

# Humans have more in common than we do differences

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Recently, I sent some of my saliva to **23andme**, a company that does DNA testing.

For about \$39 they send you a saliva collection kit, you spit into a test tube, send it to their laboratory, they analyze your DNA, and several weeks later they send you your ancestry percentages.

My results indicate that I'm 56.3% British and Irish, 18.3% French and German, 9.2% Scandinavian, .6%

Ashkenazi Jewish, etc. My ancestry also includes families from North Africa.

Millions of people, like me, have had their DNA studied through organizations like 23andme (AncestryDNA is another), but because the majority of these people were mostly urban Westerners and East Asians a wider pool needed to be analyzed.

Some scientists intentionally expanded the research:

“Three research groups sequenced high-quality genomes of 787 people from over 270 populations. Their findings were published concurrently in *Nature* magazine in September. Two of the studies drew samples from isolated groups across the globe to maximize linguistic and cultural diversity. The third focused on indigenous people of Australia and Papua New Guinea.

“Although each team collected and analyzed genomes independently, they came to the same general conclusion: Genetic similarities between peoples of Eurasia, Oceania and the Americas indicate that all non-Africans descend from a small population that left Africa” [Discover Magazine, Bridget Alex, December 22, 2016].

Regardless of whether you adhere to a creationist or evolutionist viewpoint of how we got to now (or a combination of the two), both approaches believe that all humans descended from a common ancestry. If you're a creationist, you believe we all came from Adam and Eve; if you're an evolutionist, you believe we all came from a small group or groups of evolved species.

We all have a common ancestry.

I wholeheartedly embrace the fact that every person is unique. I even wrote a workbook that helps people understand how they are nuanced (Signature Soulprint). To do well in life you need to know who you are, accept yourself, and live authentically.

But even after taking into account our differences, we humans have more in common than we are different. We are more similar than dissimilar. This should greatly influence how we view ourselves and others.

The toxic ideology called tribalism is based on an amplification of perceived differences among people and the supposed superiority of one group over another. Roger Olson describes tribalism as, “It is a group attitude of undeserved pride and superiority based solely on identification with a group. It is the tendency to look down on other people for no other reason than they don't belong to the group.”

Tribalism is expressed in various pernicious ways:

- Misogyny is fueled by the idiotic thought that men are superior to women.
- Racism creates antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior.
- Religious sectarianism creates unnecessary division and animosity.
- Xenophobia is an intense or irrational dislike or fear of people from other countries.
- Genocide in Rwanda and the Holocaust are extreme but actual results of tribalism.

Humans are social creatures so we do need to gather into groups, but a healthy sense of community will meet those needs; we can be committed to a few without being hostile toward others.

Peace and conciliation between people groups must start with an acknowledgment of our similitude and extend to embracing the inherent value and dignity of all people.

**Don McMinn**

Think with me

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[Here's](#) an insightful article called *The Sin of Tribalism* by Roger Olson.