

Introduction: The year was 1998, I moved from Miami, FL to Johnston County Garner, NC

- I'm originally from an island located directly south of the United States, yet I learned quickly that though I had traveled here North, from Miami, FL, and came from a place even more South of that, I learned when arrived in Johnston County NC that I was arriving “in the South” - I had no clue what that meant in Feb of 1998, it didn't make sense to me, but indeed, ignorant as I was, I had traveled North, and was now in the South.
- I bought a little house in Johnston County (love the country by the way, a nice quiet area) and I noticed most of my neighbors had these flags everywhere, they looked so cool to me (they looked almost like a British flag), and so I figured that it had to be the State flag, 'cause they were so many of them everywhere.
- I remember going to my neighbor one day, with a broken English, and say, “Hola neighbor, I'm your new neighbor, from the South, and I really like your flag (NC State Flag right?), where can I get one of those?”
- You can imagine the look of confusion in this neighbor, I was about to walk out of there to go buy a conf. flag
 - You see I went to College in Miami, but never learned that part of history....
- After doing a little research in the days of NO internet, I quickly realized why my neighbor was surprised and NOT very welcoming of me.... And I learned why certain parts of North America are called “the South...”; and the history made me sad.

There was a particular neighbor in JC that I decided to love and befriend. Out of all of my neighbors, this was the one that truly hated Latinos and anyone else that didn't look like him. You may say “then why did you befriend him?”

- You see I'm convinced of a couple of things: That NOTHING is as strong as the power of the LOVE of CHRIST / that His LOVE covers a multitude of sins, / and I was also convinced that there was something he didn't know about history, nor about Latinos, nor about the gospel - (even though strangely, He thought he was more Christian than me despite of him treating me like an animal)
- Every attempt I made to love AND serve this neighbor, was met with slander and hostility back towards me, and many times I left this guy's presence in tears, it was so hard ya'all; but you see, love endures all things, suffers all things, and in the words of Doctor King, I too had a dream to see hearts transformed. For The Bible tells me that prophecy shall fail; tongues shall cease; and knowledge shall vanish away, but Christ's love never fails... - 1 Co. 13:8
- Of course this neighbor could not admit, conceive, nor see his sin, he knew The Word yet was blind. Nothing new to Jesus, he faced many that knew plenty of Bible, yet were blind.
- And all the love and serving and listening to this neighbor didn't seem to be having an effect, until one day something happened...
 - While I was listening to him, I started weeping of pain because of something he said about his own people, and he didn't see it coming...
 - You see he was explaining to me that there is a sector of the white community that is hurting and feels discriminated against by their own people... / he told me that even though they are white and ethnically part of the majority, he said to me “Raudel I feel that the rejection that you talked to me about that minorities feel, I think they feel that”; and asked him “who are they?” And then he uttered one of the most horrific words I've ever heard when describing a human being; he said they call this people
 - **‘white trash’**
 - And as soon as I heard that, it broke me deeply, and I responded “why we anyone call another human being trash”, and I started sobbing for his people I didn't even know about,
 - **And it was then**, when this neighbor realized that my pain, and the pain of African Americans and other minorities was REAL too

- I was genuinely broken for his people; he didn't know what to do with grace, and it was there where he started seeing how dismissive, arrogant, and absent he was **to people that were not like him**, he started seeing that a lot of American History is not the pretty sanitized version we get on so many school textbooks.... He started facing reality and facts as I faced reality and facts with him, and wept for his people and we started going and doing some beautiful things in trailer parks reminding them that they are loved and beautiful and made in God's image, not trash....
- That day he asked me, "why do you care so much, where do you come from?" I said, "*neighbor, the Bible says that because of Jesus I now belong to God, and is not that important where I come from, what's important is where I'm going because of Jesus; I wanna tell you more about Him, and how His love transforms us...*".
- Today we love each other, and this now 85 year old white guy will be the first one to tell you how blind he was to his discrimination and indifference of others....

I have no idea how to preach what I'm about to preach to you Summit..., because it comes from a place of love, but so many are so fragile to truth / so stock in their ways, that we may not be willing to listen. When we (either knowingly or without meaning to) refuse to be one / refuse to get outside our comfort zone / refuse to do live with people that are NOT like you / that lack of Unity puts at stake our witness and the credibility of our message that Jesus was sent to reconcile us to God and to one another (that's literally what Jesus said in His prayer to God in John 17). - here is the way he put it, 20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. John 17:20-23

Prayer: Father God, give us disposition to hear Your Word today. You say in your Word in 1st Corinthians that: Not many of us were wise by human standards; not many of us were influential; not many of us were of noble birth; and here I am, that's me. But You oh God chose the foolish things of the world (like me) **to shame the wise**; God You chose the weak things of the world (like me) **to shame the strong**. God you chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—**to nullify the things that are**, to bring down false powers and fears, so that **no one may boast**, that we may live in the rest, satisfaction, and joy that it is **to live for YOUR Glory alone, and not ours**, as 1 Cor. Chapter 1 says.

- Father if you can use anything (and I know you can), please, please Lord, use me today. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Jesus speaks in John chapter 15, and right after he gives a strong command to love one another, He says in verse 18:

18 "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. 19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. (And now we see a pattern here where Jesus is saying, "*if they did this & the other to me, they'll do it to you*", see it in the second half of the next verse where Jesus says) 20 ... if they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. 21 They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 Whoever hates me hates my Father as well. 24 If I had not done among them the works no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. 25 But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.'

26 "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. 27 And you also must testify... This is the Word of God.

The story of humanity only really makes sense at the light of the story of the Bible. ~~Take it from me who sat under atheist teachings for many years....~~

- Q: What is this story that gives sense to the world we live in? That before you and I existed, before humanity existed, there was a battle of **two** kingdoms in the heavenly realms...
- A beautiful angel of light rebelled against God and His kingdom, and fooled a third of the angels to rebel with him and try to overthrow God. The result of that rebellion is that God kicked him and the fallen angels out of His Kingdom down to this world. (Jesus Himself said in Luke 10:18 **"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."**)

When you realized that this story begins with this world being occupied first by the very evil kingdom that rebelled against God, the same enemy that fooled Adam and Eve, that gives you so much light into everything else...

- That means that EVERY COUNTRY AND EVERY CULTURE on planet earth is affected by evil and sin.
- There is sin in every culture. **Now, there is also beauty in every culture** as different as they are. God is a God of creativity and diversity, **just look at the flowers, how different yet how beautiful they are... And how different is the Niagara Falls in the East, from the Grand Canyon in the West, yet they are both breathtaking.**
- So there is lots of beauty in the diversity of different cultures, but church, there is also a lot of sin that comes with that as well, a lot of **worldliness** in this world of which JESUS says in John 15, you are NOT of...
- So when Godliness comes to a worldly culture (**whatever that culture and country may be**), when Godliness comes, Godliness DOES NOT remove the distinctives of that culture, (the music style, flavors, and colors of that particular culture) **however Godliness DOES REMOVE anything and everything in those things that does NOT honor THE LORD and HIS WORD.** 2x
- So when we talk about diversity/unity/oneness, we are talking of embracing how different God has made us, and celebrate the beauty and witness we may lose if we are NOT one, but you can embrace it because we are NOT talking about anything that will dishonor THE WORD OF GOD because **nothing is better for a human being than THE GOD OF THE WORD.** The highest beauty / awe / and satisfaction you can wish somebody **is God**. **If we celebrate our diversity without being united in God, we will only be celebrating diverse manifestations of sin.**
- **Christianity does not remove our diversity, our different colors and styles;** no, God is trying to deliver us from any sin and idolatry there may be in our culture (you can keep on being who God made you to be) and actually you can enjoy most the uniqueness of your culture when you are NOT participating in sin that separates you from the God of joy who created the diversity to begging with, but we cannot undermine sin by elevating culture... We praise Jesus in all the colors, sounds, and flavors of our culture, **because it's in the freedom from sin that Jesus alone offers, where you can truly enjoy that culture. Every time any culture GIVES weight and glory to God, the result is always joy & life.** And every time culture demands weight and glory that only God should have, the result is conflict and death.
 - (-p- But the reality is that this is a fallen and broken world, NO culture is exempt from SIN, because before that culture came to be, satan and demons already ruled the land...

Why is this so important to understand? Because some people say, **"such and such country is always been Christian, they started with a Christian culture"**, listen, at the light of God's Word that reveals the depravity of every human being: **NO country and NO culture has started with a Christian or Christ like heart...** Because the truth is, that if you are referring to a country on planet earth, then that country was birthed under the influence of the enemy of God (satan) in a worldly kingdom, by humans who possess a wicked, self-interested and deceitful heart.

- **The Word of God debunks the lies we have believed, that's how it sets us free....**

Let us keep hammering this principle Jesus is teaching in John 15 (if you think **'Games of Thrones'** is good, you haven't read John 15 yet 😊 so good! 😊). John 15 is saying: You shouldn't feel at home in

this culture, because we are not of this culture. / We shouldn't feel at home in this country, because we are not of this country. We shouldn't feel at home in this world, because we are not of this world! We are living between 2 kingdoms, the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world; and they couldn't be any more different:

- God's Kingdom is eternal, this kingdom is not
- God's Kingdom is light, this one is darkness
- God's Kingdom leads to life, the best this one can give you on your last breath is an expensive tomb stone
- We received a foretaste/a sampler of the Kingdom of God when Jesus came and walked a few years here: His paths are straight / His life kindness and love / all His works were good and with pure intentions / all His words were true / His steps healing for us, / His end glory to God and reconciliation for us to God and with one another. Listen, the unity and world peace we all long for is only possible when humanity surrenders to the King of peace. We got a sampler of His Kingdom when He came the first time, and He will return a second time for the multiethnic church He promised Abraham, and the one HE will end up with as we see it in Rev. 5
- We live between two kingdoms, the pattern of human history is that for thousands of years, we cannot achieve world peace on our own, isn't it obvious? How many more thousands of years have to pass for us to humble ourselves to God and acknowledge this. The kingdom of this world is against the Kingdom of God.
- If we want to see unity and God's Kingdom here, we must start acting as if we are NOT from this world. -p-
 - At best, this world returns "**good for good**", that's humanistic, what a low bar...
 - This world also returns "**evil for evil**" we act worse than animals...
 - This world returns "**evil for good**" that's satanic... this is satan's playground
 - Oh but those who return "**good for evil**" those are called Christians, they are NOT from this world
 - Jesus said: "**Blessed are the peace makers, for they will be called children of God.**" Mathews 5:9
- Believer we are NOT of this world. PLEASE, please, please know this: Our hope is not in particular country or a particular president; our hope is a PERFECT KING names JESUS and HIS KINGDOM! - Our hope is in THE LORD. He is above all. He is greater, and better.
- We are not of this world church. In the words of Lewis, who was an atheist who came to Christ, "If we find ourselves with a thirst and desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most natural explanation is that we were made for another world." C.S. Lewis

Now, here is the dilemma that Jesus is presenting in John 15: That in the Christian life, we see a ton of inexplicable love, but at the same time the Christian life is one where you'll be hated...

- So we see God leaving His throne, bringing us out of spiritual blindness and stubbornness, all by grace and love, and that same God sends us out to love a world that hated him (every country and every culture including this one will have a tendency to cling to its culture rather than to The Word of God, when the culture feels at risks you'll despise God's Word because it challenges your identity/it challenges power and what you cling to... - the world Jesus calls us to love (for God so loved the world) Jesus says will hate us also, just as they hated Him.... That's a dilemma....
- John 15 reveals to us that we shouldn't be surprised or alarmed when we see hostility and animosity towards Christians.... And our response to that hostility is to love others still, because THEY are who WE WERE towards God, and WE were saved by GRACE....
- Not even in Disney movies the kingdom of darkness is compatible with the kingdom of God, but the heart of Jesus is not destruction, but salvation, yet this truth remains, Jesus says 18 "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If Jesus was perfect (and He was), and they hated him, it shouldn't surprise me when my neighbor hates me (even when he thinks he is Christian), but hate towards you is not personal, you need to learn to see all people with the eyes of love of Christ, they hate to let go something sinful or dear to them in the system or the culture, they don't know what they are doing by protecting what they think is better, when in reality what they cling to is too

little compared to God... (Jesus said that while hanging on the cross, “*Father forgive them... for they do not know what they are doing*”, / Steven said that too while he was being stoned to death... he knew they were rejecting God and the truth, it wasn't personal for him); next verse, **19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own.** (Why? Because everybody loves people just like them; but that's not love at all... that's loving yourself.... Loving someone that looks like you is loving the fact that you don't have to make much effort nor inconvenience yourself to love that person, that's not love....)

- Here's the logic of what Jesus is saying: “*People will know you're united with me because you're united to each other.*” **But what have we done?** We flip this entire idea. Jesus said we were supposed to be united to each other and hated by the world. But for far too many of us, we're comfortable with the world and indifferent to one another.
- It's worth asking yourself: Is your unity in the body of Christ so outrageous that it can't be ignored—just like Jesus' ministry? Or are you just hanging out with people like you? The last 10 people you texted. Do they look just like you? The people you've had in your home in the past month—do they look just like you? The books you're reading—are they written by people who look and think just like you? Brothers and sisters, that's not unity. That's not diversity. That's isolation. And it's not why Jesus came.
- **As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.**
- And because we are despised as Christians, that's the reason church we think it twice to pull our Bibles out in a coffee shop (because you don't want people to include you in the false narrative that we are bigoted intolerant haters...). *Now, do bigoted intolerant haters exist? Yes, in every country & culture, we already established that.*
- Jesus said the world will hate people like Him; is also the reason why when someone asks me, “*what do you do for living?*” I respond, “*I'll tell you but you have to promise me not to judge me*” (all of the sudden they think I'm going to say I'm a hit man or something, and at that point they are like “*I don't really wanna know now what you do*” 😊); but I tell them that because when I tell them that “*I'm a pastor*”, **they see what I meant**, they wrestle now to give me the tolerance they claim to have, *'cause they wanna hate me but just said they won't judge me*
- Jesus says “*I've moved you from a kingdom of darkness to my kingdom of light, and that's why they'll hate you,*” the light named Jesus, has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light. And when you are His, you will be despised because **the truth of God abides in you and it clashes with the fact people want to do what they want to do** (they want to keep being homogenous, they want independence from God - independence may be an American way and message but it sure ain't The Bible's message); Summit family don't lose sight that: **What matters most in this world is not the temporary hate and trials of this world, but the God who made it.**
- Jesus is better than life, and the reason you can have strength to love this world, rather than be affected by hate, is precisely because you are no longer from here; you are here, but this ain't home yet....
- I don't have to be affected by the hate, in fact, I abide in the ONE who IS LOVE, I can love while being hated because I'm just passing through, I'm heaven bound... *I'm in a ship of salvation called Jesus that will never sink*
- Remember the words of Jesus in the next verse: **20 ...if they persecuted me, they will persecute you also... 21 They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know (GOD) the one who sent me. 24 ...'They hated me without reason.'** But as for you, in the same way I was sent to the world knowing I would be hated to reveal the one they do not know: **27 you also must testify...** testify there is a better King than us / testify there is a better ending to this life / testify there is a better way and place, a better Kingdom
 - One with no more funerals / no more hospitals / no more sickness / no more death / no more separation, and people from every culture and language in perfect harmony and love

Let me bring this down to earth a little bit more by applying this to us / to our culture here in the U.S.A. that God's Word may renew our mind (**make no mistake though, I love this place, I am so grateful to God for the U.S.**) but I'm applying it here because I'm not preaching in Haiti or London right now,

We already established that because our enemy occupied this world first, ALL cultures and countries are affected by his temporary evil rule.... No nation in a fallen world post Gen. 3 is formed Christian.... And the reason why that's real important to understand here in The United States is because many of us assume that the U.S. had a great Christian past that we need to get back to, and this narrative minimizes terrible none-Christian acts and actions under the name of "people of God" - **in the words of John MacArthur, "Our Nation's founding fathers were not Christians, they were Theists."** John MacArthur - *He repeated that recently BTW when he was interviewed by Ben Shapiro.*

- If by any stretch of the imagination you think this is an anti-USA sermon you are dead wrong; **fun fact: Do you know what was the first thing I learned in English? The very first thing I learned in English was The National Anthem. I asked my Math teacher to teach it to me because I wanted to pay honor to the land that welcomed me, I love this land, but please hear this:**
- The ideologies of this world tell you that cultures are "*neutral and sacred*", but The Bible says that there is not one that is good, and that the kingdom of evil resides in this world **for now**.
- Because humanity rebelled against God, ALL cultures of this world have worldliness in it (including the so called "Christian culture" of this country)
- We are living in times where politics, alliances, country, and president, seem to be more important than God and His Kingdom,
- But Jesus wants us to be people of His Word, and He keeps pointing us upward: We are not of this world.
- The church is not a place where we primarily talk about the nation and its leaders, but rather where we talk about HE who is seating on the throne (God almighty), and that doesn't mean we won't call out sin or stay silent where-ever side of the isle sin may lie..., but again: The hope for us is not a nation and a leader; the hope for humanity is Jesus and His Kingdom. He has eternal impact, that's what John 15 is trying to tell you....
- We DO pray for our leaders, but we are not of this world.

Now you see why is so important to remember we are not of this world in our USA context: Not to put our hope in a nation, or in material prosperity, and to discern how The Word of God is fulfilled that all nations and cultures have sin, and therefore a nation and a culture CANNOT be our hope. [*in the same way there is no way to see the reason for our present sin unless we go back and see the history of the fall of man in the garden of Eden, there is also no way to see our present discrimination if we don't look back to our own history and do the same...*]. And I say this with much sadness, having shed so many tears in private about the following **sad** and gut wrenching truths; **what makes the following so sad, is that the church was far too often silent while the following was happening:**

- The killing of Natives Americans in this country was real... (people made in the image of God), the trail of tears was real: this nation was founded on the genocide of Native Americans // Also, some of the fathers of this nation like Thomas Jefferson, would cut out from the Bible everything that they did not like; **does a Christian do that? -p-** // the constitution, when it was written in 1787, didn't really stop slavery and didn't help people of color did it? // just 100 years ago, women could not even vote in the elections // Another fact: George Washington and others, on the one hand approved racism and the slavery of humans beings, but on the other hand, they would have relations with slaves of color and then would NOT recognize those children as their own because they were "not totally white...", (*there's a monument on D.C. about this*) so to them black woman were NOT human enough to have rights nor freedom, but yet human enough for them to render their selfish pleasures; **those are not founding Christian principles.** The Word of God is fulfilled! At the light of John 15, no nation, culture, or people in the world is Christian **except those who acknowledge their sins, repent, and place their trust and life in total control of The Lord Jesus Christ.**
- Christian, you are NOT of this world...

Now, is the USA worse or better than other countries? That's just the wrong question... because the USA is **A** country, and that means is not our home, no country deserves our greatest alliance (we are not of this world remember?), is not whether our sins are big or small, is just that this is a country and it won't last like God's Kingdom, if we trust in it rather than God we fail... and that matters because if we do not admit this, we'll minimize aspects of our past that we need to grapple with, so that we may not repeat the behavior.... a reality check is never fun, but we need it if we wanna grow... --- **we love our country best when we don't love it first..., when we love God first, only then can we have harmony with each other.** What has happened is that in our particular context and history, a culture wanted to copy some Biblical ideas without wanting to submit to The Bible and the God of the Bible... They ran from Queen Mary in Europe looking for religious freedom (her nick name is "*bloody Mary*" for all the Christians she killed), **yet what do we call those who killed so many Native Americans when they arrived here and enslaved Africans? "*Bloody Christians?*"** It kind of doesn't fit right? **What you see in an attempt to mirror The Bible without wanting to actually submit to what it says.** - Listen Church: **just like the Pharisees, it's totally possible for you and I to attempt to obey God without actually loving God.** - here is the contrast:

- The USA committed sins in their inception passing as "The People of God / as Israel"
- The revolution became a form of "exodus", but an exodus from Europe rather than from their sins.
- Lincoln became like "the Moses" that led the people out of slavery, signing "*the proclamation of emancipation*" 156 years ago, **glory to God for that, but did that discrimination end 156 years ago? NO, because the problem is sin and the only solution is Jesus Christ.**
- The declaration of independence / the constitution / and the bill of rights (praise God for those documents, **problem is**) for many they substitute "The Bible" and nothing can match The Holy Scriptures; as soon you and I deviate from The Bible, and try to add or remove to it, we have gone astray.
- July 4th (the day of independence) overshadowed "Resurrection Sunday" (Easter, were we acknowledge our utter dependence on God)
- The enemies of the country are those who threaten material prosperity, instead of spiritual prosperity, **and that is why we are in ruins spiritually speaking, wasting our lives in search of material things**
- More importance is given to what the founding fathers of the nation said, than what the Fathers of the church said in the Bible (*and BTW/FYI, here is D earliest picture found in history of Jesus and His disciples*)
- Your taxes have replaced your tithes and offerings, ~~we tend to give more generously to the government of this world, than to the God of the universe through His local Church here.~~
- The pledge of allegiance became more important than the prayer of repentance of a sinner
- And the president (of whatever party) has become like "the pastor of the nation" trying to replace the authority and peace figure of the only good shepherd (Jesus) who confronts our sin for our good. **You see even if a future President was the best Christian ever, he is just a man or a woman, don't trust in chariots and horses, when we trust in man we miss the strength and power OF GOD.**
- Let us not be so easily please, **our soul longs for THE LORD... stop putting your hope and identity in a tiny temporary kingdom in this temporary world**
- There is a better, eternal Kingdom, reigned by a King who is Holy / perfectly good, **He went home to prepare a place of eternal pleasure for you with Him, and He will return soon; trust Him, rest in Him.**

Our alliance church is NOT with this world, but with God and His Kingdom;

- I say this out of love: **Some of you have more allegiance to a political party than to THE WORD OF GOD: Repent! We can love each other in the midst of our differences.**
- I don't know what banner you go by, but if you call yourself a Christian, your banner is not "American" or "Cuban" your banner is Jehova Nissi; **God is your banner** (that's what Nissi means). Is

not that I'm not grateful of where I was born, I love that little Caribbean island where I was born (great mojitos), but what it is, is...

- that I am more grateful of where I'm going because of the blood of Jesus shed for me, than where I come from! I'm not home yet; ~~make no mistake my destination is secure, no one can pluck me out...~~
- Perhaps your banner and identity is "*I'm an American citizen*", hate to pop your bubble but The Bible says, "*our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*" Philippians 3:20
- Our banner is not geographical to where we are born physically, we can appreciate creation and it's God made beauty, but my joy is in the new birth spiritually, for it leads me to the maker of all things.
- **Your affiliations are revealed by the banners you wave, I want to wave nothing but Jesus and Him crucified**

You see some of you go by some other banners... some go by a culture banner I already explained (for you it's country and culture rather than God's Kingdom and His Word) but,

- Some go by a "*The theological banner*". Let me tell you:
 - I don't care if your banner is charismatic, Baptist, or reformed, if that banner ain't Jesus, it's the wrong banner! -p- And in the words of D.A. Carson: if you are not evangelizing, I can care less about your R.T.
 - Be careful people of God with the wrong banners and labels.... *My grandmother had no clue who Luther or Calvin was*, but she knew God's Word and believed it. It's alright if she didn't know Luther and Calvin, she knew Jesus!
- Some of you go by "*The educated banner*", thank God for education, I want my kids to graduate from College
 - But let me tell you, the greatest legacy I can leave my kids is not a paid home, a car, and a great education... The greatest thing I can leave my kids is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the excellencies of the saving knowledge of the glory and love of our everlasting Lord Jesus Christ.
 - I don't care if my kids say that dad is poor materially, I don't care if they say I don't have enough degrees; I want to be said of me, what people said about Peter and John, people knew on paper they were unschooled and ordinary man but yet they were astonished as it was obvious they had walked with Jesus and lived in the power of God's Spirit! If my kids say that I walked with Jesus, that's enough for me. *In the words of Paul, as having nothing, yet possessing everything.*
 - If you are educated and a professional, praise God, leverage that for God's Kingdom, for His mission, and remember not to boast at all, for "*What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?*" 1 Corinthians 4:7
 - Don't ever forget we were those who said in the past that we didn't need God, and God saved us from our blindness and foolishness. We were those who said, "*I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.*" Rev. 3:17 - it was the grace and love of God what opened our eyes to our pride; what you and I are is, in desperate need of God's grace daily.... His love is our life support, our only hope, and our reason to not give up.
- May your banner, your identity, your tribe (may not be tribalism of any kind) but the all compassing God. What banner/flag do u wave? We are residents of this world, but citizens of The Kingdom of God.

"Why are your emotions and mine not satisfied by all the things we see here on earth? It's like carrying a large ship to a narrow channel, such that it cannot sail there, it will even touch bottom; but give that ship the space of the sea and such will run like the wind.

In the same way, everything here, everything that delights you on earth, all the comforts that you know and long for, they are like narrow channels, small drops of pleasure that instead of satisfying, rather, inflame the appetite of your soul.

But take your soul to Jesus / bring it to Christ, and in Him you will find floods of deep living water in which your soul will have the space of the sea to run freely for the first time.” - John Flavel

Summit, the Dream is not a pretty neighborhood with white picket fences and kids riding bikes where everyone looks the same and everyone looks clean but they are NOT, the dream is pleasures forever in streets of gold with JESUS and the rest of His Bride where everyone is truly clean because of HIM! To God be the glory!

One day the United States will be a footnote in history. But the people of God and the kingdom of God will endure forever. Are we investing in those kingdoms, those relationships, and that unity?

Let us pray.... (real short prayer here) ***END***