



Repair & *Restore*

FROM NAYIRI KARJIAN, ASSOCIATION GENERAL MINISTER • JULY 9, 2020

In our world where “time is money” we covet shortcuts and quick fixes. In fact, we are a culture that boasts in fixing problems and solving issues quickly. We have a vast variety of band aids and quick 5-15 steps to everything.

You have a headache? Take a pill. You want to end hunger? Create a soup kitchen. You want to improve your friendships? Read a self help book. You want to grow your church? Hire a band. You want to fix racism? Talk about diversity.

I have no issues with resources that help us grow, learn and live life more fully. I appreciate the resources available and celebrate them. Yet perhaps because of our tendency to seek quick fixes instead of long term solutions, band aids instead of thoughtful exploration and mending, I wonder.

Quick fixes deal with symptoms not root causes, while many life issues and social concerns beg for exploration and scrutiny of their causes and their “WHYs.”

I have been pondering— what are the root causes of racism, inequality, supremacy? Are they problems with quick fixes or solutions, or are they wounds and injuries to be healed? Or, both?

The word *problem* from Latin is made up of *per* meaning *forward* and *ballein* meaning *to throw*, literally meaning *to throw forward*. Interestingly, *problem* shares its root with the word *diabolic* made up of *dia* meaning *across* and *ballein* meaning *to throw*, literally meaning *to throw across*.

Racism, inequality and supremacy are thrown forward and across our paths to distract, divide, damage and

injure humanity. Their root causes are power and fear, and more. Hence they are not just problems to be solved but hurts, injuries to be healed. Quick fixes are not possible nor are they enough.

The word *heal*, *hælan* means *to make whole*, to bring together what essentially belong together. *Restore* means *to give back*, *repair*, bring together what is broken yet essentially belongs together.

In order to heal and restore, we have to grasp the pain and injury racism inflicts on us. We have to go deeper, beyond fixes and solutions to healing the hurts, mending the wounds, repairing the injuries and restoring the wholeness. Broken bodies, hearts and communities cannot be treated with quick fixes or solutions, nor can a shattered humanity.

Jesus came to heal, to restore, to make whole. Jesus came to teach and to prophesy, to speak God’s truth. Jesus knew that healing cannot happen without prophesying, without speaking truth to power. Jesus knew that healing cannot come without transforming the powers that injure, without changing structures that subjugate and oppress. Jesus knew that quick fixes are not enough.

We as a people of faith and as the Church need to remember that healing and prophesying work hand in hand, that quick fixes are not enough. We are called to restore humanity to wholeness by taking bold action to change the diabolic and destructive power structures into God’s design where the first is last and the last first, where the powerful are brought down and the lowly is lifted up, where the hungry is filled with good things and the rich is sent away empty, where power, our birthright as God’s children, is shared equally. I pray for courage for such witness, action and healing!