



Panacea World

1750 Madison Avenue, Suite 210

Memphis, TN 38104

Tele: (901) 726-4055

Fax: (901) 726-4887

E-mail: Panaceaworld@aol.com

Website: SteveCole-Panacea.com

To: Memphis African American Ministers

Re: Making Church Work for the People Again

Dear Ministers, Bishops and Other Church Leaders:

I am writing to you as a concerned Black citizen of Memphis. I am troubled with all the crime, poverty, drug use, low education, poor health, etc. that plague the Black community in Memphis and throughout the country. I think that this is a direct result of a lack of proper teaching from the Black church. I feel that some where along the way the Black church has lost its way and therefore we as Black people have lost our way.

There was a time when the Black church led the fight for social justice, civil and human rights. I believe that Dr. Martin Luther King JR. would be disappointed with the direction of our church leadership now. I however believe that we can correct this problem if we start teaching differently.

I believe that we need to direct our teachings to correct the underlying problems that exist in the Black community. The main problems as I see them are as follows:

1. Self Hate-We do not like ourselves or other Black people
2. Low Self Esteem-We do not think that we deserve the best or that we are the best.
3. Confidence-We do not believe that we can do whatever is required.
4. Discipline/Moderation- We do not know how to stay the course and keep from getting distracted. We need to rid ourselves of the Bling Bling mentality.
5. Family, Neighborhood, and Community Building- We need to know that we can keep our families together and build our own neighborhoods making them safe and livable.
6. Respect/Jealousy- We need to learn to respect ourselves, our elders and others. We must learn not to be jealous of those of us who are successful, instead be proud.
7. Education- We need to instill a culture of expected high achievement.
8. Loyalty- We must learn to stay loyal and not sell out our people for individual gain.
9. Self Determination-We must be taught that how high we rise or how low we sink is reflective of the effort we put into it. We are being taught the pray and wait

mentality when it should be the pray and do mentality. We cannot sit back and wait for things to happen, we must go out and make them happen.

10. Faith- We must be people that strongly believe in God. God is there to help us with every decision we make, if we ask him to. Because God has given us free will, each decision we make, good or bad is up to us. We use God as a crutch, when we should use Him as a motivator. We must learn to ask for God's help then be wise enough and strong enough to act on the answers He gives us.

Is serving God and serving man one in the same? I believe it is. Am I my brothers' keeper? Of course I am. God wants us to create a heaven on earth; therefore we cannot down play the importance of our earthly existence. He gave us these physical bodies and all its' senses. Teach us to use it in a way that will make Him proud.

Although we may have different views on some major points, I think that we can find some common ground on which we can work together to improve the lives of our people. I would like to meet and work with any of you willing to try to change for the better the lives and future of the people we serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Cole, MD
Panacea World

Cc: National Baptist Convention, USA, INC
National Church of God in Christ
National African Methodist Episcopal