

SYMPOSIUM DIRECTORATE STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE DEATH OF GEORGE FLOYD

June 5, 2020

Dear Sisco Symposium Friends & Family,
Greetings!

First, allow me to personally thank so many of you who have reached out to our family with your thoughtful words of hope and your prayers. I also know of so many others who feel muted, simply struggling with what to say, but whose hearts are hurt and share our pain, I thank you also, for we walk in the same Spirit.

Within the past 4-6 months, our country has been faced with the most pervasive public health crisis it has ever known, and we have marshalled every resource across every industry to combat it. Unfortunately, just a few days ago, before our very eyes, we all witnessed a significant crescendo of the world's greatest public health crisis and have seen how ill-equipped we have been to address it. Systemic Racism and Oppression of Black People and others of Color is not new, and while recent losses of George, Ahmaud, and Breonna have brought it to the forefront once again, it has always been there, awkwardly, comfortably unresolved for too long.

We grieve with the mothers, fathers, children, siblings, and families who are forced to reimagine life without their loved ones. For our family, it has also been deeply personal.

With over-cried eyes and on our knees to Almighty God in our family room – Worship has been our weapon!

Watching the horrific murder on video all the following occurred:

...how can I protect my two gifted and beautiful black sons, who simply for being made in the image of Father God may be harassed and harmed?

...how much we sense the absence of Rodney's clear Spirit-filled affirming voice speaking into this time and space?

...my body shuddered with the sensation of breathlessness, unconsciously recalling years of struggle as the 'only Black _' always having to excel twice, thrice and more than your peers

just to be visible, and then to be even recognized. With over-cried eyes and on our knees to Almighty God in our family room – Worship has been our weapon!

The windpipes of our people have been compressed for a very long time.

This most recent event was tragic, not because George Floyd was Black. It was tragic simply because he was an image bearer of God.

Because of Christ, those of us who dare call Him Abba, Daddy have continued to harbor a quiet fervent Hope.

From the streets of D.C. to Denver and L.A. to Atlanta, we see the footsteps of our future leaders in the young people of our country. The Rodney Sisco Symposium is committed to its mission to inform, prepare, and influence future Christian leaders to see, embrace, and practice holistic biblical Kingdom Diversity.

Rodney said, ‘...being the body of Christ is that we understand what grace is. Grace says that we are to be patient with each other. We spend time with each other. We’re preparing young men and women to know...how to be people who are able to engage with difference and conflict in a way that still says we’re doing it as men and women of God.’

Our work is strategically and unashamedly focused on college campuses, investing in developing leaders whose world views are purposely biased toward diversity, equity, and inclusion as taught in the Bible – Rev 5:9, ‘...from every tribe, every nation, every tongue, every people...’ and with the desire to work toward that now. – Matt. 6:10, ‘...Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven...’

This we believe is one way we begin to inoculate our world against the pandemic of racism and oppression and restore peace and reconciliation.

In addition to the pathways you may already be exploring, we want to direct you to some helpful resources. These include an upcoming Live Webinar on Tuesday, June 9th, entitled “400 Years of Racial Injustice & Violence, A Call for an Antiracist Christian Identity”, two thought provoking speeches – one by Rodney Sisco – “Who is my Neighbor?” and, the other, by Dr. Bernice King – “The Fierce Urgency of Now”. You will find these all listed below and can link to them directly from our website at www.Rodneysiscosymposium.org.

We ask you to continue to pray and invite you to join your hands with ours and build this Kingdom work together. Please connect with our website above and consider supporting this work financially.

May God bless you and your family always,

On Behalf of the Sisco Symposium Directorate,

Hasana Pennant Sisco

Co-Executive Director