

Esther's Trumpet
September 15, 2011

The Sounds of Silence

It was impossible to avoid all the remembrances of the tragic 9 11 event of ten years ago. I watched, and I cried. How sad and terrible that it takes tragedy to bring us together.

Reporters talked of the incredible evil that was at the heart of the attack on America. And it was a terrible crime that took those thousands of lives. But evil, like love, and like nearly everything else, arrives in layers.

On that recent Sunday there was no talk of politics and poverty, just thousands of Americans joined together in grief and remembrance. Paul Simon sang the poignant song, "Sounds of Silence". It was a sight to behold, especially amidst the most divisive political turmoil I have witnessed in my lifetime in America.

The swift calamity of 9 11 shocked us, scared us, and brought out the best in us. People helping people, regardless of nationality and religion. People risking their lives and dying to save others. Incredible love for one another, grief and understanding. Oh for the same reaction to the layers of attack on humans in America today.

There are a lot of ways to die. People die because they cannot get health care, or enough food. Seniors die because they can't afford their medicines. Crime can kill. Environmental injustice, with it's sight set on powerless people who cannot fight back can kill. Ignorance of toxic assaults on our communities can kill. People working too many jobs for too little pay can kill. And there are ways to make a human wish they were dead. Families torn apart because of new and hateful immigration laws. A single mother who cannot afford to send her child to college. So many ways that we ignore. We never put those things in the same evil category with 9 11, yet they do as much damage, or even more.

Rudy Guliani said Sunday that our country is spiritually stronger today than 10 years ago. I beg to differ. While we have shown incredible unity during tornadoes and hurricanes, once more risking lives to save others, I don't think these heroic acts translate into everyday life. If they did, we would not have the political climate we have today. We would be putting our increased spirituality to work in daily situations, in Congress and at the Alabama Legislature. We would be looking out for "the least of these "instead of passing laws to make their lives worse.

I know of a wonderful church group that goes around helping the poor and elderly make repairs to their homes. They are good people. But some of them refuse to see the connection between politics and people. These same great folks who dedicate their weekends to helping others refuse to take the steps to changing the system that has created the atmosphere of poverty. In fact, many of them want to wipe out Social Security, any aid to the poor and believe that each person should just fend for themselves.. Some of them are even members of the Tea Party, the ones who just last week at the Republican Presidential Forum, yelled, "Let him die", after someone asked Rick Perry if he would save a 30-year old man who had no insurance and who was dying.

I don't understand this climate of hate. I don't understand how folks can profess Christianity and be so filled with hate. It makes me afraid to grow old in our country. I'm afraid for our children. And I think we need to be mindful that God is watching us, that He knows our hearts and minds. I think God is pretty unhappy with us now. Let's reach deep into our hearts and truly care about one another. Passing the American Jobs Act would be an incredible boon for our Blackbelt. Please tell your congressperson that you want that bill passed now. I know we are better than this. I know that most of us truly know that to remain silent in the face of evil is wrong. Let us join hands and stand together for justice and fairness for ALL.

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