



We are Called
TO HEAL. TO UNITE. TO JUSTICE.

REFLECTION

Putting Our Own House in Order

A reading from the Book of Joshua 24:15

But as for me and my household,
We will serve the LORD.

Reflection:

From the last chapter of the Hebrew Scriptures' Book of Joshua, this verse can be seen on coffee mugs, decorative wall hangings, clocks and needlepoint pillows. But what does it mean to serve the Lord? Joshua led the people of Israel after Moses died. Joshua brought his people into the Promised Land. The passage comes from his last speech to the community where they renewed their covenant with God, the same God that called them, led them out of slavery and gave them the land on which they stood.

The feel-good saying comes with a pointed call. First, Joshua reminds the people of all that God has done for them and that God has high expectations of their faithfulness, "You are not able to serve the LORD. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins." (Joshua 24:19). The people protest and shout assurances that they will be faithful. Then, as a sign of their commitment, Joshua tells them to "throw away the foreign gods that are among you and yield your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." (Joshua 24:23).

To serve God and follow the call requires us to look into our hearts and homes and unearth our idols. It is one thing to say that we will follow God's law to care for the weak, the outcast and the voiceless. It is quite another when doing so requires us to carefully assess where we are amiss.

Our shared work to achieve health equity and root out the causes of health disparities in our communities requires us to look inward at ourselves. Do our ministries truly serve God by serving all of God's people? What idols remain within our budgets? What sacred calves cannot be touched? What systems have we built that create inequity?



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[You may build in some time for those gathered to reflect on the strengths and opportunities within their department, facility and system when it comes to inclusion, belonging and equity.]

Intercessions:

Jesus said, "Let the one who is without sin throw the first stone" (John 8:7). No person or organization is perfect in the work of inclusion and anti-racism. Let us pray for open hearts and a willingness to change. Please respond; **for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**

For a renewed spirit of curiosity to educate ourselves about the structures of racism and inequality, which limit the challenges of some, while creating greater barriers for others. We pray, **For me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**

For a renewed spirit of self-reflection to recognize the times we consciously and unconsciously contributed to racism, exclusion and injustice. We pray, **For me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**

For a renewed commitment to examine all aspects of our organizations, from how we conduct clinical care to business operations and to then make the changes necessary to create a more just future. We pray, **For me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**

Closing Prayer:

God of All People,

You call us to serve you through our service of others.

You call us to work for a just society –

a world that values the health and well-being of all people.

Give us the wisdom to consider our shortcomings before indicting at others.

Give us the courage to make the changes necessary for your justice to take root.

Fashion our facilities, systems and entire health care ministry into a house that truly reflects and mirrors your goodness.

We pray in your holy name,

Amen.