

Walmart Workers Refuse to Make Cop's Retirement Cake

Three Walmart workers in McDonough, Georgia refused to decorate a "thin blue line" cake for a police officer's retirement party because they said it was racist.

A number of my Georgia readers alerted me to the story and on Saturday night I spoke directly with the police officer's daughter. She asked that I not divulge her name and I've agreed to honor her request.

"I was so shocked," she told me. "I didn't know what to do or say or anything. I was trying not to lose my temper or make a scene."

For the record, Walmart has confessed that most of her allegations are true. I'll have more on that a bit later in this column.

The police officer's daughter went to the Walmart on Willow Drive on Sept. 22 to order a flag for her father's retirement party. He was leaving the force after 25-years on the job.

She showed the bakers a photograph of the police officer's flag—the black and white version of Old Glory with a blue line.

"One of the bakers told me the design could be perceived as racist and nobody feels comfortable decorating the cake," the police officer's daughter told me.

As an alternative, she suggested a chocolate-frosted cake with a horizontal, frosted blue line.

But that design was also rejected by Walmart's cake decorator.

"She said, 'I don't feel comfortable doing this,'" the cop's

daughter told me. "I asked her, 'Is there something wrong with cops?'"

After being rejected for a third time, the 21-year-old told the bakers, "I'll find another bakery, thank you."

She was much more polite than I would've been, folks.

"I was disappointed," she told me. "I go to Walmart all the time—at least once a week spend hundreds of dollars. I just wanted to make my dad a cake to show how much I appreciated him."

A friend of the family posted an item about the incident on Facebook and it wasn't long before the Walmart store manager called the police officer's wife and daughter—and apologized.

"He said he was so sorry," the daughter told me. "He offered to make the cake free of charge and he gave me a \$50 gift card."

A Walmart corporate spokesperson confirmed most of the story.

"Our goal is to always take care of customers," the spokesperson told me. "But, sometimes we misstep. We're glad we were able to connect with the family to apologize and make this right."

Walmart did not say if one of their associates called the cake racist.

"I can confirm an associate made a mistake that has since been corrected for the customer," the spokesperson told me.

So how did Walmart right their wrong? The answer to that question is going to curdle your Fruit Loops, folks.

The manager offered to make and decorate a new cake. But there was just one problem—the cake decorators refused to comply.

"So the manager told me that he would decorate it—but it

looked terrible,” the police officer’s daughter said. “It doesn’t look professional.”

I’ve attached photographs of Walmart’s handiwork—it’s absolutely embarrassing and unacceptable.

“I work in retail,” the officer’s daughter told me. “If I didn’t want to deal with a customer—and said ‘No’—I would get fired.”

Unfortunately, her father’s retirement party is Sunday night, so there’s no time to go elsewhere.

“It irritates me that in Charlotte, North Carolina, the Walmart was looted and the cops were protecting them,” she said. “And you can’t make a cake for the people who are protecting you?”

Walmart needs to make this right and they can start by delivering a professionally decorated cake to the police officer’s family.

The three cake decorators need to be told: Either decorate the cake or be fired.

Just because Walmart is the home of low prices, doesn’t mean they have to hire a bunch of low-class, anti-cop bigots.

The Gloves Come Off in First 2016 Presidential Debate

Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump locked horns over the economy, assailed each other’s foreign policy, and interrupted each other repeatedly in heated exchanges at

the first U.S. presidential debate on Monday.

After greeting each other with a handshake and a smile, the two opponents went on the attack, with Clinton calling the New York businessman's tax policies "Trumped-up trickle-down" economics and Trump accusing the former secretary of state of being "all talk, no action."

Each accused the other of distortions and falsehoods and urged viewers to check their websites for the facts. She called him Donald, and he called her Secretary Clinton

"I have a feeling I'm going to be blamed for everything," said Clinton, the first woman to win the presidential nomination of a major U.S. political party.

"Why not?" Trump retorted.

As the debate opened, they put forward competing visions for the U.S. economy.

"The kind of plan that Donald has put forth would be trickle-down economics all over again. And in fact it would be the most extreme version, the biggest tax cuts for the top percents of the people in this country that we've ever had," Clinton said. "I call it Trumped-up trickle-down, because that's exactly what it would be."

Trump, a real estate tycoon and former reality television star who has never held elective office, criticized Clinton for her trade policies and said she would approve a controversial trade deal with Asian countries despite opposing it as a candidate.

"You were totally in favor of it, then you heard what I was saying, how bad it is, and you said, 'Well, I can't win that debate,' but you know that if you did win, you would approve that," he said.

Clinton rejected the criticism.

“Well Donald, I know you live in your own reality, but that is not the facts,” she said.

Clinton, 68, wore a red pantsuit, and Trump, 70, wore a dark suit and a blue tie to the encounter that could shift the course of the tight 2016 race for the White House.

Moderator Lester Holt struggled to rein in the candidates, with discussions about trade policy suddenly shifting to the fight against Islamic State as Trump accused Clinton of giving away information to the enemy by revealing on her website how she planned to defeat the group.

(Writing by Jeff Mason; Editing by Howard Goller)

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A Spirit of Violence Rises in America Following the Unveiling of the ‘Harbinger of Baal’ in New York

Is it just a coincidence that we have seen violence erupt all over America since the unveiling of the arch that served as a gateway to the Temple of Baal in New York City on September 19?

First there were the terror attacks in New York, New Jersey and Minnesota, then there were the unprecedented riots in Charlotte, and over the weekend there was a horrific mass shooting near Seattle. All of these events took place within a week after the Arch of Triumph was put up in New York. Baal

was an ancient deity that was often associated with violence and bloodshed, and those that erected this arch have no idea what they are messing with.

Rabbi Jonathan Cahn was standing in the crowd when “the harbinger of Baal” was unveiled last Monday afternoon, and he posted video of the unveiling on YouTube.

In his best-selling book *The Harbinger*, Rabbi Cahn documented a number of very specific parallels between ancient Israel before it fell and America today, and now he is adding “the harbinger of Baal” to the list. The following is an excerpt from a WND article that Rabbi Cahn just authored about the unveiling of this arch:

But Israel’s defiance of God was linked to a specific entity – the god Baal. Baal was the god to whom they sacrificed their children, before whom they practiced sexual immorality and called good “evil” and evil “good.” Baal was the god in whose name Israel persecuted the prophets and the righteous of their day.

Baal was their anti-god, their substitute for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the god of their apostasy and the god of their destruction. Baal was their devil god. In fact the name for satan, Beelzebul and Beelzebub, is derived from Baal – meaning “Baal of the flies” and “Baal of dung.”

So in the template of “The Harbinger,” when the judgment finally fell, when the ancient kingdom of Israel was wiped off the earth, the people were worshiping Baal. In the last days of Israel, when the harbingers appeared, they appeared in a land covered with the images of Baal. It was the worship of Baal that ultimately brought about the harbingers of judgment. Thus Baal was the god of the harbingers.

In his article, Rabbi Cahn also included a stunning photograph from the unveiling of a stone slate that the organizers had

placed close to the arch that contained an image of the Temple of Bel (Baal). This was obviously put there to remind people of the connection that this arch has to that ancient pagan temple.

Perhaps it is just a coincidence, but I find it very, very strange that there has been a dramatic outbreak of violence in this country in the week since this arch was put up.

The most recent incident happened over the weekend. A 20-year-old Turkish immigrant named Arcan Cetin walked into a Macy's department store in the Seattle area and started firing. Five innocent people were killed, and this incident immediately made headlines all over America:

Surveillance footage from the mall shows the suspect entering the building late Friday without a weapon but walking into Macy's 10 minutes later with what appeared to be a hunting rifle. He fired in the makeup area, then fled on foot out of range of cameras.

One of the victims was a 16-year-old girl who beat cancer, the Seattle Times and KOMO-TV reported.

Police say that Cetin was in a "zombie-like state" when he was later caught and arrested, and authorities say that his motivation for the attack is "unclear" at this moment.

But we do know that the Somali immigrant that stabbed nine people at a Macy's in central Minnesota just a few days earlier was a radical Islamist, and it has been revealed that the man that planted improvised explosive devices in New York had actually attended a Pakistani seminary:

The alleged New Jersey terrorist charged with trying to blow up Chelsea last weekend with homemade bombs spent weeks getting an "Islamic education" at a Pakistani seminary, according to a report.

Ahman Khan Rahami spent three weeks in Kuchlak, an area described as a longtime "hub" for the Taliban, in 2011, a security official inside the country told the Guardian.

Rahami, 28, attended lectures at the Kaan Kuwa Naqshbandi madrasa.

For a very long time I have been warning that we would see a sharp increase in the number of Islamic terror attacks inside the United States, and it is now happening.

I have also been warning that rioting and civil unrest would get a lot worse in our major cities, and what we witnessed in Charlotte over the past week was absolutely chilling. Stores were looted, objects were being hurled at passing vehicles from overpasses, one news photographer was almost thrown into a roaring fire, and at least 16 police officers were injured.

And of course this is just the latest in a string of riots which has hit our country in recent years. The following is from a list of these riots that the Daily Caller has compiled:

Charlotte – 2016

Milwaukee – 2016

St. Paul – 2016

Baltimore – 2015

Berkeley – 2014

Ferguson – 2014

Brooklyn – 2013

Anaheim – 2012

Los Angeles – 2012

Los Angeles – 2010

Could it be possible that the violence that we have seen during the past week in Charlotte, New York, New Jersey, Minnesota and the Seattle area has some sort of connection to “the harbinger of Baal” that was just unveiled in New York City?

I am sure that this will be hotly debated by both sides.

But what should be exceedingly clear to all of us is that a spirit of violence is rising in America. The tensions that are causing riots like we just witnessed in Charlotte continue to intensify, and the growth of radical Islam around the world will continue to motivate jihadists in this country and elsewhere to conduct more terror attacks.

For decades, most of us could just take for granted that we could go about our daily lives in peace without having to worry about some senseless act of violence. But now that is starting to change in a major way, and “normal life” in America is never going to be the same again.

Healing the Black/White Education Gap

“You’re getting your inheritance early.” Those were my father’s words to me as he explained that he was taking money that he might have left me in his will and spending it on my private school tuition. My father’s reasoning was that I would be able to create more wealth for his grandchildren if he invested in my education. Thanks to his wisdom, I would go on to graduate from Williams, one of most prestigious liberal arts colleges in the nation and to obtain my MBA from Harvard.

Besides my parents' willingness to sacrifice for my education—a decision my wife and I also made with our own two daughters—there was another key facet of my upbringing that a growing body of research has demonstrated to be extremely helpful to academic achievement. I was born to married parents, and they stayed married. This has turned out to be more important to long term success than both household income and race.

A recent study of Florida schools revealed a paradox: Highly ranked schools were producing only modest student achievement. But a deeper look turned up a likely explanation. The Institute for Family Studies found that, “the share of married-parent families in a county is one of the strongest predictors of high-school graduation rates for Florida counties; indeed, it’s a more powerful predictor than family income, race or ethnicity.”

It is not hard to imagine why children growing up in households headed by married couples generally have better educational outcomes. Married couples are typically able to provide more emotionally and financially stable environments for children, offering them more attention, supervision and opportunities than most single parents are able to provide. Naturally, the fact that far more black families are headed by single parents has implications for black educational achievement.

In short, to close the education gap, we need to work on closing the marriage gap, something which is widely misunderstood. For several years, conventional wisdom has maintained that traditional marriage is a thing of the past. Although marriage is indeed declining among Americans of all races and income levels, it is declining far more quickly in certain demographic groups. Writing in *FiveThirtyEight*, Ben Casselman explained, “Affluent, college-educated Americans are increasingly delaying marriage until their 30s. But they aren’t abandoning marriage altogether; in fact, they appear

likely to get married at close to the same rate as past generations. They rarely have children outside of marriage, and they are relatively unlikely to get divorced.” Meanwhile, lower-income, less-educated Americans are not just delaying marriage—many are forgoing it altogether. And when they do get married, they are much more likely to get divorced.

The loosening of sexual morality—which cuts across class and income—has had a disproportionately destructive effect on the poor and less educated. Out of wedlock childbearing leads to children being raised in less stable environments and increases the likelihood that those children will not graduate from high school. The answer that is most often put forward for this is greater access to condoms to mitigate the consequences of sexually promiscuous behavior. Yet a recent study conducted by the University of Notre Dame titled “The Incidental Fertility Effects of School Condom Distribution Programs” found that access to condoms in schools led to a 10 percent increase in teen births, rather than a decrease.

Unfortunately, if these trends aren’t addressed effectively, the alarming inequality in our society will only get worse. The best curriculum and the most dedicated teachers can never fully compensate for dysfunctional or unstable families. So what can we do to strengthen families? It stands to reason that if married parents have such a positive effect on student performance, we should at the very least eliminate policies that punish couples for marrying. The government may be limited in its ability to help families, but it certainly shouldn’t undermine them.

Beyond public policy, I believe communities of faith are uniquely suited to strengthen marriages and to encourage and facilitate parents’ involvement in their children’s education. Churches, synagogues and temples can and must fearlessly preach the value of marriage. They should actively encourage young people to enter into healthy marriages and offer both living examples of successful marriages as well as learning

opportunities for skills such as communication, home management and the care and discipline of children.

Faith communities can also support the education of children of single parents. In addition to supervised study time and tutoring, they can provide mentoring for the aspects of achievement that are not directly related to academics. These include things like helping parents interact with teachers and school administrators and assistance with the college selection and application process.

Any plan to heal the racial divide must address the education gap. And no plan to close that gap will succeed unless it works to strengthen families. {eoa}

Harry R. Jackson Jr. is senior pastor of 3,000-member Hope Christian Church in the nation's capital. Jackson, who earned an MBA from Harvard, is a best-selling author and popular conference speaker. He leads the High-Impact Leadership Coalition.

Report: Baptist Missionaries Raise a Man From the Dead

An unreached people group in Southeast Asia gave their lives to Christ when their leader apparently dropped dead and came back to life after a group of believers prayed.

David Platt, president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, recounted the “modern-day resurrection” story during the Southern Baptist Convention’s Executive Committee meeting on Sept. 19.

A local Southeast Asian Christian who was brought to faith by some Southern Baptist missionaries took a group of friends and began evangelizing in the remote village, *Baptist Press* reports.

Villagers responded by bringing idols, necklaces and amulets associated with their occult worship to be burned, Platt said, relaying the account of an IMB worker.

It is reported that shortly after the burning ceremony, the village leader was found dead.

The villagers said they believed they angered the local spirits by giving up their possessions. They asked for their ritual objects to be returned to them.

The Christians, discouraged by the request and the news of the leader's death, traveled to where the leader was laid and prayed over his body "that God would show His mercy to the people in the village, that God would show His glory and His love to that people who were so close," said Platt.

"This Asian believer tells our missionary," Platt said, "that as they were praying there over the man, all of a sudden the man coughed. Everybody in the house got really still. And the man coughed again. People came rushing over, and the village leader started breathing. People started helping him up. Everybody's looking at these Asian believers like, 'What happened?'"

"They decided this was as good a time as any to share the Gospel," Platt stated. "So they shared the Gospel, and in the days to come, people started coming to faith in Christ and that village starting burning their idols."

Platt acknowledged that he is not entirely sure if the man was really dead but said the episode illustrated the spiritual fruit that has come as IMB missionaries share the Gospel with "biblical clarity, precision and consistency."

“There are some things I don’t know, but here’s what I do know: We have the Good News of a God who has conquered death, who has power to say to the dead, ‘Come to life.’ So brothers and sisters, let’s work together to see thousands upon thousands of Southern Baptists proclaiming that Good News to the ends of the Earth,” he added. {eoa}

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FBI Does It Again: Weekend Document Dump Sheds More Light on Clinton Email Server

In Washington, D.C., late Friday afternoon or evening is when you release information that is either damaging or you would just as soon no one knew about.

Or both.

The FBI released 189 more pages of documents from its year-long investigation of Hillary Clinton’s use of a private email server while secretary of state late Friday. It was definitely damaging, and probably something neither the bureau nor the Clinton campaign wanted you to know about.

Here are six of the most bombshell revelations from the document dump:

1. One Platte River Networks IT worker joked that a 60-day retention policy for Clinton emails would be a “cover-up operation.”
2. Clinton used a Gmail account at least once during a trip

to Croatia when storms were disrupting her receipt of emails.

3. According to interview notes, Bryan Pagliano, who set up and maintained the server, told the FBI some State Department officials had asked him in late 2009 or early 2010 to convey to Clinton's "inner circle" that her use of a private server could pose a "federal records retention issue."
4. During a separate interview, another State Department official—whose name was redacted from the released document—said, "Wow," before declining to comment further when asked by FBI agents to review specific email exchanges that had been sent using Clinton's unprotected email server.
5. Contrary to what President Obama has previously said, longtime Clinton aide Huma Abedin told the FBI that the White House was made aware she was using a private email when Clinton changed her "primary email address," so she could still send emails directly to President Obama.
6. In fact, President Obama used a pseudonym—which was redacted from the FBI documents—to communicate with Clinton on her private email server, which even shocked Abedin—prompting a "How is that not classified?" exclamation when she was shown a 2012 email exchange between Clinton and the president.

Opposing Gay Marriage: Why It's Not Hate Speech

The ultimate goal of the radical LGBT agenda is to silence the pulpits, and they'll do it by labeling Christians as "haters." But those who strongly believe in the Bible and God's will

regarding sexual behavior also strongly believe in unconditional love and forgiveness.

To say that authentic Christians hate or fear those trapped in the homosexual lifestyle demonstrates a gross misunderstanding of the Christian faith. To “confront in love” simply comes from a desire to honor God and to truly love and care for others.

Ironically, those fighting for LGBT rights often overlook the rights of the unborn—remaining silent while silent screams go unheard. When medical professionals can fill trash cans full of mutilated babies, and presidential candidates praise the work of Planned Parenthood, and the so-called “rights” of sexual preference are put above the ultimate right to life, our conscience as a nation has been seared. God help us!

Lasting hope and joy are by-products of repentance—turning from sin rather than embracing it. We actually hurt rather than help when we don’t convey the power of repentance. Jesus perfectly balanced grace and mercy with confrontation and correction.

He wanted people to know the truth even if it offended. Oswald Chambers said, “The words of the Lord hurt and offend until there is nothing left to hurt and offend.” The Bible was written so that people would know the truth—the truth about God, creation, sin and redemption. In reality, truth invites scrutiny, whereas error runs from it (1 John 5:13).

Here are five reasons why opposing gay marriage is not hate speech:

1. Confronting is often a characteristic of genuine love. We must extend compassion but without compromise. Parents warn and confront daily. Truly misled or self-serving individuals would wrongly attribute these traits to “hate-speech.” We are not called to make truth tolerable but to make it clear. Ironically, it’s the love of God that compels us to share all

of His truth, including those things that are hard to hear.

2. Affirming what the Bible clearly calls sin is love, not hate. The term “hate speech” is meant to divert us from God’s design. Again, those who strongly believe in God’s will regarding sexual behavior also strongly believe in unconditional love and forgiveness. To “confront in love” simply comes from a desire to honor God and to truly love and care for others.

3. Those who defend homosexuality aren’t truly loving them; they are simply seeking to avoid conflict. If a person is more concerned about being accepted than being truthful, do they really love homosexuals more than those who are willing to speak the truth in love? This is genuine love, not hatred. When pastors, leaders and denominations believe that God has given them the authority to change truth in order to keep it relevant and alive, they are departing from God. His grace is big and bold enough for all, but grace doesn’t replace truth—it reinforces it.

4. Changing God’s truth is not love; it’s a slippery slope. The futile attempt being made to conform God’s Word to social norms, rather than to conform social norms to His Word, has nothing to do with love—it’s all about acceptance and every man doing what is right in his own eyes. “Will you accept me and my sin?” has always been the battle cry of man fighting God. Pastors and churches who accept sin rather than lovingly challenge it have three things in common: truth is vague, doctrine is blurred, and the fundamentals of the Christian faith are often avoided. This is not moral progression on God’s scale; it’s spiritual digression.

5. Love doesn’t always coddle; it often convicts. Many leaders today have “perverted the words of the living God” (Jer. 23:36) by not warning, instructing, challenging and contending for the truth. Pastors, as the church falls deeper into self-reliance and further from reliance on God, our need for bold

leadership has never been greater.

Change will only occur when there is a strong conviction of sin, genuine faith, humility and sincere repentance—may God grant us the wisdom and strength to proclaim these truths. We must stop confusing God's patience with His approval and preach with conviction from the pulpits again.

Times change but God's standards do not change. Although Christians love those in the LGBT community, no matter how many laws are passed in favor of sexual orientation, it will not change God's mind. His principles are guardrails through the canyons of life—they protect us from falling. {eoa}

Shane Idleman is the founder and lead pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship in Lancaster, California, just North of Los Angeles. He just released his seventh book, Desperate for More of God. Shane's sermons, articles, books and radio program can all be found at [www.shaneidleman.com](#), Follow him on Facebook.

For the original article, visit [www.shaneidleman.com](#).

Gunman Wounds at Least 7 in Houston Strip Mall

FOR THE UPDATED VERSION OF THIS STORY, PLEASE CLICK [HERE](#).

Several people in the vicinity of a Houston strip mall were injured by a shooter who fired upon vehicles on Monday, and the suspect was shot by police officers, authorities in the Texas city said.

At least seven people were injured, local media reports said.

Several of the victims suffered gunshot wounds to their extremities and a couple of the injuries were more serious, a fire department spokesman told local media. All of the victims were inside their vehicles when they were shot, he said.

“At this time, the shooting scene is believed to be contained,” the city said on its emergency page.

People who were shot by the suspect were transported to area hospitals and the exact extent of their injuries was not yet known, Houston police said.

“I do not know if he’s dead or not,” Fire Department spokesman Richard Mann told media about the shooter. “I know that he’s been neutralized and is no longer a threat.”

A police bomb squad was dispatched to the area to investigate a vehicle, Fox 26 TV reported, adding a “shelter in place” order was issued for the area.

“I am just hearing the bullets literally whiz by my window,” an unidentified woman who witnessed the shooting told the station as she stood next to a car with two bullet holes in the windshield.

Live video streams showed the presence of numerous police cars and ambulances in the area. There were also a few vehicles seen with bullet holes. {eoa}

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26 Incredible Facts About the

Economy That Every American Should Know for the Trump-Clinton Debate

Are you ready for the most anticipated presidential debate in decades? It is being projected that Monday's debate between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton could potentially break the all-time record of 80 million viewers that watched Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter debate back in 1980.

Many Americans probably hope to see some personal fireworks between the two nominees, but the two candidates have both expressed a desire to focus on substantive issues. There will likely be quite a few questions about the economy, and without a doubt this is an area where Trump and Clinton have some very sharp differences. The mainstream media would have us believe that the U.S. economy is in pretty good shape, and if that was true that would seem to favor Clinton. But is it actually true? The following are 26 incredible facts about the economy that every American should know for the Trump-Clinton debate:

1. When Barack Obama entered the White House, the U.S. government was 10.6 trillion dollars in debt. Today, the U.S. government is 19.5 trillion dollars in debt, and Obama still has several months to go until the end of his second term. That means that an average of more than 1.1 trillion dollars will be added to the national debt during his presidency. We are stealing a tremendous amount of consumption from the future to make the economy look much, much better than it otherwise would be, and we are systematically destroying the future in the process.

2. As Obama prepares to leave office, the rate at which we are adding to the national debt is actually increasing. During the fiscal year that is just ending, the U.S. government has

added another trillion dollars to the national debt.

3. It isn't just the federal government that is on a massive debt binge. Total U.S. corporate debt has nearly doubled since the end of 2007.

4. Default rates on U.S. corporate debt are the highest that they have been since the last financial crisis.

5. Corporate profits have fallen for five quarters in a row, and it is being projected that it will be six in a row once the final numbers for the third quarter come in.

6. During the month of August, commercial bankruptcy filings were up 29 percent compared to the same period a year ago.

7. The rate of new business formation in the United States dropped dramatically during the last recession and has hovered at that new lower level ever since.

8. The *Wall Street Journal* says that this is the weakest "economic recovery" since 1949.

9. Barack Obama is on track to be the only president in all of U.S. history to never have a single year when the U.S. economy grew by at least 3 percent.

10. In August, the Cass Freight Index dipped to the lowest level that we have seen for that month since 2010. What this means is that the total amount of stuff being shipped around the country by air, by rail and by truck is really dropping, and this is a clear sign that real economic activity is slowing down in a major way.

11. Capital expenditure growth has turned negative, and history has shown that this is almost always followed by a new recession.

12. The percentage of Americans with a full-time job has been

sitting at about 48 percent since 2010. You have to go back to 1983 to find a time when full-time employment in this country was so low.

13. The labor force participation rate peaked back in 1997 and has been steadily falling ever since.

14. The “inactivity rate” for men in their prime working years is actually higher today than it was during the last recession.

15. The United States has lost more than five million manufacturing jobs since the year 2000 even though our population has become much larger over that time frame.

16. If you can believe it, the total number of government employees now outnumbers the total number of manufacturing employees in the United States by almost 10 million.

17. One study found that median incomes have fallen in more than 80 percent of the major metropolitan areas in this country since the year 2000.

18. According to the Social Security Administration, 51 percent of all American workers make less than \$30,000 a year.

19. The rate of homeownership in the U.S. has fallen every single year while Barack Obama has been in the White House.

20. Approximately one out of every five young adults are currently living with their parents.

21. The auto loan debt bubble recently surpassed the one trillion dollar mark for the first time ever.

22. Auto loan delinquencies are at the highest level that we have seen since the last recession.

23. In 1971, 61 percent of all Americans were considered to be “middle class,” but now middle class Americans have

actually become a minority in this nation.

24. One recent survey discovered that 62 percent of all Americans have less than \$1,000 in savings.

25. According to the Federal Reserve, 47 percent of all Americans could not even pay an unexpected \$400 emergency room bill without borrowing the money from somewhere or selling something.

26. The number of New Yorkers sleeping in homeless shelters just set a brand new record high, and the number of families permanently living in homeless shelters is up a whopping 60 percent over the past five years.

Despite all of the facts that you just read, the truth is that there is one particular group of people that have been doing quite well during the Obama years. I really like how Charles Hugh Smith made this point in one of his recent articles:

The top 5% of households that dominate government, corporate America, finance, the Deep State and the media have been doing extraordinarily well during the past eight years of stock market bubble (oops, I mean boom) and "recovery," and so they report that the economy is doing splendidly because they've done splendidly.

By recklessly creating money out of thin air and pumping it into the financial markets, the Federal Reserve has greatly enriched the elite, but they have also dramatically increased the gap between the very wealthy and the rest of us. Since he has been in the White House during this time, Barack Obama has gotten the credit for this temporary stock market bubble, and most of the elite love Obama anyway.

But in the process the stage has been set for the greatest economic and financial implosion in U.S. history, and the pain that is coming is going to affect every man, woman and child

in this country.

During the debate, Trump and Clinton will talk a lot about tinkering with tax rates and regulations, but those measures are essentially going to be meaningless when compared to the massive economic tsunami that is coming. The next president is going to inherit the biggest economic problems that this nation has ever faced, and it is going to take a miracle of biblical proportions to turn the U.S. economy in the right direction.

From O. J. to Charlotte in Black and White

I remember the moment well.

I was sitting in my car, waiting outside my office, my ear glued to the radio. The newscasters were about to announce the verdict of the O. J. Simpson double murder case. Would he be found guilty or not?

The evidence against him seemed overwhelming. But was he framed? Could the police be trusted? Yet if he was innocent, why did he run?

It seemed all of America was waiting with bated breath. What would the jury decide?

Many Americans stood gathered around TV monitors in public places, and as the words "not guilty" were pronounced something extraordinary happened. Many blacks were absolutely elated while many whites were absolutely shocked, as preserved in more than one iconic photo.

Why such disparate reactions?

Was it simply a matter of skin color, with blacks siding with O. J. and whites siding with the victims?

For some, it may have been that simple, but remember that O. J. was hugely popular in white America, and he had been married to a white American and was living the American dream. And how many blacks would want a cold-blooded, double-murderer, living in privileged white communities, to walk away free?

No, there was something deeper going on, and it had to do with perceptions about "the system," in this case, police and the courts.

Blacks, generally speaking, tended to distrust the system; whites, generally speaking, tended to trust it.

Even today, more than 20 years after the O. J. verdict in June, 1995, "A full 83 percent of white Americans said that they are 'definitely' or 'probably' sure of Simpson's guilt. By contrast, 57 percent of black Americans agreed."

Significantly, 2015 marked the first time that polls indicated that a majority of black Americans also believed O. J. was guilty, in sharp contrast with a 1997 poll where 82 percent of whites and just 31 percent of blacks believed he was guilty.

But the numbers still remain quite disparate today, with the 2015 poll still showing a difference of 26 percent between the views of white and black Americans, and those deep difference in perceptions have surfaced time and again in the last few years (think Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Alton Sterling, Philando Castile, Terrence Crutcher, and Keith Lamont Scott).

After George Zimmerman was acquitted in the killing of Trayvon Martin, I wrote an article titled, "The George Zimmerman Trial

in Black and White,” where I laid out the varied racial perspectives on the trial, arguing passionately for each position and doing my best to expose each side to the perspective of the other side.

Now, this tragic scenario is playing out again with the Charlotte shooting of Keith Lamont Scott.

Speaking again in broadly general terms (and I apologize for the obvious over-generalizations), white Americans are grieved over the shooting but see it as justifiable.

After all, the man had a gun, he refused to obey numerous orders by the police officer (hey, he didn't even listen to his wife saying, “Don't do it!”), and he was potentially threatening the life of others. He also had a police record—come on, he previously assaulted someone with a deadly weapon—and his fingerprints, blood and DNA were found on the gun.

And there's more: The officer who shot him is black and the local police chief is black, and the police chief insists that there are eyewitnesses, along with video evidence, confirming that the officer acted properly.

Black Americans are not just grieved over the shooting, they are outraged.

Here was a man sitting peacefully in his car, waiting for his son to come home from school as he did every day, reading a book (the Quran). He posed no threat to anyone, nor did he own a gun or regularly carry a gun.

And for goodness sake, the man had been in a motorcycle accident and had a traumatic brain injury (TBI), making it difficult for him to respond to the police properly. His own wife was shouting, “He doesn't have a gun!” and “He has a TBI!”

As for the gun, the police planted it at the scene (remember the white cop in South Carolina who was charged with murder and who allegedly altered the crime scene to implicate the black man he shot in the back?), and there are eyewitnesses who confirm that it was a white officer who shot Mr. Scott.

White Americans then say, "You've got to be kidding me! You're sticking in your head in the sand. And just look at these lawless rioters and looters. No wonder the police are so quick to shoot."

Black Americans say, "What will it take for you to accept that we are not treated equally? And while these looters do not represent our community, they're expressing a deep frustration we've felt for decades."

And on and it goes, with no end in sight.

A few days ago, my wife Nancy said to me, "How would we feel if, as whites, we were the small minority, brought over on slave ships and sold as slaves, then oppressed by black society for generations, with anti-white prejudice still alive and well in many parts of the society?"

Obviously, we've thought about these things before, but it's almost impossible for us to know how we'd feel since this was not our background and experience (although as Jews, we have had more than our share of suffering in history through the centuries).

At the same time, the perception of the oppressed can also be skewed, especially when agitators play into a perpetual victim mentality that continues to enslave rather than empower.

What, then, is the solution?

At the risk of repeating points I've made in previous articles, here are four simple things we must do.

First, we must determine not to react in a fleshly, emotional,

even irrational way, recognizing that carnal anger does not produce positive results. Pointing fingers, insulting others and, worse still, breaking the law, does far more harm than good.

Second, we must talk face to face as much as possible with other fair-minded people across the racial divide, asking them to share their perspectives before allowing us to share ours.

Third, we must ask God to reveal blind spots we might have along with blind spots our friends and colleagues might have.

Fourth, we must commit to following the truth wherever it leads—to pursuing justice, regardless of the consequences and implications—which requires courage and integrity and humility.

Can we do this together?

Do we really have a choice?