

Saray-al Butler

December 16, 2022

Hello Mrs. Carole Boston Weatherford.

First, a big thank you!

Reading *The Faith Of Elijah Cummings* has helped me understand that education can be life-changing for everyone. My teachers didn't say that I talked or asked too many questions, like they said about Mr. Elijah. I am the opposite in some areas. My life is different from Mr. Elijah's life. I wasn't raised in a home of twenty-two persons, nor was I being treated differently because of the color of my skin directly. Mr. Elijah faced many adversities during his life, which is really disheartening.

Although I have not experienced racism firsthand, my brother has. When my brother was 12, he was asked to participate in a public event and it turned out that he was the only black person in attendance. During the event, a white man drove by and started yelling racial slurs at him. He said the man demanded that he go back to Africa and called him the hard "n" word and we all know what word that was. Definitely is a fight word, but my brother said his response was to ignore his ignorance and say that he would pray for him. My brother said that made the man really angry and he drove off in a hurry. I could tell that my brother was affected by the man's comment, but he continued on as if it didn't, but I noticed. Even though I did not experience that, I felt his pain.

That day changed my brother's life. It was the first time anyone had ever said anything so disgusting to him, but he learned a valuable lesson. Not everyone's parents educated their children how to love one another, just as our mother taught us. In your book you said "*I say to our children. Do not let anybody take away your hope. I do not care who they are. And let no one define you. No one.*". If only everyone was educated in loving thy neighbor, then some of us would not have to defend who we are.

Education is important, even in the discussion of treating people equally. When some people think about education, they think of educating in the subjects of Math, Science, E.L.A., and Social Studies, but there are more subjects to be taught. Subjects like humility, kindness, empathy, and love should be addressed too, especially within their household. Despite my brother's negative experience, he kept on. I can now imagine how Mr. Elijah may have felt during all his negative experiences, yet stayed positive and strong through it all.

Mrs. Weatherford, your book made me value education even more. Even though Elijah's teacher gave him no hope or motivation, he continued to seek more knowledge. He could have given up after his teacher assured him that he would never become anyone of importance, but his mother reminded him to have faith and that God had a plan for him in life.

Elijah valued education and with the help of his employer financially, he was able to complete college. Your book has reminded me that I have a support system too and I know they too will help me on my educational journey. I want to become a person who helps others when they need help and I foresee learning a lot in order to become that person. Mr. Elijah advocated for many people and I want to do the same.

Mrs. Carol Boston Weatherford, I believe that the story of Elijah Cummings was a great choice. This story reached me. It reassures me that if I work hard and advance my knowledge, I can create my success. Education was life-changing for Elijah and I am sure for you too, taken that you have authored many books. That too could not have been done without advancing your education. So again I say, thank you Mrs. Carol Boston Weatherford.

Sincerely,
Saray-al NereeJunay Butler