



Prophecy & stone throwing

by **KIM UYEDE-KAI**

HOLD A STONE IN YOUR HAND. Feel its weight, its coolness, its edges, its dust. Listen to its warning and wisdom.

One day, when my second son was much younger and in Grade 1 or 2 in his multi-ethnic school, he came home in a really bad mood. A White boy had made fun of him in the schoolyard. He made fun of the shape of his eyes. And he called him “yellow” and “Chinese” – two words that together were meant to be insulting and degrading. My son was indignant. He was not Chinese (and besides, what was wrong with being Chinese anyway?). His retort back to his adversary was, “I’m not yellow! I’m light brown. Bart Simpson is yellow. Do I look like Bart Simpson?”

A young voice of prophecy in the schoolyard. A voice that says:

- Asian kids are not inferior to White kids or any other kids of colour.
- Racial discrimination by colour is for cartoon characters, not real people.
- Differences of skin tone are neither inferior nor superior – nor invisible.
- Stones of racial discrimination can be resisted.
- Stones thrown can be deflected.

There have been many more such stones thrown at my son since that incident. Some smaller; some bigger. And I’m sure he has thrown some stones of discrimination of his own.

Colour, as in the mind of the child in my son’s story, is often the first thing we use to discriminate. How often have we used the colours White, Black, Yellow, and Red to define four contrived races of people? Yet, here’s what those colours commonly symbolize for us:

- White: dazzling, light, reflection of all colours so they are no longer visible, pure, holy, clean.
- Black: wicked, dirty, fearful, the absence of light, in fact, the absorption of all light.
- Yellow: cowardice, sickly pallor, jealousy, sensationalistic, “no frills” branding.
- Red: anger, shame, bloodshed, debt.

Colours are stones thrown.

Not seeing colour anymore is the goal of the liberal, anti-racist, multiculturalist. Colour blindness is also racial discrimination. To be “colour blind” is to be blind to the negative associations by which we judge someone’s colour. To be “colour blind” is to be blind to the positive associations of colour. To be “colour blind” is to add up all colours, with the result being like visible light: all colours add up to white. To not see someone as they are – blessed with colour, with shade, with hue, with a multitude of genetic blendings, all equal in worth to your own – is to also not see Christ. Christ sees us as we are intended to be.

Hold your stone. Feel its sharp edges as the edges of racial discrimination: exclusion, joke telling, judgement, tokenism, objectification, Anglo-European standards of physical beauty. What sharp edges have you felt? What edges have you cut others with? Feel its weight as the heavy weight of stereotyping, ignorance, colour blindness, superiority, colour politics, silencing, invisibility. What heaviness have you felt? What heaviness have you weighed others down with?

Grip your stone tightly. If you give up your stone, will another stone take its place? Will you put on the ashes of the prophet and hurl stones that you call prophecies? We are – each one of us – prophet and stone thrower. If you give up your stone, you will still be taking away with you the dust from your stone; it is a reminder that you carried a stone that is racial discrimination.

Put down your stone of racial discrimination. That is a prophetic action.

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”

Luke 13:31-35

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