

“Love’s in Need of Love”

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To understand what’s going on between police officers and Black citizens of America, you have to first understand the history of policing in America. During slavery after the passage of the runaway slaves act, bands of white slave hunters often accompanied by Black trackers, roamed the country looking for Black men, women and children yearning to be free. In time these groups morphed into security forces whose purpose was to safe-guard the property and interests of white men of wealth privilege and industry. So the intended purpose of the police force was suppression, oppression and containment of certain people(s) in our society. This is why no matter what the skin pigmentation or ethnic background of the police officers, you will still see the same behavior directed towards Black men, women and children in particular, and those of less socio-economic status in general. Race is a factor, no doubt, but the true problem is mental and systemic.

Our country was founded on the doctrine of Black inferiority (as well as that of other non-white people), therefore, it is woven into the very fabric of our nation. Our departed brother George Floyd is but one example, there have been countless others; Sandra Bland showed us that even Black women were not exempt. However, do not abandon all hope. As I watched the news coverage of protests around the country I noticed two significant differences in these protests as opposed to one in years and (decades) past. #1 The many instances of police officers, many of them white, embracing, kneeling with and displaying solidarity with Black protestors. This is significant when compared to the ‘60’s where Bull Connor unleashed dogs on “peaceful” Blacks marching for equality to end lynching and Jim Crow laws in this so-called bastion of democracy. #2 At no other time in the history of the Black struggle have I seen so many non-Black people on the front lines. There are communities where I actually saw more white faces than Black, all shouting “Black lives matter.” This is a long way from the ‘90’s incident where an all white jury acquitted several white policemen of brutally beating an unarmed Black man in California. Then there is the protest where a large crowd of predominantly Latin X people marched to protest the murder of brother George Flyod. One Latina sister was quoted saying we won’t stop marching until Black people’s lives have the same value as other citizens in our country” while she held a sign that said “Brown people 4 Black people! Black lives matter.” Atrocities are committed by those whose hearts contain no love for those who don’t look like, believe like, or live like them. This absence of love makes them do harm with no compunction or remorse. Being the “other” justified these acts of human negation. What the peaceful protests show us is that love and enmity cannot co-exist in the same heart. When a heart is full of love, compassion and empathy our perceived differences become miniscule and we are compelled to “want for our brother/sister what we want for ourselves,” freedom, justice and equality.

In closing, I ask that all who read this message download the song "Love's in Need of Love Today" by Stevie Wonder, listen to it and then act on it. Find someone unlike, someone different from you be it skin color, gender, religion or sexual orientation and show them acceptance, love and compassion. Let them know our differences are diminished by our shared humanity, let them know we are one!!!

"Love's in need of love today, don't delay send yours right away. Don't you know hate's goin' 'round breaking many hearts, stop it please before it's gone too far." (Excerpt from song).