

Rev. Jasper Williams Slammed for Preaching Against Black Lives Matter, Abortion at Aretha Franklin Funeral

Rev. Jasper Williams of New Salem Baptist Church rebuked the Black Lives Matter movement, called out black-on-black crime and the lack of fathers present in homes in the African-American community in his eulogy for Aretha Franklin this past Friday.

According to the *Chicago Sun Times*:

As he wended his way through the need for more African Americans to return to church and more men to return to their families, the heat turned up online, with younger people declaring rhetoric such as that of Williams is why they left their churches to begin with.

At one point, Williams asked: "Where is your soul, black man? As I look in your house, there are no fathers in the home no more."

As for black women, he preached that "as proud, beautiful and fine as our black women are, one thing a black woman cannot do, a black woman cannot raise a black boy to be a man."

Williams described as "abortion after birth" the idea of children being raised without a "provider" father and a mother as the "nurturer."

He negated the Black Lives Matter movement altogether in light of black-on-black crime, falling back on a rhyming pattern of yore:

"It amazes me how it is when the police kills one of us we're

ready to protest, march, destroy innocent property," Williams began. "We're ready to loot, steal whatever we want, but when we kill 100 of us, nobody says anything, nobody does anything. Black on black crime, we're all doing time, we're locked up in our mind, there's got to be a better way, we must stop this today."

Do black lives matter?

"No, black lives do not matter," Williams said. "Black lives will not matter, black lives ought not matter, black lives should not matter, black lives must not matter until black people start respecting black lives and stop killing ourselves."

The words ignited fierce controversy.

Franklin's family told Reuters that Williams used the "platform to push his negative agenda" which Franklin's family "does not agree with."

Teresa Fry Brown, the Bandy Professor of Preaching at Emory University's Candler School of Theology, spoke to the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* about the eulogy.

The professor said pastors "can do more wounding with sermons than healing. ... I don't think people should leave a sermon hemorrhaging ... other people probably got excited about it. I did not."

On Facebook, she wrote: "Eulogies are not let me get this off my chest speeches. Eulogies are not let me see what dirt I can share on the family or the deceased. Eulogies are not personal soap boxes. Eulogies are not star events. Eulogies are not throw[ing] rocks or eviscerating folk proclamations masquerading as deep prophetic pronouncements."

Williams stood by his words through intense backlash.

"I was trying to show that the movement now is moving and should move in a different direction," he tells the AP. "... What we need to do is create respect among ourselves. Aretha is the person with that song 'R-E-S-P-E-C-T' that is laid out for us and what we need to be as a race within ourselves. We need to show each other that. We need to show each other respect. That was the reason why I did it."

Did he cross a line, or was he speaking the truth? Watch the video and sound off!