

Racial Reconciliation (Part 2): To My Black Brothers & Sisters

Coming at it as a Counselor...

- I pay very close attention to what people say and how they say it...looking behind the words

Silence is Deadly

“It just can’t be our job...it just can’t fall on me to be the one to educate or comfort right now...If their heart is not postured correctly the conversation won’t be healing for either of us...it will just be arguing, rebuttals, and hurt...none of that is helpful now...”

- **Sharing Can Be Extremely Exhausting**
 - Complexities, nuances, generational layers, coping lies, distractive defenses...
 - Wading through a field of landmines...
- **It can be Intimidating and Fearful**
 - “More hurt on top of hurt...”
- **It can require my own, sometimes Painful, Introspection**
- **BUT...it is a Non-Negotiable Essential to those who want to Follow Jesus**
 - Rely on the Lord for strength and endurance...

Matthew 18:15-17

“If another believer sins against you, **go privately and point out the offense**. If the other person listens and confesses it, **you have won that person back**. But if you are unsuccessful, **take one or two others with you and go back again**, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. If the person still refuses to listen, **take your case to the church**. Then if he or she won’t accept the church’s decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.

Grace, Patience & Understanding

“I feel like we’re being told we’re bad for being white...that we’re THE problem. Everywhere I am expected to reply...to give an answer for things I don’t know yet how to honestly answer...I want to show support but I don’t know how...and I am afraid that whatever I say or do, or not do will be misunderstood and just bring more hurt...”

My friend and mentor Martin:

- *“Lee, you have to give people time and grace...some of the jumps we’re asking of people are big leaps for them...they can’t do it all at once. If you or I were raised in the same way, the same place, at the same time, we would most likely think the same way.”*

Such a Complex Web of Spiritual Attacks:

- Politics, Media, Upbringing, Past Offenses/Experiences...
- **I’m not making excuses...**
 - I’m saying the enemy is cunning, and the battle is complex and has been waged for thousands and thousands of years...

Ephesians 6:12

For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against **evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world**, against **mighty powers in this dark world**, and against **evil spirits in the heavenly places**.

Galatians 6:1

Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should **gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path.** And **be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.**

2 Timothy 2:24-26

The Lord's servant **must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness.** God may perhaps **grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.**

Choosing to See All People as the Makings of a Friend

"I realize that the most awkward conversations I am having are awkward because I don't have a relationship with them...I have to pray to see everyone I engage with as a friend. When it's a friend, the burden is not heavy."

"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend." MLK, Jr.

2 Cor. 5:16

"We can no longer allow ourselves to evaluate others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now!"

- We must see people in the context of what they are **"Becoming;"** What God is transforming inside the person rather than the current state of mind, opinion or context that is hurtful to me.

Philippians 1:6

I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

- **This allows me to put my faith in God's redeeming power** rather than in my capacity to judge whether or not it is possible for this person to change, or this offense to be resolved.
- In this way, I can, by faith, begin to see everyone as a "friend" in the making...and **that gives God permission to use me and my faith in the transformation of both person and circumstance.**

Acknowledgement and Compassion

- **There are other legitimate hurts and points that deserve everyone's attention...**
 - To lump all police officers in the camp of police brutality is the same heinous lie as lumping the black community in with the looters, burning property, violence, anarchy
 - **Often those who have suffered more are more spiritually mature...**
 - **Sometimes being the first to reach out (even if it's grossly unfair) is what it takes to begin building the bridge...**

"We know love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19)

"While we were His enemies, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)