





GLORIFYING GOD IN DIFFICULT TIMES

Matthew 5.16





A Biblical Response:

- **Mankind — all humanity — is created in the image of God.**
 - ▶ **Genesis 1.26-27**
- **Each member of humanity is a person of intrinsic value and worth.**
 - ▶ **1 Peter 2.17**
 - ▶ **“fix a valuation upon... to honour, value” (Strong)**
- **We must be willing to cross society’s ill-formed lines.**
 - ▶ **Jesus exemplified this — Mark 1.40f; John 4,8**
 - ▶ **Jesus called for this — John 17.20ff; Mark 16.15**



It's okay not to know immediately how to respond



A Practical Response:

Be willing to listen — James 1.19-20

Make sure you have the facts — Proverbs 18.13,17

Speak the truth — Colossians 3.9f (notice v11)

Consider your words and actions — Colossians 4.5

Speak graciously — Colossians 4.6

This includes Facebook!

**BARACK OBAMA WANTS THIS
PICTURE OFF THE INTERNET!**



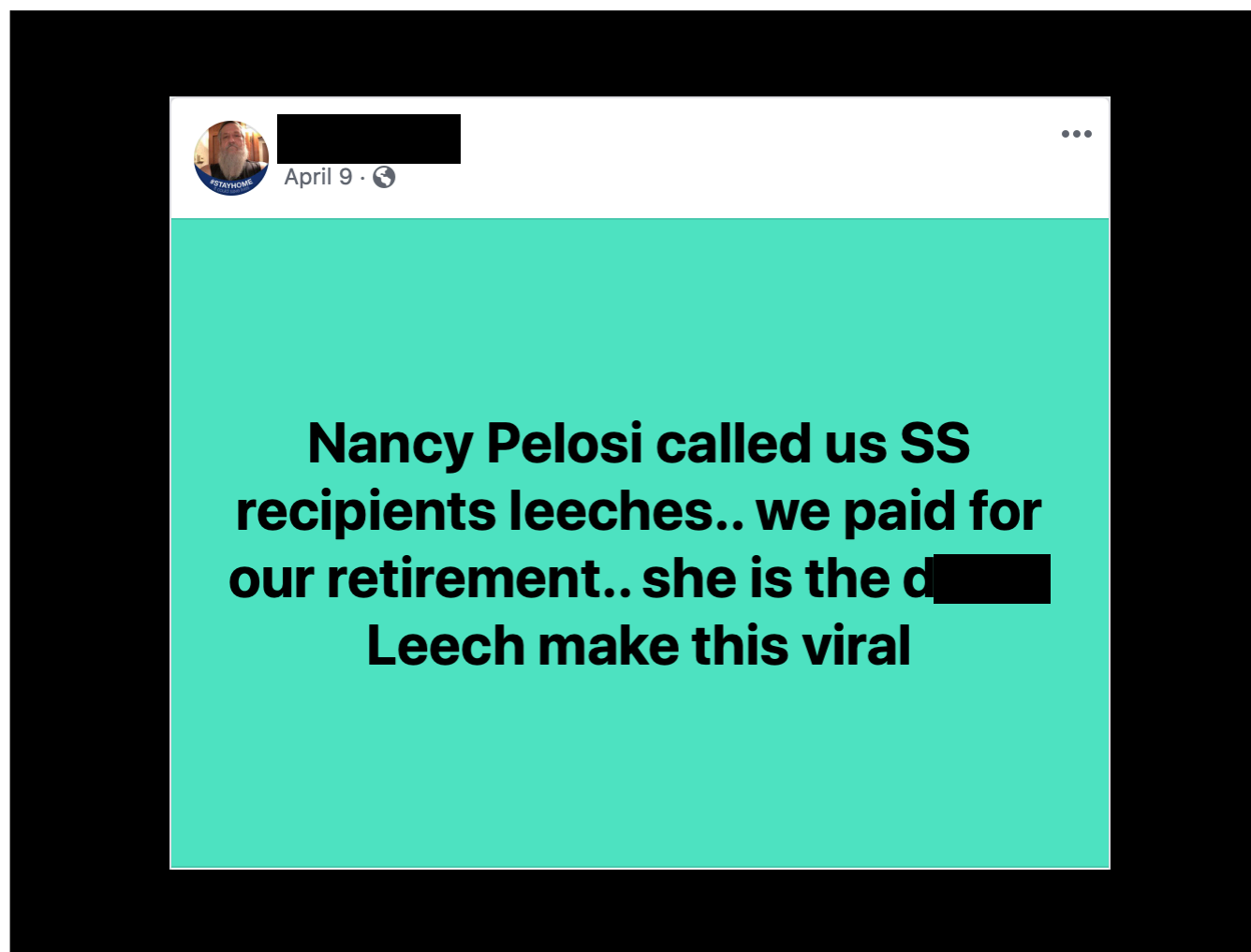
**DON'T LET THAT
HAPPEN! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO!**

Make sure you know the facts; speak the truth; speak graciously

This is [REDACTED], the worthless pile of human flesh, that vandalized the WWII Memorial in Geneva, NY. Make her mug famous. 🤡🤡🤡🤡🤡



Consider your words and actions; speak graciously. Would Jesus ever call anyone a “worthless pile of human flesh”?



Make sure you have the facts; speak the truth; consider your words and actions; speak graciously.

#1 — this is false, it's from a satirical website that mocks politicians

#2 — does this even begin to resemble gracious speech?

#3 — a few posts down from this, the person mentioned how they abhorred foul language.



Romans 12.18

- **Avoid the blame game.**
 - Adam/Eve; Saul/Israelites
- **Be willing to give the benefit of the doubt.**
 - 1 Corinthians 13.5
- **The older son was not minimized or dismissed when the father sought his brother.**
 - Luke 15.31f
- **We need to seek to be understanding to the experiences of others.**
 - Matthew 7.12



We're not dealing with external hypotheticals:

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The year is 2013... I am seeking out a ministry position. I send a resume to a congregation in Texas. I receive a phone call from an elder who is excited to fly me and my wife to Texas to meet with the congregation. Our phone call was great. He asks me to email a picture of myself and my family to him so he can show the congregation who would be coming to preach.

Not 5 minutes after I send the picture I receive a phone call. He calmly begins, "Now, I'm not racist, but..." This is where a lot of conversations break down. This is where I begin tuning people out. He explains that the area and the congregation may not be ready for a black minister. "I couldn't tell you were black over the phone, or I would have told you then," he says as if it is a perfectly normal and non-racist thing to say.

-Gospel Preacher

-Brother in Christ

-Friend



We're not dealing with external hypotheticals:

The year is 2019. I move my family away from the job I took in Georgia where I had fantastic elders and wonderful friends in order to work with the church in another state. A salary is set and we have moved. An elder shows up to my door explaining that some people have come forward with issues with bringing in a black minister (I have already moved my family.) This was how I lost my job before I began it. One elder tells me that they are fine with having a white congregation and they needed all of those congregants to still be there if they were going to be able to afford their move into a new building. Bringing me in could make some of the white members with larger pockets leave.

Same Friend, Same Brother, Same Preacher



We're not dealing with external hypotheticals:

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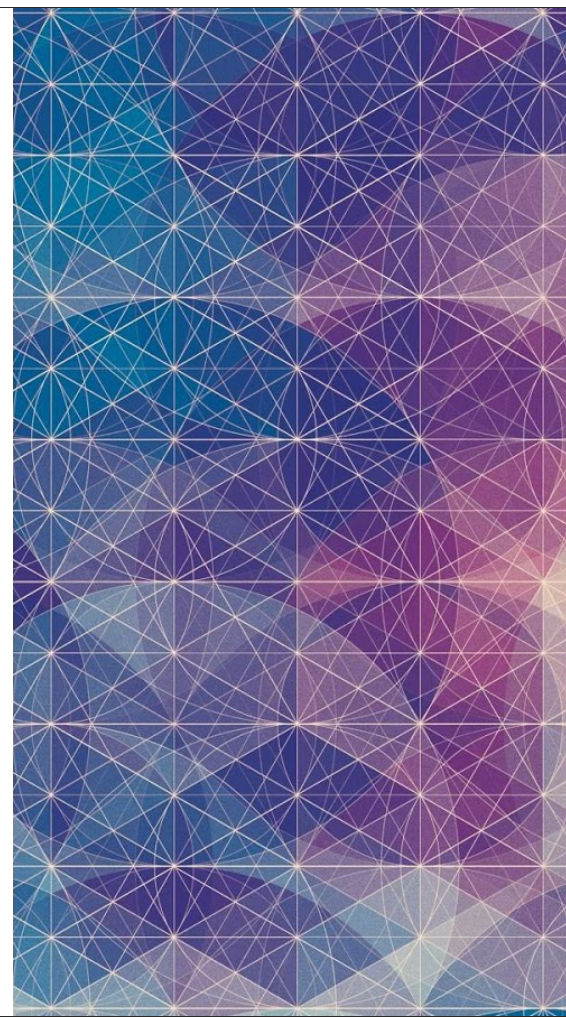
[He] has been asked to try out for jobs and then uninvited when he sends a picture of our family. Last year we moved across the country and then some men wrote a letter to the elders and said their congregation wasn't ready for a black minister and he lost his job. Every time the ax drop starts with 'now we're not racists but...'

It's exhausting really...

-Gospel Preacher's Wife

"For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all... He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf."

2 Corinthians 5:14-15



If Jesus saw all people as worthy of His love and sacrifice, we ought to see that in others, as well. The universal sacrifice of Jesus solidified the inherent worth and dignity of all humans — and if we are to be followers of Him, we must arrive at the same conclusion.

I'm thankful I'm part of a local church that does not reflect some of the racial intolerances that are reflected in the world around us. I'm thankful to have seen members of this church reach out and help people, regardless of color, culture, or creed. As our society struggles with these issues, let's make sure we're not in the business of trying to score political points but rather that we're standing with Jesus and pointing people to Him — by our words, by our posts, by our actions, by our lives.