

**Frank E. Coleman Jr.**

**Book Review: Be The Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation by Latasha Morrison**

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## **I. Overview**

In the analysis of the book *Be The Bridge*, it is obvious to see that the author Latasha Morrison views our nation as a long way from being fixed when it comes to Race. For whites life is status quo; life is about existence, accomplishments, acquiring possessions and wealth and living the dream in a nation that is free. Any challenges they may have or develop have nothing to do with the color of their skin. Yet for those whom are black and brown, before there is even an attempt to exist, accomplish, acquire or dream, their color is always the primary hurdle or challenge. Many may disagree with her analogy, but I can imagine that the agreeing and disagreeing will be across racial lines. I myself have been blessed to accomplish much in my lifetime and realized much of this American dream. And yet, the color of my skin has been the primary hurdle I've had to climb. Obviously, this gap between races and people need to be bridged. But how do we do that? You would think that Christ's church could be the bridger of the Gap. But as Morrison shares when she became a part of a predominantly white church, she, "...learned the ways the White church in America had perpetuated slavery, segregation, and racism; how they used and abused scripture to justify the practices and how some even split over slavery" (24) Yet she does not give up on the church. But Morrison believes that the church, if she would follow the will of God and the true interpretation of scripture as to reaching reconciliation and harmony amongst us, the church can be the primary resource to bridge the gap between races. But this will take following a process that is not easy but in the end would be rewarding for all. This book gives instruction to the needed process.

## **I. Revelation of my World view and Spiritual Expectation**

I appreciate LaTasha Morrison in assisting my understanding of the importance of humility in this course of racial reconciliation. It is important to not allow the pains of racism to cause one to be constantly in attack mode. But instead, find a way to see the humanistic pains and challenges of others. She says, "If you're Black, Latinx, Asian, Native American or part of any other non-White group, you'll need to come with your own posture of humility..." (29) This hit home for me, because though I feel that no one has suffered the way in which my people have suffered, still other peoples have felt the evils of racism, discrimination and genocide. I realize that in order for us to fight this evil together, we must have compassion, sympathy and empathy for other, though it may not be on the same level as your own. We must remember that it is not a competition as to who got hurt the most. But an opportunity to grieve together and then work together to confront our pain and those whom have inflicted the pain upon us.

## **II. Agree and Disagree**

I most agreed with Morrison as she journeys through the process of Reconciliation. You see, as she uses each chapter, to take you step by step to bridging the gap between the oppressed and the oppressor. After humbly understanding the plight of others being objects of the same hate and oppression, it is important to help those in power and privileged to be aware of the truth of their oppression. (Chapter2) She then shares that once aware, the guilty is invited to empathize with the oppressed. For there is no need to be aware if you're not going to be hurt and sorry for the pain caused. (Chapter3) Next Confession must take place by the guilty. But we who were the oppressed, must be willing to be forgiving upon confession. (Chapters 5&6) This is just an

example of what Morrison argued must be done step by step to bridge the gap and have all to reconcile one with another.

### **III. Theological Impact**

Conclusively, Morrison shares that "...what's broken is a distinctly biblical concept, which is why as people of faith we should be leading the way into redemption, restoration and reconciliation." (214) I believe that its time for the church to honestly be in the forefront of attempting to minister to all people what the Gospel truly means and stands for. The primary ingredient of the Gospel is love, redemption, restoration and reconciliation. Therefore, the onus is upon all who call themselves Christians to band together in love through reconciliation to bridge this gap that racism has caused.