

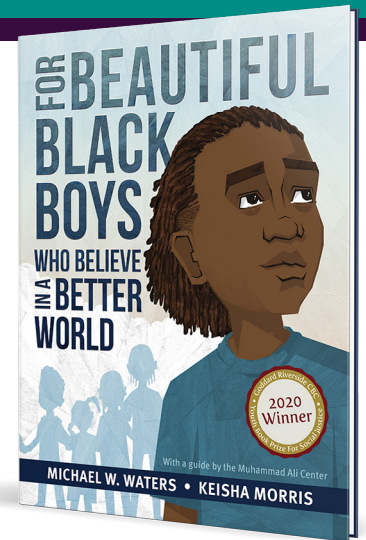
READ★PRAY★WONDER★PLAY

A GUIDE TO SHARING STORIES WITH CHILDREN

For Beautiful Black Boys Who Believe in a Better World

By Michael W. Waters & Keisha Morris

An important but difficult topic is at the center of this book that explores racism in the United States from the perspective of a Black child. Before sharing this book with your children, read not just the story but also the rich resources in the back, which include a note from the author and tools created by the educational staff of the Muhammad Ali Center. If you have never had a conversation in your family about racism, be sure to research an appropriate definition to explain what racism is and the tragic impact of this kind of hate on us and our society. Follow your child's lead as you read this book, and note that, just as Jeremiah waited until he was ready to talk about the events that were happening around him, your child may also need time to process the situations recounted in this book.



★ ★ WONDER TOGETHER ★ ★

- The book begins with Jeremiah asking his parents if he can grow locs (a hairstyle with a process of 8 months to 2 years of intentional haircare). What is something that you have really wanted to do that has taken time to achieve?
- In this story, Jeremiah's parents do their best to help him comprehend news stories about tragedies that are scary and heartbreaking. What helpful advice have grown-ups offered to help you grasp difficult information about scary situations?
- A recurring theme in the book is Jeremiah not wanting to talk about the terrible events that were happening. When bad or scary things happen, how do you respond? Can you relate to Jeremiah's response to the things happening around him?

★ ★ EXPLORE THE STORY ★ ★

- Come up with a list of people who are working in your community to make the world a better place. Consider if there are ways that your family can support the people on your list and the work they're doing.
- A main theme of this book is that while change is hard and takes a long time, change is possible. As a family, share issues that are close to your heart and need change. Seek out opportunities to support and get involved with organizations that advocate for those issues.
- Jeremiah's parents share the things they do including voting, marching, praying, organizing, and speaking out. Make a plan for how your family could do one or more of these things regularly.

PRAY

God of justice, we believe in a better world. Even though we know that anything is possible through you, waiting is hard. Watching injustice happen is even harder. Help us to be the change that will make a better world for all. Amen.



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★ ★ DIG DEEPER ★ ★

This book directly addresses one of the most pervasive problems the United States. Having difficult conversations around race and racism is necessary for all families, regardless of their racial identity. While sharing this book is a start, there's more to be done. Some ideas include:

- Hearing diverse voices. Does your bookshelf have other books centered on non-white characters? Do you watch movies or shows with people from diverse backgrounds having experiences different from yours? For adults and teens: are your social media feeds made up only of people who resemble you?
- Reading a book and saying, "That is terrible" is a first step, but it cannot be the only one. Move from outrage to action by beginning to form authentic relationships with Black boys and men. From there, consider attending vigils or protests, getting involved in antiracism efforts in your congregation and community, and sharing with your children how your faith impacts your voting.
- The PC(USA)'s Matthew 25 initiative has "Dismantling Structural Racism" as a pillar. Get involved with this initiative in your congregation or presbytery, and if your congregation hasn't already done so, take steps with your session to become a Matthew 25 church.
- Look for stories in the Bible of people who were changed by coming into relationship with people from different backgrounds or cultures.
- This book shares stories of Black people killed for no other reason than the color of their skin, but, sadly, it only scratches the surface. Recall names of others harmed by racism in your community or the country. Compile a prayer list of these names and regularly pray for those impacted by this violence, as well as offering prayers for God to help your family know how to work to create a better world for all God's people.

For other ideas, see: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/> (formerly Teaching Tolerance)

MORE TO READ & DO

CLICK THE LINKS BELOW TO LEARN MORE

ADDITIONAL DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES FOR *FOR BEAUTIFUL BLACK BOYS WHO BELIEVE IN A BETTER WORLD*

- Download the [Discussion and Activity Guide](#)
- Download the [Coloring Page](#)

ADDITIONAL BOOKS ABOUT HISTORY, RACE, AND COMMUNITY

- [Liberty's Civil Rights Road Trip](#), by Michael W. Waters & Nicole Tadgell
- [Saving Delicia: A Story about Small Seeds and Big Dreams](#), by Laura Gehl & Patricia Metola
- [Who Is My Neighbor?](#) by Amy-Jill Levine & Sandy Eisenberg Sasso & Denise Turu
- [Crocodile's Crossing: A Search for Home](#), by Yoeri Slegers
- [Three Lines in a Circle: The Exciting Life of the Peace Symbol](#), by Michael G. Long & Carlos Vélez
- [Walking toward Peace: The True Story of a Brave Woman Called Peace Pilgrim](#), by Kathleen Krull & Annie Bowler

Guide written by Becky D'Angelo-Veitch and created in partnership with PC(USA)'s initiative "[Around the Table](https://www.pcusa.org/aroundthetable)" ([pcusa.org/aroundthetable](https://www.pcusa.org/aroundthetable)).



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