A RESPONSE TO INJUSTICE

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HELLO CHAPEL FAMILY,

On May 25, when I heard of the death of Mr. George Floyd, my heart sank to learn that another black life was taken at the hands of a white police officer. I knew almost immediately that our already-divided nation would erupt in anger, pain, and protest. My mind quickly went to my friends of color and wondered what they must be feeling as they watch another scenario of injustice unfold before them.

It goes without saying that we as believers abhor this act of violence. Each person, regardless of the color of their skin, is made in the image of God and therefore has inherent and complete value bestowed upon them by their Creator. Racism is evil. The actions taken against George Floyd were excessive and abhorrent. The brutality that Mr. Floyd received from both the acting police officer and those officers standing by were in direct violation of Christ’s command in John 13:34. One cannot watch the final moments of George Floyd’s life and not think words such as, brutality, racial injustice, partiality, and even murder. As I watch the last moments of this man’s life, I felt a mixture of feelings of fear, remorse, anger, and outrage. All of us understand these emotions are natural and expected; however, we cannot let our feelings ebb into complacency. Not this time.

We at The Chapel have been working hard to be a place of inclusion for all races. We’ve been working hard to be a church of prayer for all nations, tongues, and tribes. But the reality is we still have a lot of work to do in the areas of racial inclusion. The fact is we are predominantly a “white” church. Because that is the case, we cannot remain silent. If our desire is to be a church of all colors of God’s children, we cannot sit idly by while we watch our brothers and sisters face inequality and injustice. The world will be watching and waiting to see if we’ll continue to be a part of the silent majority or if we will raise up and be a voice that cries for justice.
What must we do?

**FIRST, GRIEVE.**

We must mourn alongside the Floyd family and **join in the lament of our friends of color.**

**SECOND, PRAY.**

Diligently petition our Lord that justice might prevail in the land. **Pray without ceasing for our friends who daily face the implicit bias of our world,** simply because of the color of their skin. Pray for the police officers of our city that they might live out Micah 6:8 to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with their God.

**THIRD, PROTEST.**

You might be surprised that your pastor is calling you to protest. I am not suggesting joining those who deface our cities or loot from our shop owners. **I am suggesting that you join a peaceful protest for the purpose of walking shoulder to shoulder with our brothers and sisters whose voices are not being heard.** Protest by contacting local, state, and federal political representatives. Protest by joining your voice with those crying for fairness. In so doing, we will fulfill Scripture that calls us to “seek justice and correct oppression” (Isaiah 1:17).

As the Church, we recognize that we live in a sinful and fallen world. **Above all, our world needs Jesus.** We see this now more than ever. Because we are people who have received the Gospel, we are called to look for opportunities to share it with our neighbors. **That opportunity is now.**
For 85 years, God has given us as The Chapel the position to be in the center of what He is doing in Akron and the surrounding communities. As a result, we have had unique openings to build strong relationships that stretch across racial lines. For the sake of the Gospel, let us rise to the occasion before us and help carry the generational burdens of inequality. May God give us many opportunities through our service to speak of the saving hope of Jesus.

In His Service,

[Signature]

Senior Pastor, The Chapel

“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

ROMANS 12:9-21