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THE MARGINALIZED AND THE MAJORITY

Prayer

- *The serious challenge to the majority (white) church and myself to recognize, understand and respond to the call for racial righteousness and justice among the marginalized (black community).*
- *My/our active and exemplary response to the worldwide COVID crisis demonstrated in our activities both among our friends/family close to home and those in places we choose to travel to.*
- *NAB Gateway's new, emerging partners and friends in Lebanon who have been devastated by this incredible explosion, as well as on-going economic upheaval and the COVID crisis. We will need wisdom to know how to best proceed with our new partners in 'such a time as this'.*
- *Our son Kameron, a flight attendant, is changing bases/homes from Las Vegas to Dallas; please pray for him. Also pray for my wife Shelly (Associate Pastor at our church) as she counsels and speaks into the lives of many that are struggling during these difficult times.*

Praises

- *I'm grateful for the ability to continue in my work, largely in a virtual capacity for the past 5 (and counting) months. I've participated (as I'm sure many of you have) in numerous Zoom calls, webinars and have even been able to conduct some of the trainings on-line that I normally do in person.*
- *My dad continues to undergo regular health challenges (dialysis, etc.) but is currently fairly stable while my mum is recovering quite well from her knee replacement surgery.*
- *I also continue to be grateful for many of YOU who have continued to support my work despite your own or your church's hardship in these challenging times. Thank you again!*

*...For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples...*
ISAIAH 2:3B-4A



As I looked back at what I wrote in my May newsletter, I saw the words ‘What a difference 3 months makes...’, and you know what (?), I feel like I could say the exact same thing again! We’re all aware, of course, that the worldwide COVID crisis has continued at devastating levels in countries that often show up on our regular prayer lists, but tragically/surprisingly our own USA is at the top of this dubious list of countries being most affected by COVID-19.

The year 2020 has also brought with it economic as well as emotional depression for many, and most recently, an explosion in Beirut, Lebanon (where, incidentally, NAB Gateway has new/emerging partners - see my May newsletter) that ranks 3rd in its destructive force only to the 2 atomic bombs dropped on Japan in WWII.

But as I considered what has marked these past 3 months most significantly for me, a guy that has spent 20+ years serving in the world of global missions often among what Scripture calls ‘the least of these’ or the marginalized in ‘THE ENDS OF THE EARTH’ (Acts 1:8); it would have to be the challenge of racial injustice among marginalized people (‘the least of these’) right here in the country, the city, and the community that I refer to as home; in my ‘JERUSALEM’ (also Acts 1:8) which is Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA.

I have seen majority and marginalized cultures, races and ethnic groups in other countries juxtaposed in ways that create separation, suspicion and conflict. Borders and other lines of separation, both natural and unnatural, make it clear when you enter a corner of town or a region of the country that is meant for those marginalized folks who may live different, act different, speak different and very often ‘look different’ than those of the majority. And how does the marginalized group look different? They often (but not always)

have darker skin and features in comparison to those in the majority. But regardless of the how’s and why’s, the fact remains that these marginalized cultures next to these majority cultures are seen as different, separate, possibly suspicious and possibly a source of conflict. In many countries of Europe the marginalized could be Roma/Gypsy, in Latin America they could be indigenous/native peoples, in Africa they could be linguistically or religiously different, or different based on economic status or a very complex mix of factors; but almost always they are significantly fewer in number than that of the majority culture they share space with.

So why do I share these observations about majority/marginalized cultures in parts of the world outside of the USA (North America)? Its because I’ve become increasingly aware that as the church, we seem to have a high amount of compassion for the marginalized and the oppressed in other parts of the world and will go to great efforts through missionary support, church partnership and short-term mission, etc. to serve and minister among them (often when the majority culture church in that land will not). But when the challenge, the situation, the ‘marginalized’ group is right here in our own country, city and community; i.e., the cries, pain, sorrow and racial injustice of the black community, where is that same church? The church that has such compassion for oppressed peoples abroad is no where to be found when the oppressed people in question are right here.

And, in large part, the fact that the challenge of racial injustice IS right here at home seems to be the heart of the reason why the majority white church is not willing to act among the minority black community here. Here at home we share a history, our stories of success and of failure are connected, and our futures are intertwined. And though our compassion and efforts across the globe among the oppressed and marginalized are



never a waste or of no consequence, the church can't ignore, resist involvement or hold back its compassion when the oppressed and marginalized (the black community) are right next door because somehow its too 'complicated'.

Again, as someone that would continue to encourage the church in partnership, involvement and support among those that need it overseas, I challenge myself as well as the American (and North American) majority white church to listen to and follow our black brothers and sisters even, and especially, when its difficult. Why? Because the reconciliatory Gospel of the Kingdom is 'good news' for 'all things'; and that includes racial injustice here in America (see Col. 1:20) in this

cultural moment as well as any other injustices or other compassion worthy efforts around the globe the church feels led to get involved with.

This is probably one of the most challenging seasons I've experienced and probably one of the most challenging newsletters I've written. But, the consistency of the Gospel of the Kingdom and our response demands it.

For the Kingdom, Randy Schmor



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