



**The place  
on which  
you are  
standing is  
holy ground.**

Exodus 3:5

My life and experiences are tied to a journey for justice and a proximity to grief.

*Blackness -frequency of grief*

As Black Americans we grieve like no one else. We are experts in grief because there is always someone to lay to rest and a homegoing to celebrate.

We grieve loved ones we have lost in the natural cycles of life as well as lives and unfulfilled legacies we have been robbed of.

When will the foreboding rock of grief be rolled away?

(image 1) Look at this memorial and the stones that have been left by visitors paying their respects at this resting place.



Take a moment to honor the life and memory of someone that was gone too soon.

In your mind's eye, leave a stone here as a witness to their life and to honor their memory.

In the quiet places of your heart or out loud

Say their name

Say their name

Say their name

Give thanks to God for hearing you as you say their name

Give thanks to God for being present in your grief

Give thanks to God for being a comforter

*Blackness - Journey for justice*

As Black Americans sometimes the journey towards justice is a locked arm march or a protest rally.

Blackness requires endurance.

Sometimes it is a wandering journey towards justice of formerly enslaved people, searching for freedom from one generation to the next to the next. Justice for Black Lives continues to tarry in the education system, healthcare system and judicial system.

(image 2) Look here at this rock carin. Look at this stack of stones as a trail marker.



Take a moment to reflect on how far you have traveled.

Take a moment to reflect on where you are going.

Give thanks for the marked path

Give thanks for the ancestors and leaders that cleared the way for your journey

Take a deep breath and take in the view

Take a deep breath and feel God with you

It is meaningful to hold these practices and their meaning separately but I also feel them in my spirit often overlapping.

(image 3) Look at this image.

I think about this image weekly, if not daily.

She stands firm and planted in protest against violence and in remembrance of Alton Sterling (and others).

Like a rock cairn she stands sturdy and tall marking the way on a journey towards justice.

Stand here with Ieshia for a moment. She is a Rock of Ages.

What moves in your spirit when you stand in this moment?



Image 3

Saturday, July 9, 2016 Ieshia Evans Baton Rouge, LA

STEVE:

And now, I'll finish this time reading a scripture from the prophet Isaiah, a passage Vernee invited me to read to close this spiritual practice.

Isaiah 26 4-9

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

**4**

“Trust in the Lord forever,

For in <sup>to</sup>God the Lord, we *have* an everlasting Rock.

**5**

“For He has brought low those who dwell on high, the unassailable city;

He lays it low, He lays it low to the ground, He casts it to the dust.

**6**

“The foot will trample it,

The feet of the afflicted, the steps of the helpless.”

**7**

The way of the righteous is smooth;

O Upright One, make the path of the righteous level.

**8**

Indeed, *while following* the way of Your judgments, O Lord,

We have waited for You eagerly;

Your name, even Your memory, is the desire of *our* souls.

**9**

At night <sup>to</sup>my soul longs for You,

Indeed, <sup>to</sup>my spirit within me seeks You diligently;

For when the earth <sup>to</sup>experiences Your judgments

The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.