

99a. Ethnic Harmony In Action Transcript of Melodye Perry-Teamer

Alright, good morning. So, when Pastor Arland called and I was kind of excited. Then I think three days ago I was like, 'My God, I didn't mean to say yes.' Really didn't mean to say yes. But God is good. He knows what He is doing.

Um, when he was talking to me about the subject, all this stuff started pouring out. And I was thinking, so the Lord had me thinking about this week, all-all the things I've been through and as a kid I grew up – both my parents are in the music industry – and I grew up in a very, I always say we have a mixed background. My Mom's side is – my great-grandfather was Irish. My great grandmother was Native American and black. In those days she had to hide and pretend that she was his, actually pretend that she was his maid.

And so, um, growing up in that kind of household where I always teased my uncles and said all of my uncles, their first wives were white. So, all of my first cousins are mixed and then everybody – nobody in the family looks like me, so growing up I was kind of - my Mother would say, "You're special, you're different, you know, but you're special." So, went to school with an all-white school. I think I was one of three. The other one being my cousin. And when I was in school, I excelled at everything. I always got the greatest grades and I had teachers that would say, "You know, how does this little black girl, you know, how's she testing above everybody else?" Like in fourth grade - my mother was showing me these old grades of mine. It was crazy. Fourth grade – we took the California state test. And, I tested in English at a ninth and tenth grade level. And I tested – yeah, it was crazy – and I tested in math at a seventh-grade level. And I'd already been skipped and they wanted to skip me again. But I kept having these battles with the teachers. So, one day I was in the office and my uncle - I saw my uncle – my uncle Joseph, he was fighting back and forth with one of the teachers. And it was, I didn't realize they were treating me crazy because of my skin color. And that was the first time I'd ever heard it. I was like, wow, "I thought I was doing well. I'm doing what I'm supposed to do in class. I'm getting good grades. Being treated differently."

And so, I got saved when I was seven. I got saved and filled with the Holy Ghost. And, when my mother, I was dealing with those things at school, my mother gave me, she said, you know, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood. Has nothing to do with." She said, "You can't see it – skin color." We wrestle, and so she would make me pray these scriptures every morning before I'd go to school. And she'd say, you know, "We rebuke every trap that is set against you." I've been praying that scripture, literally, ever since I was nine years old. And she would say, "Don't look at it that way. It's just the enemy." So, I'd say, "Okay. Okay." But I didn't realize. The Lord was revealing to me this week. I didn't realize it planted a seed of, um, not un-forgiveness but a seed of thinking that, of fear. Thinking that every white person was staring at me like there was something wrong with me. I didn't - I had no idea it was already planted there.

So, flash forward ten years, like ten years after that. I am touring with Phil Driscoll. And his assistant and I start dating. And I, my friend, asked me she's like, "Oh, you're dating a white guy" and I was like I hadn't thought about it like, "Oh, my God you're dating a white guy." I said, "Probably because in my family it's mixed and I didn't think of it like that" and I said, "Yeah, you know." And she said, "Well, have you met his parents?" I was like, "Well, no." He's from Nashville TN. And she's like, "Wait till you meet his parents" and I'm like, "Okay." And so, I didn't get a chance to meet them but he said, you know, "I'm going home" and he's like very excited that we're dating and he said, um, you know, "I can't wait to tell them about you." So, I hadn't heard from him in like three days. He calls. And the next conversation was kind of like, just kind of blurted it out, "Hey, I

can't date you! Because, you know, my parents said I, you know, that dating someone outside of my race is against the Bible." And I was like, 'I've never heard anything like that. That sounds crazy.' And then they said and to disobey them was to be dishonoring God. And I was like, 'That sounds ridiculous.'

So, I began to pray and I said, I really didn't know how to handle all that situation and I just said, "Okay," well I was broken. I didn't know what to do. I was like, well, here I am, you know, always feeling like I'm (unintelligible). Here we go again. And what it did, it started festering at this seed of fear that I've already had as a kid. And I didn't realize it and I was like, "Lord, how do I, what do I do? I don't know any immediate scriptures to deal with it."

So, then I prayed, I was like, "Lord, just, you know, he wasn't the right guy and we'll move on."

The next two years, I meet another man. And, I walk into this studio and I'm ignoring this guy because he's trying to get my attention and he's 6'3", green eyes and blond. And, I'm like, "Lord, this is not happening because he doesn't understand what this is. Yes, he's cute and I'm not even going to look at him." I kept ignoring him. I'm like, 'No' and he's like, um - I think at the time I didn't have a car so I was waiting on my friend. They were late and he's like, "Well, I'll take you home" and I was like, "I don't know you. You don't know me and no." And, um, finally eventually he took me home and we had this great, long conversation and I told him about the previous relationship I was in. And, I was like, "I just don't think it's for everybody. I don't think everybody can handle it." And he was like, "Wow!" He was like, "That's a lot for a Christian girl." And I was like, "Oo-uh." You know, it like hit me in a weird place and he was like, "If you're a Christian, get over it." He was like, "Pray about it. Get over it." I was like, "Okay, (laughter) okay." So, alright. So then, but I was not going to date him. I was determined - not dating you, whatever. He calls me and lies, "A bunch of us are going together and we're going to the movies. It's like ten of us." Some of the people I had already worked with. I'm like, "Okay, cool." So, he comes to pick me up and like there's no one else in the car. It's just him and he - no, he said, "Well, I had to figure out a way to go out with you." I'm like, 'Okay.' So, we date, long story short, we dated for over a year and I fell in love with him and he was, um, a music minister and we would talk about the Word and it was just, it was beautiful, and actually something in a relationship I had never had before. And, um, we he, there was an incident at Christmas. We were all with his parents and it was wonderful, and, we secretly got engaged around Christmas this time. And, we were like around Valentine's Day we'll tell everyone. And so, somehow after New Year's his parents found out and he was like, "Hey, my parents found out that we got engaged, um, I'm going out of town but when I get back we'll see each other (x y z)." He was always traveling on the road and so I said, "Okay, no problem." A month later I'm like, 'This is crazy.' We're emailing each other. We're not even talking. He's overseas. So, he comes back in town and we have this conversation, basically, and he says, I guess, his parents were, they knew that we loved each other but they just didn't know how far we were gonna take it and because of the differences. And I was like, I heard this like, 'Err' in my head. And I was like, 'Really? We had this conversation from the gate.' And I didn't say all that but I was thinking it. I was so heartbroken. I was like, 'I cannot believe.' I was like, "Lord, I'm doing everything that you told me to do. I'm doing everything right. What am I doing wrong? You know, what's wrong with me?" So, when we broke up, I think for a matter of four years I wouldn't even think about it. I just worked. I worked, worked, worked straight through all of that because I couldn't believe. I said, "The God who has protected me, the God who loves me, that, He would even allow me to entertain something like this and somebody who is supposed to be a Christian, people who are supposed to love God would even allow these things to happen would say, you know, 'Because of what you look like, because of the color of your skin.' But I still didn't realize that that seed that I had of fear was growing. I'll tell you how I didn't realize it. I came home and I'd been working. My father asked me,

“Hey, can you go to Trader Joe’s for me?” They lived, my parents lived in Toluca Lake which was predominantly white. And I went to the store and I couldn’t get out of the car. It was really strange. All of a sudden, I looked around and there was nobody who looked like me. And I became fearful. It had never happened before. And I remember thinking, ‘I don’t want to be here. Like, their looking at me. Everybody has these prejudices they just don’t want to say it.’ And I went home. My Dad’s like, “You didn’t go in the store.” And I began to cry. And I told him, I said, “I don’t know. I feel like they’re staring at me. I feel like somethings wrong with me. You know, it’s kind of okay for them to kind of be around me but it’s not okay and it’s inconvenient for them, then I don’t want it. I don’t wanna be around.” And I didn’t realize – sorry, that made me feel emotional all of a sudden. I, I and so I began to seek the Lord, like, “What is this? What is this? How do I deal with it?”

And not long after that, my ex, who had broken my heart emailed me. He kept emailing me. I was like, ‘I don’t even want to answer you.’ So, I emailed him back and he was like, ‘Can I call you?’ So, he called me. And we talked for a long time and I just listened. I didn’t want to hear. I was just listening. So, then he said, “Can I meet you somewhere?” And I said, “I’m singing at this show,” and I was like, “you can come by.” It was one of those things. And, somehow the conversation of one hour turned into long hours, just having these conversations about healing and what had taken place and his mom had passed. Long story short. His mother had passed and immediately when his mother had passed. He had gotten married after we had broke up and he divorced his wife. Because, once his mother passed, he realized, he was like, ‘I’m married to the wrong woman. I’m doing all these things and the woman I really want to be with is in California. “And, he felt like his whole life had fell apart, so we. What ended up happening is that we ended up having to open the Word and talk about all these issues and God worked out healing for the both of us. Which is crazy and I heard this preacher say to me, “Circumcise your heart.”

So, if you can I want you to turn with me to Deuteronomy 10:16. You got it? Alright, so, it says, the Amplified Version says, “So circumcise the foreskin of your minds and hearts. Be no longer stubborn.” And I was like, “Well, Lord, what are you trying to say?” So, I looked up the definition of foreskin and a lot of times it talks about an overlaying of skin, and in the Spirit, I kept hearing the Lord say, “Pull off all of those things. You have to do the work to tear away at those things that are at your heart. Those things that have grown and had grown bigger. I was like, “That’s crazy.” He said, “Circumcise it. Actually, cut it.” And, and I, I, I told the Lord, I was like, “How do I do that?” He said, “With My Word.” He said, “Ask Me and I’ll circumcise your heart. Ask Me. I’ll help you.” And I didn’t, you know because I didn’t really want it to turn into – because any longer and my fear was gonna turn into a prejudice and I didn’t – it might have even turned into a prejudice. I didn’t want it to be that way because I had, you know, I had things I wanted to do and, I was like, the Lord was saying because you haven’t circumcised your heart, these things haven’t been open to you. I need you to - I need you to hear Me and you need to dig, dig deep and get that stuff out of you. And then my Mom’s like, “That’s what they mean when they say, ‘Work out your own soul’s salvation.’ And, I’m like, “Okay, Mom. I got it. I got it.” Dig out your own soul’s salvation. I had to do the work to circumcise my heart and root that stuff out. And, along with my friend and even with my husband, and even with my husband now, we talk about. Anytime he sees an inkling of that with me, with fear, cause he’s aware of it, he goes, “No, no, no. It’s like you said, ‘We put that under the blood.’” And I’m like, “Put that under the blood. I’m not doing that. I’m not gonna walk in fear that way.” And, um, I really thank God for that word. So, that was the Word God gave me, “Circumcise your heart in every area. Circumcise your heart, when it comes to those things, so that you don’t, because I really believe that those things create bitterness and they create, um, just all kinds of crazy opinions. You wonder why we have these things about people when we see them. I see it when I’m on the elevator sometimes with people. I see. I speak and I just smile. You know, and I told my Mom, I was like, I’s like, “I feel kind of hood with these braids and (laughter). You know

because people see me now and with different hairstyles and they treat you a little differently, and I'm like, "Hey, how ya doin'?" Okay, my Mother like, 'Now you sound really hood. Don't do that.' (laughter). You know but I'm pleasant. I see them watch me and it seems so unexpected and the Lord said, "Dig in. Fall into it." I hear the Holy Spirit say, "Be extra nice. Hey, you look really nice. Compliment them. Oh, okay and it becomes a different thing. I think you always have to challenge yourself in walking in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit and saying, "Oh, I'm gonna go against what my natural nature is, or what my fears are. No, I bind that. I'm gonna say something. I'm gonna have a conversation. Sometimes we find ourselves in interesting places. You might be alone getting coffee and you see someone people wouldn't ordinarily talk to. Talk to them. You know, it's a different – you might, you might really learn something. You'll grow. You will begin to grow and grow in the things of God. Because these are things God wants us to do. I think the problem is, is we think in our own minds that we are good and self-sufficient and we live in our own bubble but when we go outside of our homes and when we are in the workplace, we don't challenge ourselves. We don't even say, "Okay, let me, let me speak to this person." This is a black person that walks all around me all day long and I've never spoken to them. I don't know if they have kids. I don't know what's going on with them.

Let me challenge – because you can be a blessing. There are people who think 'these people will never speak to me' and you can change other people's perspective just by being a light.

Amen, and that's it.