

## **RACIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

When it comes to racial identity or racial reconciliation, there is a lot to unpack. I'm not sure I can recall my earliest memory of being introduced to racial differences. However, I can recall some instances where I questioned who I was and my purpose because of the color of my skin. And I say that to say, there is some point where I learned about racial identity at an early age, but didn't quite understand fully until I got to Elementary school.

I remember in third and fourth grades being happy that I had a black teacher. I still remember her name to this day Mrs. Watson, she was kind, smart, intelligent, and it appeared, as if nothing bothered her. She was one of the very few black staff at my school, and I remember having questions as to why there was so little people of color working in my school. I went to Catholic school and learned a lot about the Catholic religion, and just had questions about the things that I saw. At that time however, there was not much conversation in the home about race identity, and why we lived where we lived. I remembered even at one point, asking one of the teachers why they said, an inventor was White when you can clearly tell he had features of a colored person. And the only answer I got was that's what the books say.

My first true encounter with race was in the eighth grade I do not remember the teachers name, but she was Philippine. I was in that school for five years and it was known by the principal and other teachers that I had a health concern. This teacher also knew it and Wouldn't allow me to leave the room. There were some words, and I was literally told that I would just have to sit in it. If I use the bathroom by myself, this incident caused concern because when I had to leave the room, I left the room and I got sent to the principal's office, my mother had to come to the school and although she was able to correct the situation, the teacher never got fired or let

go. That was the first time I realized that there were people other than whites that were racist against us.

Because I was such an inquisitive little girl, and I had questions some answered, and most unanswered. I believe that throughout my elementary, middle, and high school years I just noticed that things were different, and because there were so many unanswered questions I just filled in the narrative. I realized that I only played with Hispanic and Black people, and there wasn't much diversity in my hood. It was almost as if my family and others that we played with knew there was a separation and was OK thinking that that's the way it was supposed to be.

I'm not sure if I have a lot of encounters regarding racial identity from my past. I do know that somewhere in my early 20s I realized more and more how many people of color was struggling as compared to all white counterparts. I also noticed and realize that those who were in our neighborhood, who are white would get treated better than we did when they were being served and when they needed to be serviced. I noticed that even those who were black, and brown were serving and servicing whites differently.

What concerns me about? My racial past is that no matter how much progress we make we will always be seen as less than other than I'm not worthy of. There is so many of us who deal with depression, low self-esteem, low self-confidence, that this racial war plays into those insecurities. My past wasn't colored with social injustices. It was a part of a daily struggle to just stay above water with bills and social well-being, mental and emotional well-being, that the rays fight the fight to be seen as equal was not even the most important thing growing up. However, in my current day moving forward because I am so much more consciously aware of what is happening to my brothers and sisters because of color it makes me angry and pushes me towards being more concerned about where we are and we were going. I don't know if this is fortunate or

unfortunate but as I read the word of God and I put on the armor of God, and as I close myself in his word and walk in the surety of who I am, and whose I am, it helps me to fight all the more for an understanding of The place of people all over the world no mad at your skin color your education your social status we all have an importance in this world through Christ.

So, I guess the thing that concerns me about my racial background is the very thing that encourages me. It is because of the mental and emotional stress and strain that we have had to go through, and we continuously have to go through. It encourages me to be a part of the racial justice fight. I am a part of this fight from a therapeutic perspective, as well as an emotional perspective. My goal is to truly teach people how to build them themselves up in the word of God because that's where our first identity comes from. We are made up of different genetics and different chromosomes and you know different app we come from different parts of the world however, we all come from that identification mark of Christ. My encouragement in regards to racial justice in regards to my racial background comes from the idea that even all white counterparts have struggles that they have to deal with. One of the biggest struggles is pride and ego, because even though they know that a lot of what their ancestors have done was wrong, some of them never admit it, and that for me, is worse than dealing with all the stresses and strains of what people place on you. I say this because we were all built with some pride and ego in us. However, those who are prideful and have an ego bigger than their history may never be able to understand the love of God, and I think that's a sad place to be. Please don't get me wrong, because it is not right, has never been right and will never be right to kill people. It is also not right to know you can do it and continuously get away with it. However, how we fight, and when we fight makes a big difference in how we win the fight.

My purpose again in getting involved in the fight for racial justice, goes beyond color and includes the spiritual aspect of it. I usually get an opportunity to speak to people from different religions, different cultures, different part of the world, and I can normally get an understanding of their traditions and the way things were and still are. For some people they will always be the way they are, because they are afraid to step out from the identity of the group to make a difference or a change. Black and Brown people all around the world are not always forced to step out but black people in these yet to be United States of America are forced to step out from the crowd and become an identifying marker for who we are. I do this so that others can understand their importance in the world is not due to color, gender, religion, community and culture, but it is having a relationship with God our Father.