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“UNSHACKLED!” - Pacific Garden Mission
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Daily Devotionals

“Racism” – John Perkins

ANNCR: May 7th, “Racism.” Racism is an explosive topic in our country today. From a secular stand point, racism flies in the face of equal human rights, which is what our constitution defends. Yet even more importantly, from a Christian standpoint, racism embodies a hatred that is entirely opposed to God. Since each person has been created in God’s image, we are rejecting the Lord when we refuse to love a fellow human being. So amidst the anguish, anger, and cries for reform, as believers, what should be our response? Today we’ll hear from a man who lived through some of the harshest forms of American racism, and he’s here to share his insight. This is his true story on today’s Unshackled Daily Devotional.

JOHN: I’m John Perkins, and I was cheated and mistreated until I didn’t trust any white person, especially after the deputy killed my brother. Right after that, my uncle sent me to California to live so I wouldn’t end up the same way. I swore I’d never go back to Mississippi. I served in the army and married, and my new bride thought God was the answer; but I rejected Christianity as a white man’s religion. A few years later our son pestered me to read the Bible,

and I realized I needed God to forgive my hatred, bitterness and other sin.

I prayed to receive Christ as my Savior, and I felt God calling me back to Mississippi in 1961 to help our people. My wife was horrified because we had four children who would have to face segregation and poverty. But we went and built a ministry based on Biblical teaching.

We landed in jail several times but kept fighting for equal treatment. Then I was arrested and beaten so badly I nearly died. As I was being tortured, I promised God that I would spend the rest of my life preaching the gospel of love to fight racism.

If I can forgive the men who nearly killed me, you can forgive, too. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another."

ANNCR: The apostle Paul says in Romans chapter 12, verses 20 and 21, ***“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”*** Friend, racism is a sin and an injustice that demands correction...but not in hate.

Otherwise, the same sin is being committed. Even as a push toward reform is being carried out, God commands us to conduct ourselves with love and forgiveness. The truth is, only reform brought about through the gospel is able to heal, because it creates no additional division. Rather, it extends grace even to the perpetrators. So, as we seek to defend the rights of all men, may we allow God's unconditional love to guide us. Will you receive this truth today?

CREDITS: Unshackled Daily Devotionals are produced by Pacific Garden Mission along with our Unshackled Audio Dramas. To find even more true stories of God's saving, transforming power, visit our website, unshackled.org.

This episode was written by Kennetha Gaebler and Elizabeth Kupferschmid and narrated by Tim Gregory and D.J. Howard.

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