

REFLECTING

HEAVEN

**BUILDING AN INTERCULTURAL
CHURCH WHERE YOU ARE**

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CHURCH WHERE YOU ARE

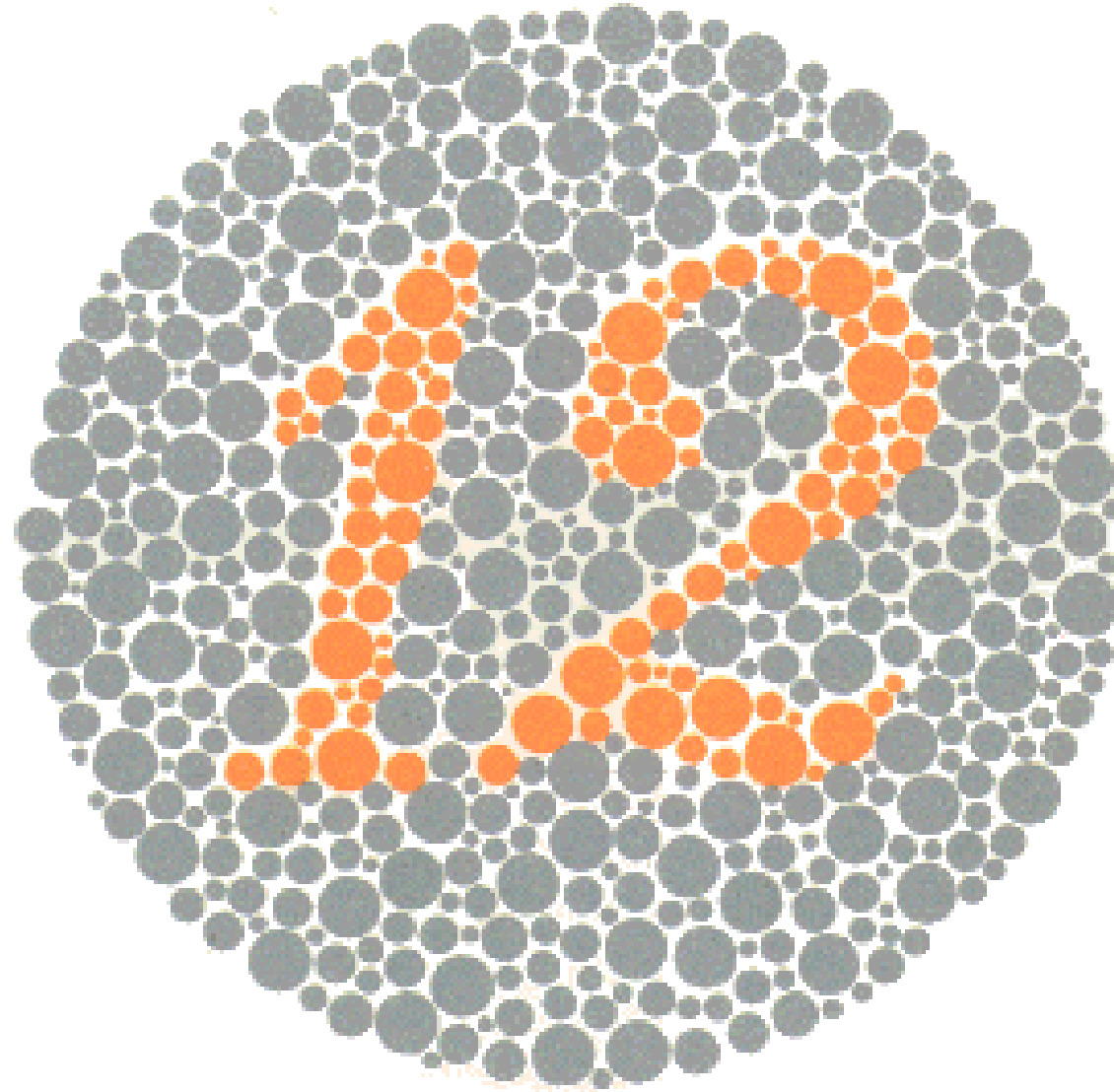
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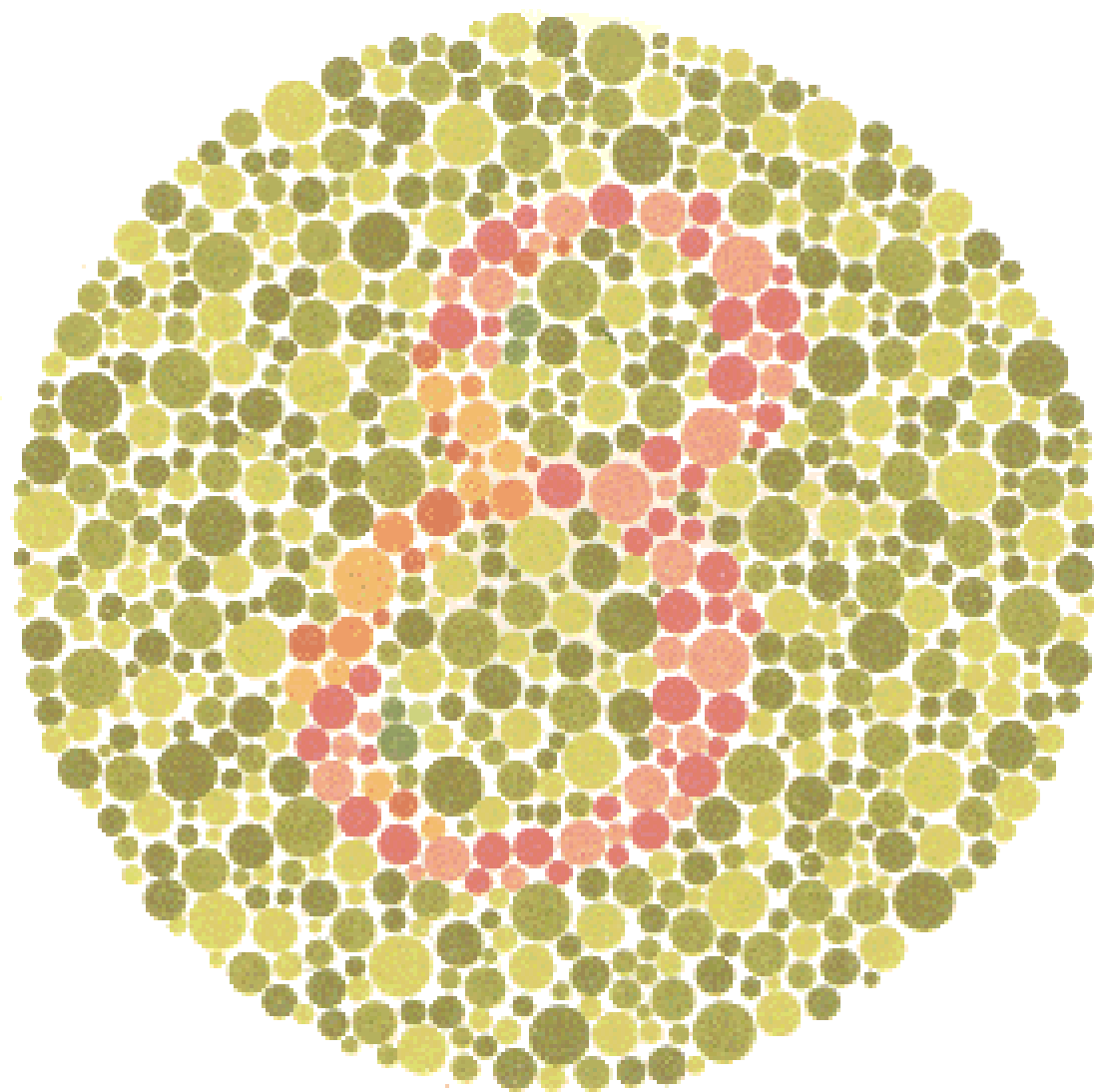


Intercultural Church Fundamentals BIBLE COMMUNICATION

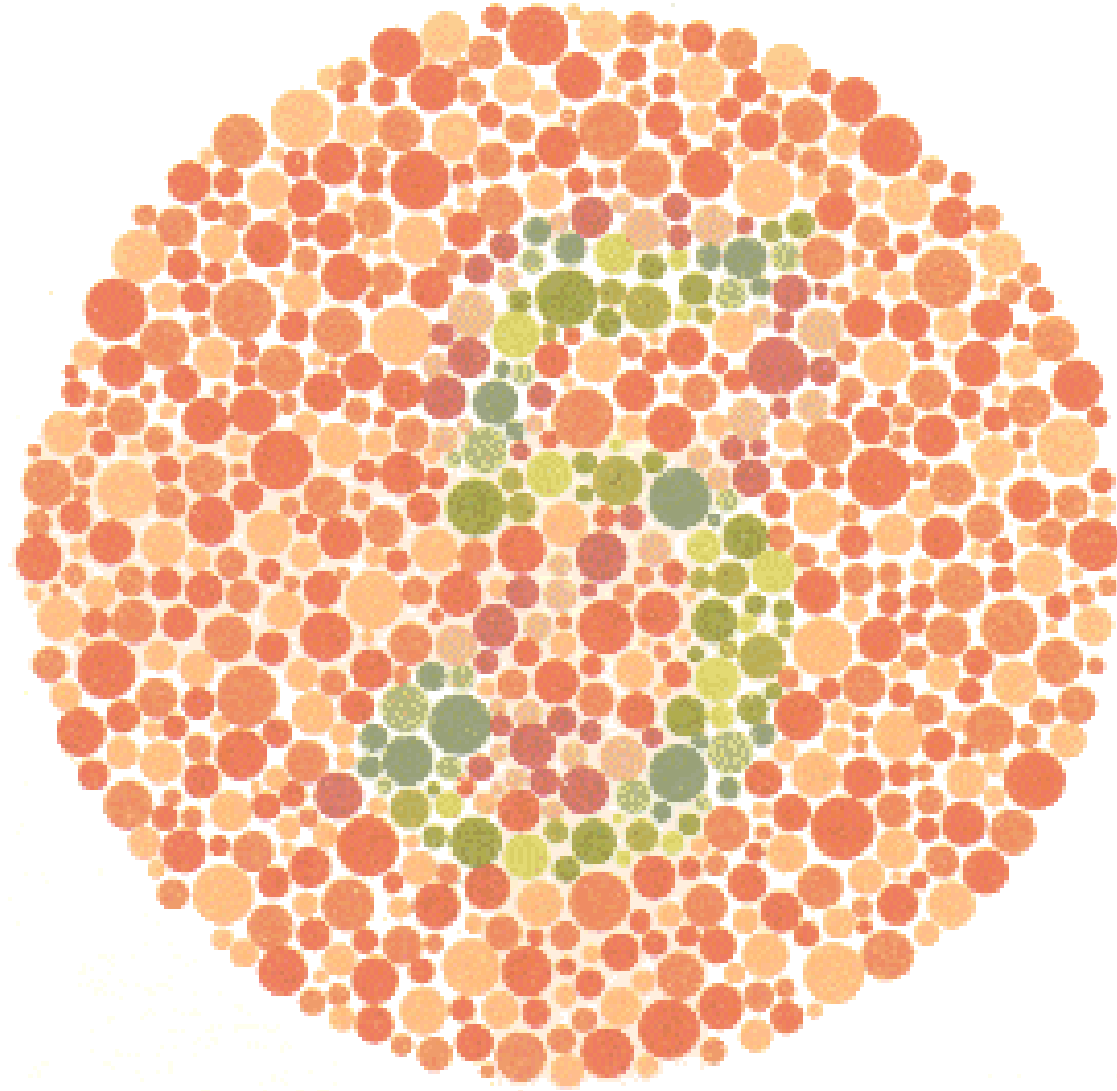
Tim McMahon
13th November 2025

Colour-blindness and how to overcome it

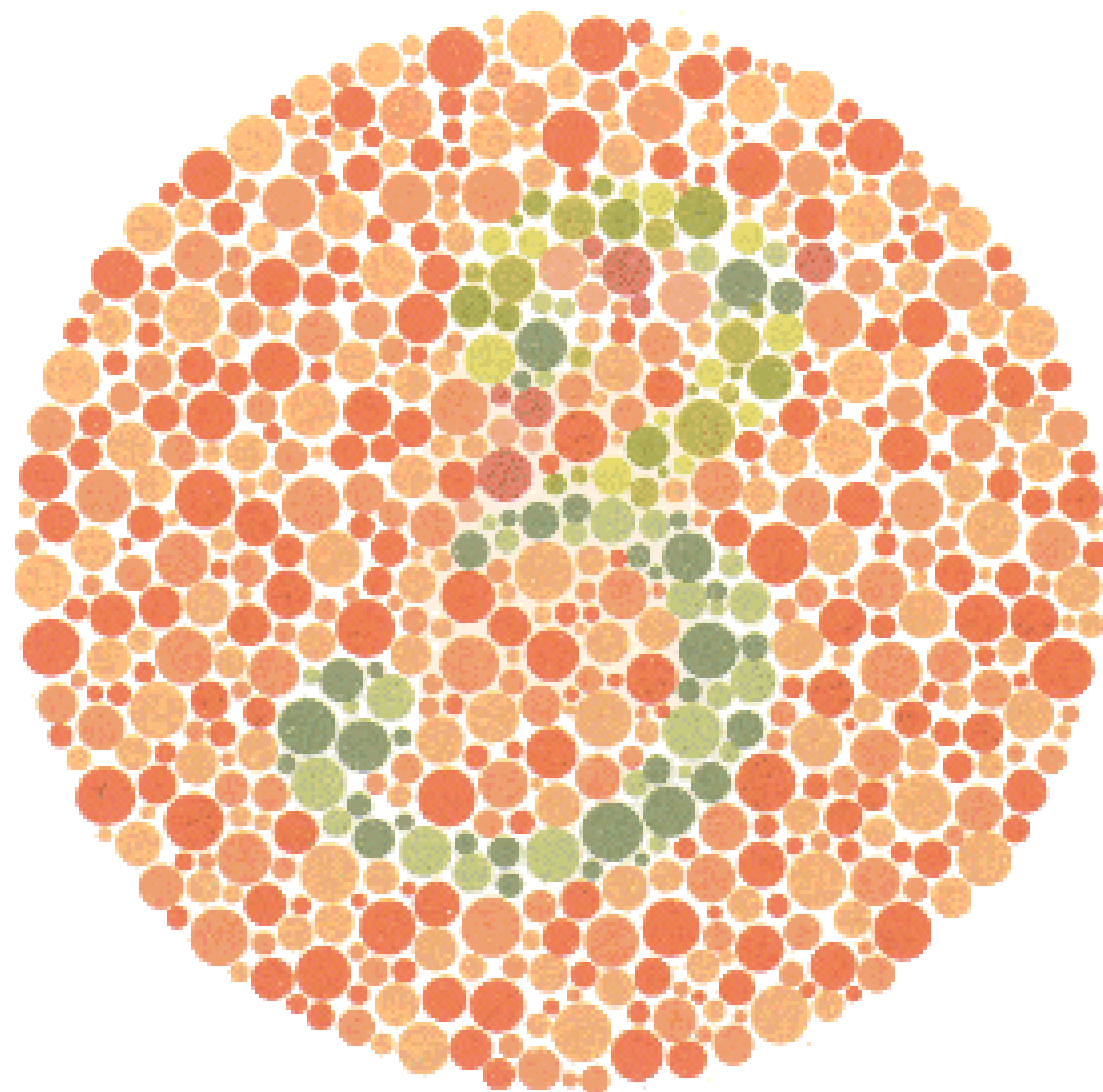




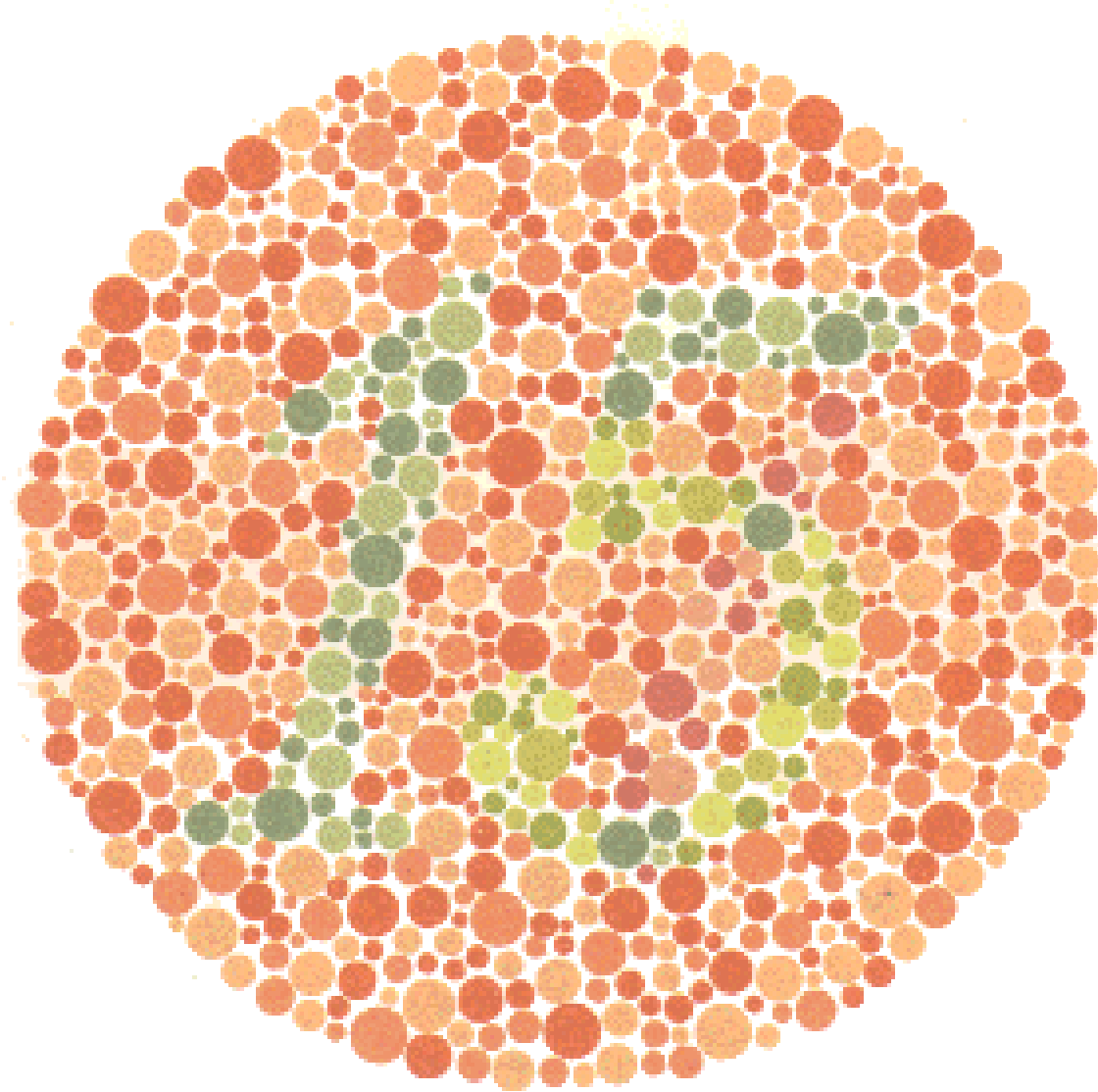
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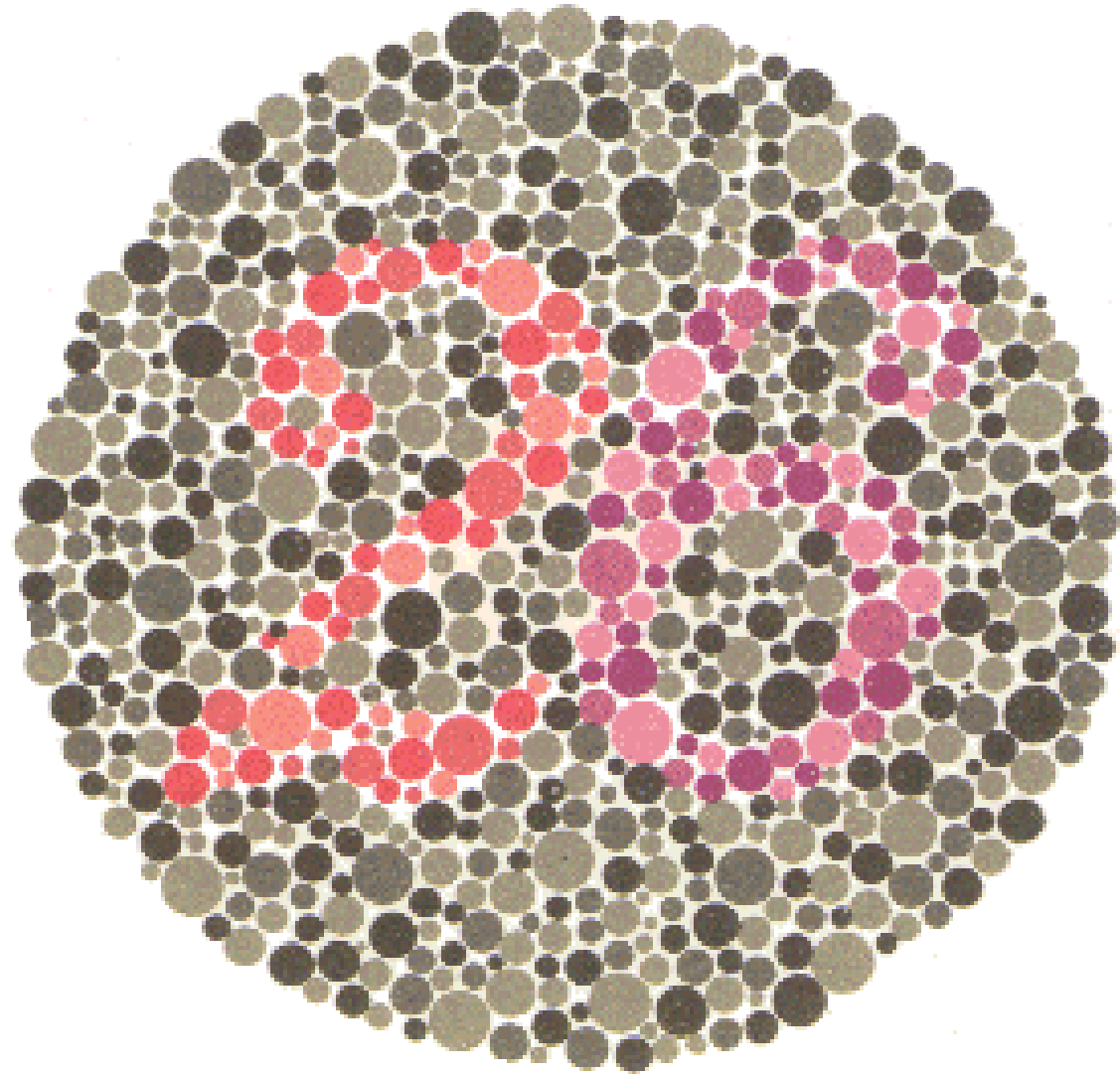
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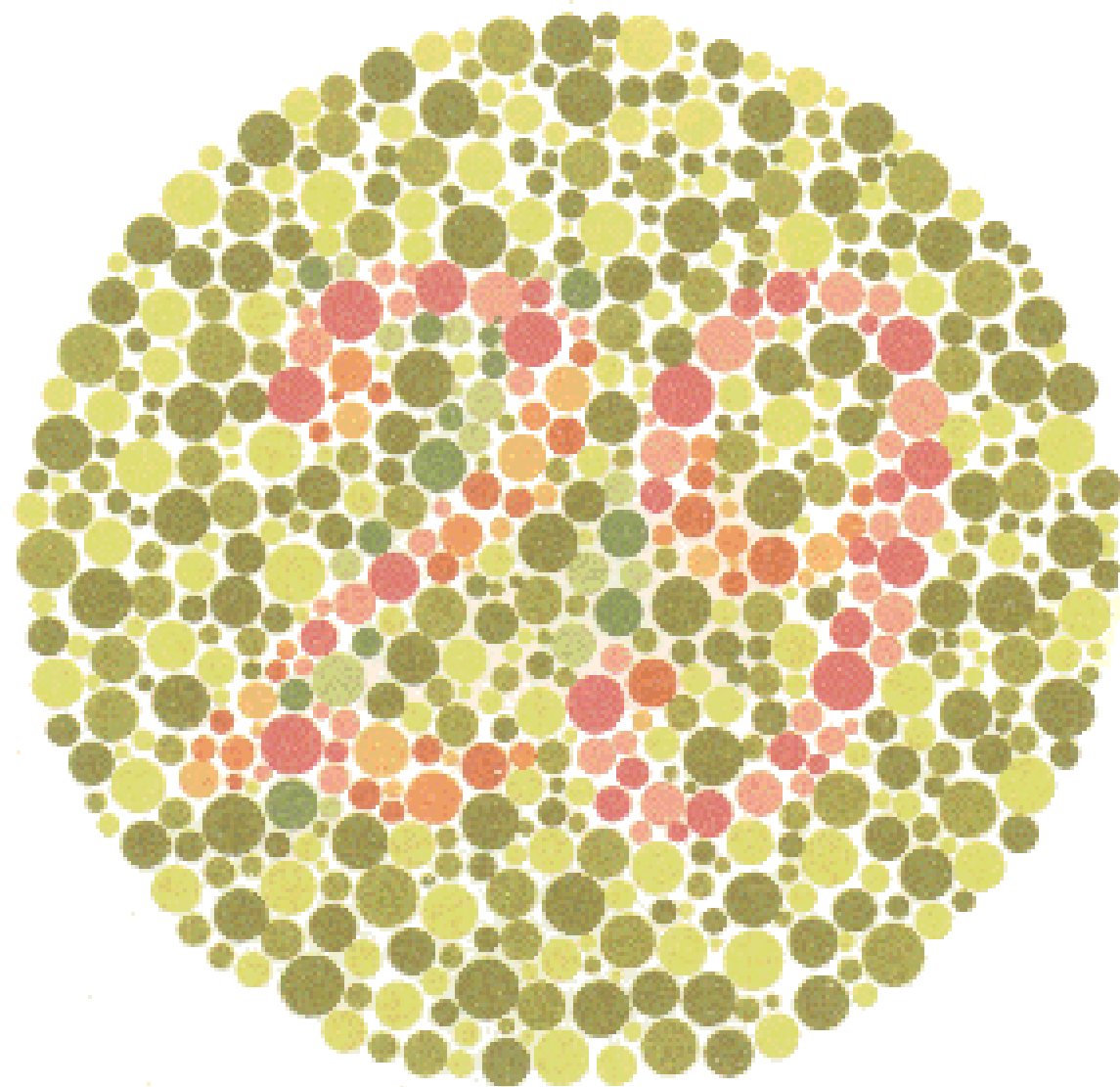
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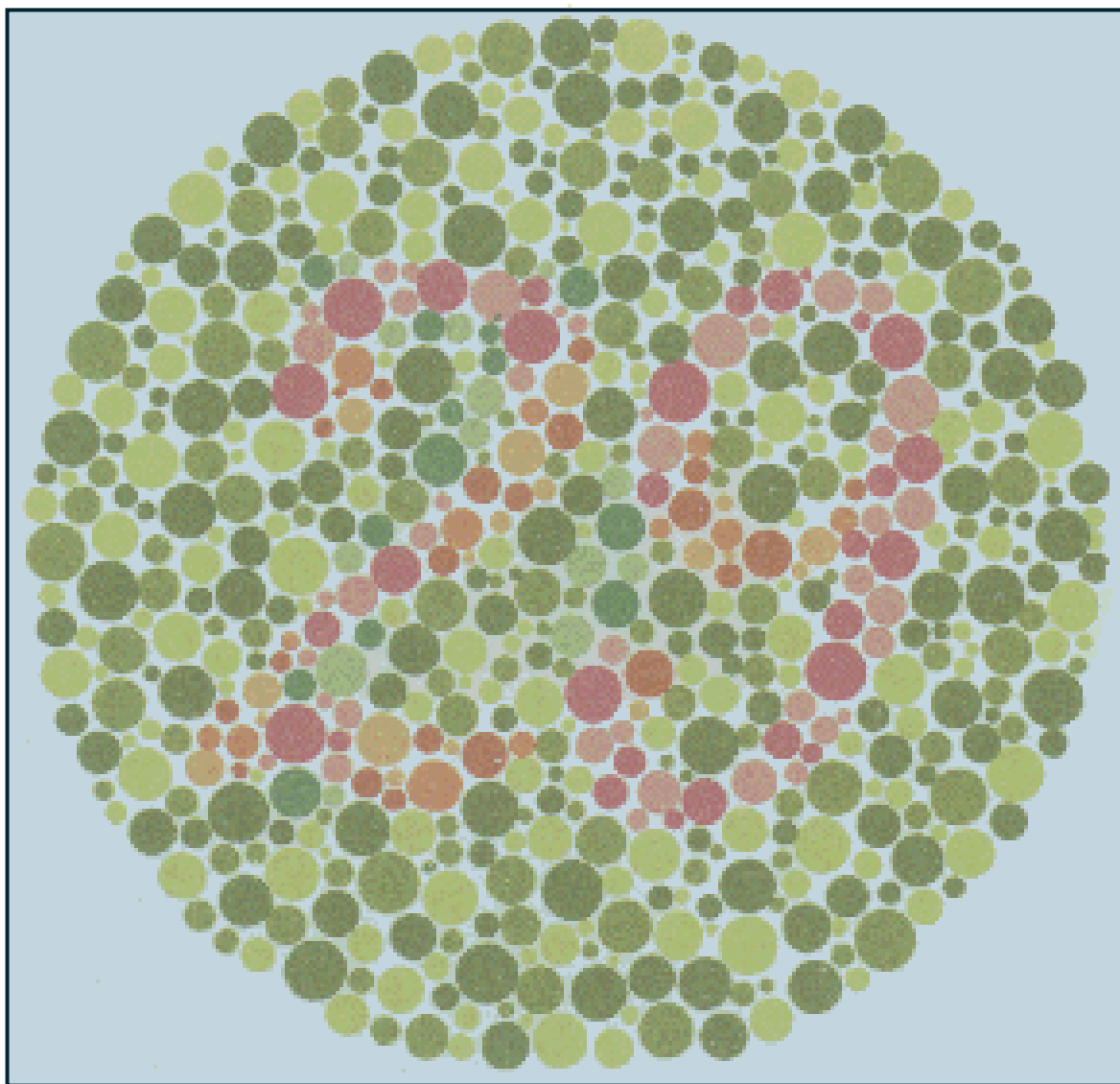
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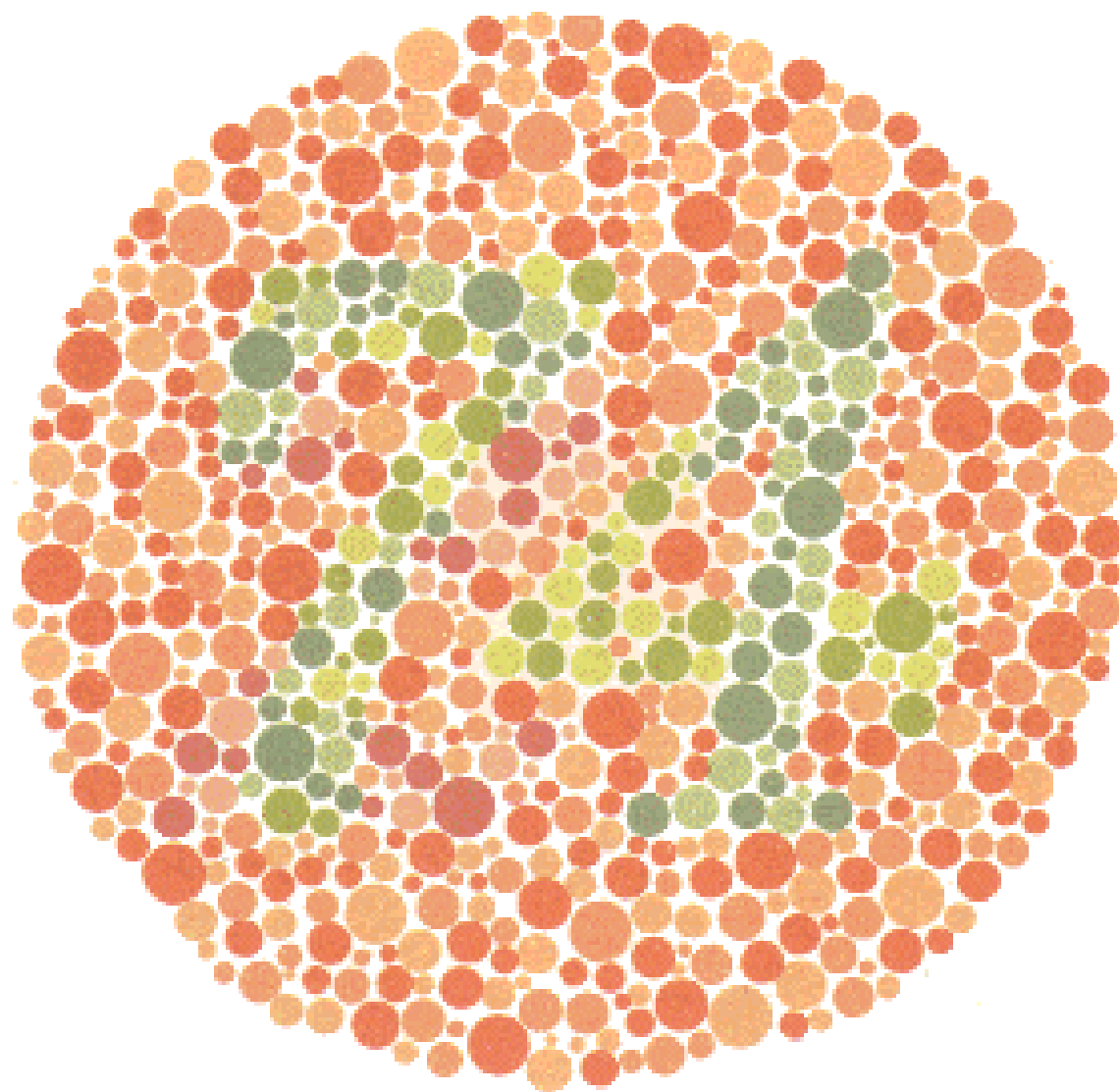
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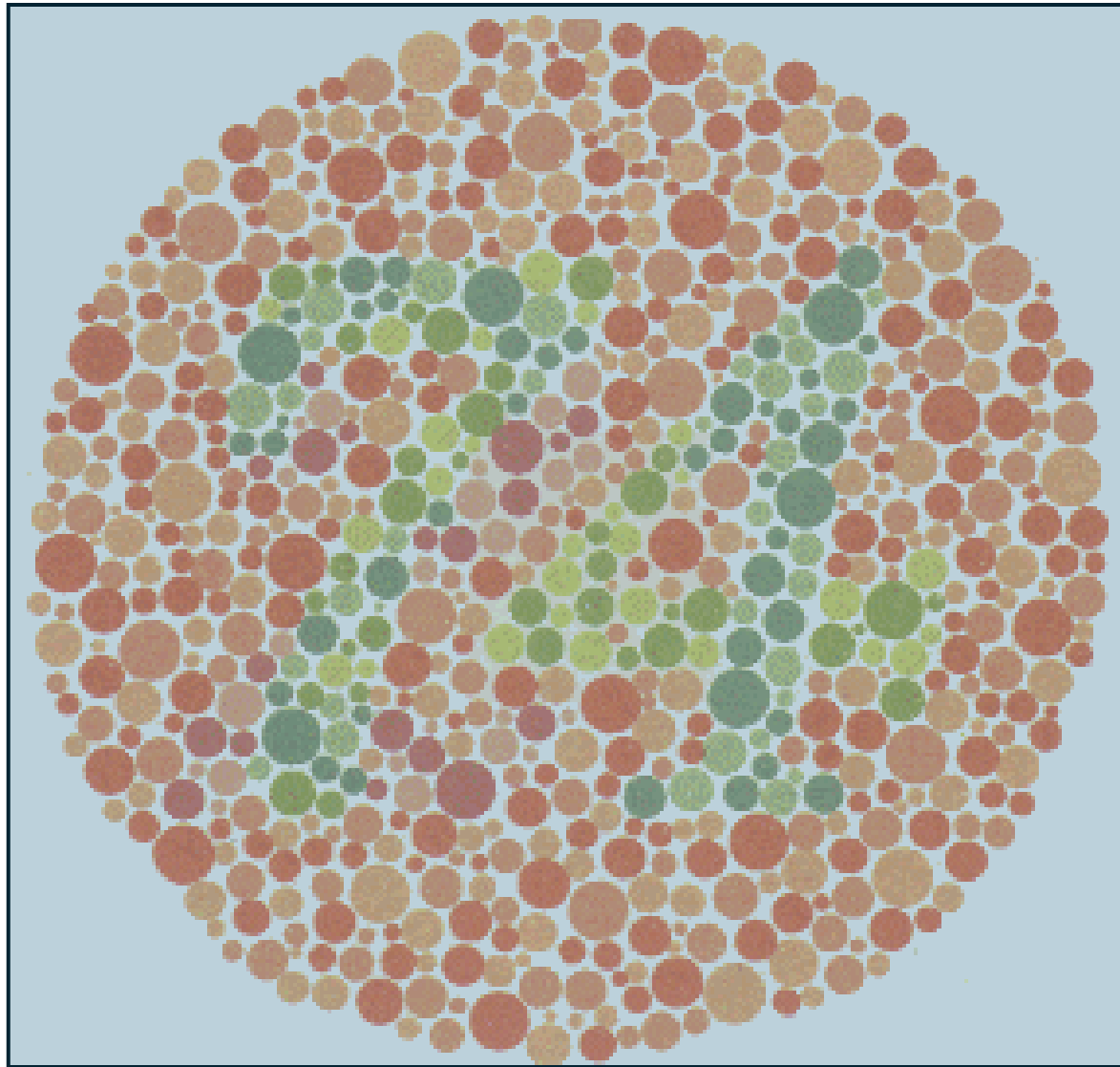
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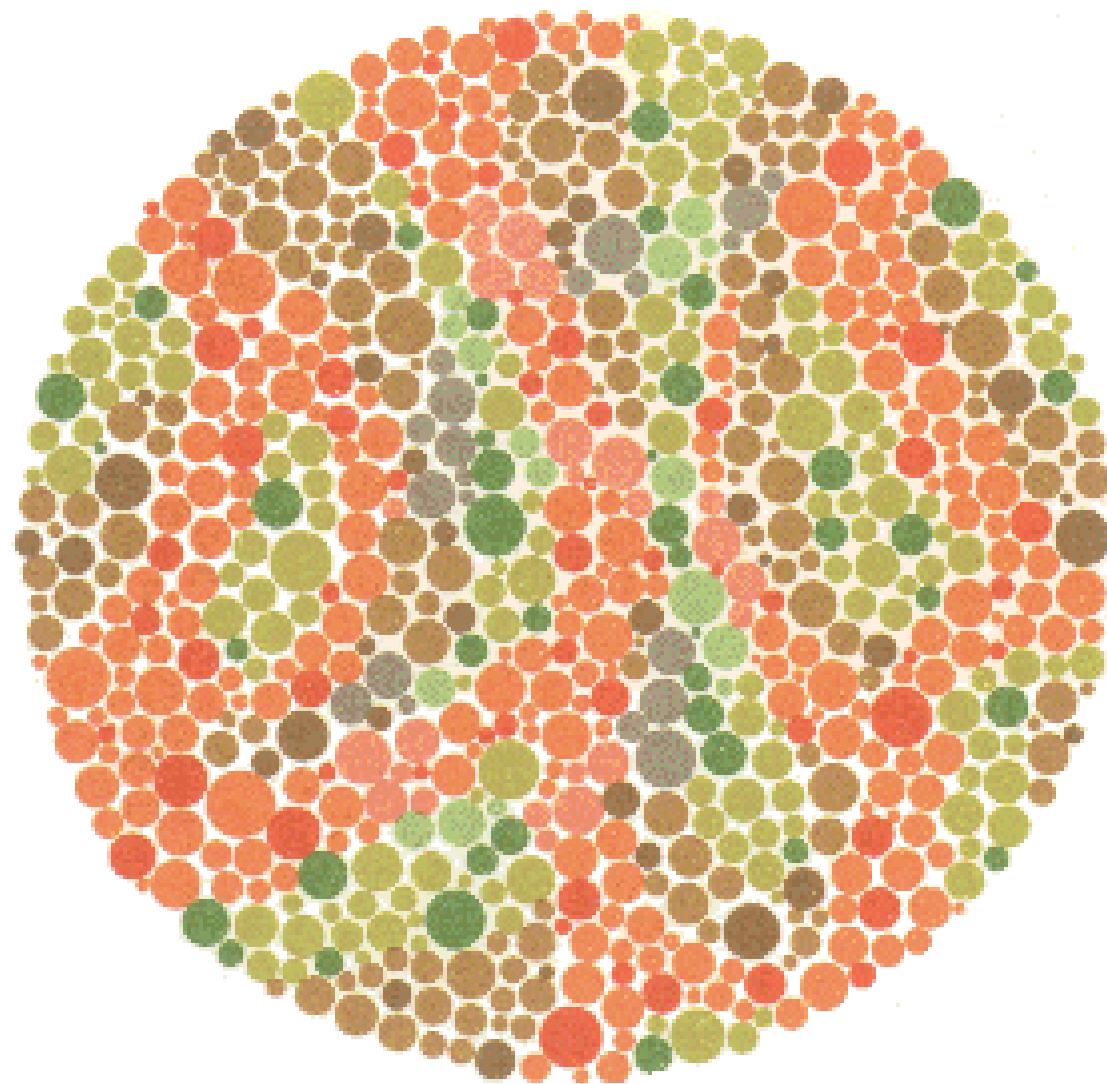
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Romans 3:23 **“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”**

Explain Romans 3:23-24

What CATEGORIES were used to explain v.23?

- ☐ A STANDARD to be measured against
- ☐ LAW - specifically, God's law
- ☐ TRANSGRESSION - e.g. breaking God's moral law
- ☐ PERFECTION
- ☐ GUILT/INNOCENCE
- ☐ HONOUR - or lack of honouring (God)
- ☐ IDOLATRY - worshipping created things rather than the Creator
- ☐ INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY - the hearer, as an individual, is primarily the focus
- ☐ CORPORATE IDENTITY - focus is on a group (to which the hearer may belong), rather than on the individual
- ☐ Other: _____

Biblical Paradigms: needed to express multi-faceted TRUTH

- The Big 4:
 - **Legal:** *Guilt / Innocence*
 - **Glory:** *Honour / Shame*
 - **Power (Authority):** *Power / Fear*
 - **Holiness:** *Purity / Pollution*
- Several others (some overlap):
 - **Moral, Covenant, Family, Wisdom, Agricultural, Transactional, Kingdom**

Biblical Paradigms: needed to express multi-faceted TRUTH

Setting	Value	Words/contrasts	Human	God
Creation New Creation <i>(teleological eschatological doxological)</i>	Glory (Honour)	glory; image, likeness, greatness; excellence; splendour, riches; reveal, display, glorify (cf. boast), praise; honour/shame; show/hide; face-to-face/turn-away; enter-in/cast-out; stand/laid-low; head-up/down	All e.g. sharing in the glory of a bride, victor, great achievement	Creator
Family (Filial, Personal, Relational)	Name	kin relationships (father/mother, brother/sister, uncle/aunt/nephew/cousin etc.); house/dynasty; restore/avenge (honour of family name); <i>KNOW</i>	Head	Father & Son (Love)
Tribe (Nation, Empire)	Power	life/death; refuge/destruction; for(with)/against; accept/reject; acknowledge/rebel; friend/enemy; citizen/sojourner; stand/laid-low; favour/fear; exile/return	Ruler Warrior	Sovereign (Lord)
Legal (Court)	Justice (Law)	obedience/transgression; just/unjust; stand justified; righteous/unrighteous; innocent/guilty; justified/condemned; reward/penalty(punishment)	Judge	Law-maker Judge
Government (Royal Court)	Wisdom	wise/foolish; fruitful/unfruitful; order/disorder prosperity/ruin; (knowledge, insight, understanding; effective, successful)	Sage	Wise (Creator)
Marital / Imperial (Covenant)	Promise	blessing/curse; faithfulness/unfaithfulness; loving-kindness/righteous-indignation(wrath); my-people/not-my-people; possess/jealous	King / Bridegroom / Lover	
Cultic (Temple+ Sacrifice+ Priest)	Distinctive-ness (Purity, Separation)	Holy/common; sacred/secular; clean/unclean; purify/pollute; consecrate/desecrate; cleanse/defile; sanctify/profane; inside/outside; worship/expelled; live/sacrifice	Priest Sacrifice	Holy (Sacrificial love at God's heart)

Other categories drawing on multiple paradigms:

1. Kingdom
Power
Covenant
Justice (*mishpat*)
Wisdom
Name
Glory

2. Moral (right/wrong)
Justice (e.g. unjust action)
Personal (e.g. unloving action)
Power (e.g. abuse of power)
Covenant (e.g. adultery)

3. Apocalyptic
Power (*God wins*)
Glory (*God reveals*)
(Wisdom)

4. Marketplace/Transaction: e.g. *redemption, ransom* 5. Agricultural: e.g. *life*,

EXERCISE: Identify the dominant cultural paradigms in these regions of the world

Culture	Honour	Family	Power	Legal	Wisdom	Covenant	Cultic
Western European							
Eastern Europe							
Near & Middle East							
Central Asia & India							
The Far East & SE Asia							
Africa, Caribbean							
Central & South America							
North American Indian							
Pacific Islander/Aborigine							

23 ways sin & judgement are portrayed in the Bible

- 1. Identify the biblical categories used (*Glory, Legal, Power, Moral, Covenant, Holiness, Family, Wisdom, Agricultural, Transactional, Kingdom*)
- 2. Which ways of presenting sin & judgement would resonate with the cultural group(s) you are living among?

To which cultural values are these biblical portrayals of Sin & Judgement likely to resonate?

G = Glory (honour/shame) L = Legal (innocence/guilt) P = Power/fear (authority) M = Moral C = Covenant
H = Holiness (cultic) F = Family/Filial W = Wisdom A = Agricultural T = Transactional (Marketplace) K = Kingdom

SIN	Other Passages	JUDGEMENT	Other Passages
1. Sin as law-breaking – transgression of revealed boundaries, trespassing	Rom 5:14	excluded from access to God; penalty experienced in own bodies	Rom 1:27
2. Sin as lawlessness (autonomy = law-making, not just law-breaking)	1 John 3:4 James 4:11	The only true law-giver/law-maker is revealed by ending (or saving) lives	James 4:12
3. Sin as rebellion, enmity, hostility	Rom 8:7	Rebellion put down	Rev 20:8-9
4. Sin as pride → boasting (self-glorification)	James 4:13-16	The proud are humbled	James 4:9-10
5. Sin as grasping for life independently of God's provision	Gen 3:6 Luke 12:18-19	Difficult harvesting, fruitless labour; earth consumes the Man	Gen 3:17-19
6. Sin as the reversal of order (Earth-Animal-Woman-Man-God)	Gen 3	Reversal of order reinforced to show its ugliness & horror	Isa 3:4-5, 11-12
7. Sin as the abdication of responsibility	Gen 3:12, 13 James 4:17	Treated as responsible	Eze 18:1-4
8. Sin as foolishness	Ps 14:1-3	Darkened hearts	Rom 1:21-22 Eph 4:18
9. Sin as religion/philosophy	Ecc 7:29	God frustrates our search for meaning Human schemes are deceitful, not delivering us to a destination	Ecc 3:11 Eph 4:14
10. Sin as lack of faith/trust	Rom 14:23	God withholding his provision	James 1:6-8
11. Sin as work not grace - seeking life by the work of our hands vs. receiving life as the work of God's hands	Rom 4:2	Judged by the law	Rom 2:1, 21-24
12. Sin as idolatry	Rom 1:25	The Living God mocks & destroys the dumb idols (e.g. Elijah on Carmel)	2 Ki 17:18
13. Sin as serving money	Matt 6:24	Corruption & decay of material things	James 5:1-3
14. Sin as a divided heart (adultery – esp. the lure of world/wealth/pleasure)	James 4:4, 8 1 John 2:15-16	Jealous wrath	James 4:5 Rev 3:15-19
15. Sin as over-desire, passions	Rom 1:26-27 James 4:3	Our passions consume us. We serve them instead of them serving us.	Rom 1:24 Eph 4:19
16. Sin as slavery	Rom 6:6, 17-19	Enslaved.	Rom 6:12
17. Sin as shameful acts (gloried in)	Rom 1:27 Php 3:19	Shame exposed	Rev 16:15; 21:27
18. Sin as suppressing the truth / believing the lie	Rom 1:18	Thinking becomes futile (ineffective)	Rom 1:28
19. Sin as self-seeking & self-serving (vs. self-giving & other-serving)	James 5:5	Wrath and fury because we do not acknowledge the truth that life is about God, not self	Rom 2:8
20. Sin as murder - brothers, God & self (fratricide, deicide, suicide)	James 4:1-2 1 John 3:12, 15	Death.	Rev 21:8
21. Sin as debt	Matt 6:12	Recompense required (repay the debt)	Mat 18:32-25
22. Sin as arrogant power	2 Ki 19:23-24	God's power overthrows proud human (kingly) power	2 Ki 19:25-28
23. Sin as deceit	Rom 7:11	Truth upheld	2 John 1:1-2

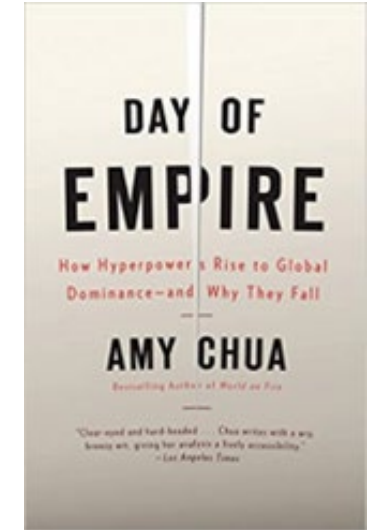
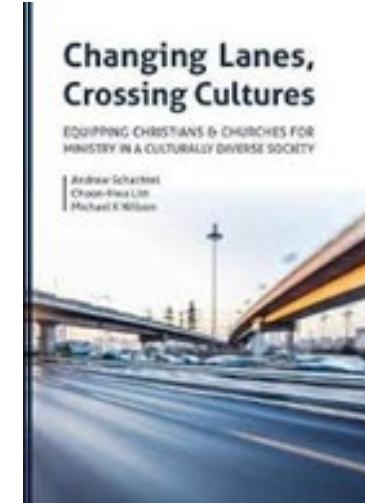
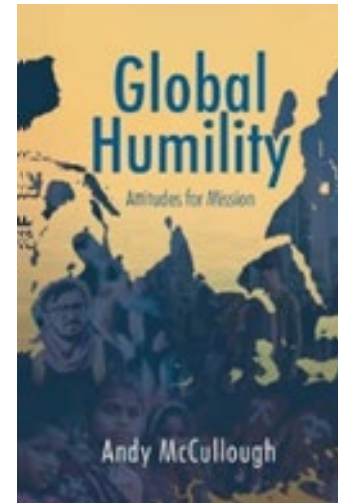
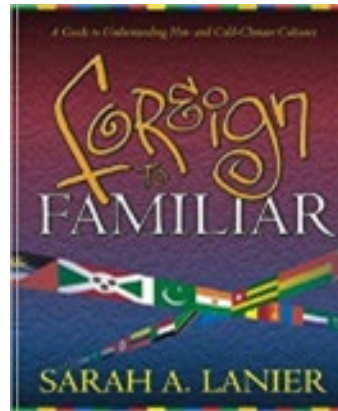
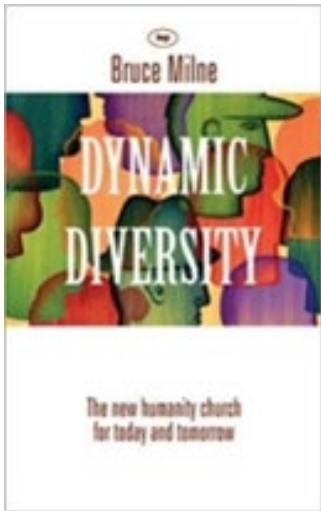
Rom 3:23 **“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”**

- 3:11 “no-one understands, no-one seeks God”
- 3:12 “all have turned away”
- 3:12 “no-one does good”
- 3:13 “the poison of vipers is on their lips”
- 3:15 “feet swift to shed blood”
- 3:17 “the way of peace they do not know”
- 3:18 “no fear of God before their eyes”
- 3:24 **“... and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”**
- 3:25 **“whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith”**

7 Areas for constant growth

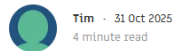
1. *Understanding of and commitment to the biblical imperative* for intercultural church
2. Heart attitude – towards others, and one's own identity
3. Cultural awareness – of one's own and others' cultures
4. Biblical communication to multiple cultures
5. Engagement across cultures – conversation and community
6. Learning from practitioners and using resources
7. Change management

Resources



Reflecting Heaven resources

Download the resources from Tim McMahon's Reflecting Heaven sessions.



Tim · 31 Oct 2025
4 minute read

FIEC website

Downloadable resources

Intercultural Competency Assessment Tool – Personal

Dr Ken Baker (Global Training Director, Serving In Mission), *Intercultural Competency Stages – Personal Assessment*, USA, 2019

Download

All presentations (PowerPoint slides) given in this workshop, as well as PowerPoint versions of the resources used, are available from Tim McMahon's Google Drive – link using the QR code in the handbook



People / courses to help you & your church

Serving In Mission

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The Intercultural Church Course



Welcome to the information page for 'The Intercultural Church' course!

We would be very happy to help you develop your understanding of how you, and your church, can have a deeper understanding of Intercultural Church ministry. At the moment, we have two options for you below and a form to let us know you're interested and we will get in contact with you.

Register for a free online consultation with an SIM mission trainer who can discuss with you your church's situation and advise on what training might be appropriate to help it move towards becoming more intercultural

Enrol in the 'The Intercultural Church' course and be linked to an SIM mission trainer who can coach you and your church throughout your journey to become more intercultural

Please fill in this form to let us know if you're interested in Intercultural Ministry us and we will be in contact.

Your details

First name *

Last name *

Email address *

Address

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The Culture Bridge

Home > Go > Mission Training > The Culture Bridge

The Culture Bridge is a five-week course run by Pioneers staff several times a year. It's aimed at equipping diaspora Christians with a greater understanding of British Culture, and enabling more effective intercultural relationships and cross-cultural evangelism with their British neighbours, all for the sake of the Gospel.

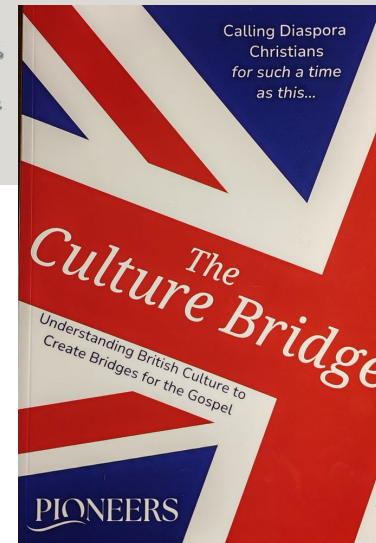
Over the five weeks we will look at:

- Why culture matters and how it influences thinking about other cultures
- Culture Types and how the Gospel can speak to the heart needs of each culture
- The complexities of British Culture and specific aspects of English Culture
- Diaspora Christians in the UK
- Evangelism in Britain
- Sharing the gospel cross-culturally

The course will be interactive and will include practical assignments. Cohorts meet once a week over Zoom, usually from 7:30-9:30pm. A workbook that runs alongside the course will be supplied.

The next course will run from Monday, 12 January - Monday, 9 February 2026.

Sign Up



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Teach to Reach

Passionate about churches reaching out to speakers of other languages in their communities

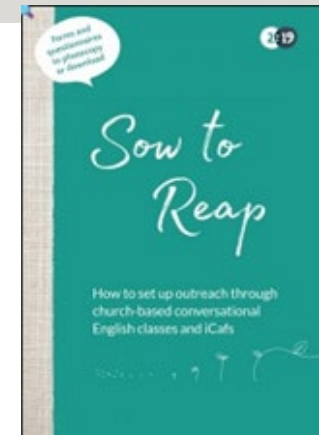
Book onto the English Teaching and Outreach Forum 2025 below.

Find out more

Resources: Resources for English conversation classes written by experienced Christian ESL teachers

Training: Support for teachers and volunteers, including resources and training in ESL and gospel outreach

Membership: Advice on setting up and running English conversation classes, and on cross-cultural outreach and discipleship



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