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God Doesn't Look At Skin Color

Oral Roberts

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President Oral Roberts

Amen. Praise God. Thank You, Father. Thank You, Father. Thank You for every one of my brothers and sisters. Thank You for the honor of being together and of lifting up the name of Jesus. And everybody said amen. Thank you very much. Good morning, everyone. I was driving behind a car recently and there was a little piece of paper stuck to the bumper. It said, "Don't tailgate this driver. He's ready for the second coming." I enjoyed that. I received a message directly from a young lady who was a student here last year and transferred out to a school not too far away. And she had grown a little weary of the chapels and the required class attendance and the rules and regulations and the comraderie that is out here. She wanted to be more little to herself and not be in such a place with all the acres. But it's a group of people that are close. And that and some other reasons. But she sent me word this week that she is saving her money and she's working at a couple of jobs on the side while she's going to that university, saving her money to get back here the second semester. And the reason is that she's getting tired of so many of the professors cursing in class and the students looking like bums and the no discipline and no requirements for this or that. She's just thrown out there into the world. And she's longing to come back home. I receive that as good news. I look forward to seeing her the second semester. Sometimes have to get away from a place like this to really know what we have. Praise God. Some wonderful things are happening. Thirteen days ago I stood here and gave a special report that nearly tore our being apart. But we stood up to it, faced it, and 13 days

later ... I believe it is 13 days later ... that was the 13th, I believe this is the 26th ... and some wonderful things have been going on. It's amazing to me when I finally realize it that God knows in advance. I sometimes don't realize He does. And that things work out for God's people. You know, in our midst this morning our medical students, about 35 of them, have already been transferred to one medical school and the junior and the sophomore and freshman class will soon be transferred. There have been several outstanding medical schools on campus to interview them and they're very interested. The senior class will remain and be graduated here next May. But the word that is so important, we have some great seed among us in those medical students. I didn't know it in those terms until just before vespers Sunday night when I was coming in. Someone told me a word. Then in the vespers at the end of it some of the medical students came up and said that, "We medical students are the seed that's being transferred to other medical schools. And not only will the vision of medical missions not die ... it will grow." Oh, my goodness! So, hello seed. I thought to myself that you weren't listening, but you all hear so much more than I think you do. And I congratulate the freshman and sophomore and junior medical class as they're transferring out as seed where they will multiply. The number will not go down. And on our Sunday morning telecast last, a couple of days ago, God let me mention that when someone seeds a \$50 million gift in here, we just may start that medical school up again because we still have the charter. Who knows, someone heard that that has the \$50 million that is ... well, I know somebody has the \$50 million that heard me, but when they catch the spirit of Seed-Faith where they can do one of the greatest things in the world, I praise God for that.

And the other word before I read the Scripture to you is that the great structure of the City of Faith is owned by this university, of course. It has no debt upon it and there's a great interest in powerful companies, well-known companies who are talking to us about leasing. And if it's leased properly, as we expect it to be, the \$10 million we have to raise extra to subsidize what is required to run ORU, in addition to what you pay as tuition, board, and room, etc., we could very well have \$7 or \$8 million a year coming from those rentals to pour into ORU to help produce that \$10 that we have to raise. And that would be very beneficial to everyone here because it would mean that any increases would be very small for tuition, board, and room. We have not raised it in two years, as most of you know. And there will have to be some raising, but our interest is keeping them low. Some universities have taken their tuition up to \$20 million ... \$20,000 ... well, \$20,000 feels like \$20 million if you don't have it, right? And they're going on up and up and up and up. And we're determined that our interest is in our students and in our ministry and in carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth. And we need to help one another in our finances and believe with one another that we all can be here as God wants us to be here and have the money, have our needs met. Will you say amen to that? Today's message is not a sermon in the strictest sense of the word. It is a sharing, more in the form of a talk. It's not any less important. In Mark's gospel, chapter 15, and Acts, chapter 13, I want to read to you Scriptures that I read some 20 years ago in chapel at Oral Roberts University. And I have not read them since in chapel. But the Spirit dealt with me and I'm going to do it today. It is a Scripture concerning the crucifixion of Jesus and what from all evidence we can gain was a

black man, a man who had a black skin is a better way to say it, was compelled to carry His cross. Beginning at verse 15. "And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified." And they took Him away toward the cross. Verse 20. "And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross." In the gospel of Luke there's another word about this, in the 23rd chapter and the 26th verse. "And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus." There is no words that I have that can describe the shame and the pain of Jesus being taken to the cross, not counting the crucifixion itself. The beatings, the mockings, it's almost too much for us to talk about. But through the loss of blood, through the beatings, the stripes on His back and all, He fell. And the cross apparently fell off Him on the ground. And they looked around to get someone to help Him carry it. And as best we can determine, it was a man with a black skin. And it says, "They compelled him." Another one says, "They laid it on him." Now it doesn't take much of an imagination to understand what it would feel like to have a cross that big, that Jesus in His physically weakened condition could no longer carry it, and have that thing just laid on you and you're forced to bear it. The thing that came into my mind, first of all, was the force, the compelling, and how that word has come down through the ages, not only to people with black skin but other, but in particularly people with black skin. We are prone to

say black people, white people, red people, yellow people, brown people, but probably a better way is to say a person who has a white skin or person who has a black skin, a person who has as red skin, because we're persons. We're human beings. And in the 18th chapter of Acts, St. Paul tells how we're made in the image of God, how we're made with one blood and says that, "In God we live and move and have our being." In God. We don't have it in our skin's color. We have it in our personhood, in the way that God created us in His image. I remember Benson Idahosa, who is a member of our Board, an archbishop in Africa, with the greatest and largest move of God in that whole continent, a black ... let me correct myself, a person with a black skin, whose birth was refused by his father, who threw him on a refuse pile. And his mother finally went out and got him and nursed him and hid him until the father was reconciled. And he grew up and later received Christ as his Savior. And God visited him and gave him a vision of the world and spoke to his heart, told him great things He wanted him to do. And because his skin was black, he was talking back to God, "I can't do this because for various reasons," finally, "Look, my skin is black." And God answered back, "I didn't know." And Benson said, "You didn't know?" "No." "Well then, I can do it." And many of you know Benson Idahosa and you will know him, you that don't know, because he'll be speaking in chapel from time to time. Our Board meeting is coming up the early part of November and he'll be here then. But at any rate, he'll be speaking in chapel. He's one of the great men of all time. But the thing that changed his mind was that God said He didn't know. When God looked at him, He didn't see the black or the white or the red, the brown. He saw a person that He had made in His image. In the beginning of ORU, 1965, opening the

academic program, I received a telephone call from a government man in Washington who had discovered that we had applied for some federal funds. And he called me, "Rev. Roberts," and he said, "I understand this," and I said, "That's true." He said, "I want to ask you what your policy is toward people who are black." "Well," I said, "let me give you the bigger policy." I said, "ORU is established in three ways, first, to be international. Third, to be interdenominational ... second; third, to be interracial." And when I finished, he said, "Well, I want you to know that if you do not accept black people and integrate them into your university, you're not going to have a chance." I said, "Sir, may I repeat what I said?" And I said, "I want you to know something," after I'd repeated what I'd said, "whether we get any federal funds or not, we'll be international, interdenominational and interracial." He said, "Well, don't get excited." I said, "I am excited. This is God's university. We're people out here. We're not white, black, red, yellow, brown. We're people. We're human beings." We don't have separatism out here and we're not going to have separatism. As long as the Roberts are around here there will be no separatism around here." I said this is going to be a talk. I'll lower my voice. But this man was so impressed that he said, "I understand you have a request for a grant of \$600,000." I said, "Yes, that's for the informational and retrieval system, the dial access system," of which there was only one being made in the nation, only one, made by RCA. And the university that was supposed to have gotten it moved away from it and we moved in and made our request and showed that we were building a tremendous library and we wanted all of the things that we could possibly get that had been created for our library. And it was a grant of \$600,000 to

obtain that. And he said, "I'm going to go to bat for you." We got that \$600,000 grant for the dial access system that's over there in the LRC. And I've often wondered what would have happened had I not stood up for what I believe and what I believe is the gospel. Now you notice this man was forced. There was a time when he was no longer forced, and that came from within. It went from being forced to being honored. How do we know? Notice again in Mark, chapter 15, that Mark who wrote this several years later, looking back at the scene, "They compelled one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross." And over in Romans, the 16th chapter, Rufus now, one of his sons, is very closely related to Paul in Romans 16:4, who in that particular verse is sending him a personal greeting. And in another place Alexander and Rufus both are referred to as workers in the gospel. And in the early gospel there was no separatism. There were human beings. There was some prejudice. But in Peter's case it was prejudice against Gentiles. And an angel had to visit him and carry him God's Words in the 10th and 11th chapters of the book of Acts and to show him that God is no respecter of persons. And when he understood it, then he opened the door to the Gentiles, and that's how you and I got in. That shows you that prejudice is so devilish, it can keep people out of the kingdom of God. Not only causing havoc among people, but keep us out of heaven, out of the kingdom. We made up our mind that these acres out here, several hundred acres, would be God's acres, this would be God's university, we would be God's people. Now you switch over to Acts, chapter 13, and you notice another tremendous scene where a man who is apparently with a black skin had a major part in the launching of Paul and Barnabas in their first great missionary

trip. And while you're turning to Acts 13:1, I'll recite to you in Acts, the 8th chapter, after Steven was martyred many of the Christians in Jerusalem were persecuted. And it was so severe they were scattered throughout the whole earth and many of them went up to Antioch, several hundred miles away. And we read in this 13th chapter of Acts, "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger." Niger. Most theologians I've ever dealt with believe that he was a Negro or a man with a black skin. "...and Lucius, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetarch, and Saul." And here's the real word. "As they," Niger among them, "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted," now see that scene just like you see here as we are singing together, worshipping together as God's people. "And the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost." Notice that these people, these Christian people of what we'd call different races were praying together, fasting together and laying hands on these two prospective missionaries. And their laying on of hands was classified as the Holy Ghost sending them. Their action was a Holy Ghost action. I think the two most powerful scenes that affected me directly which I was personally involved was in Vietnam. When my team and I went there in 1969 and I personally was permitted to go into areas my team was not, right out into the battle area and into the jungle hospital where our soldiers who were being wounded were being helicoptered in to this little jungle hospital. And the chaplain of all the armed forces had me as his guest that particular day and drove me through those areas to this place. I'll

not take time to describe any more, but it was a chilling place. As we got there, the helicopters were coming down within 20 feet of us. We had to step behind something to escape the violent wind from the wings. And he said, "Just follow me." And about that time a missionary ran up, who was a Baptist, and recognized me and fell into my arms and began to cry. And he said, "Oral Roberts, we'd rather see you than any man in the world." I said, "Well, why?" He said, "Because of what is in this hut," not hut, really hospital. It was made out of bamboo and all that. He said, "Come on in." And there were 49 US soldiers that I counted, all on little cots, side by side all around. And I went to each one and knelt down, introduced myself, and nearly everyone of them either knew me or said their parents knew me, and made me feel really at home. Many of them were nearly shot to pieces. And while we were there they were being brought down and surgery was initiated on some of them just 30 feet away while we were there. But as I went along praying for them, with this Baptist missionary by my side, and the chaplain who was Presbyterian on the other side, I discovered that I a Pentecostal and the Baptist and the Presbyterian suddenly were one. We were all three praying the same way. I mean, because there it was a different situation. But the second thing ... that was the big thing ... about every other one had a different color, either white or black. And as I was praying, those that were physically able would reach their hands across to the other one. And when we had finished praying and we'd seen this tremendous unity and love ... for example, I'd be praying for one and the one on either side would be crying and praying too. And after I finished, the chaplain said, "Do you understand what was really happening?" He said, "The only good thing in the Vietnam War, the only good thing,

the black and the white understood they had to depend on one another. And here they quit looking at each other's skin and they are no longer full of color. They are colorblind." I said, "My God, I've never seen that, never seen that." The buddy system originated in Vietnam. And they came out of Vietnam back into America with one good thing. I can't think of another good thing, but they came back with one good thing. At least some new hope came back into this country. When they built the wall in Washington, DC ... I don't know just the name of it. I'm sure many of you do, where their names of all those who died in Vietnam are inscribed. Every day there are hundreds and thousands of those soldiers come up and look for the name of their buddy. And they don't think about color. They think about, first, "It's my buddy, my buddy." That is what is in the heart of God. It's what's in the heart of God for us. It's what's in the heart of God for this country. I don't blame America. I'm talking about just people that do these bad things and to do these good things. It's just people who do good or do bad. It's just people who love or hate. It's just people who mistreat or treat people as an equal because that's really what we are. Only 40 years before the blacks in certain areas of America had a chance to vote, the American Indian had a chance to vote. The American Indians in Oklahoma and all over this nation could not vote until a law was passed in 1926. And my wife's mother as they came down from Missouri to Oklahoma didn't want to come because she didn't want her daughter Evelyn to possibly fall in love with an Indian. Is that right, Evelyn? And the Indians were the lowest on the totem pole. Well, I climbed up on the totem pole myself. And, sure enough, Evelyn married one. She doesn't want to unmarry me either. She is, for a white woman, about the sweetest woman I ever

met. (End of Side #1) The second thing in Vietnam, I've only told one time, I may never tell it again, but it's worth telling. They were trying to show me every part of Vietnam that was relevant and that I a man of God should see and if possible be a part of. For example, I spoke to the North Vietnamese soldiers who had been captured, several thousand of them, and they had them in a pen and they took me out there in the middle of them, generals and colonels. I mean, they were tough, tough characters. And I just walked out there in the middle of them and preached for them and then had a healing line. I didn't shake until it was over, when I got outside the fence. But they took me to the place where the soldiers had died and could not be recognized. Their dog tags were lost and everything. Nobody knew them. Some of them had been shot to pieces, until there was very little left. And there was a mortician from Georgia and this man recognized me when I was brought in. And he said, "Brother Roberts, I want you to walk around with me." It was a room half this size with possibly three or four hundred soldiers who were dead. Some of them looked exactly in death as they did in life. They were just killed, maybe with a small hole in their head by a bullet. Others arms were missing or legs. And finally we came to the point he said, "All of these I have identified. We have sent word to their loved ones." But he said, "I've got a piece of one of them over here I'm having great trouble with." And he took me by the arm and walked over to a place and he reached down and picked it up in his hand, said, "This is all that's left, all I've got of this soldier." And he looked at me with a fierceness of an eagle. He said, "I want you to know that I've been praying that God Almighty will help me identify this piece of human flesh." It was black. This is a white man from

Georgia. He said, "All my life I grew up on the other side. But here I don't hate any more. I recognize humanity. I understand God." He said, "Would you lay your right hand on this piece of human flesh and believe God with me that I can identify it and their loved ones back in America will know that that's not ... their child is not lost, lost from their knowledge." He said, "When I get back to America, I'm going to be one man that's going to be a human being and I'm going to be a Christian." He said, "I've been a church member all these years, but I'm going to be a Christian." Sure, I'm standing here reliving it. I can see it right now. I can hear it. As president of this university, as founder of it, here's what I want, and only you can make the choice but it's what I want ... I don't want any separatism. I want human beings. I don't want any racial jokes. If one of us forgets because of our raising and we're used to saying things, not thinking anything about it, if we say it, we apologize like happened the other day. It wasn't a joke. I think it was just an incident that wasn't intended, but it showed the grace of the person when the apology was made. And we have to fight those things down, however innocent they are. But we've grown up in such a culture that both sides sometimes say things we shouldn't say, do things we shouldn't do. And what I want is us to be aware that we are persons, human beings, period. And we don't gang up together, the whites over here having their deal, the blacks over here having their deal. We're one. For example, in intramurals, wouldn't the devil like to have all blacks on one side, all whites on the other side and get into a fistfight? What the media would do with that against the cause of Christ. Not only the cause of Christ, but what would it say about us? We shouldn't be separatists. If we want to go with one another, all

we need to do is ask ourselves a couple or three questions so that we use the wisdom of God ... would I go with that person if it wasn't the color of their skin? Would I marry that person if it wasn't for the color of the skin? If my parents would be upset, had I told them, being an honest son or daughter? Next, am I willing should I marry, am I willing to face what certain people in this world will try to do? Am I willing to face the social implications? Because I can tell you in heaven God isn't looking at the color of your skin. God in heaven is looking at your heart. And God is looking at this university at its heart, looking at me the president, looking at us as administrators, professors, workers, students, laborers, one of the places on this earth an oasis of God's love. And only we can love. God loves, but God isn't going to do our loving for us. He isn't going to do our right living for us. We're going to do that ourselves. And I guess that's about all I've got to say. P.S. I want to compliment you last Thursday when Carlton had finished his wonderful message, you stood for the benediction. And there was kind of an awkward moment when there wasn't one. No one had told Carlton or I know he would have it done it because I know how he feels. But somehow I sat there like a dummy and you didn't know what to do. But you stood because you remember I asked that at the end of a chapel we stood up in reverence. And finally someone just moved their hands and that indicated we were dismissed. I apologize for that because I'm responsible. The buck stops with Oral Roberts. I started to say the dough does, but I know the buck does. I shouldn't have said that word either. So, anyway, I wanted to compliment you. Do you know what you said to me by that act? You said to me what I feel in my heart, that these worship services are the soul of this campus. And when you

leave and have children and children's children, I give you my word, you look back and you'll remember possibly all the good things in the classes and library and other scenes, your dorm life, your wing life. But the chapel, something in chapel will stand out above all else because that's what I hear all the time from our alumni. That's what I feel in my soul. You reverence the chapels. You want to be here because invariably there will be something touch you through a song or through a prayer or through a sermon or through a talk or something the Lord will reveal to you just without anybody talking to you that will be forever. I was proud this morning at five minutes of the hour you were in your place. Only about 50 were not, but they got in. Thank you for getting in. Next time remember it's five minutes of the hour that you're in your seat. I notice the balcony is full this morning. I never saw an empty seat get converted or healed. It's always somebody in the seat. I compliment you. I love you. I feel that you're with us, that we're with you. This is going to be a great semester, a great year. And finally, you will remember this year the rest of your life because you will do more to save ORU until Jesus comes than any other because this is the tough year and we're surviving it. And, brother, sister, we're going to survive it. Thank You, Father, for order. You said, "Let everything be done in decency and in order." We thank You for the order of this campus, the way we eat, the study in our classes or in our dorm wings or the library or on a grassy knoll or together, as we play together, as we do aerobics together, as we worship together, as we visit together, travel together, as we come to know and love one another. I thank You for Your university. I'm honored to be a part of it. And the time that I have left to be its president, I want to give it my best. And I want

You to bless my brothers and sisters. I want You to bless us human beings. And I want You to do a miracle, that everyone of us will think of ourselves from now on as a human being and everybody else as a human being, made in Your image. In Jesus' name, and everybody said amen. God bless you today.