

If I Were White

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney
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I believe that God has called us all to be one people and “one nation under God.”

If we are really serious about being “one nation under God”, then we need to change the way we view and treat each other as we pledge allegiance to this flag of the United States of America that we so love and cherish.

For many years, the issue of race has been swept under the rug and has become one of the most taboo subjects known to man.....at least here in America.

It wasn't that long ago that “coloreds” could not drink from the same water fountain as whites.

It wasn't that long ago that “coloreds” could not eat from the same restaurant as whites.

It wasn't that long ago that “coloreds” could not attend the same schools or ride in the same section of the bus or be treated the same socially as whites.

Bottom line, blacks and whites, were treated differently. Not blaming anyone, just stating the facts.

With the facts being stated, I am reminded of a quote by a historical figure that I admire, Mr. Carter G. Woodson, in his 1933 writing from “The Mis-Education of the Negro” when he said:

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“History shows that it does not matter who is in power or what revolutionary forces take over the government, those who have not learned to do for themselves and have to depend solely on others never obtain any more rights or privileges in the end than they had in the beginning.”

Which brings me to my point of discomfort.

It is a disturbing site when you see a person of color, disrespect, deny access to or stifle opportunity for another person of color, simply because they are black.

Sometimes I ask myself questions, that I wish never crossed my mind, such as:

If I were white, would black people make my meetings on time?

If I were white, would black people graciously donate their time, talent or treasure to my initiatives?

If I were white, would black people spend their money with me without worrying about what I was going to do with it?

A few months back, I was troubled when I was told by another black person, in a decision-making capacity, that they did not know how to present me before their white executive bosses because then they would want to know “why are you bringing a black person before them that is the head of this type of organization. Are you trying to give them the hook-up?”

What were they actually saying?

Was my black skin a curse or a liability to them?

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This “black decision-maker” and I had never had a formal meeting.

No coffee, no lunch, no saying hello to each other while standing in the grocery line.

I had been denied a meeting because of my “black skin” by someone else with “black skin”, because they were concerned about the fact that my “black skin” might be too “black” for someone with “white skin”.

Funny thing is, I did end up getting that meeting, but it wasn't because of this person.

Someone else who had an opportunity to meet me and get to know me, vouched for me and wouldn't you know, they were white.

I would be lying to you if I told you that it didn't bother me when I see black people giving their all to seek the approval of people that don't look like them, with the hopes of obtaining some sort of validation or acceptance.

Most troublesome is when blacks treat another black person as if they are doing them a favor and they should be glad to just have them give them the crumbs from their table.

If you agree to support a black organization or a black leader, be committed.

If you choose to work for a black business or have a black leader, work with excellence and do your very best.

If you decide to spend your money with a black business, do so with no reservation.

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If black people don't support each other, as they did when segregation and Jim Crow was prevalent, can we say that we have really progressed in this country or have many black people chosen to take the place of those that once oppressed us, by oppressing ourselves?

If I were white, what would I even think about this situation?

Jeffrey L. Boney is a dynamic, international speaker with a no-nonsense approach to business and leadership development, community engagement and economic empowerment, inspiring people to push past the status-quo and be different. Jeffrey is the Founder and CEO of the Texas Business Alliance and is a weekly columnist in the Houston Forward Times. He is an experienced entrepreneur and adjunct professor in Houston, Texas. If you would like to request Jeffrey as a speaker, you can reach him at jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org.[{jcomments on}](#)