

Del Ray Baptist Church Statement about the Events in Charlottesville

Before we read our next passage of Scripture and go to God in prayer, I want to comment about something most of you are aware of. There are many tragedies and displays of evil and injustice all over our world each day. We cannot, nor are we called to comment on them all, but what I am speak of took place just a hundred miles from here, so many of us feel it all them more.

Over the past two days there have been protests and counter-protests in Charlottesville, VA surrounding issues of white supremacy. As if the rally to exalt one ethnicity over another were not grievous enough, the demonstrations turned violent and one woman was killed and two police officers died in an accident while responding to the events.

The reason I comment on these events is because they hit so close to home. This happened just down the road from where we live. Richard Spencer, the face of this movement, lives just around the corner in Old Town, and sympathizers with this racist ideology have hung signs on streets that surround our church.

As you can imagine, the nearness of these demonstrations stir fear, anxiety, and possibly the desire for vengeance in many of us. Many feel these tensions everyday, but events like this turn the volume up even more.

In light of this, I want to make two very clear statements.

1. God condemns all forms of racism, and our church does as well.

God created all people in His image. This means that all people, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, skin color, or cultural background have inherent value, dignity, and worth. Jesus Christ shed His blood on the cross to reconcile us to God, but also to break down the dividing wall of hostility between people. To see your ethnic tribe as superior and another as inferior is truly anti-Christ. We believe all racism, both public and private, is a sin and should be confessed and repented of, to the glory of God.

2. We desire to be a church that gives hope and help to all people.

DRBC is a family and we desire to be a place where we love one another. This love shows itself in listening to one another, praying for one another, consoling each other, correcting each other when necessary, and encouraging each other until we see Jesus face-to-face.

I trust that we are all grieved by what is happening in Charlottesville, but some of you certainly feel fear and anxiety and anger in ways that others cannot understand. We want you to know that we love you, and this is a place where you can find shoulders to cry on and hands to hold you up. We will all face tribulations, and it is doubtful any of us will escape our need for compassionate care from one another between now and when we reach our heavenly home.

This church aims to be a place where sinners of all sorts, including you, me, and even Richard Spencer or any of his sympathizers would be welcome to come and hear and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ who can save any sinner from their sin.

As a church, we must remain vigilant in prayer. This war is not against flesh and blood, but against the unseen spiritual forces who delight in seeing image bearers destroy one another. So pray privately, pray together, and we will most certainly pray publicly in this pulpit.

We must also be vigilant in evangelism. In a world where darkness abounds, the glory of Jesus is the only light that gives life and hope to a world being consumed by despair. May He bind us together as One and strengthen as we make His Name known.

Let's pray...