

## We've Come A Long Way But the Journey Isn't Over – A Call for Resistance

### **Relationship as Resistance**

Isaiah 64:1-4, 8-9 ; James 4:1-10

Recap – This year's Black History Black History Month theme is Black Resistance. We started with Reimagining as Resistance. Last week we explored Religion as Resistance taking our lesson from the early history of the AME Church. This week we work from the theme of Relationship as Resistance

### **What is Relationship as Resistance?**

1. **Our first relationship is with the God who created us** to be part of a much larger plan for the world. In choosing to be in relationship with God we also choose to be part of that plan and to allow ourselves to be transformed in response.
- 1.5. **God calls us into relationship with all God's children - we love people and not things.** We must not put money and material possessions before our relationship with living beings
2. **We love across societal divisions and taboos!** Jesus starts his ministry by choosing to be in relationship with his disciples – they are not perfect and he doesn't actually need them, but he chooses them. Jesus continues to make friends with all the "wrong people." It is the center of his ministry to relate with people in resistance to a religious establishment that would want him to only hang out with the "right people." Despite Jesus' example – the Christian religious establishment continues to overlook and oppress the "wrong kind of people." We must choose to build relationship in line with Jesus and push back on the religious establishment of our time.
3. **We stand strong for the beings we love!** Our relationship cannot stop with being connected to folks and having friendships. If we are in relationship we are called to be in radical solidarity with the people with whom we are in relationship. If there is oppression affecting our family then it is affecting us. We cannot be free while the people we love are oppressed, so relationship is also a call to action.

In the midst of theologies and theories we cannot lose sight of relationship and the love that comes from it. Relationship has to be at the center of how we live out our faith and what motivates our resistance.

### **Reflection Questions -**

1. Reflect on a "non-traditional" relationship that has been transformative in your life and allowed you to see God's bigger vision. How can you celebrate and grow that relationship or build other relationships?
2. Think about how the love of things has crowded out the time that you could be spending on relationship. As we approach the Lenten season, where can you make time and space to focus on relationships?
3. Reflect on a time where love fueled your willingness to stand up and resist. Is there a relationship that you could lean into as a source for resistance and transformative justice right now?