

race, gender or any other dividing line, and we certainly don't need multiple anthems, we need a unified anthem.

Imagine for just a second; if one group of people deserves recognition then others do as well. The Spanish speaking, the Italians, Irish, French, the...well you get my point. And what would having all the anthems do? Create division. I was under the impression that a part of the purpose for all of this protesting and rioting was to bring attention to the inequality among the races and to seek equality and unity. What I see is that someone is trying to widen the division between people.

Anyone who knows me even short time is pretty much aware I am a Patriot second only to being a Christian. It breaks my heart to see the kind of division all of this is accomplishing. In fact my fear is that rage will take over and we will be a nation divided. **Matthew 12:25 (ESV)**

²⁵ *Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. Those are warnings from God, out of the mouth of Jesus Christ, how much more proof do we need.*

The church has sat on the sidelines for a long time about many issues, it's time we stand up, connect with God's Word and use it as a basis for where we *must* stand. The church's position of standing on the sidelines instead of standing for what is right has got to disappear or the church is no longer the church. What do we do? First pray. Notice I said first pray, that isn't where we stop. We represent God, He left His church here to care for ALL of His people, to do what is right. It's time we take that seriously.

Series: Bible 3:16s
Title: "1 John 3:16"

¹⁶ *By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. -- 1 John 3:16 (ESV)*

1. LOVE IS THE _____

¹⁰ *By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. ¹¹ For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. ¹² We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

-- 1 John 3:10–15 (ESV)

- 1) Between a child of God and a child of the devil.**
- 2) Between eternal life and eternal death.**
- 3) Between hate and love.**

²¹ *"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. – Matthew 5:21-22 (ESV)*

2. LOVE IS THE _____ OF _____

¹⁶ *By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.* ¹⁷ *But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?* ¹⁸ *Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.* ¹⁹ *By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him,*²⁰ *for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. – 1 John 3:16–20 (ESV)*

3. LOVE GIVES US _____ BEFORE _____

²¹ *Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;* ²² *and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.* ²³ *And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.* ²⁴ *Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us. -- 1 John 3:21–24 (ESV)*

²² *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. -- Hebrews 10:22 (ESV)*

From The Pastor's Study "One Nation"

I have been struggling this week and it has hit me so hard I probably shouldn't write this but every time I try ignoring the ache in my heart, it just digs deeper. This country went through a war over slavery, as if there were two countries

fighting over control of this land. Not just two parts of the same country but two completely different countries. After a lot of bloodshed we became one nation and over time this nation grew together and the "one nation" became "one nation under God"

It was for our love of God and desire to worship freely, as we desire that grew this country. It wasn't perfect but we eventually grew together, no, not all people were treated equally and that is so wrong but we were working to move toward more equitable relationships with one another. Eleven years ago we, as a nation, began growing a greater division. Now, we are no longer one nation, we are a nation divided.

I have been watching this division grow, and I understand the frustration of people. I have never felt their depth of frustration; I felt it to some degree when I returned from Vietnam to a nation who despised me because of my uniform. So I understand a small bit of that.

But most of us have worked to unify this country, pushing away at the years of hate, and we have made progress, not to the point we need to be but I believe we would have gotten there. Now division hasn't just increased, it has exploded and I am not so sure we will make it back.

The other day on the news I saw where the Black National Anthem will now be played before the countries National Anthem. Okay, does our National Anthem need to be changed? I don't know, maybe it is time but if it is to change it should be agreed upon by the nation, not one particular