



June 9, 2020

Good Afternoon,

Quite honestly, I was uncertain if SCARF would issue a statement about the recent killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and Sean Reed by police officers, and the killing of Ahmaud Arbery by a former police officer, but as I stood peacefully at a rally in Lakeland, Florida this past Sunday I was more convinced than ever that, “My silence is their power”.

I am inspired to speak about...

Yesterday, as I watched James Baldwin’s brilliant 1965 speech as he talked about why black lives matter and broke down how, “In order to achieve real progress, we all have to reflect on the ways in which we were taught to devalue other human beings”;

Sunday, during the protest, I listened as a mother lamented as she spoke about seeing her 11-year-old, honor roll son in handcuffs in the back of a police car because he refused to stand during the school’s Pledge of Allegiance; and

Two weeks ago, as my younger daughter looked to her mother to help make sense of her world as she spoke about Arbery and now Floyd’s death.

Two weeks ago, I had no immediate words of encouragement, no words of hope, no scripture verse to quiet her fears; however, with a clear head and a careful and prayerful heart, I do now.

So, for you Jessika, Kayla, Joshua and all of our black children...this is for you:



Even though you live in a country where black men, women and children are being killed simply for:

Driving, **jogging**, sleeping, **yelling**, parking, **babysitting**, sitting in a van, **selling CDs**, selling cigarettes, **opening the door**, walking at night, **wearing a hoody**, holding a toy gun, **lying on the ground**, being homeless, **being in a stairway**, holding a cell phone, **having a broken taillight**, exercising horses, **having a bottle of prescription pills**, shopping at Walmart, **holding a bb gun at Walmart**, holding a phone in your own backyard, **eating ice cream in your own house**, shopping – **you matter**. More importantly, you matter to the Almighty and Sovereign God who does not sleep or slumber.

Ultimately, it is my sincere hope that by educating ourselves, our children, and the children we serve, we come to realize that “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere...[for] whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” *Martin Luther King Jr.*

Take Care,

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