



Pilgrim Rest
MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
Preaching, Teaching and Reaching for
Transformation and Liberation

“CONSCIOUS AND INTENTIONAL MINISTRY: DOING WHO I AM WITH UNDERSTANDING”

Of Issachar, those who had understanding of the times, to
know what Israel ought to do... 1 Chronicles 12:32

THE PASTOR’S PEN March 12, 2023

BLACK HISTORY / BLACK CHURCH THOUGHTS

Over the next few weeks, I will share some of my thoughts from previous writings regarding the Black Church. As I think out loud, I pray that you join me on the journey.

Stage 5: The Black religious experience approaching maturity in the 21st century.

My task is to determine how the Black church can regain the incarnated power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? In stages two and three, I showed that the force behind the effectiveness and impact of the slave church and the Black church of the civil rights movements was its acceptance of the classical model of the incarnation of Jesus.

That is, Jesus was fully human and fully divine. This model provides the hope necessary to transform individual lives, especially those who are oppressed. In stage four, I showed the impact of the Black preacher on the Black church and the need for the Black preacher to keep focused on the will of God. As the Black church prepares to move to the 21st century, several points need to be made in regards to Jesus’ incarnation. First, it is essential that the Black church have a Jesus, fully human, who is able to compassionately respond to the needs of the community for salvation, peace, love, mercy, etc. This is the internal Jesus. The Jesus that can be called on in the midnight hour from out of ones depths of despair. The Jesus who can fix it and work it out – right on time. This is the Jesus that spent time with the oppressed and marginalized of his day.

It is also essential that we have a Jesus, fully divine, who is able to empower individuals to fight for justice and the oppressed. This is the external Jesus. The Jesus that has access to the divine power of God and is willing to right the wrongs. I need to know that God is both present and acts on my behalf. Roberts states:

This indicates that we cannot abandon either the Jesus of history or the Christ of faith.

We need both. If the evidence is not conclusive to support our claims, neither is the evidence conclusive against our claim.¹

Secondly, I think that it is important that every individual has an encounter with the divine. Martin Luther King had such an experience at his kitchen table following a phone call threat. As he sat with his head in his hands, crying out to God:

At that moment King says he “experienced the presence of the divine” as he had never experienced it before. He heard an inner voice answering his prayer... James Cone explains that after this experience, King “never doubted God’s presence in the struggle for justice.”²

An encounter with the divine will accomplish two goals. First, it will validate God’s ability to occupy and control human flesh. Secondly, it will support God’s ability to occupy and control human flesh in the person of Jesus. After an encounter with the divine, the Black church can move forward with power and authority, never doubting the presence and participation of God in our lives.

¹ J. Deotis Roberts, *A Black Political Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1974) p. 124.

² Kelly Brown Douglas, *The Black Christ* (New York: Orbis Books, 1998) p. 39.

Lastly, the Black church needs to continue to keep its focus on Jesus. Through the ages, Jesus has been the sustainer of the slave church through the gruesome ordeals of slavery. Jesus was also the sustainer of the Black church through the acquisition of power in the civil rights movement. As a model, Jesus is capable of sustaining the Black church through its recapturing of leadership for the 21st century. Evans points out:

The dynamics of figural interpretation meant that Jesus was more than a Palestinian Jew who lived two thousand years ago. Jesus lived and lives in the countless figural manifestations in African-American culture.³

As the Black church focuses on these points, as well as others, it has the ability to develop an agenda or vision that can transform and strengthen our communities.

³ James H. Evans, Jr., *We Have Been Believers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992) p. 82.

The Pilgrim Rest Oasis

Sharing the Faith · Securing the Future

Through faith God has given us the space to be an **oasis** in the middle of the city.

An **oasis** is a fertile spot in the desert where refuge, relief, and refreshment is found.

Be part of God’s plan for Pilgrim Rest and this community.

Start contributing to the **Oasis** today!
Let’s continue to make progress!



Thank you for your continued support of God’s plan for us.



Your contribution can be dedicated to a specific activity or the Oasis, in general.

	Educational Enrichment	Technology Literacy	Athletics & Recreation	Performing Arts	Facility Innovation
\$500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Subject books for elementary (math, literature, history, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 iPad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 basketballs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 art sets for aspiring artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External security lighting to keep the street well-lit and safe
\$1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Summer Bridge books to help students retain learning during breaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 “learn how to code” kits for elementary students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 tennis rackets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 beginner saxophones or 8 beginner violins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camera security system to keep everyone safe
\$2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 students can be challenged to excel using interactive problem-solving programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 computer for graphic design and website creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 sets of golf clubs for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Play Scripts with performance/ licensing fee and cast instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wireless PA system to easily communicate at the school
\$5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 smartboard to help teachers engage students in learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 STEM lab cart of materials for a classroom with multiple activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-day Speed and Agility workshop for 15 young aspiring track stars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 pairs of tap shoes for aspiring dancers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Battery operated floor scrubber to keep the building looking its best
\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 trip for 15 students to visit 1 HBCU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Robotic kits to reinforce studies in STEAM subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open gym for 20 young people 1 X a week throughout the winter in a safe place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200 tickets to see Alvin Ailey Dance Company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LED light fixtures throughout the school to promote learning and natural light

WORK FOR THE WEEK

MARCH MEMORY VERSE

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things are just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Philippians 4:8

MARCH MEDITATION QUOTE

"I must confront my own complicity with a European way of thinking"

Dr. Miguel De La Torres