

Scouting a Multi-Cultural Ministry

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You hear so much about the need to be a multicultural society these days that I wonder if we really know what it means. What is multicultural? Is there a need for a ministry?

First, let's look at what "multicultural" is. *Webster's Dictionary* defines "multi" as a combining form meaning many or much. It means "specifically consisting of, containing, or having many." *Webster's Dictionary* defines "culture" as "a particular stage of advancement in civilization or the characteristic features of such."

So what is meant by being multicultural? It is the combining of many characteristics of our civilization into one form or unit, which is very similar to what goes on in the church. In Ephesians 4:4-6 we read, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

You might ask, what has that to do with Scouting? Scouting is one of the characteristics that, once combined with other characteristics, forms the whole or complete unit or body. It is one of the many tools or ways of introducing the gospel message to the community.

There are many types of Boy Scout troops or Explorers groups. Some are comprised of youngsters from certain ethnic backgrounds, such as Asian, African-American, or Hispanic. Some are built on common interests, such as law enforcement, dentistry, or Bible studies. But what if one in the group does not speak English? No problem! Boy Scouts has literature, teaching manuals, and handbooks produced in many different languages, with Spanish being the largest. At the 2007 General Conference, material was provided to missionaries to use in their countries to help reach their communities.