

Chapel Talk by Nelson Thomas '16

I'm Proud I was a Slave
(No More Shame)

I'm Proud I was a Slave,

I'm proud that my ancestors went by Adebowale, Chadike, Ema, and Abioye;
Only to have their names switched to Jonathan, Robert, Michael and James
I'm Proud I was a Slave.

I'm proud my forefathers were able to endure that hardship ridden boat ride from their
homes to a land unknown
I'm Proud I was a Slave.

I'm proud that I come from Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner and Solomon Northup,
I'm proud that we were able to endure that struggle,
I'm proud that we put this country on our backs
(quite literally)
and built this land up from scraps into what you see here today,
I'm Proud I was a Slave.

Because being proud of have been a Slave, is being proud of America.

America without slavery is like pancakes without syrup,
Ice cream with no apple pie,
The Bulls without Jordan or Tinker Hatfield designing the Jordan Five,
It's just not as good,
Not in first place,
Because the fact of the matter is 200 plus years of free labor put us ahead of the race,
This infant nation grew fast and at a steady pace because African Slaves built
America's base.

I'm Proud I was a Slave,

I'm proud that we were able to go from that place,
To a place where the most beautiful person in the world is a black face!
(Lupita Nyong'o)

I'm proud that we were able to go from that place,
To a place where the most powerful women in the world is a black face!
(Michelle Obama)

I'm proud of Neil Degrasse Tyson!

I'm proud of Lebron James!

I'm Proud of Kwasi Enin!

I'm proud of my name!

I'm proud of brotha Malcolm and my brother, Malcolm,

And I'm proud of the poetic justice we have seen everyday

The poetic justice we have seen for 8 years straight.

That the same White House that was forged by black hands houses a proud black family today,

I'm Proud I was a Slave!

I'm Proud I was a Slave!

No more shame so I say here today!

THAT I AM PROUD I WAS A SLAVE!

- Nelson Thomas