

A WORD IN SEASON SERIES
“EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS AND
MINISTRY OF BROTHER SAM GREENE”

I Am Black But Comely

The Revelation Of Black People
Throughout Scripture

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The following excerpt taken from the Brother Sam's Book, I Am Black But Comely – The Revelation of Black People Throughout Scriptures...

God Does Not Tolerate Racism

Chapter 2

In this chapter I would like to share that God does not tolerate racism by first looking at a story in Numbers 12. First of all, God just doesn't like racism, and He will not tolerate it. As we'll find in this story, there is nothing like interracial marriage to make people's true racism come out. This subject will be covered in its own complete way later in a chapter all it's own. But here we see in God's Holy Word his attitude towards racism.

If you or I find ourselves walking in a mall today and we see a black man with a white woman together, we may feel something. Why is this? You can't consciously explain why you do, but something in you moves. If you are a black woman and you see a black man walking down the

street with a white woman, you feel something move inside of you. Of course nobody will admit this, but it is true. These things many times are subconscious and they live inside of us and until God opens up that chamber in our heart, we may be carrying around racism that we don't even know is there. It is all subtle because the devil is subtle, and he's the Father of racism. When God said to the children of Israel to not marry another tribe, He was not saying you can't marry somebody of another race. He was saying to not marry outside the Kingdom of God or outside of His people (the Nation of Israel). We will see this when we talk about the curse of Ham. Israelites were especially not to marry Canaanites.

As we begin in Numbers 12, we see that Miriam and Aaron definitely had a problem the woman Moses married. They had a problem with this woman not only because she was black, but also an Egyptian. Remember the Egyptians had held Israel in bondage for many years. So there was obviously some resentment for being simply all an Egyptian woman, and then also because she was black." So Let us read starting in verse 1, "*And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman...*" An Ethiopian woman is a black woman. No matter how commentators or whoever try to act like she is not, she was black. Many commentators go to great lengths to twist this fact to say she wasn't black. Moses married a black woman, and Miriam who was a worship leader and was commended in the book of Micah for being one of the leaders in the Exodus, and Aaron, who really acted cowardly and did what others say (e.g. gave into the people to build them a golden calf), had a problem with this. When we consider Aaron as a leader, if we look back to Exodus 3, God really never intended Aaron to be there. God called Moses alone to deliver His people. It reminds me of Kathryn Kuhlman who was a sister who had a tremendous healing ministry for many years. It always bothered me when she would say, "I know that a man is supposed to be doing my ministry". Secretly in her heart she knew this wasn't true. She was saying that to appease all of the chauvinist males as if God couldn't use a woman in ministry to work miracles. But this kind of thinking is ingrained in us. You see, 20-30 years ago it was ingrained in women that they were to stay at home and do anything and everything their husband said. I was there in the 1970's when this was happening. The submission teachings came out. Shepherds came out and told women that they had to submit to anything and everything their husband said. Out of this came multitudes of divorces 10 or 20 years later when everybody realized it was bad

teaching and error. We are to submit to one another in love. A wife is to submit to her husband in the Lord. When a husband tells his wife to do something that defiles her conscious, she doesn't have to do it because our first and greatest husband is Jesus.

So Moses had married this black woman. In verse 2, Miriam and Aaron continue, *“²And they said, hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?”* There is tremendous revelation here. Miriam and Aaron didn't come out and say they are troubled because of the black woman. They use another angle. People will not confess that they are really a racist, but they find another excuse to express their dissatisfaction. God does not like this, which is why He makes it clear in verse 1 that their speaking against Moses was due to the black woman. If we look towards the end of the story, we will see that Miriam gets leprosy and Aaron doesn't, which shows Miriam was the real racist here. This reveals that Miriam was like the woman described in Ecclesiastes 7:26, *“And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.”* She had a controlling spirit. Aaron, like so many husbands we see, just went along with whatever Miriam said. When you consider also what they said, *“Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?”* it sounds like an Absalom spirit as well. They were maybe waiting to take some of the credit for leading God's people out of bondage.

“...And the LORD heard it.” You better circle this in your Bible because we need to always remember the Lord hears everything. He hears it when we think it too. Every idle word we speak will be accounted for in our life. We better watch what we say. We all should understand a day of judgment is coming (Luke 8:17 & Luke 12:2). Certainly we must know we cannot hide anything from the Holy Ghost. Just consider Ananias and Sapphria in Acts 5; and that should be sufficient evidence.

“³(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)” Moses grew up in Pharaoh's house and was a prince of Egypt. He had everything, but the 40 years in the wilderness broke him so completely, that he became the meekest man on the face of the earth. Meekness does not mean weakness because how many of us have stood before Pharaoh with just a staff or held up our rod before the Red Sea and it parts. Meekness means Moses was pliable,

teachable, humble, and didn't think he had it all. Let's just consider a few scriptures about man and his worthiness. Romans 7:18 says "*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*" Psalms 39:5 adds, "*...verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.*" Jeremiah 17:9 plainly says, "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*" Isaiah 40:17 reads "*All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity.*"

What else does the Bible say about man? Job 15:14 says, "*What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?*" Psalms 143:3-4 says, "*³For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. ⁴Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.*" Isaiah 53:6 says, "*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*" We see in Psalms 14:2-3 that "*²The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. ³They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*" Micah 7:2 says "*The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men...*" Romans 3:10-13 clearly defines man and says, "*¹⁰As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: ¹¹There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. ¹²They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ¹³Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips.*" And finally, Jeremiah 17:5 says, "*Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.*" All of us must eventually come to this conclusion that without Him we are nothing.

⁴And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out." God was so upset about this, He moved immediately. "*⁵And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.*" Let me say this first: if you have been the subject of racism or if you've been the person whom racism has been used against and you are a child of God, the Lord will hear it and the Lord will call them out and He will come down! The audible voice of God spoke.

If I was Miriam or Aaron, I would be afraid by now. This reminds me when I used to get my reports cards in school. I would have stomach aches all the way home. If I couldn't convince my sisters to change my grades, then I knew I was going to get a serious whipping at home, so I had a terrible feeling all the way home that judgement was coming. So God comes down in His glory and singles out Miriam and Aaron to come here. If I was them, I would've been on my face screaming at the top of my lungs saying "I'm sorry, have mercy, Moses is a great man of God!" God comes down suddenly. He didn't even give them a chance to think about what they did.

"⁶And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. ⁷My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house ⁸With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? ⁹And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed." When somebody talks about a man or woman of God in an unrighteous way, they better be careful. That goes for all of us. You see, there is something greater than a prophet and the five-fold ministry. The similitude of the Lord is the face of God. This tells me maybe many ministers do not behold the face of God, which is the manifest presence of God. The word "presence" in Hebrew means "face, or the turning of the face towards". You can be a prophet and yet never even have the manifest presence of God as Moses. There is something greater than the five-fold ministry and it is called Brideship. It is called intimacy with God. God was basically saying to Miriam and Aaron, "you know I have a special relationship with Moses and you've seen Me come down to meet with Moses causing him to have to cover his face because of the glory, why then were you not afraid to speak against Moses?" Do you not think Miriam and Aaron should have thought twice before speaking unrighteously about Moses? I encourage all of us to wait a moment before we open our mouths. Never answer anything quickly or hastily. You and I learn this most of the time by making mistakes. You can even say the right thing at the wrong time. Consider all that Moses had done: how God dealt with him for 40 years; how God used him against the entire nation of Egypt and brought 3 million Israelites out with mighty signs and wonders and beyond that how God had given him the 10 commandments burned into stone (twice); Moses had fasted 80 days; they saw Moses go up into the mountain to be with God and when he would come back the glow of God's glory upon him

was too much that they made Moses put a veil on his face, etc. Miriam and Aaron did not consider this.

The truth is, for many people, everything you or I do is never enough. They will criticize one petty thing and overlook the thousand selfless things we do. For example, I hear criticism all of the time about our worship services at the church I pastor. Some say it is too loud or it is too long, etc. They are speaking about creature comforts and the flesh. Now should we go on forever and ever and ever? Certainly not, every worship session should be different in time limits. If God is done in 20 minutes, I will put my guitar down. Sometimes it is an hour and a half, sometimes it is 45 minutes. You can't say, we are going to only worship for 30 minutes. If you do this then you are touching the ark of God and somebody may just die. I will never try to touch and control the Holy Spirit. The ark of God should always be free to move until it is in its right place and we've lead everybody in the room to the Most Holy Place. Once we are in there, than we can stop. God is never satisfied until He meets with His people face to face in there.

You see, when you or I receive the Word of God in the outer court, we really don't get it like we could. When you receive the Word in the Holy Place, there is a little more chance, but when you receive the Word of God in the Most Holy Place, it is a living Word and when God speaks in the Most Holy Place, He writes it upon the table of our hearts. It is engraved into your nature! This is why we just don't have meetings to have meetings. We have visitations with God and while we are there, He engraves on our hearts what He wants to say. It is an impartation of His character. We don't realize how Babylonish we really are many times in our church gatherings. Our purpose for meeting should always be about Jesus and meeting with Him. We don't come to church to receive and just do things. We come to give, to "*bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord*" (Jeremiah 33:11), to "*bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse*" (Malachi 3:10), etc. We are supposed to bring an offering with us as in Exodus 25:1-2, "¹*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ²Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.*" The Lord spoke to His people to bring an offering in order to build the house of the Lord, "⁸*And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them*" (Exodus 25:8). We don't come to church to get, but we come to church to give. Many times I feel like a voice crying in the wilderness and there is a great hurricane and winds blowing all around me. And I am screaming at the top of my lungs, but my voice is

overshadowed by the winds and storm and people just don't get it. So much of what we still do is founded in religion, not the Spirit of God. Oh it is going to require a great shaking to bring forth that remnant, but it is happening even now. A remnant will not have "Mystery Babylon" written on their foreheads, but the image of Christ will be on their forehead. Glory to God!

But in this story, God is challenging Aaron and Miriam as to why they were not afraid to speak against Moses. Now God doesn't want us afraid of men or women of God, but He does want us to give honor where honor is due. I Timothy 5:17 says, "*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*" So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Miriam and Aaron. "¹⁰*And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle...*" God got so mad the cloud departed. Haven't you seen someone so mad that they just left the room? This is the picture I get about what happened. You can be sure that when God sees racism, even when it is done subtly, he will leave. He will remove his manifest presence. He will not tolerate it. Men are so caught up in themselves and their own ministry, they don't even recognize the Lord has departed. Ministers especially should be concerned about racism, for they will receive the greater judgment. But how many hide behind the scriptures and pervert the Word of God, by their subtle racism.

And then, "*...behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.*"

¹¹*And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.*" Just in the last few months, somebody called me and for an hour they just lit into me. They cursed at me, said stuff to me, screamed and yelled, and told me I was everything but a man of God, for an hour. I kept my peace, didn't lose control, and tried to end the conversation peaceably. And then an hour or two later they called back and said they acted foolishly and said they were sorry for what they said. Now, I was glad to say I forgive you, but you know, you wound people when you talk like this. Every one of us needs to be careful. Yes, I forgave them instantly, but the damage people do when your mouth becomes an agent of Satan accusing others and speaking abusively, full of pettiness and disputing, and then you realize you made a mistake, you know, sometimes it is not enough just to say you are sorry. You might want to grab the person and say, "look at me, I'm really sorry, because I know I

might have hurt your heart when I did that.” If you are going to be a man or a woman of God, a true minister, than you are going to have to be able to forgive and love people in spite of what they do. If you can't do that, than go back to college and get a degree in something you can make money in because you are not going to make it in the ministry. Everybody will always have something to say about everything you do in ministry. It is a way of life. Also, we have to be able to be people who are able to listen because God can speak through anybody.

At the same time, God gets angry when others speak unrighteously about others, especially those in leadership. It is amazing to me that people will lie right to your face and then turn around and smile at you when they see you and act like they didn't just cut you to shreds. Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 10:20 *“Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.”* I remember I was in a restaurant one time sitting in a booth and as I was eating I heard on the other side of the partition between booths two people talking about a man called Sam Greene. So I listened as I was eating my food these two people ripping me to shreds with their judgements. I left the restaurant before they were able to see me and when I saw them on Sunday morning they were just sitting there smiling and saying they loved me. God is watching and when you hurt a man or woman of God, God gets upset. In I Samuel 8, Samuel was so upset at what the people were saying God had to speak to Samuel and say, *“Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.”* (I Samuel 8:7). Ultimately people will get mad about what God has done in you that has pointed out their indiscretion and they use you as the whipping post. But every word that is spoken is written down and God hears it, especially if it is about somebody who is in the glory because we really have to be careful then.

Aaron continues crying out to Moses in verse 12, *“¹²Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb...”* Look at Moses reaction, *“¹³And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. ¹⁴And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days?...”* As precious as Moses was, he was trying to get Miriam to have no punishment, but God was not going to let that happen. The Lord continues, *“...let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.”* What does this

mean, seven days? Miriam is not allowed back in the congregation until the seventh day, that is, until that thing has been perfected in her life and she's not going to do it again.

“¹⁵And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.” This is very interesting. Do you realize when we do things like what Miriam did, we not only harm ourselves, but the rest of the body can't go on either. And this was all because Moses married a black woman and they were such cowards they couldn't even say the real reason why they were mad. Let us not be like Miriam. This was racism at its purist and God despised it!

The next Scripture I would to mention regarding God does not tolerate racism is in Luke 6:30-37, particularly in verse 32 where Jesus says, *“For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them.”* The Lord expects us to love everybody. Amen!

Matthew 25:31-45 is the story of the people of God standing in the last days, and God divides the sheep and the goats. The sheep were those that visited the prisons, took care of the hungry and thirsty, clothed the naked, etc, and did it in a merciful way. So much of our own religious works in the respect of this time and age is done in a way that looks down upon the needy and the strangers. There is nothing worse than treating a person like they are beneath you. Years ago, when I was a young man and moved to Jacksonville, FL from Washington D.C., I had no money, worked a job to make just enough money to get by so I could go to all of the meetings night and day, so I rarely had money for frivolous things like restaurants and movies. Occasionally when I would want to go out to eat, sometimes people would say they would take care of me, but in doing so they would make it very clear when we were sitting at the table that they were taking care of the food for me and would embarrass me completely. I remember one time when it was a cruel embarrassment (I was thankful for the food), but as I went home that night I was in the presence of the Lord and the Lord said He allowed this to happen to me because it is a learning experience for you to learn what not to do. And I remember asking the Lord when the day comes that I get to the place where I have a flow of money and am not in constant need that I will always look to pay for others and I will never make them feel obligated, expecting nothing in return and never embarrass them. We are not to give loans, expecting a return. We don't remind people how much we've given or treat them like they are beneath

us. Jesus expects us when we go to the prisons, to treat prisoners with respect. Or if we see strangers or clothe the naked, we don't act like we are big-shots giving them clothes to wear like we are something great. We don't do things to be seen of men. Matthew 6:3 says, "*But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.*" Everything we do is unto the Lord. God is watching and especially the way we treat people who are different from us or of another race and at the judgment seat there will be many people saying to the Lord, "*when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?*" (Matthew 25:36). Jesus responded and said, "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*" God does not tolerate racism in any shape or form.

I Peter 2:17 says, "*Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*" He tells us four major things to do here. We are to honor the king (e.g. our president), fear God, love our brothers in Jesus, and honor all men. Even worldly people, we are to treat them with respect.

We must all be careful not to judge people according to their appearance. We have all done it but God is not pleased with it. John 7:24 says, "*Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*" I can honestly say to you I have done this also. Upon meeting somebody for the first time, we immediately just size them up. We compartmentalize people in our brain. Even with somebody's name, we judge them unrighteously. For example, if I knew a girl named April years ago and I meet somebody else named April, somehow my brain thinks the new April is like the April I knew years ago. We have to be careful because we can put people in a box and expect them to be a certain way when they are not like that at all. God made it clear in I Samuel 16:7 when Samuel saw Jesse's first son and said basically, "*wow, this guy is beautiful, surely the Lord's anointed is before me.*" And God set Samuel straight when He said "*Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*" Here is some help in doing this. When you meet somebody, let them talk. Give thhyuiem 5 minutes or so because that is all it will take. Our mouths will always betray us because our hearts and our mouths are connected. In 5 minutes, they will say something to let you know what kind of spirit they have. You will have a witness about what kind of person they are by

what they say. We can't just immediately make judgments, especially on the outward appearance. This is really a racist act, whether we know it or not. God doesn't like this. We are to honor all men and not to judge them unrighteously. Let us give people a chance. Let's not judge them, immediately. Let's wait and discern a righteous judgement. Don't judge a man by his appearance, the clothes he wears, the color of his skin, etc... Let's wait and let God show us the true heart of an individual, lets judge them by their fruit, and the content of their character.

In Isaiah 65:5 the Lord is speaking here, "*Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.*" This reminds me of a person that came to the church I was pastoring and came with great need. We helped this person tremendously, but then one day I was counseling this person in my office and this person actually said to me, "You know, I thought the people here at Narrow Way were spiritual, but you all don't even come anywhere close to the kind of glory I tap into when I am alone." Now knowing this person, knowing the extreme problems in their life, that I had just dealt with. I couldn't h... having entered into any great level of glory, because her life was so messed up and confused. Yet she still felt superior to the rest of us. And knowing the witness of the Holy Ghost, I couldn't tell if they even entered into any level of glory. The audacity for this person to say they are in a greater place spiritually than all of us is amazing. First of all, if you were, you would never say it. Actually, this person went on to criticize another member of the church and the way they prayed and that it didn't meet up to her standards. I responded and said, "First of all, this is Jesus' church, and I am the pastor and those are my sheep you are talking about." Then I said, "You are spooky, not spiritual". I see this person from time to time and they just go from church to church, and subtly I see there is a spirit of rebellion. This holier than thou attitude, God says, is a smoke in His nostrils and it infuriates Him.

I remember when I moved to Jacksonville, FL as a teenager, I only had a brown paper bag containing 2 sets of underwear, 2 pairs of jeans, a couple pair of socks, a pair of Chuck Taylor tennis shoes, a couple of shirts, and a pair of overalls, and that was all I owned. It all fit in one paper bag. I slept on a floor for a couple of months initially until I moved into a house with a couple of brothers. Remember now, I came from the ghetto and could remember the times walking with my mama to pick up our government cheese and powder milk. I came out of poverty and know all about it. As I began to grow in the Lord, I eventually got

sent out to pastor in Chicago for a couple of years, then I came back to Jacksonville and was put on staff of a pretty large church, I was making a pretty good salary, had a couple of suits, and all that goes with a little success. Well, one day after I led the worship during a service and the glory was in the room, I had my nice new brown suit on and I smelled real good and I went to sit down in the front row. After I sat down, I remember smelling this awful smell. Immediately I knew the smell because homeless people have a certain stench to them when they don't take showers for a long period of time. Well, sitting there was this man, obviously in dire need of a shower, several shaves, and probably needed to be bathed in cologne for 2 weeks. And immediately this thing rose up in me and I began to be very critical of him thinking how can he come to church smelling and looking like that. As I was thinking this, the pastor got up to the microphone and said, "I would like everyone to turn to the person next to you and give them a Holy Ghost hug!" Well, there was only one person next to me and I immediately cringed thinking I had to touch this filthy and dirty man. As I was thinking of some way to get out of this because I didn't want my suit spoiled and stained (some people can be so nasty the smell on them can remain on your clothes), the voice of the Lord came to me saying, "I remember a young man..." He didn't have to say anything else. I immediately received the rebuke, walked over to the man, and embraced him. I never saw him again. It is amazing how you can be poor and poverty stricken, get a little money, and become so self-righteous and "holier than thou". This can happen to any of us.

In Acts 10:28 when Peter is rehearsing before the council there, he says, "*And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.*" He was rehearsing the fact when God had visited him at Cornelius' house. God doesn't want us calling any man, nation or ethnic group, common or unclean. God created all men, and he expects us to treat people as he does. Let's remember we are all God's children, we are all his creation, so we need to give respect to every man.

Lastly, let us look at the parable in Luke 18:9-14, "⁹*And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others...*" We are talking about the attitude of racism or self-righteousness, God hates it. Jesus speaks this parable to everybody but He knows there are certain people in the midst who are like this. You see, when a word comes forth, it may not be for you. If

you are not self-righteous, don't get upset. You just need to realize that certain among us have that problem. Just listen and let God hammer this truth deeper into your heart. Sometimes God just has a word for certain people in the midst. If the shoes fits wear it, and if not don't come under bondage or condemnation. Many times, the Lord will say things publicly so He doesn't have to embarrass or single people out. I always loved what William Branham used to do when the Lord would give him words of prophecy that exposed the sin in their lives. He would put his hand over the microphone and whisper in their ear. It is not the will of God to embarrass people or prophesy horrible things to them in front of other sheep. We see this happen all of the time in the body of Christ and it is not of God and we need to not be a part in it.

Continuing in the story, ¹⁰*Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.* ¹¹*The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself...* What does this mean that he *“prayed thus with himself”*? It means God didn't hear his prayer. He was just praying to himself. God doesn't hear selfish, arrogant, and racist prayers. He was just talking to himself and said, *“...God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.* ¹²*I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess...*” I am going to tell you a little secret. Every person, whether they consciously thought about it or not, has done the exact same thing. Maybe we didn't say these same words, but something in us was like that at some point. God wants to help us and remove this thinking from us. Jesus always stands with the accused. You and I have to be able to talk to the poorest of the poor and the richest of the rich and still be the same person. I know so many brothers who could not make it into the ministry because they couldn't speak to millionaires because they were so insecure and intimidated. They couldn't talk to people of greater social rank or greater intelligence than them and they never wanted to excel or progress where they could do that. Jesus was able to sit in a rich man's house and converse freely and He was able to talk to harlots. We are to be all things to all people. We have to learn to be transparent and have *“always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men”* (Acts 24:16).

“I fast twice in the week...” I remember when fasting really became popular in the early 1970's. Everybody fasted. It was one of the things that poured through the charismatic movement. People fasted every other week back then because it was the thing to do. I have fasted much in my Christian life so far and I have found many times that I was fasting

because it was the thing to do (everybody else was doing it). I remember the Lord speaking to me once during one of these times and said I wasn't really fasting, I was just making myself hungry, and He never called me to fast. Everything that God institutes is beautiful, but we can make it religious and become self-righteous with it. First of all, if we fast, we don't need to tell anybody about it. Now sometimes, we can't help and tell others because we have to, but I always got amused when I would ask a brother to get a bite to eat and they would immediately say, "No, I'm fasting". Why couldn't they just say, "No, I'm busy" or something like that. It's always, "No, I'm fasting", and immediately you feel inferior to the "great faster"

Here's another one, "*I give tithes of all that I possess...*" Just tithe and keep quiet. It is like when people give testimonies. Sometimes I would hate testimony time at the church I grew up in because sure enough ten people would always get up and give a testimony and it was always, "I went to the hospital, and I prayed for people, and God used me, and God anointed me" and it never seemed to end up being a testimony of the goodness and grace of God, but a testimony of their greatness. It felt like instead of singing the song to God "How Great Thou Art" we needed to sing to the person "How Great You Are!"

¹³*And the publican, standing afar off...*" How many are standing a far off? How many times do we not include people of color in our lives? We don't really accept or honor them, we simply tolerate them. This tells us something right here. He wouldn't even come close, but "*a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*" (Psalms 51:17). "*And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.*" ¹⁴*I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*" Amen! We need to humble ourselves. Jesus said it perfectly in Matthew 11:29, "*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*" We don't have to impress anybody. Impress Jesus with the way you live and treat others. Let's do everything we do to the Lord, and not to men. Keep your heart, examine yourself, and try not just other people's spirits, but try your own spirit to see whether it is of God. Judge a righteous judgment! Don't judge according to the outward appearance. There is a lot of stuff the Lord has to work out of us. This is why sanctification, the second aspect of our salvation, takes a lifetime. Don't be discouraged if you have these issues

still in you and the Lord is working on them. Ultimately, God will deliver you which is why you are going through it.

But God hates racism. God hates that class mentality that somebody is better than somebody else. The craziest thing I have seen poor ignorant rednecks who didn't even have an education (they quit school during elementary school) act like they are the greatest thing in the human race. I've seen rich wealthy people act like complete fools. Everybody is tempted with these issues, but we are not of this world anymore. We are in a new Kingdom! Let the glory of the Lord descend now upon every reader and seal this word in their hearts. We want to be like Jesus! Amen! Let us resolve to never, judge a man after the outward appearance, or just an initial meeting. But rather judge them by their fruits, heart, and content of their character. Let us never judge a man simply because his skin color is different from ours. Or his culture is different from ours. Let's learn to rejoice in God's great diversity of people, and try to learn something from them, rather than rejecting them.

I believe most Christians desire to do good, to act and respond as Jesus did with people; but many times we are a product of our environment. If our parents were racist or we've had bad experiences with people of whatever color, if the people that we're around or grown up with had racist tendencies, it tends to form an opinion in our minds or subconscious, and we then act on those impulses that have been ingrained in us from our youth. Remember every man and women are different, they have their own unique personality we just have to stop lumping people of a different color, and generalizing them by thinking all people of that skin color are alike. They just aren't, if we truly yearn to be like Jesus then we're going to have to act like him. "With God there is no respecter of persons..." Let this be our motto, and way of life from now on. We can bring an end to racism. Actually, the body of Christ should lead the way. How else can the world see the love of God, if we don't walk, talk, live and act like Him?

I pray that from this day on together we will not be self righteous, proud, arrogant or judgmental, or racist. But we will learn of him where the scriptures say "I am meek and lowly of heart", or "For God so loved the world" or "they will know that you are my disciple because of the love you have one to another." Why don't we as Philippians 2:15 declares, "*That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;*" Finally then this scripture will be

fulfilled; Matthew 5:13-16, “*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*”¹⁴ *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*¹⁵ *Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*¹⁶ *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*

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