

“Hay Bendito” & “That’s so sad. Someone should do something about that.”

By: Justo González

In the midst of these turbulent, confusing and violent times in our country, I often hear people say, “Hay Bendito” in Spanish. “Hay Bendito” is an expression of sympathy, sadness or a way to demonstrate our humanity with another’s suffering, pain or station in life. It is similar to the English, “That’s so sad. Someone should do something about that.”

Both “Hay Bendito” just like “That’s so sad. Someone should do something about that”, are ways of expressing solidarity with others and of doing the Pontius Pilate. Let me express some theoretical solidarity so that I can wash my hands of the feelings I’m having and the uncomfortable things that it does to me.

Can I please pretend that I don’t know what I know or that I haven’t seen or experienced what I just did? My life is comfortable God. Why are YOU, through this pastor and my conscience, messing with my life? I like traveling toward the Valley of the Shadow of Death in a new car and with my credit cards. I have been blessed that traveling in the Shadow of Death isn’t really traveling in my reality. I love the fact that I can drive by the Valley of Death and take the detour to the other side of my dream vacation. I fear no evil on my cruise, in the Caribbean, in Europe and the places and stations in life where others like me, model security to the essence of my soul.

Why do you challenge me to see the humanity in the African-American young men who are **Killed Driving While Black?**

Why must you force me to **Hear Children Crying while Detained by ICE.** We ALL know that their parents are “illegal” and responsible for all of this.

Why does life show me women with breast cancer who have no health insurance and will surely receive substandard care, if they get any at all? What is wrong with you God? I pray. I go to church. Why do I have to feel discomfort with others not having healthcare? It’s not a right. Why did I have to discover that I am a “preexisting” condition? Don’t you know Eternal One that it is rude to be in someone’s face or to bring up uncomfortable topics like these? If you are all knowing, why are you all up in my face?

“Hay Bendito” to all those things that make me uncomfortable. “That’s so sad. Someone should do something about these things” to everything that I don’t want to deal with and certainly don’t want to do.

“I am the God of your Ancient parents. I walked with your great, great, great grandparents. I saw the pain of their treatment as immigrants. I was there when you were blessed with privilege and power. I was there when the beauty of the golden and chocolate brown skin of African descendants was celebrated and when others dehumanized it. I, the God of rivers, mountains and fields know all that was and is. I do not affirm realities and powers that can use privilege to simply wipe away the pains of my children by simply saying, “Hay Bendito and that’s so sad.”

Thus says, the Creator of all that is and will be, you must be willing to dirty your hands, journey with those whose life is already beaten and bruised and told that they are not worthy. I, Your God, send you forth with the liberation needed for action.

I LIBERATE YOU from “Hay Bendito” and “That’s so sad” and replace it with raw consciousness. You are aware now! You cannot simply wash your hands from the pains of the world. Doing so will condemn you to complicity. I send you forth to be agents of transformation. Meet people in their lived reality. Be bold and step out of your reality and journey with them wherever they lead. Be my hands and feet and bring restoration to all you encounter.