

Endorsements for *Beyond the Suffering*

“*Beyond the Suffering* is remarkable: deep, thoughtful, painful, and hopeful. W. E. B. DuBois said a century ago that African Americans had a great gift to give if it would only be received: the gift of double vision; insight of a people who were simultaneously at home and forced to live as aliens. That gift, baptized in the Spirit, is on display here. It will illumine, trouble, and heal.”

—**John Ortberg**, Sr. Pastor and Author

“*Beyond the Suffering* tells the story of people who faced the challenges of depression, pain, loss, relational trauma and despair of epic proportions—without professional therapists, mega-church ministries, or antidepressants. The authors use the actual testimonies of these individuals to describe how they found courage and comfort in God and in each other. Their ability to develop a healing community, against all odds, is greatly informative to our efforts today. This is a unique *must-read*, not just on the elements of multicultural ministry, but on the very core elements of ministry to all people in pain.”

—**Michael R. Lyles**, MD, Founder, Lyles/Crawford Consulting

“*Beyond the Suffering* is a deeply moving and helpful book. Kellemen and Edwards clearly describe the legacy of African American soul care and spiritual direction that comes to us beyond the suffering and also because of the suffering African Americans have experienced. I highly recommend *Beyond the Suffering* as crucial reading for everyone involved in soul care, spiritual direction, and counseling.”

—**Rev. Dr. Siang-Yang Tan**, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Senior Pastor, First Evangelical Church Glendale, CA

“Drawing on the riches of the African American tradition, this book sheds new light on spiritual formation and Christian nurture. A splendid contribution and a great gift!”

—**Dr. Timothy George**, Dean, Beeson Divinity School, Samford University; Executive Editor, *Christianity Today*

“The amazing grace in the lives of blacks in America gives hope to us all of God’s redemptive desire to touch our souls. This book underscores such a legacy.”

—**David Anderson**, Sr. Pastor, Bridgeway Community Church; author, *Multicultural Ministry: Finding Your Church’s Unique Rhythm*

“*Beyond the Suffering* rips the truth about soul care from the hands of the elitist and hands it to those who lived and taught it in the crucible of suffering. The Gospel’s ability to transcend race, abuse, and evil of every kind is powerfully presented. It shook me up.”

—**Bill Hull**, Founder, Choose the Life Ministry, Author, *Choose the Life*

“What can be said of *Beyond the Suffering*? It captured my heart! The cultural heritage picks up where remembering our “Roots” ended and brings into full bloom the fruit of cultivating our legacy. The abundance of grace exhibited by the authors as they present what has been a very sensitive dialogue provides a compelling read of life’s encounters with a divine God and the reality of the rough places we have trod. Every person from the pulpit to the pew that ministers to and interacts with those in the African American community will benefit from embracing the

Lord's presence in this redemptive, restorative work that outlines healing for the nations. Thoroughly researched to include the various voices of humanity from biblical scholars to slave narratives, the text provides refuge and solace in the sanctuary of Christ. Each chapter closes with an opportunity for us to learn together as it helps us move from a context of slavery to dealing with everyday issues which are universal. *Beyond the Suffering* is a delicate balance of comfort and confrontation from two true spiritual friends. You are invited to drink deeply from the traditions and timeless wisdom that has been forged through years. This text will encourage its readers to take pride in who you are and all that you have potential to and are destined to become. *Read, write, rejoice, and celebrate.* The Lord has seen, He has heard, He knows, and He has come down to help you move beyond the suffering."

—**Dr. Sabrina D. Black**, President, National Biblical Counselors Association; Chairperson, Black African American Christian Counselors; Clinical Director, Abundant Life Counseling Center; Coauthor, *Counseling in African American Communities*

"*Beyond the Suffering* addresses the spiritual chauvinism of contemporary ministry. That is, we prefer the latest trends and fads of the present and ignore the wisdom of our African American parents. In *Beyond the Suffering: Embracing the Legacy of African American Soul Care and Spiritual Direction*, Kellemen and Edwards join a growing movement today in denominations and theological seminaries that mine the practices of the past in order to discern the wisdom of our ancestors that informs us today. This work shows how doctrines like grace and sin were used pastorally by both lay and clergy to foster soul care, spiritual direction, and pastoral care. The book will be helpful for those who want to understand how the practical theological wisdom of the past is essential to minister today."

—**Edward P. Wimberly**, Vice President for Academic Services/Provost, Interdenominational Theological Center

"*Beyond the Suffering* reaches into the past to bring spiritual-caregivers eye-opening insights and proven methods for helping those who are suffering. It gives lay and professional counselors the courage to share the challenging truths of God's Word to those who are facing life's deepest challenges."

—**Sam Hodges**, Senior Producer, The Church Initiative

"I was hesitant when I picked up this manuscript since so much written about racism today ends up being racist. This book is delightfully different! A colleague with whom I shared it commented, 'It is historical, factual, emotional, spiritual, scriptural, and thought provoking.' The authors have succeeded in touching the heart through situational narrative. By telling the story they engage the reader in the historical reality without pointing fingers. Truly a must-read!"

—**Howard A. Eyrich**, DMin, President Emeritus, Birmingham Theological Seminary; Director, Briarwood Counseling Ministries, Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, AL

"Even though some ask, 'Why, God, is this happening to me?', the good news found in black folk religion is that 'trouble don't last always.' It is through suffering that healing, character, and spiritual formation take place. The plight and predicament of African American people are a testimony to the church universal. The voices of unlettered black folk teach us how, despite storm clouds hovering in the midnight hour, joy does, indeed, come in the morning. Kellemen

and Edwards warm the soul with this scholarly reflection of the mind. Beyond suffering lies the power of new life and new beginnings.”

—**Dwight N. Hopkins**, Professor, University of Chicago, Author, *Being Human: Race, Culture, and Religion*