

Tuesday Reflection for June 2, 2020

## Black Lives Matter

*Isaiah 1:16-17*

*Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;*

*Remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes;*

*Cease to do evil, learn to do good;*

*Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.*

I admit that I was a person who thought that saying all lives matter was all that was needed. After all, my best friend in high school was black and my college roommate for the first two years was black. They were just like me, well except for the fact that Barb was stunningly fast on a track and Carmen was in the Miss Universe Pageant, we were still just young women with the same kinds of hopes and dreams. The truth is, I do not know what it is like to be a black man or black woman.

I have had ups and downs in life just like anyone. But I have not had ancestors who were slaves. I have not ever had to sit in the back of a bus or drink from a different water fountain. I have not ever been afraid that the police would treat me any different from anyone else. I have not experienced looks of fear and distrust on people's faces when I walk down the street. Not once in my life was I in fear simply because of the color of my skin.

I thought that if we all treated each other as equals, if we all just worked together and got along that there would be peace in our communities. I admit my naivety prevented me from seeing the real situation. I admit that I have been silent for far too long. I can no longer remain silent. I no longer feel that we live in a just society. And I know that I am to blame. And more importantly, I must speak out.

Black lives matter. The color of your skin should not matter. All people should be treated with respect and dignity. There is no dignity in pleading for your life when you are handcuffed and lying on the ground pleading to be able to breathe. I do not understand how you can kill a man just because his skin is black. I do not understand how you can stand by and watch a man die who is not a threat to you.

I am deeply grieved by what is happening in our communities. I am grateful for peaceful protests. I also understand the anger that is leading to riots and chaos. You can not abuse someone based solely on the color of their skin for as long as white America has abused those with black skin and expect the protests to be peaceful. Martin Luther King, Jr. tried that and while progress was made, we have taken many steps backward. Peaceful protests have failed those with black skin. We can not allow the color of one's skin to determine how they are treated. It must stop. We must become a just society for everyone's sake.

We can no longer remain silent. We can no longer say that every life matters and think that that solves anything. If it did, we would not have the heartbreak we have right now in our country. We are called by God to spread God's love to everyone regardless of the color of their skin. Every single one of us is God's child. It is time to show respect and love for our black sisters and brothers. May it begin with me. Black lives matter.

In Peace,

Pastor Suzanne