

Hour of Power Deutschland
Steinerne Furt 78
86167 Augsburg

Telefon: 08 21 / 420 96 96
Telefax: 08 21 / 420 96 97

E-Mail: info@hourofpower.de
www.hourofpower.de

Baden-Württembergische Bank
BLZ: 600 501 01
Konto: 28 94 829

BAN:
DE43600501010002894829

BIC:
SOLADEST600

Büro Schweiz:

Hour of Power Schweiz
Seestr. 11
3594 Güttingen
Tel.: 071 690 07 81
info@hourofpower-schweiz.ch
www.hourofpower-schweiz.ch

Spendenkonto:

PostFinance AG, 3030 Bern
Konto: 61-18359-6
BAN:
CH1609000000610183596

Hour of Power, 19.07.2020

GOOD MORNING/INVOCATION – Bobby & Hannah

BS: This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. Hello.
HS: And welcome visitors and welcome church family. Thank you for joining us. You know, our world is in a heavy place right now, but we are a people of hope; hope that we can bring God's kingdom of love and justice here and now. And I hope you don't mind this morning I felt it on my heart to pray over you, to pray the Holy Spirit would refresh you and strengthen you. So if you would join me right now. Lord Father, we come before you and we say Holy Spirit, we are hungry for you. Holy Spirit, we are so hungry for you. I ask that every person who could hear my voice right now would be filled with the fullness of you. Lord Father, open our eyes to see. Give us ears to hear, hearts to understand. Help us to release our faith into the world. Give us the power to be people of great faith, people of great hope and people of great love, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.
Turn around to the person next to you and say God loves you and so do I.

SCRIPTURE – Colossians 3:11-15 – Hannah Schuller

HS: In preparation for the message, Colossians 3:11-15:
Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.
Church family, we are just that – a spiritual family. Titles or skin color have no relevance here, for the powerful love of Christ bonds our hearts together and cannot be overcome. Amen.

INTERVIEW – DARRYL STRAWBERRY

{VOICE OVER: Darryl Strawberry is a former professional baseball player whose career spanned over two decades. After his career, he dealt with some hardships in life that ultimately led him to surrendering his life to the Lord. He and his wife, Tracy, created Finding Your Way Ministries, an organization that helps people restore their faith and create lasting change in their communities. Please welcome, Darryl Strawberry!}

BS: It's such a cool thing to have you here for me. I watched you playing baseball in high school when I was in high school; like you were so great. You had that Ted Williams kind of swing and you were an amazing baseball player for so many people, such a catchy name, too. And it's so great to know your story, and I want people to hear it, too, about how you came to faith. We got to meet at a Kingdom Men's Conference in Los Angeles a couple years ago, and it was such a great thing to meet you. But welcome, we're so glad to have you here!

DS: It's great to be here, even though we sit in these challenging times in our country, and God is asked and God will always be the answer, and there's some circumstances that are really going on in our country today from the pandemic and the racial issues and Black Lives Matter and all that we've been through, and prayer is the answer to all supplication. We need to pray. The Body of Christ and Christians, we need to pray, we need a makeover, I would call it in this country to change things, and we can't wait for government to change. Christians has to change things and we have to speak the gospel, we have to preach the gospel. It's the gospel that's going to change people. Let's not water down the gospel like it's been and people are not able to get well on the inside, so we need to speak light as it comes through the word of God.

Children of Abraham

BS: Amen, well that's one of the main reasons I wanted you here today, Darryl, is to speak to that issue and to give everybody some hope. I think people need to hear that things can get better in this country, especially when it comes to the racial divides and all of the tension and stuff that we're facing. But before we get to that, I want people to know your story because a lot of people know your public life in baseball, but I don't know how many people.. of course you travel and speak, you're an evangelist, a motivational speaker. You do these kinds of things. But you had an amazing story. Can you tell people about how you came to faith and what happened in baseball and all of that?

DS: I came through faith through my broken pieces of my life, like most of us: lost in sin and separated from God, believing all these earthly things are great but they're really not at the end of the day. The Bible makes it clear: my people perish because of lack of knowledge. There's no knowledge and understanding of God's word and I think that's why I was perishing so much in my lifetime, separated from God. Broken, come from a raging alcoholic family, my dad, and he said I was nothing, rejected me and beat me and my brother and left us scarred. I always tell people I was already broken before I ever put the uniform on. My pain led me to my greatness, but my greatness would eventually lead me to my destructive behavior, because if you don't get well on the inside, it's going to lead to destructive behavior. And you look in the society like I was growing up back younger, too, it's the same as it is today. Lawlessness brings about brokenness and if you don't get well on the inside, it doesn't matter what you have on the outside. Jesus is the only one that can heal you and make you complete on the inside. He's the deliverer of all things, whatever it may be: hatred, whatever it may be. Hatred comes from living in sin. Sin is separation from God. And I was the same way. I was so separated from God, and I went on to play major league baseball for 17 years and achieve all these great things. And yes, I've been privileged and lived behind community gates, but that didn't make me a man. What made me a man was coming to meet Jesus and having a personal relationship and having a transformation like I would call it a makeover that we all need in this country today is a makeover, a transformation from Jesus Christ changes everything about who you are and what you see, so this is what we're dealing with right now.

BS: That's awesome. Well and also too, you said you live in gated communities and you've been very successful and prosperous in your life, but it wasn't always that way. I mean you're local from Los Angeles, you grew up in Crenshaw, and I'm sure that had to have your experience with the police, I'm sure a lot of is different in Crenshaw than it is for example here in Irvine. I imagine that you must have faced.. have you in your life when you see some of these videos like we saw of George Floyd, Ahmad Avery and some of the others that we've been seeing recently and in the past, does this drum up any memories for you? Have you had experiences where you felt like you were being profiled or had run in's with the police that you thought were unfair?

DS: No question about it because of my age, young and black and living in those areas, coming from those areas and being successful early. It was early in my career, living in South Central still and driving a big car, stuff like that, and being profiled by police officers, police brutality is real. They harass you and they say all kind of things – what are you doing driving a car like this? How could you afford to drive a car like this and once I turn my license over to them, they realize that okay, he's Darryl Strawberry, he's a baseball player, major league baseball player. So you have a slap on the wrist there, but the average person don't get that, and that's unfair. We see people different and police officers see African Americans different and they don't see them as human beings, and we need to get to that place where everybody has to be seen the same, no matter who you are, no matter where you come from, no matter how successful you are of color and we need to understand that, and I think that's what the country is fighting for. That's what protesting is all about. There's nothing wrong with peaceful protests. Yes I've experienced some of these things with the police officers, but I'm not here about me today, I'm here about all that have lost their lives, unacceptable. It's just unacceptable that we sit here as people and accept that. We have to do something different. We have to speak out and have a voice, and I think today they're having a loud voice.

BS: Do you have a word of encouragement for those in our black community who are Americans who are watching now that are just feeling so discouraged and frustrated and don't know what to do, maybe hopeless. What would you say to those folks that are watching?

DS: I just really want to encourage the black community and all across the globe wherever you may be that God loves you and Jesus is the answer, He's the way. John 14:6 Jesus said "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes through the Father except through me." We're trying to go all these other different ways and He is the way.

Children of Abraham

He went to the tomb, He hung on the cross and He went to the tomb and He got up and He was resurrected and He was resurrected with all power for all of us so that we can have life and may have it more abundantly. But He also tells us in that John 10:10 about the enemy. He said "a thief does not come except to steal, kill and destroy. I have come that you may have life and may have it more abundantly." He's talking about a great life for you. All you got to do is enter in with Him and accept Him as Lord over your life. You can't hang on the outside and want things to change if you don't know and have a personal relationship with Jesus. Because what has to change is the heart of the man, and God's looking at the heart of a man that He loves to change. I don't care what kind of broken pieces you may have and struggles you may have, God will change your heart. He did it for me, He did it for many more, and He will do it for you, too.

BS: I love the light and the power that you have for God in you. I think it's an encouragement to so many people, not just African Americans, but anybody who's struggling with drugs or hopelessness, that Darryl Strawberry, you're an example of someone who can turn things around. What encouragement would you give to the church? One of the things I hear from so many people who feel.. I think everybody's feeling this more now than ever. Maybe its COVID-19, we don't have work to distract us and entertainment, but so many people are feeling like what can I do? But I think even the bigger question, since we have so many Christians watching, what can the church do to make a difference and stand on behalf of people who are hurting and bring peace to our country?

DS: Well it's time for the church to really embrace and show love and concern and not look at the color of people's skin, and hug and love someone, and listen, and have conversations, real conversations with other people that is not of your color and don't pull back. It's time that we come together as the body of Christ. Christ isn't coming back for color, He's coming back for a church. The reason why He's not appeared yet because the church is not ready. It's up to us to make the right decisions to love people, no matter what their conditions are, no matter amount of work that they're struggles are, and we have to always remember that. And see we as the church, that Romans 12:2 says "and do not be conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of the mind." We have to have a renewing of our mindset to love and meet people's needs and help people, and do all that you can do because there's lot of us that have plenty, so go and give back. Go back to areas that you never imagined yourself just to be a part of and says you know what? God loved me and He blessed me and restored me, and I just want to show you God love. We as the body of Christ, we got to be able to show people God love. We got to stop talking about it, and we got to preach the gospel, and we can't water the gospel down and tell people not to repent and get out of sin. We got to tell people how to live abundant life. They're not getting to the place of living abundant life, and that's why they fall off and they don't stay with Christ because they have not been empowered on the inside. It's a look on the outside what we look like, and we got to get past the look, Pastor Bobby.

BS: Darryl Strawberry, thank you so much for your encouraging words. I know you have so much going on, but to take the time to be with us in church today, to gather with us, I know it means so much and thank you for being here. It's interesting to look, we have audiences in Germany, Netherlands, Australia, China, different places, and there are people standing in solidarity in those places with black Americans today, too, which I think is really cool. And anyway, we just appreciate you speaking to us, and thank you so much for being here, for your testimony.

DS: Well thank you so much. Thanks for having me, and we win when we stand together.

BS: Amen. That's a great line to finish on. Darryl Strawberry, thank you so much. God bless you.

DS: God bless you, Pastor Bobby. Thank you for having me.

DECLARATION – Bobby Schuller

BS: I want to invite you to stand. Hold your hands out like this as a way of receiving from the Lord. Let's say this together: I'm not what I do. I'm not what I have. I'm not what people say about me. I am the beloved of God. It's who I am. No one can take it from me. I don't have to worry, I don't have to hurry, I can trust my friend Jesus and share His love with the world. Amen!

MESSAGE/PRAYER – Bobby Schuller "Children of Abraham"

This has been a very hard week for a lot of people. I'm sure it's been hard for police. It's been hard for everyday Americans, but it's especially been hard for the black community. Today I'm preaching a sermon called Children of Abraham. We're in a series on names. And this is what God calls you. If you believe in Jesus Christ, this is what God calls you.

Children of Abraham

And of course this last week, our whole country has continued on the tails of COVID-19 to see anarchy and protests and anger on one hand, and then on the other side, peace, encouragement, growth. But before I get into my sermon, I want to show you this video that a filmmaker, who's a Christian, named Nathan Presley made and I think it'll help us get in the right mindset for the sermon I'm about to give. You can watch this video here: <https://youtu.be/rW00DQDj2KQ>

What did you feel when you saw the George Floyd death? I'm sure you felt what almost all of us felt. You see a poor man, an American, a Christian being bullied, carelessly, nonchalantly being murdered. Whatever you felt and whatever I felt, if you're not black, it was probably ten percent of what our black brothers and sisters felt when they saw that. Maybe not even that. That's not an accusation. I've come to realize that I'm out of touch and I think so many of us are with the feelings and the plight of so many people of color in this country.

There'd been, especially in 2016, many videos like this, just as bad, just as evil, just as horrible. When this one dropped, though, people wondered why hasn't that officer been arrested? Why hasn't he been written up? Finally he was arrested, but then the other three. Why weren't they arrested? And finally they were arrested, but still these protests happened all over the nation.

And a lot of people want to point out the looting. There's all this looting and taking and that's terrible, that's horrible, but there were also these peaceful protests. In fact we had one by our home where we had hundreds of people coming up the street near our house, singing, many of them Bible believing, Jesus loving Christians. Many of them who are trying to understand better the difficulties that our African American brothers and sisters and people of color face.

And then I remember as there was sort of some looters, many of whom, if not most of whom seem to be white for some reason. There were these bricks showing up everywhere and all sorts of conspiracy theories circulating around that. We also had a lot of really good people, and a lot of really good stories of good cops and good protesters praying, singing, asking God when will this end! One of my favorite encounters like that was when George Floyd's brother said to the looters my brother wouldn't want this. He loved this city! He loved his life here. He had a great job. He had a great church. He wouldn't want this. Put down your weapons.

When I saw George Floyd killed and I learned more about the story, I didn't just see a guy being killed by police officers, I saw an American, a son of liberty, and I saw a Christian, a child of God. That's how you hold a Bible, huh? With your church. Hold it up high, hold it up proud. That's a man who I'm sure was flawed like me, like you, but a man who loved the Lord. A man who a lot like probably Darryl Strawberry was working on getting his life back together.

For those of you who are mothers, what did you feel when that forty something year old man who was dying said mama? Many say that it was a call to all mothers to protect our boys well.

One of the big questions I ask is why was this one so big? Why was this one so big? And it's obvious, isn't it? It's obvious. We've been in lockdown for two and a half months, and we have all these coping mechanisms that we can go to when something bad happens. We have our parks and our restaurants and our social gatherings and our churches! And we have all these places we can go and we have to work and we've got bills to pay and things to do.

But there is something and maybe we can call this a very thin silver lining of COVID-19 but something about being sheltered in place has caused all of us to examine our demons. Not just this race issue, but everything. And I think because of that, we as a nation, I think, I think this will be a change. I think this will be different. I sure hope it is because I don't think anybody wants to see something like that ever again. And I believe that the church needs to lead the way to show people and show in the way we gather and in the way we worship and the way we preach that we are a church that condemns racism. I feel so vapid, doesn't it? I mean it feels like everybody says that. That we would be a church that shows that the people of God look different, come from different places, but we are family. We are kin! We're kin. When Jesus came, the core of Jesus' message was the proclamation of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God means that what God wants is happening. And the presence of this kingdom is supposed to be mostly manifested in the church, and it is. It is. God is doing this in the church. God is doing good work, the work of hope, the work of reconciliation, the work of love and goodness. He's doing it in the church.

But it's so interesting to think that when the church came on the scene, I mean racism is not an American thing. Racism is a global historic thing. It's always existed, and without the church, it will continue to exist. It's interesting because when you look at the birth of the church, you had these little pockets of people in a world that frankly was a lot bigger than ours. I mean most people when they were born didn't leave more than 14 miles from the place they were born in Jesus' day.

Children of Abraham

You had whole bodies of people who had never even heard of each other; major world powers that didn't even know one another existed. And it was into this world that Jesus came, and He built His church.

The first group that had sort of racism towards one another were the Jews and the Samaritans. I don't mean in world history, but I mean in the history of the church. The Jews and the Samaritans hated each other. We've talked a lot about that, and it's ironic because ethnically they were very similar. They probably looked very similar, their language was pretty similar. They even shared the same Bible with a few changes. But more than anyone, Jews hated the Samaritans, and Samaritans hated Jews, and they murdered each other and they burned each other's temples down and they robbed one another and they cursed each other and they hated each other. Some of the first Christians were Samaritans.

And then there was this other group, the Greeks who initially had occupied Israel, the Seleucid's and others from Alexander the Great, who brought in their language and their philosophy and their theory, but they also brought in their sexual promiscuity and their dislike of Jewish customs and rules, and their different language. Well they didn't like each other very much.

And then there were the Romans, the Latin speaking military pragmatic business people who had conquered their whole world and were in Jesus' day actually occupying Israel. Well obviously the Jews didn't like the Romans very much.

And then there was this other group, a group we're not really familiar with in the modern world – barbarians, who in Jesus' day probably would have outnumbered the civilized folk in the world. Some say that the reason they were called barbarians is because Greeks mockingly say all they can say is bar, bar, bar, bar, bar, bar. We'll call them barbarians. Here's one such barbarian. This is a fun image of Boudica, the great Celtic.

It would have been interesting because during the Roman Empire, many Celts and Germans and different peoples from the north and Britain where these barbarians came from; white people back in those days, the only white people, would have been some of the most uncivilized in the world and they would have shown up in their skins and had all their weird paint on their face and their weird customs. And when they lost in battle against Rome, they would have been shipped all over, so every once in awhile you would have seen barbarian slaves in places like Syria and Israel.

And then you had this other group, this group that were the barbarians of the barbarians – the Scythians. It's a hard word to say. Loosely affiliated with groups like the Huns and the Mongols, probably came from an area called Kazakhstan. These were horse archers and horse warriors that if we saw them today, I mean they grew up on a horse. They would put children on a horse, they would live on a horse. These archers could shoot ninety pound bows that would pierce light armor. They were impossible to fight. They had no land to conquer. They just raided and pillaged, and there was all sorts of stories, I'm sure many of them are legends of cannibalism and blood drinking and pagan sacrifice. These are the type of barbarians that freaked everybody out, including the Romans and the Greeks. Nobody knew what to do with them.

And it's all these types of people in Paul's day who just start pouring into the church with all of their language and customs and different skin colors and weird foods, all these people within a century begin to just pour into this movement coming out of the Orient called Christianity. Then it was called the way. And they were gathering and worshipping together in love and hospitality and kindness and compassion and justice and care for children! And care for the poor! And care for the sick and care for the elderly. And this was the first time that I know of that other than some army, people had gathered in such a way. Gathered not to rob and kill and to destroy, but gathered to pray! To feed each other. To care for their communities. To love one another and to say to each other all those old labels, they're gone. We are Abraham's seed. We are God's people. We are His family. And this is what it means to be the church.

It's amazing to think that in the Roman society you even had a built-in cast system where you had patricians at the very top and equities who were like knights, and then plebeians and freedman and then slaves. And they were so different; uber wealthy, powerful, and then a slave, and both would come to faith, and then they would gather at church and take communion together, and this patrician who formally would maybe beat or kill or sell these slaves now looked at this slave who was his brother, and would look at him and say brother, Christ' body broken for you. Christ' blood shed for you. And this is why Paul writes in the scripture today, thank you, Hannah, for reading that. Colossians 3, verse 11, and this paragraph type thing we're about to read appears in a few places, actually.

Children of Abraham

It's also in Galatians something very similar, but I like this one the most. It says "here there is neither Gentile or Jew, there isn't circumcised or uncircumcised." That's another way of saying faithful Jew and those who are not faithful. "There is neither barbarian" cause there's barbarians in this church. "There's not Scythians" those horse archers. Yes, Scythians were coming to Christ, too, and gathering in the church. "There's not slave or free, but Christ is all and is in all. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion." Let me just pause there for a second. Do you know compassion – we always think of compassion as a deep love, and it is, but the word "compassion" literally means to suffer with – to suffer with.

I think one of the hardest things when you go through a difficult time, is to feel like nobody understands what you're going through, or nobody cares, or in your suffering you're suffering alone, and I want to tell you, whoever you are, you're not suffering alone. Christ suffers with you, I suffer with you, and when you think about what people are going through in this country, especially African Americans, I know we'll get to this in a minute, but don't forget that compassion means to suffer with; to feel empathy.

So he says "clothe yourselves in compassion" so you're just like oozing compassion "and kindness and humility and gentleness and patience." That's who you are. You're a patient, compassionate kind person, and the world needs people like you. He says "bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you and over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." Perfect unity. Perfect unity.

I am convinced more than ever when Paul talks about heresy in the Bible, he's almost always talking about strife. You can make a very strong argument that heresy has more to do about breaking churches up and breaking people up, than it is about saying something that is false, and that's not good either, but I believe that Satan is in the business of splitting people up and the Holy Spirit is in the business of perfect unity; of binding people together in forgiveness, in love, in compassion towards one another.

And this is what Paul believed. I mean Paul was constantly struggling with these cultural issues, with racism in the church, but I think one of the most powerful things about the early church, the church in the first couple centuries, was that in a world that was even more racist than we are, that had more challenges, more hatred, more bitterness; enemies that had great memories of.. I mean we're talking like long standing ancient enemies could see one another and not see an enemy, and not just see a friend, but see kin, see family, that is what I believe so much was alluring about the church was that there was this body, this movement of people who were so different that loved each other so much that would die for one another because they cared about each other so much because of what Christ did for them.

And that is what makes the church powerful today! That we don't just grandstand in virtue signal and do all this stuff, but we actually love one another! That we weep when we see a brother in the Lord murdered! That we cry out and say we need something! Something to change!

Well, remember what Paul says in Galatians when he says something similar – that we're none of these things. We're not slave, free, Jew, Gentile, circumcised, un-circumcised, we're not any of these things. We are Abraham's seed. And what he means by that is that when God chose Abraham, this nomad from Mesopotamia in the middle of nowhere, and brought him on a mountaintop and showed him all the stars in the sky, and said to this old man, your descendants will outnumber the stars in the sky, he was talking about you and he was talking about George Floyd! And he said that you will be a blessing to them and they will be a blessing to all the nations; to the whole world, and this is something we must remember – that God said "and I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you." Be careful about cursing those whom God has blessed, and be careful to go out of your way to bless those whom God has blessed.

Many people have come to me this week and said Pastor Bobby, especially, you know, Pastor Bobby, what do I do about this? What can we do? I don't know about you, but this type of thing, it just feels kind of like a school shooting, it's just like how could this happen again? And I just want to finish by saying first of all, you are so full of life and so full of joy, you are so generous, and let's continue to be those kinds of people. And I think one of the best ways you can make your light shine in a difficult time like today is I think there are really three things we can do that the first thing is just to listen. I think social media is teaching us not to listen. It's teaching us to posture, to grandstand, to react, to give advice.

Children of Abraham

When Hannah and I were first married, we had to do a marriage counseling class and they taught us then what they taught me later when I was in seminary in pastoral counseling that most of counseling is just listening well. Most of a good relationship is just listening well. People are not going to care what you have to say if they feel like you didn't hear them. I don't see a lot of questions being asked in places like social media. I see a lot of points being made. I see a lot of preaching but not a lot of listening. I know it's an irony – I'm preaching, but I think it's important that our first posture, especially those of us who are not in the black community, when we have black Christians, black people, black Americans who are calling out to their brothers and sisters – us! Listen! When we try to give advice instead of listening, or when we try to point to the things on the fringe instead of listening, it's kind of like we're saying you're not experiencing this. Be careful not to accidentally say you're not experiencing this. Be a listener and watch how healing that can be. So number one – be a listener.

Number two – learn to forgive. After I was saved, one of the first churches I got involved with was Crenshaw Christian Center in LA, which is a black mega church. And it was during that time I remember there was an altar call, and the altar call was to search your heart if you had some racism in your heart. At the time, I mean I had no racism towards black people, but I had had this experience a couple of years, or about a year before I was saved, I was about 14 and I was with my best friend. And we were already pretty scrappy. We loved to get in fights, and we loved to throw fireworks and rocks and light things on fire and so fighting was like a fun thing for us.

And I remember there were these Hispanic guys at the park and I forget what happened. We got in a fight with them but there was like 5 of them and 2 of us, and they beat us up, whatever 14-year-olds can.. it wasn't bad, but I remember walking away from my friend, walking away with my friend all bruised and after losing a fight, and I remember and I hope you forgive me forgive me for saying this, he said "dirty Mexicans." And I remember that phrase took seed in my heart where I was just a kid. I had this phrase that had lingered and it had become a thing in my heart that I didn't even know was there, that even after I got saved, I didn't recognize that I had this as a 15-year-old, I had this prejudice that was in my heart.

And it was at a black church where they did an altar call for people to be healed from this that I felt the Holy Spirit very strongly on my heart to go forward. And I had an older black woman who laid hands on me and prayed in the Holy Spirit, and freed me from something that I wondered even now today as a middle aged man, what if that seed had taken root?

Maybe you're watching today and you've had an experience in your past with.. maybe you're black and it was somebody who was white. Maybe it was from some other race or maybe it's not a race thing. Maybe it's a culture thing, or some group, and you don't even recognize it, but you've got this thing in your heart. Hey, it could even be un-forgiveness you have towards Democrats or Republicans and I mean that very seriously. And I want to ask you to do what the scripture told us to do and that is to forgive. To forgive that one or two people who hurt you, and don't punish everybody else that's in that group, but learn to see that people aren't perfect, and that if we all run to Jesus Christ, He can heal us and heal our land and help us to love one another. So forgive. Always forgive. If anything, just to free yourself. Forgive.

And finally, I just want to say if you're asking what do I do during this time, Bobby, sounds like forgive and listen, but reach out. If you don't have friends that have a different opinion from yours, do your best to reach out and make yourself a little uncomfortable in that way and make friends. Or if you have friends that are maybe going through this and you've been avoiding them, I want to encourage you to reach out and take a listening, forgiving, loving posture, and watch the good that God can do through that experience.

Dr. King, probably his most famous, one of his most famous quotes and I want to remind everybody who's watching this. He said "darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." You want to drive out darkness? You want to drive out hate? Be who the Lord made you. You are light. You are salt. You are the compassionate, loving, forgiving, listening person that this broken world needs. They need the Christ in you. They need the spirit of Christ that hovers over you. They need the power of Christ that cloaks you. They need the love of Christ that permeates you. They need you. Doesn't matter who you think you are, you think you can't make a change. Friend? If Christ can make a change, you can make a change because Christ is in you. You can be that hope for someone who's weeping today. You can be that encouragement for someone who's lost everything today.

Children of Abraham

You can be that person who is the difference between two paths – one good and one negative that someone might have taken because you were there to stand in the gap with them; to love them and encourage them.

Mother Teresa said if you can't help the whole world, just help one person.

Let's pray together: Father, we thank you and it's in Jesus' name we ask that you would bring healing to this country, Lord. So much arguing and division and fighting and hatred and bitterness, old allegiances, old demons, we rebuke those things and cast them out with the authority you've given us in Jesus' name and we call forth the spirit of peace and life, of liberty, of love and freedom and goodness to be distributed to all. Through the power of your spirit and the power of common grace, we ask Lord that this would happen. That through your church, Lord, we would be an example of reconciliation, of life, of freedom, and most of all, of love. God, we thank you, and it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.