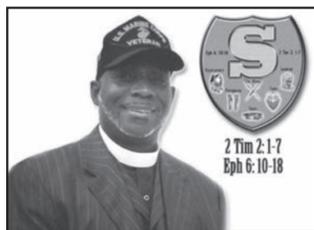


COMMUNITY NEWS



Breaking the Cycle

REV. DR. ROBERT L. HARRISON, PH.D.
Men of S.T.E.E.L. Ministries
www.menofsteelministries.com

Saving our community

Praise the Lord Saints. If you were shocked or surprised of the Darren Wilson verdict, then you've been living under a rock for the past 40 years.

Satan has the uncanny ability to make the truth seem like a lie and vice versa. We now have to pray for the civil case that should have a better ending. Again, this is nothing new to us here in the Tampa Bay area.

I have to talk about the crime and injustice that may not involve actual weapons like guns but is just as deadly and damaging.

The St. Petersburg Housing Authority (SPHA) has launched an all-out attack on our neighborhoods and communities with its attempt to displace and evict historic pillars in our community, Advantage Village Academy and the Carter G. Woodson African America Museum.

I won't go into detail but I will talk on the strategy and "logic" they are using to end the life of these two community staples.

Being military trained, I see and I am very familiar with these tactics and these businesses don't understand that they are at the mercy of the SPHA because they are not being led by a military-trained individual.

Marines are trained in numerous tactics that when employed in the civilian sector, they are defenseless. They can't win using civilian methodology because it's useless. It's like going to a dentist after you broke your femur in three places. He maybe a professional and a doctor, but he is not equipped or trained in this area. The same holds true when a civilian-minded person attempts to battle a military-trained person in warfare. It's like bringing a Super Soaker to a M-16 gunfight, you won't stand a chance unless you are MacGyver and you turned the Super Soaker into a grenade launcher.

The SPHA has become desensitized and uncaring as to how detrimental their choices are to our kids in the immediate neighborhood of Midtown area.

Back to this verdict. There isn't much that can be done by us here except pray for them and hope they learn from what y'all did back in the 90s. I say y'all because I was stationed in another state at the time the riots were happening here.

Moving forward, we have to jump onto the bandwagon that was started back on

Nov. 17 when we had the Parental Engagement Forum at John Hopkins Middle School.

Although we focused mainly on the lowest performing five elementary schools in Pinellas County: Melrose, Campbell Park, Maximo, Lakewood and Fairmount Park, we will be moving forward with all of the schools in Pinellas County that currently are not a "4" schools, according to the format Dr. Karen Mapp described.

The moment we address this and focus our efforts towards producing a better end product, kids that have Jesus in their lives and in their actions, conduct and character, then we can begin to turn this epidemic around and force Satan to seek a new home.

We have more than 140 churches in St. Pete and although I don't know the number south of Central, it's more than enough to have things change.

This paradigm shift begins from the pulpits, then homes, then family, then neighborhoods, then communities, cities, states, so forth and so on.

BUT, if all the preacher is teaching is name it and claim it, blab it and grab it, fake it till you make it, then we are in for more of what we have had for the past 30 plus years.

A lot of folks talk about us apostolic preachers but the one thing they don't say is that we don't know the Word. They credit us for knowing the Word but they we take things to the extreme.

Well, I am a 21st century apostolic preacher that teaches. There are some issues in all churches but one thing is for sure, we have evidence that says that sometimes you have to have boundaries but you must stay in the Bible and not go outside the Bible to further nail it home.

This way helped me produced exceptional kids, but it wasn't the only principles we used.

Collectively we have to come together and combine strategies that work, not opinions, or new practices. The blueprint is currently in use and positively working for many but some have decided to keep it to themselves and well, it's time we show Satan we can come into the unity of the faith and do what's best for our kids, future, and society.

Till next week,
God Bless.
Dr. Rob



Thursday's Thoughts By Micki Morency

Unprovoked profiling

In light of the recent shootings of several unarmed Black American citizens, I felt compelled to share a personal experience to shed more light on how African Americans are regarded and treated in America. We police the world for Human rights violation. Who is policing us?

For the first time since I left my native country of Haiti forty years ago, I was racially profiled in Bostwick, Fla., an unincorporated community in Putnam County. It happened on October 28, 2013 while I was staying there with my husband who was completing an assignment in Palatka, Fla., as a locum tenens physician. We have happily lived and raised our daughters in St Petersburg for 28 years.

I left the house in Bostwick for a walk at 5:30 PM, with my music in my ears, minding my business. Twenty minutes into my walk, a white pickup truck pulled up next to me, spitting gravel. I removed my earplugs as I noticed there was no one else around and the Caucasian driver was talking and gesturing. His left arm was outside the window pointing at me accusingly.

"You live 'round here," he drawled in a very thick southern accent.

"Yeah," I answered.

"We had an incident 'round here yesterday. A man of your 'persuasion' was goin' round snappin' photos of people's automobiles," he added.

I shrugged.

"I want to know what street you livin on?" he continued.

I stared at him, shocked.

Then I noticed he was shirtless and toothless with a mean look on his face. He appeared to be in his mid-thirties. I put my earpieces back on and proceeded to cut my walk short and go back to the house.

As I turned on my street, he drove by me and slowed down, glaring at me through the passenger side window. I kept on walking, furtively looking around to see if there were any other people on their porches or front yards. I needed a witness in case he decided to do "something." The street was deserted, even the dogs stopped barking. I quickened my steps as anger boiled inside me.

What have I done to this man to deserve this harassment?

If the color of my skin bothered him so much, was that my problem?

The response in my head to his questions might have started a verbal confrontation. Suddenly I thought of all the previous victims of racial profiling. Was it worth it to get into a war of words with this ignorant, toothless, tattooed, backward idiot?

He probably was incapable of understanding my weapon of words and I was not prepared to face his firearms, which I was sure he carried in that truck to protect himself against people of my "persuasion." My immediate response would have been: "Man, this is 2013 and in case you can't read, I know you watch TV. There's a man of my "persuasion" in the White house. So get the hell away from me"

But I didn't say anything. Did that make me a coward or a smart woman not willing to self-sacrifice for the greater cause?

After all, how did all the racially motivated deaths move our plight forward? How did they change the discourse of racial inequality in America today?

Now I can understand why African American males might feel angry and tired of being profiled. That was my first time and it was one time too many that afternoon.

Why do we have to explain our presence in certain areas of our country?

Why did the presence of an unarmed African-American woman threaten the security and peace of a big white man?

Economic segregation had already removed the people of my persuasion from areas inhabited by people of his "persuasion."

But must we also not even walk on "their" streets? Sit on "their" park benches?

Isn't it a free country? Or is it only free for some but not all?

One might say: Why are we still writing, talking and airing racial incidents? My answer is: We can't afford not to. As long as people like "toothless" are raising children who stared and gaped at me that afternoon as if I was from another planet and ran inside, perhaps to alert him, then our fight for equality, acceptance and respect will continue for a long time.

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