



# Metro/Religion

## Evangelist uses gospel to forge racial harmony

CONTRIBUTED STORY  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Evangelist's third "Live At Azusa" album brings bigger message than the music.

Since his early days as an Oral Roberts University World Action Singer, the evangelist Bishop Carlton Pearson's mission has been to eradicate racism from Christianity. His annual Azusa conference has become an interracial magnet for thousands of pastors and church leaders to obtain spiritual rejuvenation. As a result, Pearson has become a pastor to pastors. Someone they can talk to when they need counsel. In fact, Pearson is the presiding bishop to over 600 churches throughout the U.S.

For years, Pearson has quietly nurtured budding ministries. Among the scores of leaders Pearson has counseled is Bishop T.D. Jakes. When he was an unknown preacher from West Virginia, Pearson had Jakes speak at the Azusa conference. His "Behind Closed Doors" sermon riveted the crowd. Pearson aired Jakes' sermon on his Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) TV show and Jakes started to get offers to speak around the country. "We encouraged him to go on television and we helped edit his first television programs," he recalls. "When I went off TBN the very spot I had at 3:00 p.m., T.D. Jakes bought my time and he took off."

Of course, every shepherd's advice is not heeded. He politely warned PTL founder Jim Bakker to "live clean" a year before the 1986 PTL scandal, but Bakker ignored his premonition. "The FBI and the IRS are monitoring big ministries that have not been scrupulous in their financial dealings," he says. "I've been warning the brethren to dot every I and cross every T and to live clean because when it hits, it hits. "Most others solicit and heed Person's advice. Charisma magazine publisher Steven Strang sought Pearson's advice on his starting a black Christian lifestyle magazine. Person's advice was to integrate blacks into Charisma instead of segregating them to their won magazine. "He did what I suggested and I recently wrote him a



Bishop Carlton Pearson

thank you note because there's not an issue of Charisma that doesn't have some black story in it," he says. "My stance all along has been to expose the body of Christ to itself."

Returning to the subject of Azusa, Pearson reflect. "I started mixing the speaker line-up at Azusa to further expose people to men and women of God they would not ordinarily gravitate to. We pulled in a James Robinson or an R.W. Shamback, and paired them with a Richard Henton or an Ernestine Cleveland Reems. For the music, we had Michael English and CeCe Winans trying to integrate the body of Christ."

Pearson's successful "Live at Azusa" albums grew out of the conference worship experience. Atlantic Records just released the

current Live at Azusa 3: Reminding the Saints of the Hope which features guest appearances by Fred Hammond on "Jesus Be A Fence," Marvin Winans on "Just A Closer Walk With Thee" and Beverly Crawford on "He Lives" among several others. "On the last album the songs that went over were old church songs like 'Bye and Bye' that I opened with the Mother Sherman story.

I didn't think the label was going to leave that story in. I just told it to introduce the song. And that was the song that went over, not the studio-crafted songs.

The inspired songs were the ones that I loved for years. A large portion of our church is non-black and never hears those songs, but there would always be an awesome sentimental

anointing on those songs when ever I'd tear into them. People were crying. I would start crying. These old songs are the ones that really seemed to touch people the most and they helped tear down those racial divisions that often separate us. They also remind us of the hope. I felt those old songs gave us a sense of stability and a sense of security and safe keeping because that's what kept us through the Jim Crow lines, civil rights riots and the assassinations of Dr. King and President Kennedy in the sixties."

Pearson's advocacy of racial reconciliation grows out of the social urgency he heard in those old songs when he was growing up. He's not just about singing, but using the music to bridge communities. When President Clinton and the Reverend Billy Graham went to Oklahoma to comfort the community where the bombing took place, Bishop Pearson was right there with them. He knew the bombing was fueled by hatred of some sort and as one of the leading pastors in the state, he was there to lend a shoulder. As a black man, Pearson has also taken positions that have put him at odds with some black leadership like the Nation of Islam. He was adamantly opposed to the Million Man march because he felt it polarized black and white men. When televangelists recently called the murder rampage that killed several people at a Baptist church in Ft. Worth Texas the latest in a rising tide of "anti-Christian" vigilantism, Pearson suggested that Fundamentalist churches have alienated themselves from the community with their self-righteousness. "This is a time to reach out, not kick out" Pearson says of Fundamentalists' ostracism philosophy.

Pearson trumpets the horn of racial harmony because the Bible commands him to, but also because he feels the church should be an active participant in making lives a little happier. "The one thing the church has emphasized is saving of souls," he says, "but we've neglected saving of lives, we want to get everybody into heaven and let them live in hell on earth. I want to change that."

## The three ingredients to understanding life

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Truly understanding the world around you is fundamental to achieving real happiness and a sense of well being. The idea of understanding is endlessly written about, spoken about, insisted upon, yet it seems that nowhere in all the discussion is understanding itself defined in such a way as to enable us to exercise and apply it with any consistency or real effectiveness.

A genuine understanding of personal relationships in the workplace, for example, will make ones job a pleasure. Absence of understanding, on the other hand, often leads only to turmoil, rebuke and public embarrassment, to say nothing of the loss of one's job and career.

An understanding of children (and parents) will make the difference between a successful and a failed family relationship.

Have you ever tried to talk with an angry man? Or a child throwing a tantrum? What do you do when you are forced to work with someone you simply don't like? How do you deal with a situation in which the other person just doesn't see what to you is a very obvious solution to handling a problem?

Knowing the basic ingredients or elements of understanding will greatly assist interpersonal relationships.

What are these ingredients?

The first is Affinity—the degree of liking or affection for someone or something or the lack of it.

The second is Reality—which, fundamentally, is agreement.

The third, and most important, is Communication—the interchange, of ideas between two people.

These elements—Affinity, Reality and Communication—comprise what is called the ARC triangle and add up to understanding.

They are interdependent, one upon the other, and if one falls away the other two do so as well. Conversely, when one element rises, the other two rise with it.

Discovered by famed author L. Ron Hubbard, the ARC Triangle has many indispensable applications in improving one's condition in life. It answers the universal question of how to talk effectively to someone else: by applying the techniques of the triangle to identify a subject on which you and the other person can agree (Reality), affinity (liking) will increase and Communication (interchange) will improve as well.

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## Obituaries

In loving memory of

**Kenneth Romell Lampkin**

Sunrise  
November 28, 1951

Sunset  
January 23, 2000

Kenneth Romell Lampkin was retired, but when he worked he was a Caregiver. Kenneth belonged to the Church of God In Christ and he enjoyed music & shooting pool. Kenneth leaves to cherish his memory: Elizabeth Jackson Mother Portland, OR

Cecil E. Jackson Step-Father Portland, OR  
Lori Lampkin Sister Manteca, CA  
Claude L. Lampkin Jr. Brother Portland, OR  
John R. Lampkin Brother Los Angeles, CA  
Stephanie D. Ray Sister Portland, OR

In loving memory of

**Kamil Camry Jones**

Sunrise  
November 19, 1999

Sunset  
January 18, 2000

Kamil Camry Jones went to be with our Lord at only 2 months of age, he passed away with SIDS.

Kamil leaves to cherish his memory: Shawn D. Jones Mother Portland, OR  
DeWayne Williams Father Portland, OR  
Billy West Grandfather Portland, OR  
Jessie Mae Jones Grandmother Portland, OR

The funeral services were held on January 25, 2000 at Greater Solid Rock COGIC

### Christian Music Talent Search

Embassy Music of Nashville, Tennessee is conducting its 6<sup>th</sup> annual Artist and Song Search. The ultimate talent search will offer over \$50,000 in prizes, which includes a recording contract for the grand-prize winner in the artist's division. The grand-prize winning song will be recorded and distributed nationwide to Christian Radio. Entry forms are now available. All entries must be received no later than February 29, 2000

To receive entry information, visit [www.embassymusic.com](http://www.embassymusic.com) or call the Ultimate Hotline at 615-846-1700.

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