

### **388 All Lives Matter**

In recent days news bulletins have been dominated by pictures of the “Black Lives Matter!” demonstrations in cities round the world, prompted by the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis at the hands, or rather the boot, of a white policeman who has since been sacked and charged with murder.

That killing was wrong, and justice must now take its course. We see in this incident both the power of a single mobile-phone camera whose footage was posted on social media and then “went viral”, as well as the power of the tongue (eg, James 3.5-8 and President Trump’s impetuous tweets). Hence, by three sparks thrown into the tinder box of American society - a police murder, mobile phone footage and a few tweets - appalling mayhem has ensued.

We turn now to God’s Word, picking our way carefully through the minefield of anger and accusation as we identify some key issues involved in the “Black Lives matter” slogan.

First, foremost, and crucially, Almighty God our Creator has “made of one blood all nations of men” (KJV, egs., Acts 17.26a / Genesis 3.20 & 9.19 / Romans 5.12ff / I Corinthians 15.22,47), with every single one of us being made “in the image of God” (Genesis 1.26-27). So there is only one human race, which renders the popular snarl of “Racist!” completely meaningless.

Within this one human race we clearly have very obvious sub-groups, which in this Reflection we will simply term as African, Asian and European. These sub-groups have developed through inbuilt genetic variety from Shem, Ham and Japheth and the divine “scattering abroad” from Babel (Genesis 9.19 & 11.9). Each now has its own physical features, heritage, culture, characteristics, gifts, strengths, weaknesses, virtues and sins.

In Genesis 3 God’s perfect creation was spoiled by the entrance of sin via the serpent, Eve and Adam, and that spoiling prevails today in every human being, apart from One, who has ever lived - “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3.23). The track record of each of the sub-groups and its people within the single human race is therefore subject to criticism when appropriate, for no person, people or sub-group is perfect.

From Eden sin has spread its ugliness across the world and the centuries, including countless wars, conquests, and the long-standing, widespread curse of slavery. For various reasons African peoples suffered most from this trade, at the hands of Asian and European traders and often with the connivance of African tribal chiefs. What we can term as the “inter-sub-group” tensions currently plaguing the United States are a direct legacy of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, in which of course several European powers were shamefully involved.

(At the same time European contact with Africans has been far from being “all bad”, bringing a host of technological, economic, medical, social and political benefits, plus the Christian gospel, to African people. These benefits do not excuse slavery one jot, but remembering them retains the fuller picture).

In seeking to pull these various strands together, we can assert quite clearly that ALL human lives matter! – the sub-group of the lives involved being entirely irrelevant. Murder is wrong whoever is the victim (egs., Genesis 4.9-10 / Exodus 20.13 & Deuteronomy 5 17 / I Peter 4.15 / Revelation 9.21, 21.8, 22.15), be that a George Floyd or unborn ones in the womb. And it is because every single “made-in-the-image-of-God” life matters that the solemn principle of Genesis 9.6 still stands, “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed”.

In truth, “The Lord is good to all” (Psalm 145.9a / Matthew 5.45b / Acts 14.17), in faithfully providing more than enough for everyone on earth, yet His abundance is so often frustrated by human sinfulness. Above all, God in His love for the people of this world has given His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but will receive the free gift of eternal life (John 3.16-17 / Romans 5.6-11 / ...).

God desires that the valid concerns of any people within the human family should be properly addressed, (scripturally we think for example of “the poor, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow”, eg Deuteronomy 24.14-22), with mutual honesty, repentance and shared responsibility on all sides wherever necessary.

The terrible scenes in the cities of America and elsewhere may well be being fanned now by subversive groups for their own ends, but within the whole angry mix lie legitimate grievances among African-Americans which need urgent attention. We pray that those in authority, notably in the United States, no matter which sub-group they represent, will have the sense to seek, find and follow the guidance of Almighty God, as they

demonstrate in word, law and practice that ALL lives matter in the one human family “of one blood”.

Thanks be to God, in the midst of all the turmoils we can take comfort that in Christ the words of Psalm 67 will surely come to pass.

© 2020 Faithful Sheep Ministries – [www.fsmins.org](http://www.fsmins.org)