

After Zimmerman Verdict, Christians Must Stand Their Ground

In the wake of the George Zimmerman court ruling, one Orlando pastor warns Christians who feel the outcome was unjust not to allow their anger to turn to hate. He encourages the church to stand its ground and refocus its attention.

The Bible records Paul's message to young Timothy to encourage and exhort the church with a final word in Ephesians 6:10-17. The first component is to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. We must understand the challenging times facing America at this current time and find comfort in being strong in the Lord. It is not enough to have strength in the Lord, but we must also stand our ground and be strong in the power of His might.

There have been a lot of negative remarks said in the media and by Christians as this case has unfolded. The apostle Paul admonishes us to stand our ground for Christ by putting on the whole armor of God. He tells us to use the helmet of salvation to shield against the words spoken that contradict your salvation. God never commanded us to hate but to love despite our opinions and sentiments. I refuse to let society pour hate in a mind God has saved and filled with love. I choose to cover my mind with the helmet of salvation.

Furthermore, the apostle Paul encourages us to put on the belt of truth. The truth hurts, but it also brings forth life. I bury a lot of young Trayvon Martins in our community, and many times justice is not served because it is difficult to find eyewitnesses to testify in these cases. Many people are rallying around this particular worthy cause, but they don't champion many others who lie dead in our inner city streets.

Some people are excited that Paula Deen has lost endorsements, such as Wal-Mart, because of the allegations that she has used the N-word and is a racist. But why aren't we just as zealous to see Wal-Mart and other retailers remove music that denigrates women, promotes violence and constantly uses the N-word? Shouldn't we be outraged about this too?

The truth is, as Martin Luther King Jr. said years ago, Sunday morning is the most segregated day of the week. How can the church effectively make an impact on this world if we are more focused on how one denomination sees the blood of Christ as opposed to all of us being under the blood of Christ?

Whether African-American, white, Latino, Japanese, etc., the church has a responsibility to fight for the causes of those in the pew who consistently bring their resources into our institutions. We need to utilize this tragic death to come together and champion for the impoverished and homeless in our communities and contend against the declining literacy rate. We should be upset with the overcharging of those who can't get representation and use this case to show Christ's love to all.

In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., the church needs to be the headlight and not the taillight. But how can we do that if we are fighting each other and focused on the wrong things? We must stand our ground together for the cause of Christ.

David Jacques *is senior pastor of Kingdom Church in Orlando, Fla. You can learn more about his ministry at . Follow him on Twitter and on Facebook.*