

LEMONADE

AMERICA'S UNDERLYING CONDITIONS, JAMES 2:8-13

Underlying Conditions

- COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease with a variety of symptoms
- Although African Americans make up only 13% of the population, we represent 23% of all COVID 19 deaths in the USA
 - d because they have *underlying conditions* such as high blood pressure, diabetes, lung disease, lupus, obesity, etc.
- It's true these diseases affect the African American population at a disproportionate rate, it's not the only underlying condition
- There are underlying conditions that greatly contribute to the contribute to COVID-19 health risks and death rate among African Americans
 - African Americans are more likely to live in densely populated areas due residential housing discrimination
 - Racial segregation is directly related to negative health outcomes
 - African Americans are more like to live in communities with limited access to grocery stores, which means limited access to fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, bread milk
 - Limited access to drug stores, medical centers and hospitals, to get medicines, medical advice, and medical care
 - Inequitable access to COVID-19 testing and treatment in communities of color even after the discovery of the high infection and death rates in communities of color
 - Limited access to green space, i.e. parks, bike/jogging trails
 - People of color often work on jobs without benefits like sick leave, personal days, etc. so even when they are not feeling well, they have to go to work
- The potential exposure to COVID-19 rate for people of color is significantly higher because many people of color work essential jobs (i.e. nurses, delivery drivers, grocery store staff, restaurant staff, etc.)
- The push to reopen local and state economies increases the risk of COVID-19 exposure to essential workers
- The issues that I've outlined are not new or unknown, they just been revealed publicly by COVID-19
- What COVID-19 has revealed is America's "underlying condition", *structural racism*

I Can't Breathe

- Nine days ago, George Floyd was arrested for "allegedly" attempting to pass a counterfeit \$20 bill
- He's placed on the ground and on officer puts his knee on his neck until he dies *while* three other officers are either holding him down or just watching what's happening and do nothing to intervene
- We've all seen the video and it's difficult to watch a man pleading for his life saying over and over I Can't Breathe

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- The video of George Floyd's death has sparked protests literally all over the nation and around the world
- Some people have resorted to violence and looting, but those were "instigators and opportunists" and not peaceful protestors
- The outrage, frustration, and grief are due to we've seen this happen too many times to our Black men and the protestors are saying, *enough is enough*
- George Floyd's death and the days and nights of protests are revealing another of America's underlying conditions, *police brutality and deadly use of force against African Americans and other disparities in the criminal justice system*
 - An African American man is 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police than a white man
 - African Americans are more likely to be searched during a routine traffic stop
 - African Americans make up 14% of the youth populations
 - In Texas, African Americans are 12% of the population, but we represent 29% of the deaths in police custody
- The protests were seeing in America is a collective cry for justice

What does the Bible Say About America's Underlying Conditions?

James 2:8-13 (KJV) 8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: 9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. 10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no dultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

- The Bible says we are all children of God ***Genesis 1:26-27 (KJV) 26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, ...27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.***
- Every human being was made in the image of God and no human being is made "more" in God's image than another
- No human being should be exalted or depreciated at all
- The Bible says in the Old and New Testaments we are to love our neighbor as ourselves
- If we are to please God as a Christian society, we are to fulfill and obey this command to love our neighbors as ourselves
- We are to love others *regardless* of their race

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- Our Christian faith is founded on love **John 3:16 (KJV) 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**
- God set the example demonstrating His love for us by sacrificing His Son for us
- You can't Christ-like without love
- **13:35 (KJV) 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.**
- The Bible says when we have "respect of persons", partiality, favoring a person over another based-on race, gender, age, ability, etc. it's a sin
- It's not only an unloving act, it's sin
- It's still a sin even if you're living godly in other areas
- Sin contaminates any good we do
- We can't as a country say we're a God-fearing nation and discriminate against others and it not be sin
- The *underlying conditions* of the USA must change

What's Our Role in Healing America's Underlying Condition?

- To change narrative, we must act
- It's been said, "The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for God men to do nothing"
- If we do nothing, evil wins, racial disparities win, excessive force by police wins
- **Continue to Love Matthew 5:44 (KJV) 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;**
 - Love is not mere words, it's actions
 - When we love others, we are truly showing that Jesus is the Lord of our lives and not our circumstances
- **Confront racism Ephesians 4:15 (KJV) 15 "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, ..."**
 - Confronting issues that are wrong is important if we are going to effect change
 - For structural racism and police brutality to be dismantled, we must speak up and continue to speak until our collective voices are heard
 - We are speaking up in a way that does not inflame an already tough issue, but at the same time we're speaking up to ensure we are not ignored or put off
 - We were speaking up not only to change our present situation, but also to see change benefit future generations
 - We can speak up and be loving *and* firm
- **Pray for Change and Pray for America's Leaders 2 Chronicles 7:14 (KJV) 14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and**

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pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

- We must ask God to forgive us of our "underlying conditions"
- Prayer not only changes situations and circumstance, it changes people
- Pray all in authority **1 Timothy 2:1-2 (KJV) 1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.**
- Pray for the President and all our elected officials
- Prayer is vital to our seeing change society
- ***Teach your children Deuteronomy 6:7 (KJV) 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.***
 - We are to teach our children how to live godly lives by word and example
 - Teach them to love and respect everyone regardless of their race
 - Model what you teach
- ***Vote***
 - Vote in every election, local, state, and national
 - We can't afford to "sit out" any election
 - Your vote directly effects the level of services your community receives
 - Vote for candidates that are concerned about your community
- ***Leave the Vengeance to God Romans 12:19 (KJV) 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.***
 - We are living in tense times, don't do or say things that make matters worse
 - God is still in control; He will repay all that have done wrong
 - Instead of seeking revenge do the opposite
 - Lost in all of the protests, political rhetoric and violence have spontaneous acts love and kindness
 - Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good
 - When we do what we can do, we'll see God do what only God can do