Viewing Other Cultures: The Attitude Spectrum

Howard Culbertson
Southern Nazarene University
Attitudes toward other cultures
The Continuum

Ignore    Reject    Tolerate    Understand    Embrace
Words to Keep in Mind

- Ethnocentrism
- Assimilation / acculturation
- Syncretism / contextualization
Ignoring
Ignore

- Active or passive denial: “It may exist, but I don’t want to hear about it.”

- Disdain or disregard for anything different
  - Example: American GI’s who never leave military bases in foreign country
Reject

- Thinks in stereotypes
- Feelings of repulsion
- Rebuff and repel on contact
  - Examples?
- Any overtures are spurned
Tolerate

- Adjectives used: Irrational, rude, ignorant

- How it’s managed
  - “I can survive this.”
  - “I don’t like it, but I can bear it.”
  - “It’s awful, but I will stomach it.”
Understand

- Accept
- Appreciate
- Empathize with . . .
Embrace

“I love you for who you are.”

Welcome and even adopt
- Integration
- Incorporate
Question

How do we deal with those things in a culture which we think go against biblical principles?
Attitudes toward other cultures
The Continuum

More  Reject  Tolerate  Understand  Embrace