

continued from front

unarmed blacks by police officers. Our congregational evangelist, Todd Asaad, sent out an email blast to our membership and apologized for our oversight and seeming indifference, promising that we would seek to be more informed, more involved and more empathetic in the future. It was a very good letter. Shortly after this, one of our region leaders, Mark Mancini, contacted me and asked if I would speak on the subject of racism and prejudice in his region. Not only does that region have a significant contingent of black brothers and sisters (including one black elder and one white elder, both married to black sisters), Mark’s and Connie’s son was about to graduate from the Police Academy in Los Angeles.

I agreed to preach the sermon, although I had never preached an entire lesson on this subject. I have mentioned it many times in sermons, plus addressed it in written articles, but hadn’t preached an entire lesson on it, surprisingly. Regarding those articles, you can read them on my website (gordonferguson.org). The articles are entitled “The Big Black Brother’s Club,” of which I was a part in Boston, and “Surprise, Surprise: Guess Who’s Been Coming to Dinner,” loosely based on the title of an old movie. In the latter, I explain how my frequent comment (intended to be humorous) about having too much soul to be a white man led to a challenge by a black friend to take a DNA test. I finally did it and found that I was 12% black (no surprise to me). Although both articles have some humor in them, especially the first, racial issues are serious issues to me and have been for decades. The articles reflect that seriousness.

The sermon in our Southwest Region lasted well over an hour. I could not introduce such a sensitive subject without trying to make myself as clear as possible. Honestly, not many white guys could say some of the things I say about the subject, but somehow I seem to resonate well with both blacks and whites (or so I have been told by those of both races). Being an old guy likely helps, and being raised during the Jim Crow era in Louisiana by non-racist parents exposed me to situations that were very unusual for a white kid growing up in that setting.

Evidently Mark had some good things to say about the lesson, for the other region leaders asked me to preach the same sermon in their regions. The audio lessons were posted on our website, and a black sister in St. Louis, Yolanda Suber, listened to the lesson and asked her church leaders to listen to it. The result was a last-minute invitation to come there to deliver the lesson, after which we had a panel discussing the race issue very openly and honestly (see here). Jeff Mannel, lead evangelist at the Gateway City Church, told me recently that people from 52 nations had already watched all or part of my sermon – in less than three weeks. Obviously, the subject hit a very sensitive nerve. I suggest you watch both.

The birth of a new idea

However unexpected it may have been, God had his way of filling my vacuum. The issue of racism disturbs me greatly, but the prospect of speaking and writing about it excites me. My black friends have not felt totally safe sharing exactly how they feel about life in their world with those of other races. That feeling must end, and my blog is going to be dedicated to helping end it. As per usual, I will be direct and the subjects addressed will cover a broad spectrum. In my blog, “Black Tax and White Privilege”, I will be praying for God’s Spirit to guide me in what I say and how I say it.

Editor’s note: Please visit www.DisciplesToday.org for the entire story, this version was edited for space.

www.DisciplesToday.org hosts thousands of pages of news, articles and images to help connect disciples and churches around the world. All information and content is freely available for everyone.

Latest Stories on www.DisciplesToday.org:

Go to www.DisciplesToday.org to read the latest Hot News articles and to access the archives for all channels.

• 2017 Alaska Singles Retreat
Nick Morrill, Anchorage, AK — Saturday, 26 November 2016

Are you looking for adventure and inspiration in 2017? Are you wanting to connect with God and his people in new and exciting ways? The Great Land Christian Church invites you do this and more in one the world’s most beautiful places: Alaska. Join us August 7-13, 2017, for “Denali: The Climb – 2017 Alaskan...

• Jesus and the Poor: Part 1
Dr. G. Steve Kinnard, New York, NY, USA
— Thursday, 03 November 2016

The Teachers Service Team of the ICOC is excited to launch The Teachers’ Corner. This bi-weekly publication will feature articles authored by men and women who serve as teachers in our fellowship of...

• “Walk This Way: The Spirit-Led Life”:
New Book on Transformation and Overcoming
Byron Parson, Los Angeles, CA, USA
— Monday, 14 November 2016

How do we move from ever-increasing events and activities to passionate and powerful experiences of God? How do we recognize and disarm the limiting beliefs and distorted self-image that holds us...

• Bolivian Campus Ministry September Update
Ludi Avecedo, La Paz, Bolivia — Friday, 04 November 2016

Recently, we have split our church services in two regions. We meet in downtown and south regions twice a month. We also have a special service every last Sunday...

INTERNATIONAL & LOCAL NEWS BULLETIN

To Inspire, Inform, Unify and Grow the International Churches of Christ

DT DISCIPLES TODAY

WWW.DISCIPLESTODAY.ORG • ISSUE 582 • NOVEMBER 27, 2016

Black Tax and White Privilege: An Introduction to a New Blog on Racism and Prejudice

Gordon Ferguson, Dallas, TX, USA

Editor’s note: Find more resources in our new Oneness column. Please share this column with your friends and church families, and send your recommended sermons and articles to content@dtoday.net.

Why this? Why now? Why me?
During my 45 plus years of ministry, I have served in many roles in many places. When I turned 65, I resigned from my ministry staff role in Phoenix and began a teaching ministry. The advice I received from trusted, wise brothers about my future legacy was that my greatest contribution would come through leadership training and writing. Hence I embarked on the leadership training part, and pursued it vigorously for about seven years. Then we moved to Dallas and I served as a part-time staff person in 2015. Through these eight years, I wrote only one full length book and did second editions on a couple of others. I was unable to concentrate on writing while still considered even a part-time staff member. It was purely my problem, for the Dallas leadership didn’t put any pressure on me at all. This issue, along with continuing to have friends younger than I am die, led me to end the part-time staff involvement and devote 2016 to writing.

By God’s grace and to my amazement, I wrote three books in four months, and introduced them at Reach2016 in St. Louis. After this immersion in writing, I came up for air and realized that I didn’t have any other book idea burning in my heart, although I have the ideas for several in a folder on my computer. I felt like I was somehow in a vacuum, not knowing what God had in store for me next. I thought of the passage in Acts 13:36: “Now when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep...” This question hit me: “Are we done here, Lord?” Maybe my purpose has been fulfilled and it’s my time to die. After all, I did turn 74 on October 27th. I had no desire to sit in a rocking chair awaiting death, and the selfish life most people associate with retirement is repugnant to me.

God moves in mysterious ways
As I was mulling over these things, praying about them, but still feeling like I was in a vacuum, five police officers were shot in Dallas. Some of our African American members were bold enough to state that we were not hesitant to talk about this tragedy, yet said nothing about the continuing killing of



• UPCOMING EVENTS

ICMC US West
2017 ICOC Spring Leadership Meetings
Dallas, Texas USA
April 4-8, 2017

DT Singles Cruise
Galveston, Texas USA
April 23-30, 2017
Austin, Texas USA
June 29-July 1, 2017

Middle East Conference
Cairo, Egypt
July 2017

ICMC US East
Asheville, North Carolina USA
August 4-6, 2017

2017 Family Ministry Conference
Denver, Colorado USA
September 1-3, 2017

2020 World Discipleship Summit
Orlando, Florida USA
July 2-5, 2020

CONNECTING DISCIPLES IN
CHURCHES AROUND THE WORLD

DT

International News reprinted
courtesy of Disciples Today
www.DisciplesToday.org
www.DTSpace.net
KNN@DToday.org
All rights reserved ©2016

continued on back