

Notes from *Do All Lives Matter?*

The Issues We Can No Longer Ignore and the Solutions We All Long For

Wayne Gordon & John M. Perkins

Gordon, Wayne, and John M. Perkins. *Do All Lives Matter?* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017.

“The Black Lives Matter movement has given hope to many African Americans who have often been told in different ways that their lives don’t matter – that, despite our country’s highest aspirations, they are not equal in the eyes of others.”¹

“...I could see, even as a young boy, that the person who controlled the capital made all the decisions.”²

“I believe that people are often pierced to the soul by how others treat them. We have to create an environment where the soul can be satisfied, or at least soothed, in its longing to be perceived as meaningful. Others in our lives balance our perspectives. When our souls cry out for significance, the pain has to be resolved.”³

“I think that God created human beings to be free and to rebel against oppression. There is no attribute of God that can be cited to justify one person oppressing another. But when we take our stand, we must do so peacefully. Otherwise, we risk becoming the enemy.”⁴

“Often when we think of contemporary expressions of racism or sexism we think of obvious things such as unjustified and unnecessary police shootings...But discrimination also has a subtler side. This subtler side reveals its face – often unintentionally – when we don’t notice the people around us. In effect they become invisible, and to the extent that they go unheard and unnoticed, they get the message that their lives don’t matter.”⁵

“Christians, including those who call themselves evangelicals, can and do reach different conclusions regarding how biblical principles ought to inform various moral, social, and public policy issues. Sincere people can read the same Bible and disagree on how it should be interpreted and applied in various situations and contexts. But on some matters the Bible is abundantly clear – beyond any reasonable debate. And one of those matters is that *all* human beings are equal in the sight of God.”⁶

“It was through our Native American friend Mark Charles that we became aware of something known as the “Doctrine of Discovery.” This doctrine originated in the Catholic Church through a series of papal edicts that came out in the late 1400s. It essentially provided theological justification for the Christian empire of Europe to take over any land inhabited by non-Christian

¹ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 21.

² Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 28.

³ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 28.

⁴ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 32.

⁵ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 45.

⁶ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 59-60.

people... The nineteenth-century philosophy of Manifest Destiny, according to which it was the destiny of the United States to claim and take over the continent from coast to coast, also contributed to the unjust treatment of Native Americans and spread the message that their lives did not matter. The church throughout history has, at times, been pretty good at finding biblical support to justify immoral behavior. The majority of those who owned slaves in America were Christians.”⁷

“We don’t doubt that we’ve come a long way as a church and as a culture. But we also don’t doubt that we still have a long way to go.”⁸

“We can think of no better way to proclaim to the world that all lives do indeed matter.”⁹

“Instead of ignoring or suppressing our pain and the pain of others, maybe we all need to cry more, not less. But we should also be careful not to allow our sadness and grief to keep us from taking action.”¹⁰

“Laws might change behavior, but they cannot change hearts. A true revolution in our country – one that claims victory over violence and eliminates all exclusions to the proclamation that all lives matter – will come only as hearts are changed and as we recognize who our neighbors are and learn to truly love them as ourselves.”¹¹

“eleven suggestions...to demonstrate the conviction that all lives matter...”¹²

1. Pray and discuss the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi on a Regular Basis
2. Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
3. Build and cultivate relationships across ethnic lines.
4. Strive to build friendships with people who are different.
5. Listen to the music of other cultures.
6. Move into a diverse community.
7. Allow the right books and movies to inform and inspire you.
8. Participate in a discussion group.
9. Support restorative justice policies and efforts.
10. Consider organizing or joining a peaceful protest.
11. Work with the police and leaders of your city or community¹³

⁷ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 61.

⁸ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 63.

⁹ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 66.

¹⁰ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 69.

¹¹ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 71.

¹² Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 71-82.

¹³ Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins, *Do All Lives Matter?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 71-82.