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**Remember Why You're Here, Brother**

Sometimes it pays to be late. On July 31, 1966, I intended to meet up with civil rights marchers at a Southside church who were going to march in Marquette Park for open housing. The purpose of going to a church, like the demonstrations in Selma, Alabama and elsewhere, was to mentally and spiritually prepare for a nonviolent response to what could be a violent afternoon. As I was driving east toward the church, the demonstrators were driving west, so instead of going to the church, I fell in behind and was the last car in the procession as we approached Marquette Park.

The cars filled all the spaces in the small parking lot on the southeast corner of the park, so I was left parking between two police cars near the entrance. I went to this march with the intention of photographing the marchers and the landmark event because I was a teacher at the time, but seeing the size of the opposition, I put my camera back in the car and joined the march.

As we started marching, angry whites started spitting on me and the other marchers. Not being mentally prepared to accept this kind of degrading abuse, I told someone in the mob, "I wouldn't do that if I were you," as if I were ready to take on the whole mob. (I think I may have been a little naïve at the time.) Then an older African-American man in front of me turned around and said, "Remember why you're here, brother" and from that point on, I remained silent and walked in solemn procession while rocks, bottles and cherry bombs were being thrown at us over the heads of the police who were "escorting" the marchers through the park. With the escort of reluctant police officers, it turned out to be the most brutal march I had ever been involved in. In fact, when we returned to our cars, we saw several pushed into the lagoon and others that were set on fire, turned over or damaged in some way. Ironically, there were only three cars not damaged. One was mine, and the other two were the police cars I had parked between. Had I arrived earlier, my car would have been damaged or destroyed like the others.

Due to the condition of our cars and the angry white mob, it was impossible to return to our cars. So, the marchers headed east on 71<sup>st</sup> Street where at least for while, police protection broke down completely. For example, before reaching 71<sup>st</sup> Street, when the police were still walking alongside the demonstrators, the mob came close enough to spit on us. Then, when we reached 71<sup>st</sup> Street, our police escort disappeared, and ironically, the mob moved further away from us, to the other side of the street. However, without the police presence, the mob threw the rocks much harder and windows broke above and around us. Even though the rocks hit my legs and the marchers around me, we had to just keep walking. Even if the police escort had been there, little would have been done to protect the marchers. However, the police did take swift action when one of the mob hit a police officer. Then the police clubbed him down to the ground.

It wasn't until we approached Ashland Avenue that the mob retreated because Ashland, at that time, was the "dividing line" between Black and White. The white mob seemed to lose their "courage" as they approached Ashland Avenue. Later that night, a police officer escorted me back to my car that had remained undamaged throughout the entire demonstration.

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