethnicity. They are who they are, and they’re not going to change. Pastor Mitchell is not our guy because

he's culturally different; he's just not our guy because the job demands that he make cultural adjustments. Not only does he refuse, but I'm not sure he even knows how. It's like Wilson said, nothing in his resume shows us that he can culturally adjust to whites. He didn't go to school with them. He doesn't live with them, and they don't come to his church or serve on his leadership teams.

"But there's something else about C3s you need to know. They typically see the world through their cultural lens, which means to them, their perspective is right and everyone else's tends to be wrong."

"Like Ice Cube? Is he a C3?" Thoreau asked.

"Yes, you could say that," Peter answered. "Ice Cube has a definite view about his people and culture. And he has no interest in being dissuaded from that. Good."

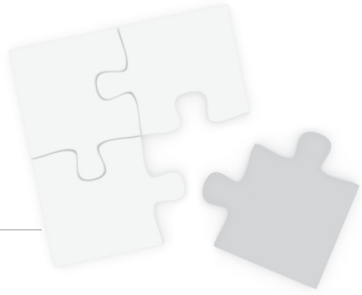
"Is there an example of a C3 in the Bible?" Wilson asked.

"Of course. The Pharisees are classic C3s. Remember when we read that passage in Philippians 3 where Paul said that he was a Hebrew of Hebrews? That was C3 language. Before his conversion, Paul was a Pharisee, and the Pharisees were always at odds with Jesus. Much of the conflict centered over the Pharisees' refusal to culturally adjust. So they berated Jesus for letting His disciples pick grain on the Sabbath. They went to war with Jesus for healing

on the Sabbath, or not forcing His disciples to wash their hands before they ate. They went crazy over the fact that Jesus ate with prostitutes and tax collectors—a big cultural no-no. In each case Jesus revealed that these were cultural practices and preferences, not essential requirements. You can always spot a C3—they hold on to their cultural preferences and norms as if it's gospel truth."

Peter paused, letting his explanation sink in. "By the way," Peter said, breaking the silence. "Pastor Mitchell wasn't the only C3 in this room."

Chapter 26



I'm not sure what you mean by that, Pete," Jackson said.

"It's interesting that whenever I talk about C1s, C2s, and C3s, the automatic assumption is that I'm only talking about minority groups like African Americans or Hispanics, but this also includes whites. For example, have you ever met a white person who struck you as a person who 'acted black'?"

"Oh yeah, sure," Thoreau said.

"Give me an example."

"In the entertainment world I naturally think of the hip-hop artist Eminem," Thoreau said.

"You all are experts at this!" Peter said.

"Never heard of the guy," Wilson said. "You got some of his music on your phone? Play his music for us, Peter."

Thoreau and Peter immediately started to laugh.

"Wouldn't be appropriate, Wilson," Peter said.

"But Eminem would be a great example of a C1, a white guy ethnically who has assimilated into black culture.

But now let's talk about C3s. Give me an example."

"Me," Jackson said reluctantly.

"Interesting. Why do you say you're a C3?" Peter asked.

"Well, like Pastor Mitchell, I don't really have meaningful experiences or ongoing relationships with people of different ethnicities. And that whole deal about C3s seeing things from their cultural perspective and assuming their way is right—man, that nailed me right between the eyes. I just assume the style of Bible teaching or music or the way we do church here is the default. I'm forty-two and stuck in my cultural ways, I'm ashamed to say."

Jackson's vulnerability caught the room off guard, interjecting a pause in the conversation. Peter looked at Jackson with great affection, placing his hand on his shoulder.

"Proud of you," Peter said, whispering in Jackson's ear. Then moving back to the whiteboard, Peter continued his lesson. "This is so key for us to understand. When Pastor Mitchell walked into the room, I felt suspicion and a little judgment coming from you. This only heightened as the interview went on, and if I'm honest, I think it's because he didn't fit your cultural way of doing things. From the clothes, to the way he preaches, to the fact that he has an annual pastoral anniversary—all of this was met with judgment, because you all assume, and I say this gently, that your way of doing things is the right way."

Janice looked down at her hands, hiding her eyes.

Peter knew this was difficult for the group to hear, but he wanted to make sure they didn't hide or escape from the truth—since he knew ultimately the truth could set them free to truly pursue the multiethnic trajectory.

“Let's take pastoral anniversaries and his title,” he continued. “The black experience is one of honor. We are taught to esteem the older and those who are in leadership positions. In traditional black culture this means that we don't call adults, or those in high positions, by their first name; we call them by some title. In the black experience the pastor is as high as it gets. Back in the day it was an honor for him to come to your house and eat—so much so that he was served before the women and children. We honor. Whites not so much.”

“That's not completely true, though, Peter,” Wilson said.

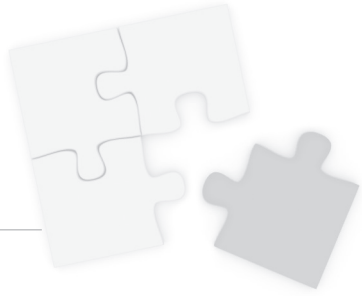
“He's right, Pete,” Jackson said. “Southerners are polite and use titles with their elders.”

“I think it's more of a generational thing with whites, though,” Janice admitted, finally looking up. “We're becoming less and less formal.”

“That's true. It's common to see white kids call adults by their first names.” Peter pointed at Gary. “Dr. Kirkland here is not Dr. Kirkland, he's just Gary. But no matter what

generation, in the traditional black church we would never call him Gary. Did you notice that Pastor Mitchell was put off when you called Gary by his first name? Not a right or wrong thing, just a cultural difference. Who's right? Who's wrong?" Before anyone could answer, Peter continued, "I don't think it's a matter of right or wrong. Now if that's the case, why does Pastor Mitchell have to adjust to you? Why not adjust to him and his way of doing things? See, if you put two C3s together of different ethnicities, you're going to have an explosion because neither side is going to give. That's why Pastor Mitchell couldn't work here. It's not only because he won't budge, it's also because you won't give either. Isn't it ironic that you all are as stuck in your ways as he is in his?"

Chapter 27



But I never see myself as being white,” Janice said sincerely.

“I know, and I believe you, Janice,” Peter said. “In fact, I believe most white people don’t see themselves as being white. And this is a huge disconnect in our society, because minorities are constantly in tune with their ethnicity, while you’re not in tune with yours. It would be like me pointing out to you that you have two arms. You’d shrug as if to say, *Big deal*. You don’t see yourself as having two arms, and neither do you see yourself as being white. But now imagine I had only one arm, and was constantly made aware that I was different in a two-arm society. If we’re going to get along, you’re going to have to understand what life is like for me having only one arm. That’s the disconnect between whites and minorities. We live in a white world—a two-armed society, so to speak—but we minorities have only one arm. Life as a minority can feel like you’re handicapped at times when compared to our white brothers and sisters.”

“I see what you’re saying,” Thoreau said. “I’ve grown up with a lot of privileges, and there’s not a day that goes by when I don’t stop and realize how blessed I am. I also know that I have to steward my blessings well. So if what you’re saying is true, why not hire a guy like Pastor Mitchell and put us in a position where we have to adjust to him? Don’t you think that would be healthy?”

“In an ideal world it would be,” Peter admitted. “But we don’t live in an ideal world. And remember, Poplar Bible is composed primarily of C3s who are used to doing life their way. Not only that, but they’ve attended a church who has affirmed their cultural worldview for the last forty years. Bring in Pastor Mitchell now and the C3s will simply revolt, either leaving or forcing him out. I’ve seen this happen too many times, right, Gary?”

Gary nodded, abandoning his usual smile.

“Okay, I’m putting this together,” Jackson said, as though he were making his final argument before a jury. “Ronald was too safe. He is a C1, like Carlton Banks. Hiring him would be like hiring another one of us.” He gestured to the whole team. “Whereas Octavius is at the other extreme, so different from us and unwilling to change that he would cause an explosion in our church—because C3s can’t lead C3s of a different ethnicity. Is that right, Pete?”

“My man!” Peter exclaimed, slapping high five with Jackson.

“So if C1s are too safe, and C3s too divisive, then by process of elimination we need a C2,” Jackson said, now pleased with himself. “But what exactly is a C2?”

“I’m glad you asked.”

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