

Jeanbaptiste Lamisere

Introduction to Racial Reconciliation

Professor Nathaniel B. Perez

Date 02/04/2023

My Autobiography

The information that was communicated in the lecture by Gabriel Salguero is that group power may be the cause of Racism. It reminds me of 1869 about the Negro Babercue in a book called Without Sanctuary. Power was given to white supremacy. Salguero believes If power is removed from all, Racism would be abolished. How do we fight a sin like Racism? And yet allow such a group to exist. In this paper, I will discuss my racial autobiography.

What is my earliest memory of race?

When I was a child, I did not think much of race. I grew up in Haiti middle-class family. My father was in the military, and we live in a city called "Cite Militaire," which translates as Military City. It was for those who served in the military. It was not a military base; however, it would consider a military base in the United States. Everyone around us shares the same skin tone. It was not something I was aware of as a child. I saw people with different skin colors, primarily in movies. I became conscious of race in history class when I was thirteen. We learned how the French treated the Haitians as enslaved people. The treatment was inhuman and ruthless. They raped and murdered women and children for their pleasure. They would cut off our toes to prevent us from running away. When I came to the United States in 1996 at 15, when I was in High School, all my teachers were white. The black people that worked there were the security guards and the janitors.

Have I had any negative experiences associated with my racial identity or that of someone else?

I did not think much of Racism as a child because everyone shared the same skin tone in Haiti. Yes, some may be lighter than others, but generally, we know we are the same. It was not an issue for me growing

up. However, It was different when I came to the United States. Racism is everywhere. Even a simple application asked you a question about your race. In the United States, it was evident that I was viewed as a lesser person because of my skin color. We were also taught that the color black is dirty and white is beautiful. It was the norm for a kid in the United States to experience this teaching in the 90s. I did not challenge it because back home, it is prohibited to question your teacher. Even the idea that black people are not fully evolved is racist, but white people are beautiful and fully evolved. Therefore, this stigma was pinned on black kids like me because of my skin color. It was a terrible teaching back then that was supported by the government. According to Morrison, You are not supposed to be upset by it because you will be seen as unsafe, angry, and likely to make trouble (Morrison, p. 16).

When did I become racially conscious?

I knew about Racism in theory, but I became racially conscious when I came to the United States. There is a difference between learning about it and experiencing it. It is another level. Racist individuals do not understand the amount of damage they have done to a person of a different race when they have been racist. It is usual for them to act the way they did. In high school, during lunchtime, I looked where there were black individuals to sit next to them because, in my mind, a white kid would not feel comfortable sitting next to a black kid. It was weird that there in the cafeteria, there was segregation. Furthermore, even that was the norm for the school. It has to change.

From whom or in what period of life did I learn the most about race and diversity?

I learned most about race when I became a Christian at my church. My pastor was a public school teacher and taught us about it in bible study. I was about 20 years old, and at the time, it was scary to be black and be out at night. There were some things my pastor taught me to stay alive in case a cop pulled me over. One of them was to ensure that I kept all the lights in the car on so that the cops do not shoot me. This was serious. People of other races do not understand the horror a person of color

has to endure in the United States. Unfortunately, when you share this with a white person, they automatically think you hate the country and should go elsewhere if you are not happy with the rule here.

What concerns me about my racial past?

What concerns me about my racial past is that it still happens today. My oldest son is 15, and I shared the same things my pastor told me about turning on all the lights in the car when pulled over by a cop. My son does not even drive yet. My concern is if a cop murders my son, it will not go well with me. Therefore, to prevent such a thing, I have to act differently than others who do not have the same skin tone.

What encourages me about my racial past? What encourages me about my racial past is seeing people of different races speak about it. They acknowledge that Racism is real for black people. It is significant to hear from people of color and learn about their perspectives on Racism. White people cannot know how to fix it because it is not their problem. The people with the solution to Racism are black people. Many are in survival mode, and it is time to change it. I am encouraged to hear people can speak about it freely. A solution will start with communication. It feels good that people are talking about it.

Why do I "do" racial justice? What is the purpose for me? When you have a group of people that was mistreated for hundreds of years because of the color of their skin, I want to see justice for them. Black people are still experiencing injustice in the United States and worldwide. It is my purpose to see justice for them. Racism is evil; we need to end white supremacy and be willing to get the bull by the horn, even if it means suffering and discomfort. Racism must be destroyed.

Reference:

Morrison, L. Be the bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation (2019). Kindle edition.