

Why Singing ‘Lift Every Voice’ During Black History Month Is Not Enough

Popularly referred to as the Black National Anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” has long been sung in churches, expressing a love of God and country.

This modern a capella rendition of the spiritual ballad echoes the sentiment penned by James Weldon Johnson and set to music at the turn of the 20th century by Johnson’s brother John Rosamond Johnson.

*God of our weary years/ God of our silent tears/
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way/
Thou who has by Thy might/ Led us into the light/
Keep us forever in the path, we pray/
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met
Thee*

The symbolism in the lyrics referring to the biblical exodus from slavery to the freedom of the “promised land” mimics much of the recent racial unrest and reconciliation efforts.

But singing such powerful lyrics is null and void if believers do not ponder this well-posed question: “What actions would begin to show our Black siblings in faith that this message has truly touched our hearts?”

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