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Each Human Being is Precious

By Syretta Spears
UCF Forum columnist
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But currently Black lives are in danger and in need of support to make change.



A biblical parable speaks of a shepherd leaving his flock in safety to tend to one missing sheep in danger. (Photo by Alan Currie in iStock)

Many have taken offense to the slogan Black Lives Matter.

The rebuttal is often that All Lives Matter. They absolutely should all matter, but this reply misses the point: A population of Americans – Black Americans – is in danger due

to discrimination and violence. While the intention of the phrase, All Lives Matter, may be to convey a sense of unification and equality, the phrase can be insensitive and divisive as it lessens the focus of real discrimination and violence toward people of color.

In the eyes of government and law enforcement, white lives seem to have always mattered. If all people were equal and All Lives Matter, there would be no need for the Black Lives Matter movement.

So I ask the question: If “all men are created equal,” as the Declaration of Independence states, does that “all” truly include Black lives?

A biblical parable speaks of a shepherd, his 100 sheep, and tending to one of them in danger. The story continues that 99 safe sheep are left unattended while the shepherd leaves to rescue the one lost sheep.

Optimistically, this parable adds perspective to the growing debate surrounding the statement that Black Lives Matter, in essence explaining that each human being is precious. From a biblical context, the lost sheep can be perceived as that of redemption for all and/or advocating for focus on a race of people (in this case the “lost sheep”) in need of momentary support for change.

Offering a condensed perspective, for more than 400 years Blacks have experienced more than their fair share of inhumane mistreatment, inequality and brutality at the hands of people who viewed certain human beings as mere property and a means to securing economic prosperity. Along came the abolition of and emancipation era of slavery, and there was hope that life would be better and there would be true equality for all. Onward to the crusade for civil rights, the fight for rights to vote, a good education by way of desegregation of schools, and really the hopefulness that we would be judged by our character and not by skin color.

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Fast forward to present day, the biases of old remain ever present and troublesome for African Americans. This biased (and often deadly) treatment now emanates sometimes in the form of police brutality against those of color, especially those of African lineage.

The nation and the world recently witnessed 8 minutes and 46 seconds of frustration. Recorded for all to see, America witnessed a human being (another unarmed, compliant black man) being choked to death by police officers with a blatant disregard for human life. That man, George Floyd, is one of a growing number of African Americans that the nation has witnessed or heard of being harassed or slain at the hands of law enforcement.

To that effect, the global Black Lives Matter movement was organized to bring attention to police brutality, systemic racism and injustice against Black lives. The Black Lives Matter movement’s guiding principles are eradication of racism and empowerment to

intervene and seek change through education and fundraising when violence is inflicted on Black communities.

At the most simplistic level, the movement seeks to reduce nationwide statistics that Black people (and other people of color) are twice as likely to be killed by police while unarmed, in comparison to white individuals, according to a report in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine. The Black Lives Matter movement strives to combat and counteract violence against Black people globally.

No one has said, “Only Black Lives Matter.” We know All Lives Matter, but currently Black lives are in danger and in need of support (the lost sheep) to make change.

Thus, all lives won’t matter until Black lives do, too. All people are deserving of life, liberty and justice – if, in fact, we are all equal.

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