



## Welborn Baptist Foundation

*Cultivating Communities that Flourish*

### *What to say?*

I've put my fingers to the keyboard numerous times over the past few weeks, hoping and praying for inspiration to flow...for some words of encouragement or hope or challenge to share...or some articulate acknowledgment of the painfully obvious reality that we find ourselves in as a country.

And, nothing.

As if trying to pull words from a void within me I'm reaching inside to find some rationale, some reason, some explanation, some something. I grasp for understanding but it's not there. Experience flows through my fingers like water that I cannot hold. And reason can't be pulled out because it's not there--in the void.

Because I'm white.

I think white and experience white and see white. My reality, what's real for me, might include some level of the knowledge of the history, or the systems, or the challenges of Black America—just barely.

But my reality is white reality. Black reality is not my reality. White *real* is not black *real*.

What is real for Black America? In addition to the evil racism and violence towards blacks we see readily in the media I could quote the statistics that demonstrate the gross disparities and inequities in access to high-quality early learning, educational attainment, income levels, wealth accumulation, incarceration rates, decent affordable housing, infant mortality, workplace mobility, and...the list goes on. You can Google the stats. Real numbers representing real issues affecting real people. Black people.

### *What to do?*

I've asked some of my black friends and neighbors that very question. I'm doing my best to listen, trying to understand their experience—their reality. Here is some of what they shared:

-“It's been 400 years – my friend is tired. “My granddaughter is scared” – he cried telling me. “What will it take”? – she's looking for answers. “Learn” – she's saying this is not new news. “Get informed” – he's saying we own what we know, or don't. “Share what you learn” – advocate. “Speak out for justice, equity, and equality” – make the change you want to see. “Vote” - vote. “Teach your kids” – change our culture. “Change systems” – sustain the change. “Empathize” – it's the closest white people can get to experiencing what is real for black people. “Love people” – love is the outward expression of the internal REALity in our hearts, good intentions are not. Please do something.

Intentional learning is one of our cultural values at the Welborn Baptist Foundation. We are committed to listen, learn, and better understand the racial inequities that shape the reality of the black community. And we invite those learnings to shape who we are and the work we do as we pursue our vision to see Communities Flourishing with the well-being, abundance, and peace that God desires.

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