

## It's Time

Yes, and how many times must a man look up  
Before he can see the sky?  
And how many ears must one man have  
Before he can hear people cry?  
Yes, and how many deaths will it take 'til he knows  
That too many people have died?  
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind  
The answer is blowin' in the wind.  
--Bob Dylan

It's time. It's time for us to remember who we are and why we are here. I am writing a week after the guilty verdict in the trial of Derek Chauvin. I am not interested in re-litigating the trial. My point is: we cannot live like this. It is not God's intention. We must move out of melodrama. There are not good people and bad people. There are just sinners who are aware of their need of God to enable them even as flawed people to be instruments of God's will. There also are those who are unaware and, therefore, may be helping to bring in God's reign of peace, justice or may be consciously or unconsciously working against it.

It's time to move out of melodrama and take an honest look at who we are as a nation and what we want to be. More importantly, as Christians we must remember who Jesus is calling us to be.

It's time: time to be honest about our past, our present, and God's desire for our future. Remember Jesus' last words in the Gospel of Matthew? "Go therefore making disciples of all nations.... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." And what did Jesus teach us? "Love God with all your heart soul and mind and love your neighbor as yourself."

It's time. It's not enough to sit in judgement of Derek Chauvin or anyone else. We are to "be the change you seek for the world" (Mahatma Gandhi). The question is not simply who is right and who is wrong. The questions we face are what are we doing here and now to make a difference? How are we being instruments of the Good News? Are we loving our neighbor as ourselves?

It's time. We start where we are.

First, we become more aware of who we are as a country and who we are as individuals. Take a step in that direction. Become a participant in [Sacred Ground](#); read books that lift the veil of our country's history.

Second, as we say in AA, "Do a moral inventory." What's our personal history? What is it about our individual and corporate past that we don't want to confront? In this moment, what is God calling each of us to do?

I grew up in Asheville. We had a maid who left her eleven children to come and cook for us and clean our house. As a child, it never dawned on me that something was wrong with this. I never wondered why the five of us lived in a house three times bigger than the one Anna lived in with twelve other people or why she had to leave her children to be with us.

Third, we are to be open and intentional about what God is calling us to do and think right now. It's convenient to blame Derek Chauvin as if he is the cause of everything racist in Minneapolis. However, he is one chapter of a long story that has been told since our country's inception.

As the writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote: "If only it were all so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?"

Yes, we must confess our country's racism and pray and work to rid ourselves and this country of it.

Yes, we must do something about the never-ending deaths of black men and women in our streets and realize this is more than a police problem. It's a systemic problem that unveils the differences between races in income, housing, medical care and on and on.

Because we all are sinners in need of God's redemption, we must not make Derek Chauvin the scapegoat. He is one person who holds up a mirror of what is wrong throughout our country. Racism is not over because he is convicted.

Now is the time. The answer is not blowing in the wind. It's pounding in our hearts and echoing in the voice of our Lord. It's time.