

PASTORING DURING PROTEST AND PANDEMIC

Conversation between Adriene Thorne, Amantha Barbee, Kate Murphy

USING THIS CONVERSATION GUIDELINE

- *We recommend listening/watching the workshop together with your small group.*
 - *Below are some points from the workshop around which you can have conversation but feel free to go off script and use any other parts of the workshop that stirs a response.*
 - *Remember, the conversation is not about recalling content, but sharing your honest responses to them, both emotionally, intellectually, and even physically. Help create a safe space in which one can explore and express all aspects of their response to the workshop.*
 - *Every question will land differently for a white person and for a person of color because of the racialized experience in America. And some questions are directed to white people (e.g. how they were taught racism) and others are directed to people of color (e.g. how they experienced and responded to racism).*
 - *The times in parenthesis is the approximate time in the audio when that particular quote or phrase was spoken.*
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WORKSHOP OUTLINE

1. All three speakers shared their experiences of being in protest.
 - a. Did any of their stories surprise you?
 - b. Adriene mentions a technique used by NYPD called cattling (21:00), where they trap protesters. Did you hear of this technique before?
2. All three speakers said that though they agree with the intention of the protest, they do not think it's pastorally responsible to guilt the congregants to join the protest.
 - a. Do you agree with that?
3. Have you joined any protests (current and past)?
 - a. Share your experience in your small group.
 - b. Did it affect any changes in your ideas on race, policing, church or God?
4. "No justice no peace" (13.00). Kate admits she, as a white person, first heard it as a threat. But she realizes that it is a declaration of fact, that when there is no justice, there is no peace because the biblical understanding of shalom is "state of existence of flourishing and wellbeing for all people and creatures." And where people might say there was peace until protests started she says, "there has never been peace in this land since white colonists came and started a campaign of genocide."
 - a. What do you hear when hear the chant, "No justice no peace?"
 - b. How does your understanding of "Shalom" interpret that chant?

5. Kate talks about how white people do not like to be called out of their complicity in racism. But she challenges us saying “just because I am uncomfortable, doesn’t mean what’s happening is wrong....Total depravity that is core understanding of humanity...give us a theological framework to sit with discomfort.”
 - a. If you are a white person, share when you felt discomfort in talking about racism. Did you do anything to remove the discomfort? Do you feel uncomfortable now?
 - b. How should one sit with that discomfort? Does the doctrine of depravity provide a theological framework for it?
6. Amantha (39:50) mentions about listening to a young lady who said in a video that she would burn down Target. She listened several times because she wanted to understand the young person. That is a mature and difficult response because most of us make judgment before listening.
 - a. Target represented the system of oppression to the young person. Could you understand how Target can represent a system of oppression?
 - b. Does the news help us to listen or does it rush us to judgment?
 - c. Have you spent time really listening to the protesters?
 - d. Are you listening to your neighbors who are not of your race? Your church?
7. Racism as a system is a sin that we got caught in (36:00). Metaphor of racism as “getting wet.” Everyone got wet, meaning everyone is racist.
 - a. Do you agree with this?
8. Adriene says, “Each person of faith has to figure out what their role is in the protest.” (20:02)
 - a. She mentions civil rights story and that the people in the streets were not the only ones protesting, but those who were taking care of children and prepare meals when they come back.
 - b. She also mentions how protesting could be triggering for people of color
 - c. What do you think is your role? Your congregation’s role?

CLOSING

- Have the group say the words “No justice no peace” three times. Share what you felt or realized as you said those words.
- End the meeting by praying the Lord’s Prayer.