

Christian Leaders Rebuke Injustice When Black Man Dies After Police Officer Kneels on His Neck

A black man identified as George Floyd died Monday in Minneapolis following his arrest. Police issued a statement Tuesday saying Floyd had a medical incident during the arrest, but a video of the arrest reveals an officer kneeling on Floyd's neck for seven minutes, despite Floyd being handcuffed. Floyd lost consciousness, but before he did, he can be heard saying repeatedly, "I can't breathe."

The video of the arrest has gone viral, prompting an FBI investigation into the fatal encounter. Four police officers have been fired as a result of Floyd's death, and Christian leaders are demanding justice.

"My heart breaks to witness yet another senseless loss of life," says Dr. Tony Evans. "As believers in Christ, we must band together across racial lines to ensure justice is righteously served and a new environment for safety, equity and healing can be established. #icantbreathe"

Pastor Jentezen Franklin likewise called for justice and praised the FBI for investigating the incident:

"Good the FBI is investigating the officers involved the death of George Floyd, but let's be clear: this should not happen in America to begin with! Enough is enough. The investigation should be expeditious, thorough, impartial & justice must be done."

Ex-lesbian and Bible teacher Jackie Hill Perry condemned the act as murder in a tweet she posted Tuesday:

Imagine how dark your heart must be to place your knee on a handcuffed mans neck, hear him say "I can't breath" multiple times and yet continue to watch him suffocate under the weight of your body.

This is wicked. This is murder.

– Jackie Hill Perry (@JackieHillPerry) May 26, 2020

"This is indefensible," wrote Tony Suarez, vice president of the National Hispanic Leadership Conference. "Our nation needs a revival of compassion and respect for human life."

Bible teacher Christine Caine said she was done trying to "wait and see" with situations involving police brutality.

"Now, after seeing too many videos like this to name, I'm beginning to wonder if my response should have been, 'Maybe I should try to understand their pain,'" she says. "Sometimes we can be so blinded by our experience & reality that we invalidate someone else's. Today our black brothers & sisters are experiencing another trauma that communicates to them that their lives aren't valuable.

"Centuries of reoccurring trauma takes its toll on a people group. Today I choose to lay down my truth to learn from my friends of color. If we are truly the body of Christ one pain affects us all. We aren't just the body when it's convenient. We are the body when it's hurting and broken. No more than the leg can disconnect from the arm can I disconnect my pain from that of my brethren. I'd like to share what I'm learning with you. This has to change."