

Title: Why We all Need to say Black Lives Matter
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Luke 15:1-7 NIV

15 Now the tax collectors and “sinners” were all gathering around to hear him. 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

3 Then Jesus told them this parable: 4 “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? 5 And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders 6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ 7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

Flow:

Introduction

There is a social media post from Jared Price that has been circulating for the last two months. Price credits Twitter user Manny Arteaga for originally posting it. Maybe you’ve seen it:

IMAGE of Social Media Post from Jared Price

Social Media Post from Jared Price (June 1, 2020)

If you are a Christian and can’t hear #BlackLivesMatter without feeling the need to respond with the criticism that “All Lives Matters.” Then crack open your Bible and hit up Luke 15.

There are 100 sheep, but one goes missing. Jesus leaves the 99 and goes after the one.

The 99: “But... what about us? Don’t we matter?”

Of course the 99 still matter, but they’re not the ones in danger. The one is. I’ll say it again, #BlackLivesMatter.

Summary of This Series

Because the topic is so sensitive and because it is so easy to feel preached at instead of preached to, I started off speaking about my own life, and how the diseases of racism and alcoholism have been passed down in my family. Rather than seeing the Black Lives Matter

Movement as a recrimination against all white people, we can see it as an intervention, a wake-up call from God if you will – that the sickness of racism that has been passed down to us need to be healed. In Matt 6 Jesus says that darkness and light depend on the health of our eyes. [The gospel enables us to see reality and experience healing.](#)

Because this an illness we all suffer under, we need to see this in its largest context – as a spiritual struggle with systemic evil. When we see the big picture as Paul helps us to do in Ephesians 6, we can embrace the call to stand in the armor of God,

in the midst of this struggle,

moving forward with gospel purpose until God’s kingdom comes,

on earth as it is in heaven,

until our nation is truly a place in which liberty and justice are equally available to all.

[The gospel enables us to stand in the face of evil and experience victory.](#)

Reconciliation in all its forms – including race - isn’t a modern invention or some political agenda. Galatians 3 is one of many passages in scripture that make plain how this was always God’s vision for humanity. It is a vision of true liberty expressed as a new community formed to transcends all the ways we try to divide ourselves into Us versus Them. Such a community will NOT be organized around deciding who is better, or more valuable, or more important, or more deserving. It is organized around Christ’s singular command to express your love for God by loving your neighbor as yourself.

[The gospel enables us to live united in love and experience reconciliation.](#)

Text reflection

So let’s linger on this extraordinary parable in Luke 15.

[Now the tax collectors and “sinners” were all gathering around to hear him. – Luke 15:1 NIV](#)

I like how the editors of the NIV chose to put the word sinners in quotes at the beginning of this story, as if to say to the reader: Which of these two groups would you rather be in?

We all know this story, and we love it. We love it because it shows God’s heart for the lost one, the isolated one, the at-risk one. We hear this parable and remember Jesus declaring, “I am the Good Shepherd and I will lay my life down for my sheep.”

We love this story because it reminds us that Jesus loves ME so much that he will come looking for ME!

But as the Lord has gone out and found each of us, and brought us back into the fold, and thrown a party in heaven to celebrate our safe return, we need to remember:

We are one of the 99 now. We are safe. We are secure. We are – yes, I’ll say it – we are privileged. Heaven has had its celebration for us.

Our job now cheer on the Good Shepherd, and to long for him to safely bring the one home.

The 99 know: Our joy is incomplete until the one – indeed every one – is brought safely home.

Sinners get that. Pharisees? Not so much.

We careful bible students may take issue with the way social media has appropriated this parable for the BlackLivesMatter movement. We may be tempted to say: This isn't a parable of racial reconciliation! It about repentance! People are misusing scripture!

You get that the Pharisees accused Jesus of that all the time, right? That's why he spoke in parables. A parable is a story that reveal's God heart. It reveals that God is always and forever extending, reaching, searching, finding, rescuing, bringing safely home. God's heart is always concerned with the ones who are in danger.

If we don't experience that danger ourselves, it is very hard to accept. If we accept it, we also have to accept that things are going to be really uncomfortable for us. Not for a few weeks. Not just until some new laws are written or new leaders are chosen. **We should expect that things will be uncomfortable for us for a long time.**

And we need to believe that it will be worth it. For all of us.

My friend Harriette is facing a reality that is hard to accept. She had a bicycle accident and broke her elbow. She had to have surgery, and now she is in rehab. She Her physical therapist put it to her bluntly: You are going to be uncomfortable for a while. Work through it. Do the work, and you will be able to do all things you long to do.

So my challenge to you today has two parts: One part remembering and one part imagining.

1. Recall the passages in the bible that demonstrate God's care for the vulnerable, the at-risk, the in-danger, the lost one.
2. Imagine what life will be like for your grandchildren in a nation where BlackLivesMatter has made it possible for us to not only say but demonstrate that every life matters.

Conclusion

Maybe you've seen this image as well, of the sweet girl with a big smile making a simple request:

IMAGE of a little girl holding up the sign

We said → Black Lives Matter

Never said → Only Black Lives Matter

We know → All lives Matter

We just need YOUR HELP with #BlackLivesMatter for Black lives are in danger.