

The Tennessee Tribune

Volume 23, No. 15, 3 Sections

THURSDAY, April 12-18, 2012

\$1.00

Evidence of an Abiding Love: Easter and the Meaning of Change

A Commentary by Jason Curry



The Reverend Dr. Jason Richard Curry is Dean of the Fisk Memorial Chapel at Fisk University. He can be reached at jcurry@fisk.edu or www.fiskmemorialchapel.com.

I enjoyed listening to a very popular hip-hop group approximately twenty-five years ago. As teenagers, we wore black hats, black shirts or black pants to demonstrate our solidarity with their overall message. Interestingly enough, many Caucasian-American teenagers also enjoyed their message because of its anti-establishment tone. This popular musical group had a strong message of self-empowerment for African-Americans. The artists mentioned our contributions to humanity on the continent of Africa, and they articulated a prescription for political and economic progress for the black community in America. However, one of the aspects about their overall message that I didn't really appreciate concerned a lyrical "undercurrent" which sought to criticize or degrade people who were not African-American. Indeed, African-Americans have had a challenging history in America, however, this group sometimes suggested that people who are not African-

American will always seek to limit our intellectual, spiritual, economic and spiritual potential.

People are not incorrigible. I am a witness that people can change. The very election of an African-American man to the most powerful office in this country is a testament to the fact that people can change. Also, when Jesus arose from the grave, he appeared to Mary Magdalene, a person who was "changed" into a faithful follower after she had been healed from seven demons (Mark 16:9). The resurrection moment, which occurred on the first Easter morning is symbolic of the new testament or new covenant that God has with humanity. Jesus' resurrection also affirms God's abiding love for us, and it presents us with an opportunity for salvation (Romans 10:9). I am of the opinion that much of the apathy, hopelessness, pessimism and despair that we often see today is rooted in the belief that the people and the organizations that they represent cannot or will not

change. Leaders in the area of business can change. Some profits now go to foundations, and these foundations support programs which help people to read and write in an effort to prepare them for a brighter and more meaningful future. Leaders in politics can change. Many politicians are not Machiavellian in nature, and they do not believe that the ends always justify the means. Many elected officials earnestly strive to support programs which are designed to provide a better quality of life for the entire world. Some African-American artists have traded-in the low road of misogyny and violence, for the high road of affirmation, even consecration, so that our communities might be helped and healed. Some lawyers have decided to pick-up more pro-bono work. Some preachers have decided to put down the (economic) prosperity gospel. Easter is symbolic of hope, and renewal and change for the good. Thank God for the blessed Resurrection Sunday.