AUA Mid-Week Institution Online Worship



Finding Your Voice

D. W. Baker, Vice Chancellor, June 2, 2020

Adventist University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

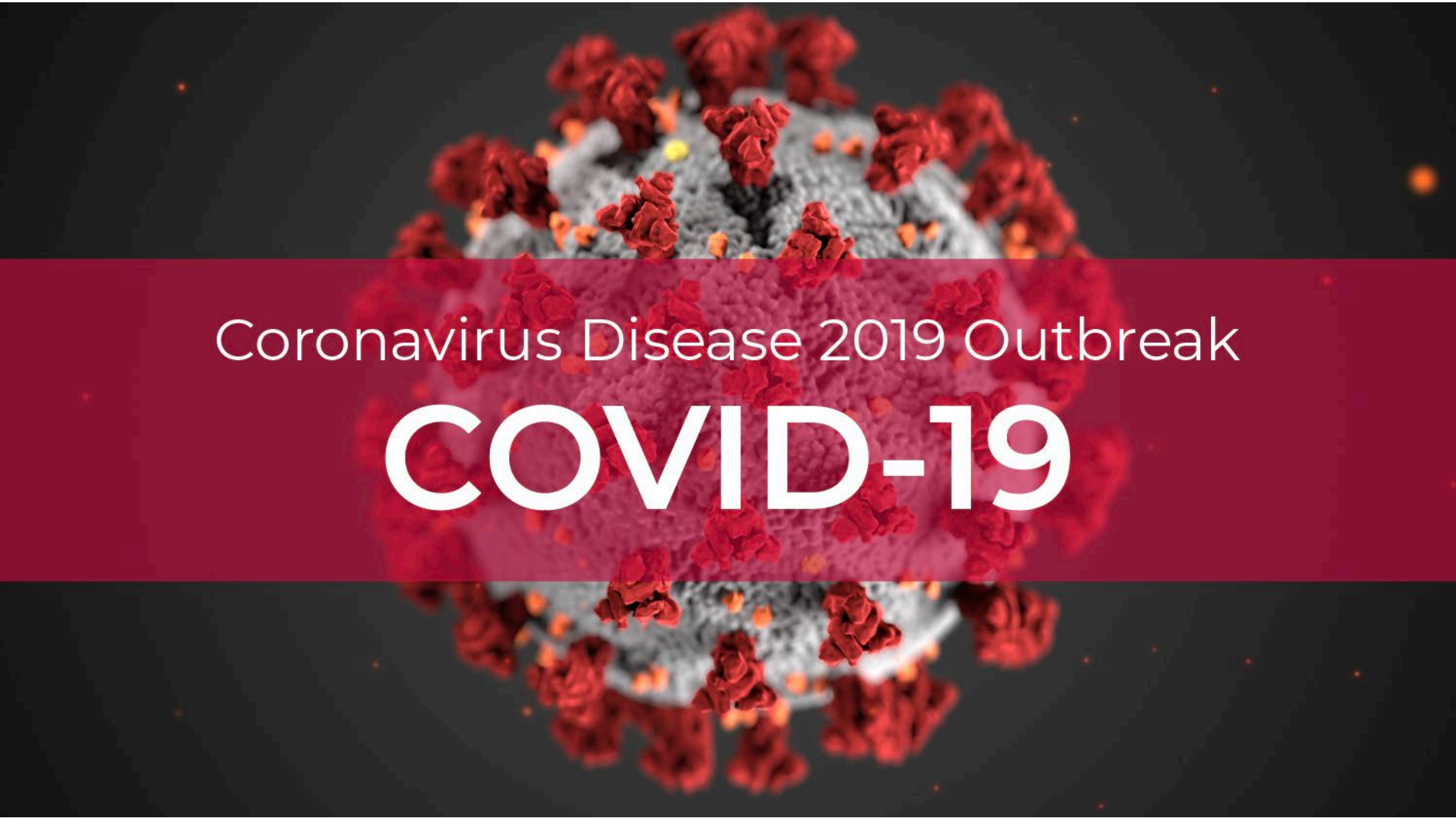
80 Days in Covid-19 Shutdown

Topic: *Finding Your Voice*

1. Challenging Context
2. Spectrum of Responses
3. Core Issue/Bible Principles
4. World Leaders Speak Out
5. My Response—My Voice

1. Challenging Context

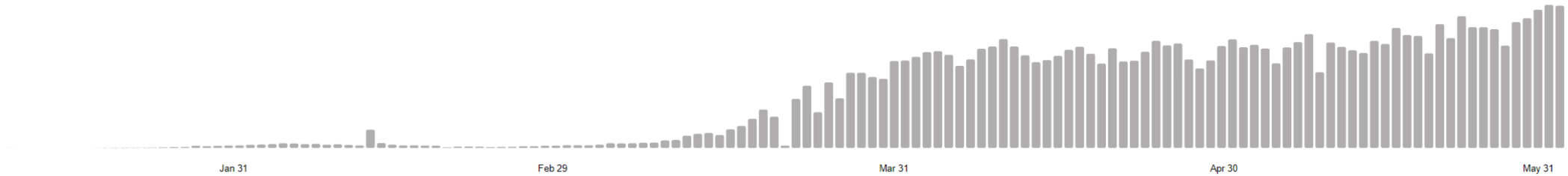
Global Pandemic and Human Tragedies


Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak
COVID-19

Confirmed Cases Over Time

Daily

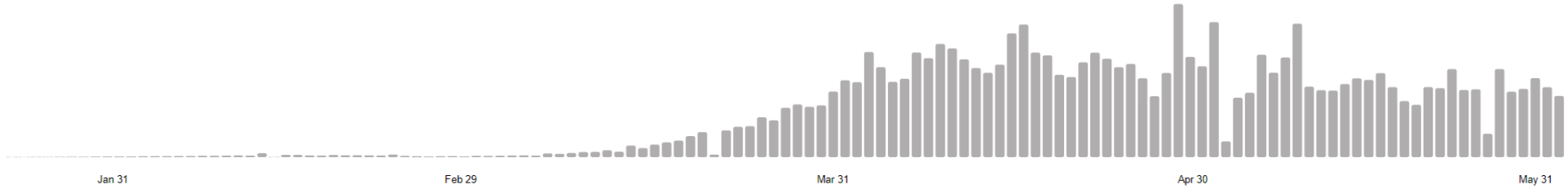
6,140,934
confirmed cases
Source: World Health Organization



Deaths Over Time

Daily

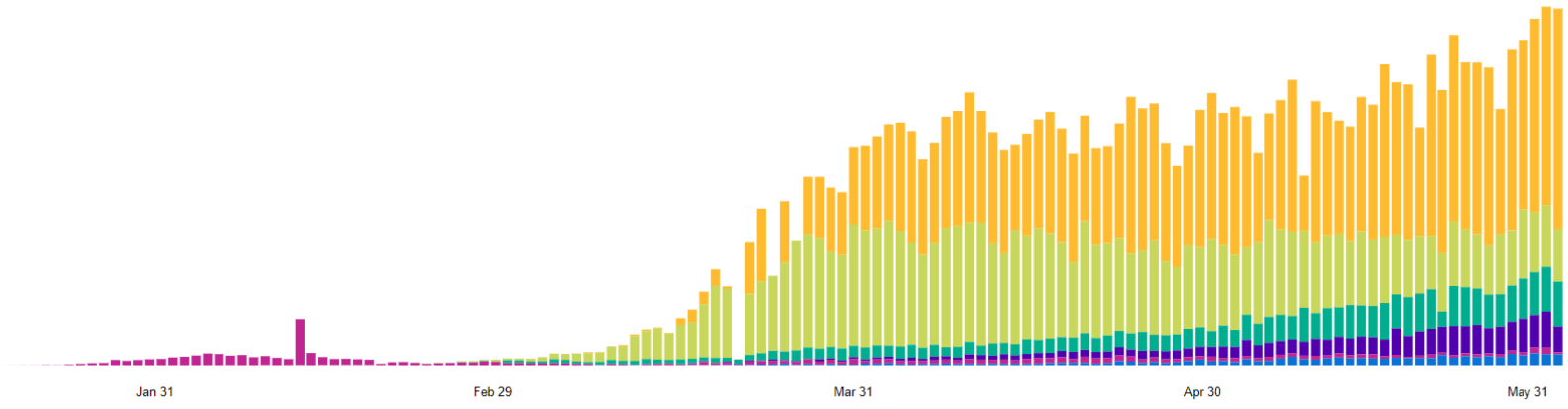
373,548
deaths
Source: World Health Organization



Case Comparison

WHO Regions

Americas	2,879,316 confirmed cases
Europe	2,159,791 confirmed cases
Eastern Mediterranean	536,148 confirmed cases
South-East Asia	272,512 confirmed cases
Western Pacific	184,305 confirmed cases
Africa	108,121 confirmed cases





Covid-19 + Racism
US/Global Community



- On May 25, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, died after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds as he lay face-down, handcuffed. In a now viral video, George Floyd repeatedly tells the officer “I can’t breathe.” before going motionless.
- The news of the death of George Floyd comes in the wake of the killings of Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor; two other unarmed Black individuals whose deaths have drawn public attention and widespread outcry.


EAPOLIS

The George Floyd Incident

- On Thursday, May 25, 2020, George Perry Floyd, an African-American man, was killed in the Powderhorn community of Minneapolis, Minnesota, US.
- While Floyd was handcuffed, lying face down on a city street during an arrest, Derek Chauvin, a white American Minneapolis police officer, kept his knee on the right side of Floyd's neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds.
- According to the criminal complaint against Chauvin, 2 minutes and 53 seconds of that time occurred after Floyd became unresponsive.
- Officers Tou Thao, J. Alexander Kueng, and Thomas K. Lane participated in Floyd's arrest, with Kueng holding Floyd's back, Lane holding his legs, and Thao looking on and preventing intervention by an onlooker as he stood nearby.



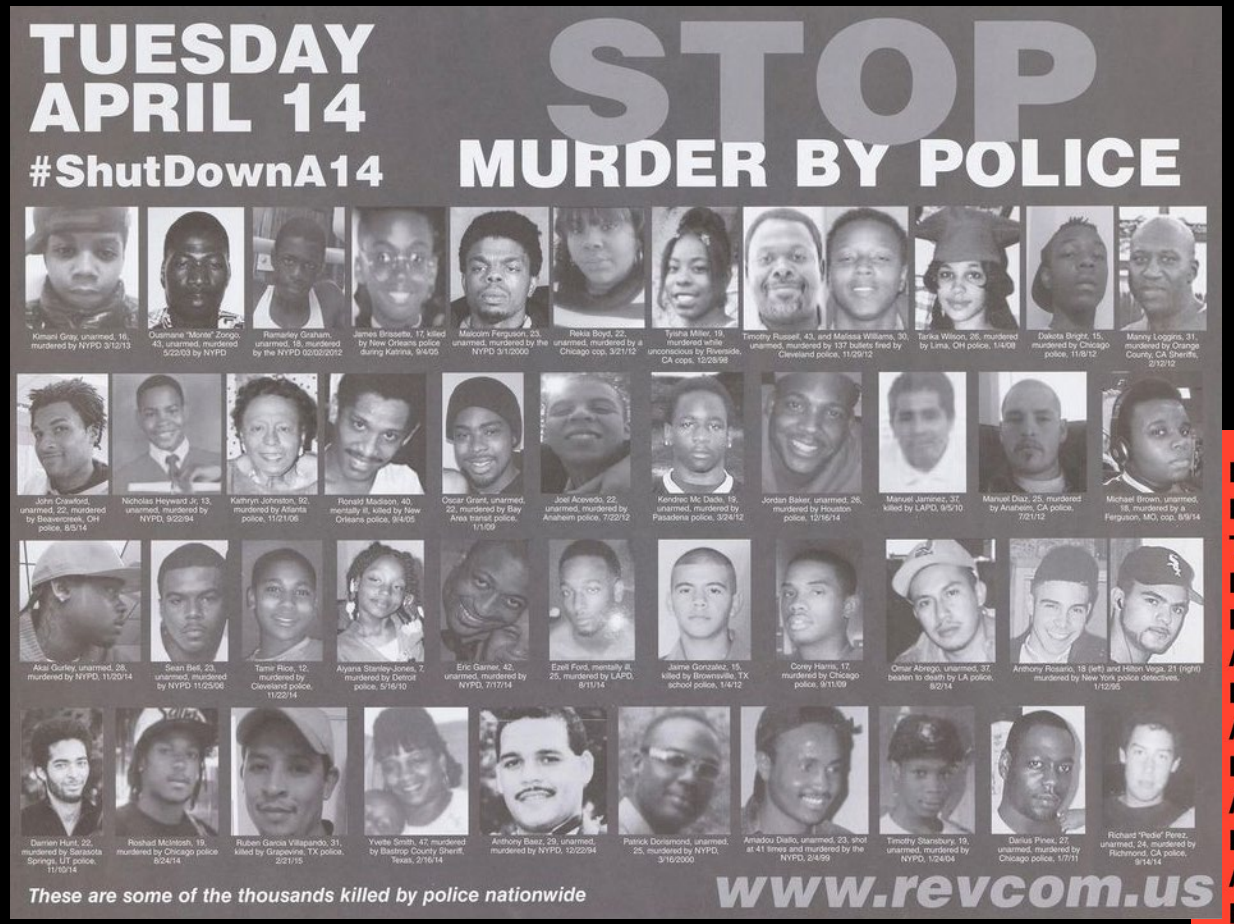
George Floyd's Family's Statement

"We're devastated about the senseless violence that has broken the hearts of our families.

"While we are grateful for the outpouring of love and support, it's important that now – more than ever – we use our voices to enact change, demand accountability within our justice system and keep the legacies of Breonna, Ahmaud and George alive.

"This is a national crisis and our government needs to take immediate and widespread action to protect our black and brown communities."





ERIC GARNER - JOHN CRAWFORD III - MICHAEL BROWN - EZELL FORD
DANTE PARKER - MICHELLE CUSSEAUX - LAQUAN MCDONALD - GEORGE MANN
TANISHA ANDERSON - AKAI GURLEY - TAMIR RICE - RUMAIN BRISBON - JERAME REID
MATTHEW AJIBADE - FRANK SMART - NATASHA MCKENNA - TONY ROBINSON - ANTHONY HILL
MYA HALL - PHILLIP WHITE - ERIC HARRIS - WALTER SCOTT - WILLIAM CHAPMAN II
ALEXIA CHRISTIAN - BRENDON GLENN - VICTOR MANUEL LAROSA - JONATHAN SANDERS
FREDDIE BLUE - JOSEPH MANN - SALVADO ELLSWOOD - SANDRA BLAND
ALBERT JOSEPH DAVIS - DARRIUS STEWART - BILLY RAY DAVIS - SAMUEL DUBOSE
MICHAEL SABBIE - BRIAN KEITH DAY - CHRISTIAN TAYLOR - TROY ROBINSON
ASSHAMS PHAROAH MANLEY - FELIX KUMI - KEITH HARRISON MCLEOD - JUNIOR PROSPER
LAMONTEZ JONES - PATERSON BROWN - DOMINIC HUTCHINSON - ANTHONY ASHFORD
ALONZO SMITH - TYREE CRAWFORD - INDIA KAGER - LA'VANTE BIGGS
MICHAEL LEE MARSHALL - JAMAR CLARK - RICHARD PERKINS - NATHANIEL HARRIS PICKETT
BENNI LEE TIGNOR - MIGUEL ESPINAL - MICHAEL NOEL - KEVIN MATTHEWS - BETTIE JONES
QUINTONIO LEGRIER - KEITH CHILDRESS JR. - JANET WILSON - RANDY NELSON
ANTRONIE SCOTT - WENDELL CELESTINE - DAVID JOSEPH - CALIN ROQUEMORE - DYZHAWN
PERKINS - CHRISTOPHER DAVIS - MARCO LOUD - PETER GAINES - TORREY ROBINSON - DARIUS
ROBINSON - KEVIN HICKS - MARY TRUXILLO - DEMARCUS SEMER - WILLIE TILLMAN
TERRILL THOMAS - SYLVILLE SMITH - ALTON STERLING - PHILANDO CASTILE - TERENCE
CRUTCHER - PAUL O'NEAL - ALTERIA WOODS - JORDAN EDWARDS - AARON BAILEY
RONELL FOSTER - STEPHON CLARK - ANTWON ROSE II - BOTHAM JEAN
PAMELA TURNER - DOMINIQUE CLAYTON - ATATIANA JEFFERSON - CHRISTOPHER WHITFIELD
CHRISTOPHER MCCORVEY - ERIC REASON - MICHAEL LORENZO DEAN - BREONNA TAYLOR
G E O R G E F L O Y D

2. Spectrum of Responses

Reaction to the inhumanity, abuse, murder of George Floyd




NO JUSTICE NO PEACE
BLACK LIVES MATTER
BLACK LIVES MATTER
BLACK LIVES MATTER
WE CANNOT WAIT
I CAN'T BREATHE
43
94


PALKA
PALKA


BLACK
LIVES
MATTER


END
WHITE
SILENCE




ABOLISH
POLICE
US PARK POLICE

3. Core Issue/Bible Principles

Bible/SOP on Race, Racism, Christian Response


Racism

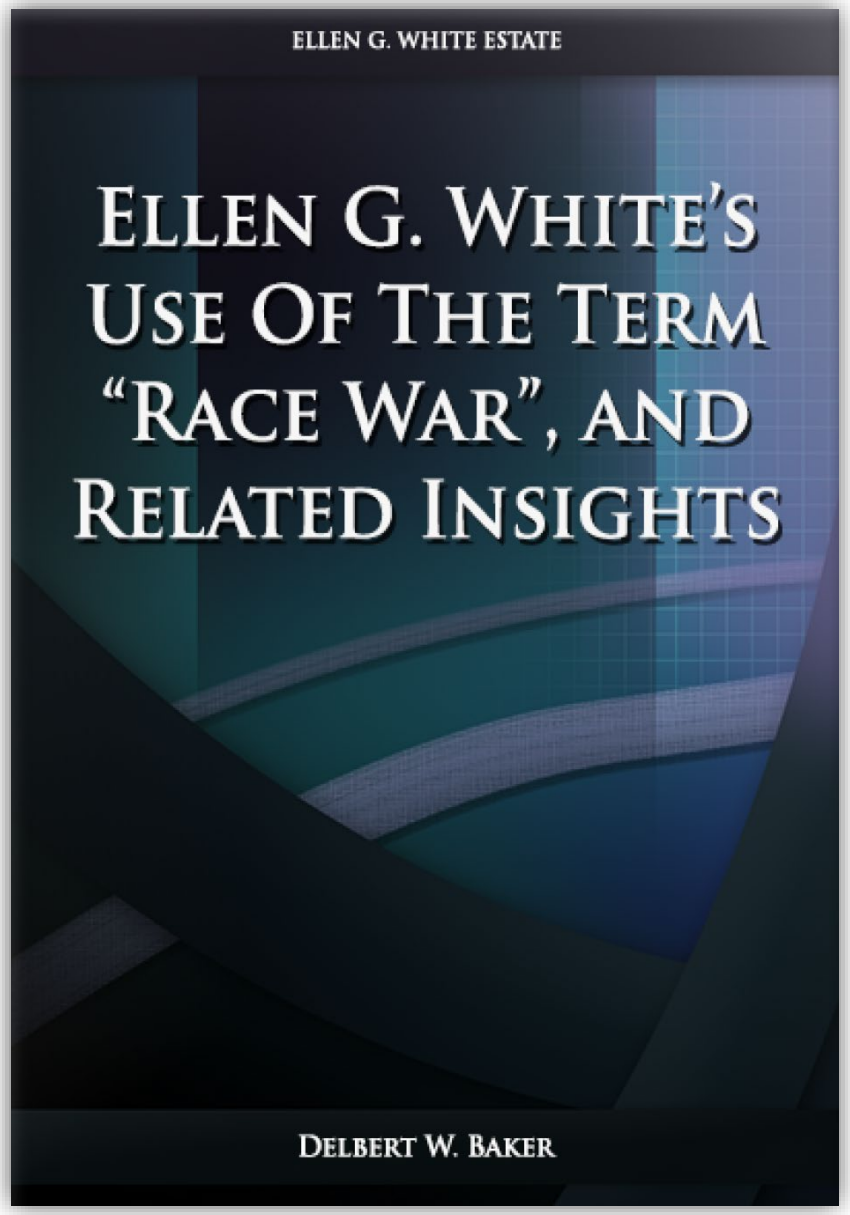

ACT JUSTLY
LOVE MERCY
WALK HUMBLY
MICAH 6:8

Biblical Principles that Validate the Believers Attitude for Justice, Standing for Right, Doing Good and Against Racism and Injustice

The Bible repeatedly advocates for justice, compassion and love by :

1. *Loving* everyone, everywhere made in the image of God (1 Jn. 3:11-15).
2. *Resisting* dominance over others and evil selfishness (Gal. 5:16-24).
3. *Avoiding* mistreating people with power/justice system (Prov. 17:15, 23:10).
4. *Listening*, responding to cries of the mistreated (Deut. 23:14-15; Jas. 5:4).
5. *Exhibiting* repentance, humility, to God, others when wrong (Rom. 6:23).
6. *Obeying* the command to "'open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land'" (Deut. 15:11).
7. *Accepting* Christ's call to serve as ambassadors who actively advocate, though Christ working for us all to "be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

"May AUA and all believers be faithful to these principles wherever we are."



The following references highlight that race relations has historically been a area of tensions in the US.

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B. Ellen White's usage of the term "slavery" was given different connotations and meanings according to the particular context in which it was used. xxxii
C. The prediction concerning "race war" was fulfilled, but like other statements by Ellen White, it has continuing application. xxxii
D. Ellen White saw the race question as being a matter of continual potential sensitivity, and hence there would always be a need for concern and balance in dealing with it. xxxiii
E. Slavery, prejudice, and all of their resultant evils were viewed by Ellen White as originating with Satan, and she saw that the only true antidote is acceptance of the Spirit of Christ, and genuine conversion. xxxiv
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Masterly Authority Over…



At the turn of the dawn of the 20th century White insightfully observed:

"The desire to show their [whites] masterly authority over the blacks is still burning in the hearts of many who claim to be Christians, but whose lives declare that they are standing under the black banner of the great apostate.

"When the whites commit crimes, they are often allowed to go uncondemned, while for the same transgressions the blacks...are treated worse than the brutes.

"The demon of passion is let loose, and all the suffering that can be devised is instituted against them. Will not God judge for these things? As surely as the whites have brought their inhuman cruelty to bear upon the negroes, so surely will God's vengeance fall upon them."

Ellen White, Letter 99, 1899, June 10, 1899 (brackets added).



Ellen White's "Race War" Statement

Interview 1907

These statements made by Ellen White in 1907 were fulfilled within an approximate fifteen-year period after she made them. However, like numerous predictions she made, there is room for yet future applications as well. Hence, the fulfillment of these predictions were historically valid yet they intimate possible further applications.

(See Ellen White's use of the Term "Race Wars" in Ellen White Estate Monogram on same subject.)

"I knew that this very race war would be introduced." *and*

"There will be slavery just as verily as it has been, only upon a basis that is more favorable and secure to the white people."

Race Relations: A Perplexing Problem



In 1895 Ellen White, speaking in her day to the existing sentiments of systemic racism and prejudice, when she said:

> "Judges and jurors, lawyers and citizens would, if they had a chance, bring decisions which would bind about them rites which would cause much suffering, not only to the ones whom they term guilty of breaking the laws of their state, but all the colored people everywhere would be placed in a position of surveillance, and under cruel treatment by the white people, that would be no less than slavery."
>
> *Ellen White, The Southern Work*, pages 72, 73.

In 1909, during the period of "race war" in the US, Ellen White wrote concerning relations between Whites and Blacks (*Testimonies, volume 9*):

> "The relation of the two races has been a matter hard to deal with, and I fear that it will ever remain a most perplexing problem" (page 214).



"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



Beloved, let us love one another



No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

— Nelson Mandela —

AZ QUOTES

4. World Leaders Speak Out

Statement of Conviction: How Should We Then Act

(Following statements made from May 26 to June 1)

A Pastoral Letter and Appeal from the SDA World Church President, Pastor Ted NC Wilson



“During these past weeks, we have had such unusual situations around the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has destroyed many lives and disrupted daily life worldwide as we know it…. Violence and hared continue to exhibit themselves in unconverted hearts…

“On a worldwide basis, human relations have become frayed and interpersonal understanding undermined by bigotry, anger, and frustration. Recently, various events have led to anger and death against unarmed African-Americans, culminating with the horrific, senseless, brutal death of a handcuffed, unarmed African-American by a police officer. Senseless acts like this can take place in various situations around the world. Those perpetrating such reprehensible treatment of fellow human beings must be held responsible according to established laws.

“The cycle of hatred and brutality must cease. However, this will happen only when people submit their lives and actions to God. All Seventh-day Adventists worldwide are urged to earnestly pray for families who have lost loved ones in malicious killings, as well as from natural disasters, COVID-19, and more. Let us seek to bring peace and healing to broken hearts and fragmented communities.”

NAD Response to Recent Deaths and Racial Turmoil in U.S.

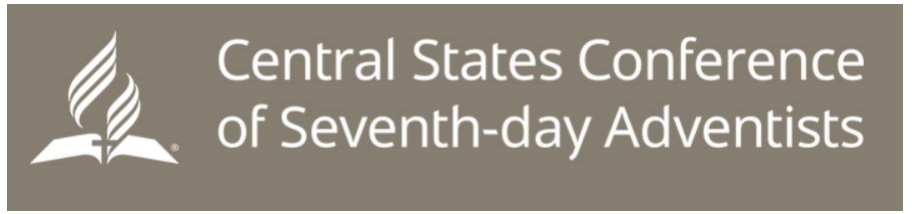
Seventh-day Adventist® Church
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America is responding to the tragic killings of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia, Breonna Taylor in Kentucky, George Floyd in Minnesota, and other recent events that clearly document the racial divide destroying the quality of life for so many and the very fabric of our democratic society. As Christians we condemn such actions of hate and violence and call for justice to be served for the victims and their families.

Walls of separation that serve to destroy the essential rights of human dignity, self-worth, and freedom have been built up. These rights are required for all Americans to live and thrive in their local communities. Some of those who have been trusted to protect all members of society have broken their solemn pact to serve others; especially those in need. Americans should never have to live in fear of going out in public just because of the color of their skin or their ethnicity. We can and must do better.

We urge all our church members to prayerfully consider how they interact with everyone in their communities. We ask you to speak out against injustice and hatred, just as Jesus did when He was on this earth. We can make a difference for those who are marginalized and betrayed by others, and we must provide a forum for the voices of the victims of hatred and racism. Our actions can speak louder than words. We can lead by example in how we treat others and demand that all people be treated equally and fairly.

Central States Conference of SDA, Kansas City, Kansas

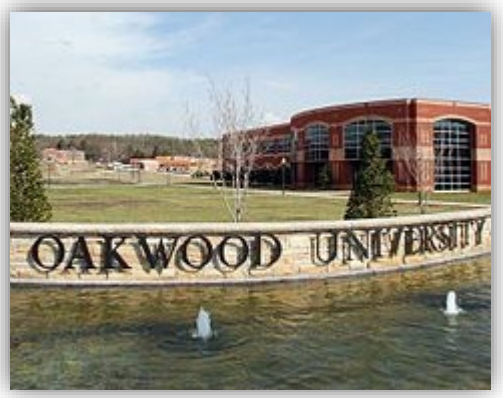


We, the Central States Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, are deeply saddened, angered, and horrified by the tragic death of George Floyd, at the hands of Minneapolis Police Officers on Monday May 25, 2020. We are thankful to the Minneapolis Police Department for their swift termination of the police officers involved in this tragedy. We would like to see justice legally served that is equal to the crime perpetrated against George Floyd.

As a Seventh-day Adventist Conference that oversees churches and members in the Minneapolis, Minnesota area, we fully support any and all non-violent protests, boycotts, and public pressure necessary to achieve justice for George Floyd.

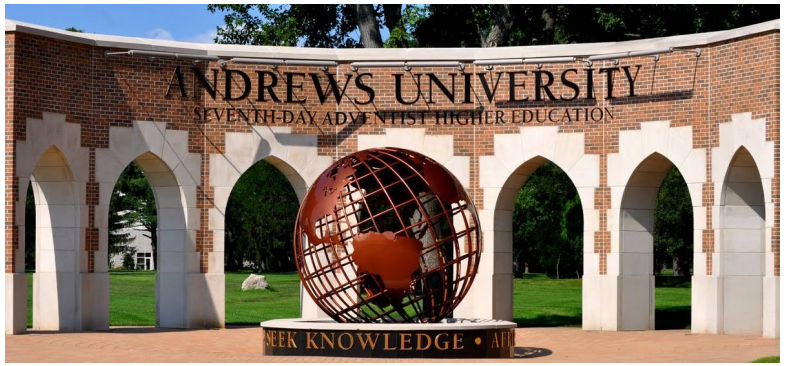
As people of the Word, who believe in not only talking about God's love but demonstrating God's love, Isaiah 1:17 admonishes us to "Learn to do good; Seek justice; Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow." The wise man Solomon in Proverbs 18:5 reiterates "It is not right to acquit the guilty or deny justice to the innocent." (Minneapolis, Minnesota Is located within the territory of this SDA Regional Conference.)

Oakwood University, Huntsville, Alabama



- *On May 31, 2020, Oakwood University president Leslie Pollard wrote the following letter to the school's community following the death of George Floyd. Oakwood University is an historically Black Seventh-day Adventist school in Huntsville, Alabama, United States.—AR Editors*
- Since I first shared my feelings about recent events in our nation on last Thursday morning [May 28, 2020] during the Inside Oakwood radio segment, I have continued to reflect on the tragic circumstances that led to the death of Mr. George Floyd. The only words and emotions that come to mind are anger, outrage, and exhaustion. Exhaustion — because we can only wonder how long we will as Black people have to grapple with the incessant devaluation of Black lives.
- Anger, because on a personal note I am angry at the relentless psychological and physical assaults upon people of color. Yes, I am angry — the one emotion that is used by society to stereotypically dismiss the voices of "angry black men" and "angry black women." I am angry about Mr. Floyd's murder. And I'm outraged when I feel forever doomed to wonder whether black young men will survive a routine traffic stop. I'm outraged, wondering whether young Black women will be safe in their own homes — or strolling through Central Park. It is almost impossible to be an African - American and not have, or to not know someone who has had negative encounters involving race — everything from being followed in stores, to being pulled over while driving a luxury car, or driving in a certain area, to being ignored in department stores because you don't fit the wealth profile of other patrons...and the list goes on.
- But in the wake of Mr. Floyd's unnecessary and senseless death, I am also determined. I am determined that the Oakwood community will continue to be a center of empowerment and witness to the lives and work of a generation of student standard bearers. Students who will, in the words of Jesus love "the least of these" (Mat. 25:40).

Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan



No excuses. Treating a person as less of a human because of skin-color (or social class, gender, job description, education, etc.) is wrong, a sin in the eyes of God. Likewise inexcusable is a Seventh-day Adventist Christian observing such acts and turning away, thinking this doesn't concern me (like the priest or Levite of Lk 10:30-32), is not a major problem, or that I am not a part of it.

Anyone who carries the love of God in their heart is grieving this week as we learn of new acts of violence and prejudice against our black brothers and sisters, which evidence the perpetuation of the long and deeply grounded history of racial injustice in North America. Every individual on this earth, is created in the image of God, and is our neighbor whom we are commanded to treat with love and respect. No one should have to wonder if they are safe in stepping out of their house.

Real love turns recognition and grieving into Christ-founded action. God's kind of love means we will connect with our brothers and sisters and seek to understand life through their eyes. It means allowing God to reveal our own erroneous hidden assumptions and misconceptions and attitudes, and repenting of them. It means speaking out when we witness an act of injustice. It means caring enough to act with compassion and do what is in our power to stop these things from happening.

We have visited enough countries in the world to know that because of our sinful nature, every society has groups they unjustly marginalize, whom culture has cultivated in us through stereotypes and false myths, to believe from the time we are born are somehow less than us and deserving of being treated as such. Thus we are all implicated. God help us each to put His kind of love into practice today.

Statement of the Chairperson following the murder of George Floyd in the USA

29 May 2020, Addis Ababa: The Chairperson of the African Union Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat strongly condemns the murder of George Floyd that occurred in the United States of America at the hands of law enforcement officers, and wishes to extend his deepest condolences to his family and loved ones.

Recalling the historic Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) Resolution on Racial Discrimination in the United States of America made by African Heads of State and Government, at the OAU's First Assembly Meeting held in Cairo, Egypt from 17 to 24 July 1964, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission firmly reaffirms and reiterates the African Union's rejection of the continuing discriminatory practices against Black citizens of the United States of America.

He further urges the authorities in the United States of America to intensify their efforts to ensure the total elimination of all forms of discrimination based on race or ethnic origin.

Issued by: The Spokesperson of the Chairperson of the Commission, Ebba Kalondo

U.S. Embassies in Africa Condemn George Floyd Murder



The ambassador to Congo, Mike Hammer, highlighted a tweet from a local media entrepreneur who addressed him saying, “Dear ambassador, your country is shameful. Proud America, which went through everything from segregation to the election of Barack Obama, still hasn’t conquered the demons of racism. How many black people must be killed by white police officers before authorities react seriously?”

The ambassador’s response, in French: “I am profoundly troubled by the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. The Justice Department is conducting a full criminal investigation as a top priority. Security forces around the world should be held accountable. No one is above the law.”

Similar statements were tweeted by the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Uganda, while the embassies in Tanzania and Kenya tweeted a joint statement from the Department of Justice office in Minnesota on the investigation.

5. My Response—My Voice

After hearing the response of others, what is My Response?

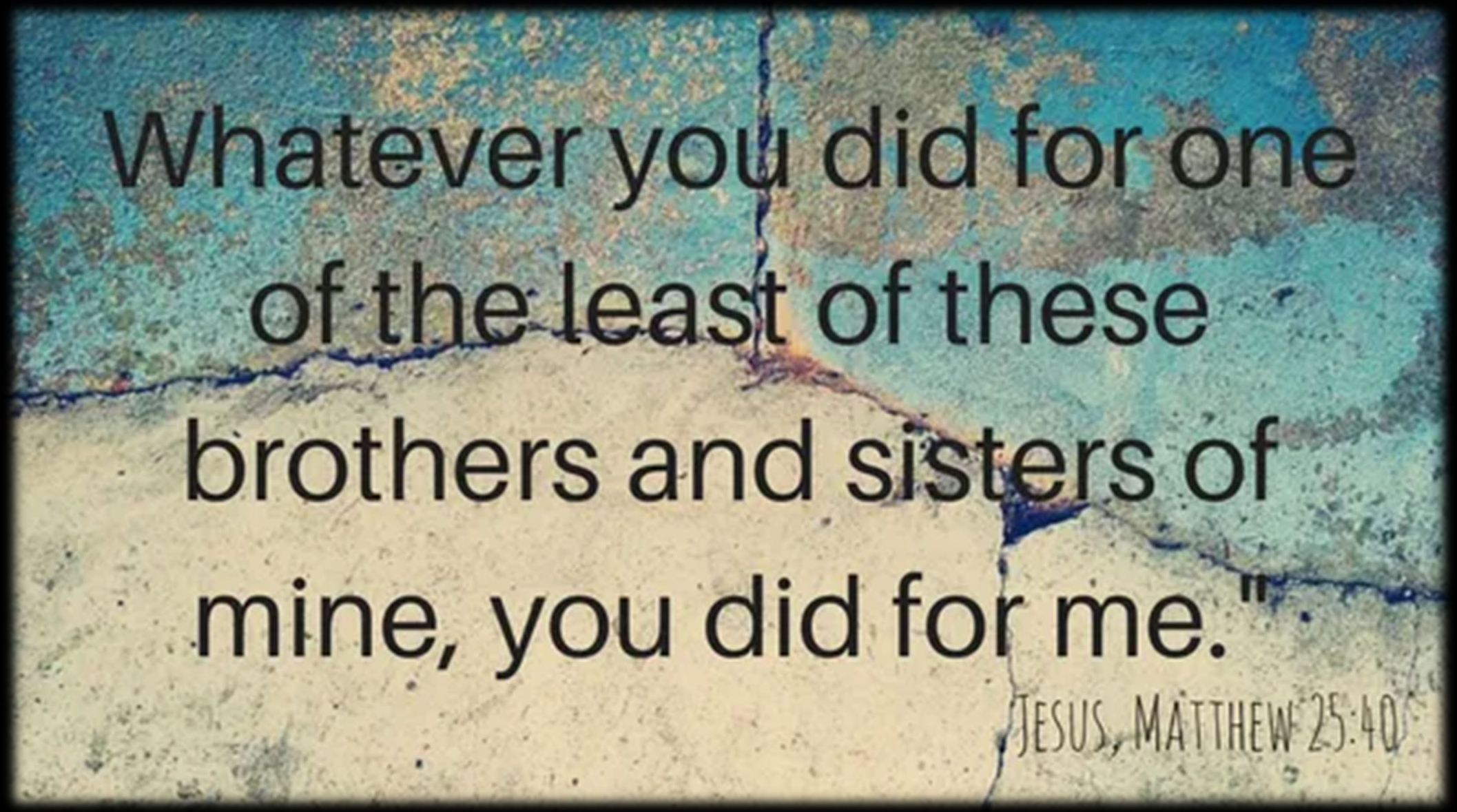

YOUR
VOICE
makes a
difference

YES, It's always "*The other Guy*". . .

. . . until ***IT'S YOU!***

As we listen to and are tempted to repeat the rhetoric about immigrants, people of other races, religions, or those in any way different from ourselves, I pray that we remember, reflect upon and consider the wisdom of these words:

First they came for the Jews
and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for the Communists
and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist.
Then they came for the trade unionists
and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for me
and there was no one left to speak out for me.
- Niemöller -


Whatever you did for one
of the least of these
brothers and sisters of
mine, you did for me."
JESUS, MATTHEW 25:40

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