

Healing the Consciousness of Racism in America
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Dallas City Hall Plaza
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I come to speak of Love - to speak about the Power of Love. Love is the grandest healing and drawing power on earth. Love is a cosmic force whose sweep is irresistible. Love is the greatest Power there is and it is this Power, this Presence that we have come here to BE. It is the very reason for our being and for our very life. We are made in the image and likeness of God and God is Love.

Fred Rogers, “Mr Rogers” as you may remember him, said in one of his programs to help the children of America deal with the assassination of JFK - “Sometimes we need to struggle with a tragedy to feel the gravity of Love. Love is what keeps us together and afloat.” Having just watched the movie “Are you My Neighbor?” I was truly inspired by how radical his messages were for his time and how relevant it is for us today because we find ourselves, over and over again faced with tragedy. Tragedies of war, and of weather, and of earth, but also tragedies rooted in our inability to love one another.

Fred Rogers also said in an interview “The ones who would make you feel less than you are - that’s the real evil.” Although we don’t use the term “evil” we certainly see the evidence of what Mr Rogers was pointing to. Today, we are here to heal the perception of difference that plays out as the “less than” mentality inherent in racism – or any other kind of prejudice and divisiveness.

Our founder, Rev Dr Ernest Holmes wrote “God is Love and we are Its expressed likeness, the image of the Eternal Being... When we realize God and we are One and not two, we shall love both. We shall love each other as an expression of God, and God as the Life Principle of all.”

Love is free from condemnation, even as it is free from fear. Love is a cosmic force whose sweep is irresistible... I claim that this irresistible cosmic force sweeps through each one of us in this country right here and right now. For there is That, which is within each of us, that has never been afraid, never been limited, never felt separate, never been harmed, never known hatred. I declare it is in this moment that each and every person knows that place within – a place of Divine Love, Divine Intelligence, Divine Right Action, Harmony and the place where the Unity of All Life resides.

I speak to that place within each of us and invite us each to lay down our thoughts and false beliefs of mass destruction – those thoughts of division, separation, privilege, superiority and pick up our awareness that there are more divine similarities than differences. That within the word Humanity there is Unity. We attract to us what we first become – until we learn to BE Love we are not sending out love vibrations and not until we send out those vibrations can we receive love in return.

Fred Rogers continues to challenge us with his admonishment to “take the gauntlet and make Goodness attractive in this next millennium. That’s the real job that we have.” He went on to say “The only thing that ever REALLY changes the world is when somebody gets the idea that Love can abound and can be shared.” So it is ours to realize that to BE Love is powerful, not weak; that it build bridges rather than simply tolerates, and that it is, in fact, the deepest spiritual practice and moral obligation that we as human beings can take on.

One of the first things to do with this obligation is to love everybody. We must begin this at once. There is always more Good than bad in people, and seeing the good brings it forth. We know that what we focus on grows. So focusing on hate brings more hate and difference brings out our differences. But focusing on Love changes everything. Love is the greatest healing and drawing power on earth. Love is the sole impulse for creation, and when we do not have love as the greatest incentive in our life, we are not aligned with God, the Universal Presence, the Spirit of Life Itself.

At times like these, it is important to open ourselves up to the acts of Love that are available every day. To see them, call them out, and add our own acts of Being Love in the World. To bring this Power to bare in our daily lives. Mr Rogers incorporated them into a successful children’s program, which was his ministry for 30 years. He passionately believed in this love and regularly reminded his viewers “You are the Beloved son/daughter of God.”

I realize that at times like these we so often turn to Martin Luther King Jr, for his powerful words and inspiration. And yet we stand here today as predominantly **white** ministers and people of faith. Therefore, now is the time for each of us to take of the mantle of Love and to BE Love for the sake of our black brothers and sisters. To ensure that our thoughts, intentions and especially our words and actions are *not* passive or moderate; rather, powerfully active and significant.

I am constantly faced with the voices of fear in my head that say...

What difference will my one voice make?

If I take this stand for Love, people won't like me.

Someone else is better equipped to take this stand than me.

I feel overwhelmed already, why try?

There's nothing I can do.

I'll probably say or do the wrong thing.

And somebody will judge me.

Thankfully, I've begun to learn how to let the voice of Love drown out the voice of fear.

I've had a few experiences where I did get it right...

When I spoke up for my black brothers and sisters and did not remain silent...

I've stood as the Power and Presence of Love in the midst of an altercation...

Most importantly, I've made the commitment within myself that I won't be a bystander, I ensure that Love is on the field when fear, hatred, and racism is present.

Recently, in a Faith Forward Dallas meeting, I was touch by Rev Michael Waters of the AME Church in South Dallas who spoke to the White Faith Leaders in the room... you don't need an invitation from anyone... we need you... show up, stand up, and speak up.

Our faith teaches us that God in each of is the same in all of us. We are one with all people, all things, with all life. Let us each be moved by this great Love which we have for the world, for America, for our black brothers and sisters in this time of one more tragedy. Let us believe in the power of this Love. Let us each BE It, as we talk, live, and act from It....and in doing so we are, in fact, healing the consciousness of racism in America.