

The Pandemic Creates A Need For The Bigger Purpose

by Derrick Richardson
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ALTON - How do we move forward? We move forward by being part of a *Bigger Purpose*. The pandemic and race relations have given us a lot to reflect on in 2020. We are trapped in history only if we fail to learn from it. Most people don't like change, even if it's what they need the most. It may be a struggle to get through this, but we can do it. We must go beyond the boundary of how we define and understand each other. We need to lead with our heart and mind and treat each other with respect, regardless of race, religion, political views, social status, or any other artificial criteria. The human factor should be our highest priority.

In some courtrooms, you will see quotes like, "Find Truth, Seek Justice". Finding the truth means finding the facts and evidence. We discover the truth by educating ourselves and learning information we didn't know before. The proper and appropriate justice is served when it is based off the truth. People seek justice by many routes, and some people have their own idea of what justice should be. It is not fair to decide the fate of people without the truth. The purpose of justice is to provide fair treatment to each individual, without exception, in regard to their personal rights. The truth is that racism is everywhere, so let's live in truth and make the future better. We don't do humanity justice when we treat others unfairly based on what we don't know, don't understand, or want to accept.

There is a big difference between peaceful protesting and what is rioting and vandalism. The meanings are not synonymous, the words are not interchangeable. Rioting and vandalism are not acceptable in any situation by any group of people. Often, they are labeled as the same thing to fit a narrative or a perception that it is the same people because they have the same skin color. The character, integrity, motives, agenda, and intentions of those doing peaceful protesting are different from those are doing the rioting and vandalizing. Hence, they are not the same people.

There is such a thing as innocent ignorance and so many of us are guilty of that. White people are not black. White people will never know what it is like to be black. Some white people are not phased or care about how black people are treated because it will never affect them. Some white people have never had to deal with racism based on their skin color. We must learn from each other on what makes us different so that we can understand, respect, and appreciate each other.

The lyrics below are from a song called, "*The Bigger Picture*". It says a lot about what society is dealing with and how society should move forward:

"Every colored person is not dumb and all whites are not racist

We should be judging with the mind and heart

*It's bigger than black and white
It's a problem with the whole way of life
It can't change overnight
But we got to start somewhere
Might as well go ahead and start here
We all have had a hell of a year
I'm going to make it count while I'm here
God is the only one I fear”*

Derrick D. Richardson, Author

Pettigrew, N., Section 8, Lil Baby (2020). *The Bigger Picture*. A Single. Universal Music Group.