



RELIGION

Scripture of the Week

James 1:19-20

Expressing Yourself as a Christian

□ An Excerpt from Chapter Three of *Your Church and You* By A. LEE HENDERSON

You will have a marvelous time expressing yourself as a Christian and a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church if you grant yourself the gift to know your church and to know your self.

What better way to accustom yourself to the full warmth awaiting you from the African Methodist Episcopal Church than to accept John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, at his word.

"If your heart is as my heart, give me your hand," invited Wesley.

This doctrine ran contrary to the Roman Catholic Church who claims there is no salvation outside their circle and bans its members from attending other denominational services.

They are apt to look at split-off demonstrations as renegades. They are the targets who cry, "They drew a circle and shut me out." They see themselves as targets. But the democratic arms of Protestantism respond, "God and I have the wit to win. We draw a circle and take them in."

The Greek Orthodox, also known as the Eastern Orthodox Church has maintained an attitude of working with the state government contrasted to the Roman Catholic Church which maintains domination above it, and the Protestant churches which seek separation between church and state. Yet as God works in mysterious ways, the Greek Orthodox position has kept the doors open in Russia to good relations; and we now see that with glasnost, the great churches in Russia are still serving the very people who have been discouraged from accepting Christianity as "The opiate of the people."

Jesus established our separate way-to-come when he foretold that "I am the vine, ye are the branches." It is not for us to diminish someone who practices another religion. It is for us to glory our own! Perhaps, we shower understanding upon the multitudinous denominations while professing our chosen affiliation. The threat, however, to shrinking Christian practices, no matter how verbal and loudly vocal they have been, even through televangelism, comes from the anti-Christians. They are the "intel-

lectuals," the atheists, the agnostics who build their strength on materialism*. Too often they poke fun at those who are Christian. Their weapons are belittlement, arrogance, self-smugness and they give themselves permission to attack you for the pleasure of their own perversities. They demand logical responses to illogical demands. They are able to prove nothing and insist that you should be able to prove everything. Like a power source yourself, there are limitless expressions available to you for showing the world, by example, that you are plugged into the Master's switch, a living demonstration of His love and His works!

Some of the top professional and material successes build their power base on spiritual belief and Christian faith. You can do the same. There is still room at the top, and you don't have to be born with a silver spoon in your mouth to achieve it. No one knows better about this than Ronald M. Supancic, a certified family law specialist based in Woodland Hills, California, who has represented some of the "zillionaires and celebrities" as well as the ordinary people, too, who seek him out for his unusual tactics. These unusual tactics are rooted in his Christian principles. Like Christ, he is an instrument for healing, not just severing marriages and sick relationships! Like Christ, he is an instrument to confront and chase the money lenders from the temple. He is a formidable adversary for his clients, a bastion for single parents, for those who would prevent separation and divorce, and for those whose situations have gone beyond repair and must create separate lives for themselves by leaving toxic relationships through the divorce and separation process.

Ronald M. Supancic wrote the book "When All else Fails... The REal Cost of Ending A marriage,"* presenting himself to the public as a professed Christian. He makes himself visible and expresses himself as a Christian, professionally and personally. Even his automobile's license plate echoes a statement for all to see and to remind themselves as they pass on their individual ways... "Kids 1st" is on that license plate!

What is the message you would put on your license plates, theoretically if

you were able, to spread a word of concern or a message of love to those who pass your way? The concentrated focus of your feelings and their expression under the roof consecrated to God is within your Church. Indeed, from the first meeting with Jesus in the upper room in Jerusalem where the first Christian service began, we have built many spires and rooftops towards God. They are but part of the testimony, for you...what you say, plan, and do are the major part of testimony.

An effective church must be able to touch the need of its people, its community, responding to all their hopes and problems. You then, are required to bring to your church the true expression of these contemporary needs. Share them with god, but also share them with the pastor and church members to the extent that you will be keeping each other informed about vital needs. John Wesley emphasized the church's role in England by recalling to the church and its members, the need to put Christ at the center of their lives and helping others to do this, too. Be alive to god's directions. Only then can you carry out His full plan for your life in your unshackled ambition to surge forward and accomplish miracles! From the tending of a flower garden to the building of an industrial empire, all is under the loving sponsorship of the African Methodist Episcopal Church under god!

The founder of our church family established our "rock" as the foundations of the human race, a non-exclusionary Kingdom of souls undivided by racial pigmentation.

We express ourselves courageously through Christ. We are to be effective in seeking social change and human betterment under this umbrella of the Gospel: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." (St. John: 13:34,35)

*1-Materialism is the outlook that matter and material process are the sole constituent of reality. It is also a preoccupation with money to the exclusion of intellectual or spiritual things.

*2-Published by Fleming H. Revell Company, 1986. Continued Next Week.

MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY THE ROLE MODEL

Whenever or wherever there is a social group or community, whether it be of the insect kingdom, animal kingdom of the human family, the process of Role Modeling is a powerful and determining factor for the development and destiny of that group society.

Portland Oregon, a city with a population of approximately 29,000 blacks mostly concentrated in the North and Northeast section of the city, aches with the need to magnify positive role models for the growth and development of the community.

I emphasize the act of MAGNIFICATION because there seems to be a concerted effort by unidentified forces to blind the people or hide from them the many positive role models that exist in our community, who walk among us everyday and work constantly with us twenty-four seven.

It is an apparent truth, that drug addiction and alcoholism exists and affects our community in an negative way, it is a problem that demand our attention and energy, but as we move through this life we have our won attributes and we can't always give our attention to problem that exist but God in his wisdom has always sent a messenger to his people when they are in dire need whose lives are dedicated to solving and eliminating problems for us.

It is this same wisdom that sent us an answer to our problem by inspiring Don McMillan with the will and the vision to from INSIDE OUTSIDE PEOPLE. role model of the self help concept that thrives today even though IOP no longer exists.

STAY CLEAN INC. is such an institution and the men and women who took control of INSIDE OUTSIDE PEOPLE INC. are the real ghostbusters, they are heroes, they are positive role models and they should not be hidden or desire anonymity.

For if in truth, Stay Clean Inc. magnifies the vision of Don McMillan, then all of those involved in this program are a manifestation of the original vision which God gave Don McMillan and without this there would be no role model, no inspiration for a Stay Clean Inc., and those who are in a leadership role would be relegated to prison, drug addiction or hell here on earth.

-Woody Breadnax

Amani A. Jabari: June 6, 1948 - July 22, 1990

Amani A. Jabari, of Northeast Portland, died of complications arising from AIDS. He was 42 years old.

Born (Hal E. Holt) in Portland, he is survived by his mother, Cynthia Holt; sisters Joanne Davis, Sandra Holt, and Florence Stephens, brother Billy Holt, aunt Inez Walls and a host of friends, relatives, and loved ones.

Since the early eighties, Jabari has championed the cause for HIV/AIDS prevention education to People of Color in the Pacific Northwest. He was a founding member of "People of Color United Against AIDS" and the founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Oregon Minority AIDS Coalition. Amani was a member of the "Oregon AIDS Task Force" and active with the Multnomah County and State Health Division. He was one of the original organizers of the Metropolitan Community Church AIDS Vigil, and trainer with the Clark County AIDS program for health care providers.

Amani was an activist for Social Justice; before returning to Portland ten years ago he worked in Washington, D.C. in Fair Housing and Tenants' Rights. Also, he served on the Board of McKenzie River Gathering Foundation and the Urban League Youth Service Center Advocacy Board.

Services will be held Friday at 1p.m. at Maranatha Church, 4222 NE 12th, officiated by Billie Johnson.

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