

# The Voyager

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A Report of the Children's Defense Fund

**America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline™**

## Mass Incarceration and the American Trinity

By Lowell Noble

Behind slavery, segregation and mass incarceration lies white racism; underlying white racism, stands the American trinity of individualism, materialism and ethnocentrism; behind the American trinity stands a catastrophic theological failure to faithfully and fully teach the large biblical content on oppression and justice. Will the American evangelical church release the power of the Holy Spirit to incarnate the kingdom of God as justice for the poor and oppressed in order to dismantle the unjust system of mass incarceration and destroy the American trinity? Or will the white evangelical church continue to sit on its hands as the American trinity manifested though the mass incarceration of young Black and Hispanic males continues to wreak havoc in Black and Hispanic communities?

*I believe that the American trinity [...] is an evil system of values that has generated the system of mass incarceration.* Michelle Alexander, the African American lawyer who wrote the ground-breaking book entitled *The New Jim Crow*, believes that the War on Drugs initiated in 1982 quickly became a case of massive racial profiling. Since 1982, 31 million persons have been arrested for drug offenses; overwhelmingly, they were Black and Hispanic. But studies show that Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics traffic in illegal drugs equally; about 6 percent of each ethnic group use and sell illegal drugs. Use illegal drugs equally, imprisoned unequally.

Alexander believes that white racism is the culprit driving mass incarceration. Racism must be replaced by "an ethic of genuine care, compassion, and concern for every human being--of every class, race and nationality--within our nation's borders (including poor whites)."

[...] (Continued on page 2.)

## Graduation: A celebration of an ending and a beginning

By Barbara Hilliard

Whether you are finishing elementary school, middle school, high school or college, we congratulate you on your academic achievements. Family and friends are proud of the knowledge you have gained, for each knows how it can enrich your life. Thus, we say congratulations to you for your efforts, your families for their sacrifices, and your teachers/professors for their dedication to excellence.

You might ask the question, "How can an ending be a beginning?" As you celebrated your graduation from a particular phase of your formal education, you completed your studies in elementary school, middle school, high school or college. These are not phases that are intended that you end a portion of your life, but they are to prepare you to begin a new life. So you must take what you have learned and use it. You now stand at a gateway. On the other side is the world with all that it offers and all that it demands. So, saying "farewell" translates to saying "hello" to tomorrow. You must grab onto that tomorrow, use what you have learned in the past, and build it into a bright and shining future.

Many times we search for something or someone to steer us on our way to succeeding in life. Although we look to God for guidance, there are practical virtues which are viewed as reflections of our core values that play an important role in our development. The Reverends Floyd and M. Elaine Flake speak of them as "habits of the mind, the heart, and the soul. They are hands-on, useful, and applicable to our daily lives." These virtues must be practiced and exercised. The most basic and strongest of virtues include the following: (Continued on page 3.)

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### Pastor Rhodes to Receive Torchbearers' Award

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, Tau Upsilon Zeta Chapter of Clinton, Mississippi, will honor Pastor Rhodes during its Torchbearers' Awards Gala on *Friday, June 10, 2011, 7:30 p.m. at Old Capitol Inn*. The theme for this event is "Building a Legacy of Excellence Through the Commitment of Community Service". The Gala will honor and recognize three individuals who represent a proven record of community involvement and achievement.

In addition to Pastor Rhodes, other honorees are Judge Tomie T. Green, Senior Circuit Court Judge, District 7 and state Representative Alyce Clarke, Mississippi 69<sup>th</sup> District. Proceeds from the event will benefit the sorority's community service efforts and fund scholarships to deserving high school students.

Congratulations to Pastor Rhodes on being a recipient of the Torchbearers' Award.

**The Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, representing a cross section of progressive faith leaders, is calling on churches to highlight The New Jim Crow during Juneteenth (June 19). For more information visit [www.sdpconference.info](http://www.sdpconference.info).**



# Forgotten Power

By Pastor C. Edward Rhodes, II

*"We may as well face it: the whole level of spirituality among us is low. We have measured ourselves by ourselves until the incentive to seek higher plateaus in the things of the Spirit is all but gone... [We] have imitated the world, sought popular favor, manufactured delights to substitute for the joy of the Lord and produced a cheap and synthetic power to substitute for the power of the Holy Ghost." -A. W. Tozer-*

In his wonderful book *Forgotten God* Francis Chan writes: "From my perspective, the Holy Spirit is tragically neglected and, for all practical purposes, forgotten. While no evangelical would deny His existence, I'm willing to bet there are millions of churchgoers across America who cannot confidently say they have experienced His presence or action in their lives over the past years. And many of them do not believe they can."

I would have to agree with Pastor Chan. Ours is a church age that has relied too heavily on our own power, preferences, and prerogatives. Though we wouldn't flat out deny the Spirit's existence, many of us don't have the blessed assurance of His presence and power in our daily lives. For others, talk of the Holy Ghost makes them nervous because of emotionalism in churches or Gospel pimps who manipulate spirituality in pulpits and on religious broadcasts. We either live as if the Spirit doesn't matter or have become too frightened to embrace His leadership. Neither position allows us to receive the Holy Spirit's gifts for us.

This sad state of the church may be the reason I've given so much attention to the Holy Spirit in my eleven years of ministry. I remember growing up in the small Missionary Baptist church of my youth, yearning for something more than dead religion. The predictability of our services and the spiritual fruitlessness of many of the members led me to believe that there wasn't really much to religion. We went to church because it was the acceptable thing to do, but changed many of us were not. It wasn't until I sought God beyond mere ritual that I experienced the grace of the Holy Spirit—and I've never been the same since. Only the Spirit can take us deeper, deeper.

June 12 many churches will celebrate Pentecost Sunday, a time when we remember the coming of the promise of the Father and the dynamic power the early church received in order to faithfully bear witness to Jesus the Anointed One (Acts 1-2). The Person and power of the Holy Spirit is so important, so vital to our discipleship and ministry, that I'll be teaching and preaching at length about this subject through the coming weeks. My prayer is that the same Pentecostal power will fill and strengthen us. Do not fear nor be too proud to accept the Spirit's leading. May we pray on one accord this simple prayer, given to us through a great hymn of the church:

*Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me. Amen!*

## Mass Incarceration (From page 1.)

Evangelicals don't fully understand the Bible they supposedly treasure; their Bible is full of powerful teaching on oppression and justice which they largely ignore. We evangelicals, with the help of the Holy Spirit and the word of God, should have spotted this new system of oppression, this new racial caste system, before anyone else, but we did not. [...]

By our ignorance, silence and inaction, we remain more a part of the problem than a major

part of the solution. It need not, it should not, be this way. Evangelicals could replace the American trinity with love, justice, reconciliation and shalom. The Spirit-anointed church could become a powerful instrument in the hands of God to incarnate the kingdom of God as justice among the poor and oppressed. We could destroy the false god of the American trinity.

Toward the end of his short but powerful life, Martin Luther King called for a "revolution of

values," a reconstruction of the entire society." If evangelicals fully preached and practiced the kingdom of God as justice, they could lead the way towards achieving this badly needed revolution.

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*EDITORIAL NOTE: Lowell Noble, a Methodist minister and theologian, has worked with The John Perkins Center. For more information on the Cradle to Prison Pipeline, please read Alexander's The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.*



## Going Deeper . . .

Resources to help you go deeper in your study of the Holy Spirit



### QUOTATION FROM CHARLES PRICE JONES, 5<sup>TH</sup> PASTOR OF MT HELM

"I found myself in need of a deeper experience of grace, a larger power. [...] As a Baptist I had doctrinal assurance; I wanted spiritual assurance, heart peace, rest of soul, the joy of salvation in the understanding of a new heart, a new mind, a new spirit, constantly renewed and confronted by the Holy Ghost."

Cited from *The Parade of Pastors: 1864-1988* by Dr. Lee E. Williams, Sr.

## BOOKS

Billy Graham, *The Holy Spirit: Activating God's Power in Your Life*

Charles Stanley, *The Wonderful Spirit-Filled Life*

W. Tozer, *The Counselor: Straight Talk About the Spirit from a 20<sup>th</sup> Century Prophet*

Francis Chan, *Forgotten God: Reversing Our Tragic Neglect of the Holy Spirit*

Cheryl J. Sanders, *Saints in Exile: The Holiness-Pentecostal Experience in African American Religion and Culture*

Vinson Synan, *Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001*

## We Salute the Graduates

**KATINA HENDERSON:** graduated from elementary school. She will enter middle school.

**LAUREN DAVIS:** graduated from middle school and will enter high school in the fall.

**AVERY HILLIARD:** graduated from Jim Hill High School (IB Programme) and has begun school at Hinds Community College. He is pursuing a degree to become a nurse anesthetist.

**JASON POLK:** graduated from Mississippi State University with a B.A. degree in sociology.

**VIVIAN LOMAX:** graduated from Jackson State University with a B.A. degree in sociology.

**RYAN HERD:** graduated from LeMoyne Owens College with a B.A. degree in political science.

### SPECIAL CONGRATULATIONS OBSERVANCE OF 50<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION YEAR

Mrs. C. M. Lewis

North Carolina Central University (College)

Mrs. Rosie Ward

Jackson State University

Dr. William Rush

Philander Smith College

### Graduation (From page 1.)

**COURAGE:** the state of mind that enables you to face difficulty or danger with confidence in spite of fear.

**DILIGENCE:** an earnest determination that guides you toward the fulfillment of your duties and the realization of your goals.

**FAITH:** gives you the hope to live beyond the mundane and to see beneath the superficial.

**FORBEARANCE:** grows from our knowledge that patience will ultimately earn its proper reward.

**FORGIVENESS:** an active compassion arising from the knowledge that no human being is perfect.

**HONESTY:** paves the path to sincere and upright living.

**LOVE:** arises from a deep, tender compassion and sense of underlying oneness with others.

**LOYALTY:** strengthens our families and holds our communities together.

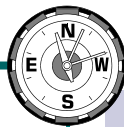
**PRUDENCE:** gives you the ability to exercise good judgment in practical affairs.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** defines you as an autonomous individual and allows you control over your own life.

**SERVICE:** allows you to do your duty to God and fulfill your worldly purpose.

**TRUSTWORTHINESS:** marks you as a dependable individual, warranting the confidence of your friends and family.





## ON THE HORIZON: JUNE EVENTS

1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Odyssey of Life Institute (6 p.m.)  
Youth Meeting (6 p.m.)  
Prayer Service (7 p.m.)

5 COMMUNION SUNDAY

12 PENTECOST SUNDAY

13 Brotherhood Bible Class  
Monthly Meeting

14 Flag Day

15 W.W. Colley Missionary Meeting

19 Father's Day

19 Juneteenth Observation

21 First Day of Summer

26 YOUTH SUNDAY

Each Saturday: Choirs Practice—9:30 a.m.

## Contact Mt. Helm

### MAILING ADDRESS:

300 E. CHURCH STREET  
P.O. BOX 11098  
JACKSON, MS 39283-1098

### STREET ADDRESS:

300 E. CHURCH STREET  
JACKSON, MS 39202  
601-353-3981 PHONE  
601-353-7411 FAX  
ADMIN@MTHELM.ORG

## STAFF

Sister Barbara Hilliard, Editor  
Sister Olivia Thomas, Associate Editor  
Sister Arva Fuller, Writer  
Brother Charles Holmes, Writer  
Sister Angela Norwood, Writer  
Brother Jason Thompson, Writer

The *Mt. Helm Voyager* newsletter will be available to our members on the first Sunday of each month. To save on printing costs, we encourage members to visit [www.mthelm.org](http://www.mthelm.org) to access a downloadable pdf on the Monday following the first Sunday of each month.

Articles, photographs and notices of special events may be submitted to Sister Hilliard or to Sister Olivia Thomas. We look forward to expanding and increasing *The Voyager* and we thank you for your assistance and support.

*The Voyager* is a monthly newsletter published by Mount Helm Baptist Church, Jackson, Mississippi.

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[www.mthelm.org](http://www.mthelm.org)



# ANNUAL CHURCH & COMMUNITY PICNIC

## 4PM - 7PM | July 9, 2011

*"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily as such as should be saved." - Acts 2:46-47 KJV*

## Mt. Helm Baptist Church 300 E. Church Street | Jackson, MS

- Menu: Chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, and desserts!
- Games and activities for youth of all ages!
- Meet the Mt. Helm Ministries!
- Door prizes and giveaways throughout the day!

For more information, contact Bro. Tony Davis at 601.954.0600 or Bro. Jason Thompson at 601.940.7059.

## The Christian Legal Society

by Charles Holmes

The Christian Legal Society (CLS) was founded in 1961 in Chicago, Illinois, by several attorneys through the leadership of Paul Barnard and Harry Brinks. It was incorporated on October 19, 1961. Their initial brochure outlines CLS's main purposes which remain:

- To provide a means of society among Christian lawyers
- To clarify and promote the concept of the Christian lawyer
- To encourage and aid deserving young students in preparing for the legal profession
- To provide a forum for the discussion of problems relating to Christianity and law
- To cooperate with bar associations and other organizations in asserting and maintaining high standards of legal ethics.

Chapters of CLS have been established by most state Bar Associations and accredited law schools throughout the United States. In addition, more than forty states have membership directors. A few of those states have Christian Conciliation directors. The latter operate under the principles of I Corinthians 6:1-11 and Matthew 18: 15-20. These passages are concerned with not only the ultimate resolution of dispute but also means by which resolution is achieved. *While conflict among Christians is inevitable, the former Biblical passages outline a Christ-like method for resolving disputes.* Conciliation services are provided for members, Christians and non-Christians.

The organization publishes the Quarterly, which features articles that explore topics that relate to religious issues. For example, in the Spring 1991 Quarterly, there appeared the article entitled "Bring Salt in the Legal Profession". Moreover, key events and cases which touch on religious freedom and the First Amendment to the United States Constitution are provided.

To learn more about CLS, contact your state bar organization or visit [www.clsnet.org](http://www.clsnet.org).