Richelle B. White
A Transformative Pedagogy for Peacemaking in the Temple of Hiphop

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As an aspiring music producer with heart, I can testify that rap music does have a strong impact on black communities; sometimes good, sometimes bad. However, when considering the controversial issue of rap music, one has to understand that rap cannot be held in full accountability for the crime, violence and drugs in black communities, yet, is a factor in many misdemeanors.

Politically speaking, rap music is nothing but a genre of music that depicts the problems and conditions of society. The thought provoking lyrics illustrate real life, real problems and real circumstances from real people. Regardless of people's intake on rap music, all it does is show how people live and think in a tranquil, but sometimes and most often times, reckless environment. Rappers use life scenarios in a sometimes rhyming, sometimes free verse poetic form to emit some sort of message. If one were to listen the music in its totality with an open, unbiased mind, one would be able to see the vivid picture the artist is trying to portray. No matter how raw, simple or explicit the lyrics are, there is a story to be told or message to get across.

Youth Hope Builders Academy Scholar, class of 2005

Introduction

These powerfully spoken words set the context and introduce the content to be engaged in this presentation, which contributes to the growing body of scholarship pertinent to the faith formation of teenagers in the twenty-first century. A Transformative Pedagogy for Peacemaking in the Temple of Hiphop is an educational resource for African American youth that offers strategies for embodying armistice and equity among members of the Hip-Hop generation. Guided by the aesthetics of Hip-Hop culture, this work is a catalyst in the holistic development of African American youth, by creating new forms of knowledge about peace and justice through the use of imaginative instructional methods. Imaginative instructional methods are models of teaching and learning that are characterized by originality, which encourages students to think and express themselves in a creative manner in order to acquire information, skills and ideas. This interdisciplinary presentation encompasses the fields of Christian Education, Womanist Theology and Ethics, wherein I use several models of peacemaking in the Black Church community, in order to create a pedagogical and curricular framework that will enable African American youth to find the right balance between peace and justice in daily life.

The terms peace and justice are significant to this study as we examine ways in which to address injustices that permeate the global context. Peacemaking is the act of reconciling persons who find themselves in conflict. Through the art of communication, disagreements are explored and human well-being is promoted. In the context of the African American church, confrontation precedes incompatible tensions and the idea of persons disagreeing without becoming disagreeable is oftentimes ignored. Peacemaking is essential because it fosters respect among persons who share opposing views. Justice is the concept that every person receiving what is due them regardless of race, age,

gender or class, by full participation in the processes of society in order to refute exclusion and marginalization. The African American Church sometimes confuses justice and charity, offering immediate provisions for one's physical needs, while overlooking or ignoring the systemic injustice that exists. The worst case scenario is one in which justice and charity is nonexistent.
This presentation defines and gives voice to the practical and theoretical implications of transformative learning for African American youth, define both Hip-Hop Culture and the Hip-Hop Generation, identify Hip-Hop' pedagogical features, introduce the Temple of H.I.P.H.O.P, share the need for a Transformative Pedagogy for Peacemaking in the Temple of Hiphop, and elucidate the research findings from the Living Laboratory Experience with the Youth Hope Builders Academy 2005.

Transformative Learning
The primary purpose of Christian Education is to make disciples or learners of all ages. Christian teaching must empower the people and help them to flourish by bringing honest dialogue and relevant teaching to the Christian Education setting. We must meet students at their level of need. Christian Educator LaVerne Tolbert calls this transformation teaching, and the goal is to teach the word of God so that lives and minds are changed. She says:

The type of teaching that causes transformation occurs when learners replace bad habits with biblical ones, when godly thought processes result in right actions. As teachers we partner with the Holy Spirit in this transforming process.[1]

Moving from the practical to the theoretical, it is crucial to be cognizant of the Core Concepts of Transformation Theory by Jack Mezirow. Mezirow's research interests are adult learning theory and education for social change. However, there are theoretical implications in his work that can assist us as we seek to engage in transformative learning experiences with youth. Mezirow emphasizes "meaning making" as a learning process. He strongly believes that adult learning emphasize contextual understanding, critical reflection on assumptions and validating meaning by assessing reasons.[2] The justification for much of what we know and believe, our values and our feelings, depends on the context—biographical, historical, cultural in which they are imbedded.[3]

I would argue that the same set of experiences are also necessary for youth. The aforementioned learning emphases are integral if we are to engage youth in holistic ministry. Holistic ministry is the loving service that we provide others in the name of Jesus Christ by attending to their intellectual, emotional, physical, cultural, social and spiritual growth and development in order to prepare them for productive adulthood.

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[1] LaVerne Tolbert. Teaching Like Jesus—A Practical Guide to Christian Education in Your Church. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000) p.23
[2] Jack Mezirow & Associates. Learning As Transformation. (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2000) p.3. Mezirow states that being human is having an urgent need to make meaning of our experiences and to integrate it with what we know as a means of avoiding chaos.
[3] Ibid, p.3

Exposure to and involvement in comprehensive teaching and learning encounters youth will experience transformation in the following areas:

- Christian Formation—the developmental process of maturing in the life of faith that occurs by God's initiative and our responsibility in order to be disciples and disciple others.
- Historical Enlightenment—to provide intellectual insight that chronicles the life events and experiences of African Diasporic people as a method of understanding the Black Experience.
- Ethical Embodiment—to personify and live out what we believe and why we should as a means of representing our moral principles.
- Values clarification—to define one's fundamental character by prioritizing and living out one's moral principles in order to identify what matters most.
- Theological Grounding—understanding the relationship between God and people through encounters with the stories of the bible, the community of faith and one's lived experiences in order to lay a foundation for the study of the nature of the Creator.

As we consider essential practices of transformative pedagogy, Edward W. Taylor in his work—***The Theory and Practice of Transformative Learning—A Critical Review*** highlights the following conditions as fundamental for fostering transformative learning:

- Ideal learning conditions promote a sense of safety, openness, and trust
- Effective instructional methods that support a learner-centered approach
- The importance of activities that encourage the exploration of alternative personal perspectives, problem posing and critical reflection[4]

From an African American Christian perspective, transformative learning requires that church leaders believe that education is vital to the life of the church; have a commitment to build a ministry that reflects excellence in its execution, and are dedicated to the development of a body of Christ that is well-equipped to understand and embrace its "African, African American and Christian" heritage.[5]

What is Hip-Hop Culture?

Hip-Hop culture is an inner city movement that seeks victory over the oppressive routine of urban life. Hip-Hop is the name of young America's collective consciousness. It is generally expressed through the unique elements of Breakin, Emceein, Graffiti Art, Deejayin, Beat Boxin, Street Fashion, Street Language, Street Knowledge and Street

[4] Edward W. Taylor. The Theory and Practice of Transformative Learning—A Critical Review. (Columbus: Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, 1997) p.48. A review of the empirical studies of transformative learning.

[5] Yolanda Y. Smith. Reclaiming the Spirituals-New Possibilities for African American Christian Education. (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2004) p.13 African, African American and Christian refers to the triple heritage model of Christian Education proposed by Dr. Smith.

Entrepreneurialism known as the nine elements of Hip-Hop.[6] To its constituents, Hip-Hop is a state of mind.

Hip-Hop's genesis occurred in New York City during the mid-seventies. At its inception, Hip-Hop was a vehicle for African American inner city youth to throw block parties at area clubs, and make money as DJ's and promoters. Hip-Hop remained largely ignored outside of New York City's ghettoes until the fall of 1979 when the Sugar Hill Gang's "Rapper's Delight" brought Hip-Hop national and international attention.[7] Hip-Hop is now a billion dollar industry and has become the voice of young people. It breaks down racial, ethnic, gender, class, language and regional barriers[8] Hip-Hop has become the greatest cultural bridge in the pop culture of American today.

Who is the Hip-Hop Generation?

Since its beginning, Hip-Hop has been a youth movement. Ten to twenty-four year olds give Hip-Hop life. In Hip-Hop, they have found a religion that gives them principles to live by. For many of these youth and young adults, Hip-Hop is their only way of life. For them, Hip-Hop is an identity, until they find their own.[9] Many of these principles perpetuated by the Hip-Hop and Rap artists blatantly contradict the teachings of Jesus and Muhammad, the leaders of the two most prominent religions among the Hip-Hop generation. As we examine the Hip-Hop culture of today, what we witness is a far cry from its original intentions.

Chicago based writer Stephanie Mwandisi Gadlin who writes about cultural and socio-political issues has written what she terms, "Hip Hop's Unspoken Ten Commandments. Hers is a contemporary critique of Hip-Hop culture and how it is perpetrated by entertainers, athletes, and rap artists. For the purposes of this presentation, Unspoken Commandment Six is the problem that will be examined. This commandment has been instrumental in my research and teaching of African American youth, and is critical for ***A Transformative Pedagogy for Peacemaking in the Temple of Hiphop***. Gadlin's sixth commandment states:

Though must rarely talk about God and spirituality. You must lyrically condone atheism and a false belief system that negates the existences of a higher being. You must routinely question the existence of a god by lyrically challenging him/her/it to take your life or grant you three wishes. You are to refer to yourself as a god who gives and takes

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[6] www.templeofhiphop.org all definitions are posted on the website under refinitions. This website chronicles the origins, development and future of Hip-Hop. Refinitions are actually definitions of Hip-Hop street language.

[7] www.rockhall.com--exhibitions essay. Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum: Exhibitions. A Hip-Hop Story by Kevin Powell, curational consultant who traced the past and present of Hip-Hop's origins and development.

[8] Tony Mitchell, ed. Global Noise—Rap and Hip-Hop Outside the USA. (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 2001) p.1. This book shows how international hip-hop scenes in Europe, Canada, Japan and Australia developed by first adopting then adapting US models of hip-hop culture and infused them with local and musical features.

[9] Devone Holt. Hip-Hop Slop—The Impact of a Dysfunctional Culture (Louisville: Chicago Spectrum Press, 2003) p.25. A critique of today's Hip-Hop culture from an African American ministerial perspective.

life. You may lyrically create your own religion, based on a ghetto belief system. Thou shalt not talk about life and death as it relates to religious texts. You are prohibited from acknowledging any spiritual beliefs that may have been instilled you by family. However, you may identify with a Jesus by wearing a large, diamond encrusted piece whereby you may brag about its costs. Under no circumstance are you to promote prayer, reflection, meditation atonement, redemption, sacrifice, mercy, or grace. The consumer fan base must identify with your lack of spiritual grounding by believing that the only gods are sex and money. By keeping this commandment, you vow to limit your personal spiritual growth and development. You also vow to never be seen publicly in a church, synagogue, mosque, temple, or other house of worship and reflection.[10]

To counteract the message of this commentary, a living laboratory experience assisted in the creation and implementation of this pedagogical framework. Hip-Hop culture has easily identifiable pedagogical features and what better way to reach the Hip-Hop Generation than through that art form. Teaching and learning with the aid of Hip-Hop music is one such learning experience. Youth learn, actually understand beyond memorization at their own individual pace, and enjoy learning when a subject becomes relevant in their daily lives. The Temple of Hiphop is an educational resource for using Hip-Hop in a Christian Education setting.

What is the Temple of Hiphop?

Rap is something you do; Hip Hop is something you live are the opening words for the Temple of Hiphop. The Temple's founder KRS-ONE (Lawrence Parker) defines Hip-Hop as a spiritual art form; Hip-Hop cannot be interpreted or described by words alone. It is a feeling, awareness, and a state of mind. Intellectually, Hip-Hop is an alternative behavior that enables one to transform subjects and objects in an attempt to describe and or change the character and desire of one's inner being.

At the Temple of Hiphop, Hiphop is practiced as a unique inner-city awareness that enhances one's ability to self-create. It is a "sight" a way to view the world. As an acronym, the Temple of Hiphop teaches H.I.P.H.O.P. as His/Her Infinite Power Helps Oppressed People. In May 2001, at the United Nations in New York the Hip-Hop Declaration of Peace was introduced. The Declaration is comprised of eighteen principles that establish a foundation of health, love, awareness, wealth, peace and prosperity for the current generation and for generations to come.

The Need for A Transformative Pedagogy for Peacemaking in the Temple of Hiphop

African American youth especially those who identify with Hip-Hop culture—find it hard to combine the Hip-Hop Declaration of Peace with the Church's traditional peacemaking teaching that is often presented as the passive act of turning the other cheek. For some, the tension is primarily cultural—they feel torn between the May 2001 pronouncement that guides members of the Hip-Hop generation toward freedom from

[10] Gadlin, "Hip-Hop's (Unspoken) Ten Commandments" Her article can be found online at www.blackcommentator.com

violence and the church's seemingly docile submissiveness. For many youth, the conflict between church and society has a hard edge; it pits peace against justice.

The Research Context

The Living Laboratory experience took place at the residential program of the Youth Hope Builders Academy (YHBA) a theological initiative of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta, Georgia which is funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. The YHBA residential program of 2005 brought together forty-eight African American high school youth and twenty six staff members to live together at the Simpsonwood Conference and Retreat Center in Norcross, Georgia over a month long period. Together, youth and staff grow as family by learning to appreciate and affirm one another's uniqueness by exploring and using the gifts and talents given them by God and sharing stories of life's journey.

Each day the activities begin at 7:30 a.m. and end at 11:00 p.m. The staff and youth serve as leaders and participants in morning worship called "Hope Explosion: In God's Presence." The youth hear special speakers from local congregations and community agencies in a plenary immersion entitled "What's going on and Who's Who?" The teens are guided by experienced leaders in Christian identity and vocation exploration groups; music, visual arts and dance; recreation; and heart-to-heart mentoring groups as well as in theological reflection by faculty from ITC.

Field trips for the 2005 residential program took place within and beyond the Atlanta metropolitan area. Trips include ones to the Roper Mountain Science Center in Greenville, South Carolina; the Global Village at the Habitat for Humanity Center in Americus, Georgia; the Shrine of the Black Madonna in Atlanta; the Asbury Harris Epworth Towers in Atlanta for community service with senior adults; worship at the Ghana Interdenominational Church in Atlanta and the First African Presbyterian Church in Lithonia, Georgia; and the Clark Atlanta University Career Center. The presence of two youth and a leader from Barbados, as well as the involvement of the YHBA in a video conference called "Kin-to-Kin Talk," with youth and leaders from Johannesburg, South Africa.[11]

The Research Sample and Design

The sample consisted of eight scholars who volunteered to participate in four teaching and learning sessions. Four of them were male and four were female. Their ages ranged from thirteen years to seventeen years. They represented the Missionary Baptist, United Methodist, and African Methodist Episcopal denominations. The sessions included three one hour and two thirty minute sessions with the researcher. The content of the sessions were:

- Introduction to the Study
- Group Interview
- Session One—Definitions, Case Study and Message in the Music

[11] YHBA Newsletter—*The Hope Messenger*, Summer 2005, A Message From the Director—Anne E. Streaty Wimberly, PhD.

- Session Two—Storylinking and Group Investigation
- Questions, Answers and Debriefing

The group interview was comprised of three sets of questions—Autobiographical Information, Hip-Hop Culture, and Teaching and Learning. A summary of the scholar's responses are shared. However, not all participants answered each question. Questions of this genre were asked as a means for creating, planning and engaging the scholars in a transforming pedagogical model of teaching and learning.

Autobiographical Information

- Tell me about your relationship with God.
- What are your plans for the future?
- What are your most important values?
- What are your views on Black History?
- What are your thoughts about peace and justice?
- If you were to interview God, what is one question you would ask, and why is that important to you?

The autobiographical information began with a personal assessment of each scholar's relationship with God. Responses included—"it has been strengthened by being at YHBA;" "it could be better," and "it's kind of OK, I worship Him, but I don't understand what I am worshipping." The scholar's plans for the future include going to college. One scholar would like to be a preacher, one a self-made millionaire of philanthropy and one a professional athlete. Important values included being authentic—not being influenced by what others think of you; as well as family life. One respondent passionately shared that she really values and loves her family. They are the most important thing to her at this time in her life.

There were varying views of Black History. One scholar expressed that he had no views on Black History; whereas, another said that "Black History is the best history." She said, "We went through so much, and we've overcome a lot. We're still going through a lot of things and we are still creating history." Of great interest were the scholar's thoughts about peace and justice. Several expressed disproval with the current justice system and how justice is carried out, as well as the absence of peace in the world. One scholar passionately articulated his view. "Our justice system is horrible, it sucks. I can't even express what justice is. Peace is overrated. There is no peace in the world. They are still talking about you behind your back. There is no peace." If granted an interview with God, this same scholar would ask the following question: "Why is there so much violence in the world, because if we are supposed to love each other, why do we take each other's life?" Other theologically informed questions included: "Who made God? I always wondered about that. This question is important to me because people always say only he is perfect, well it has to be somebody else that made him." One scholar would ask God the timeless question—"Why do bad things happen to good people?" She explained, "This is a question that has racked my brain a whole lot. This question is very important to me because my grandmommy is real sick. She is one of the most faithful people I've ever met. She's suffering right now, and I want to know why."

Hip-Hop Culture

- Please define Hip-Hop culture.
- What do you know about the history of Hip-Hop?
- What do you think is positive about Hip-Hop culture?
- What would you say is negative about Hip-Hop culture?
- Is it possible to maintain a Christian identity and be a constituent of Hip-Hop culture?

The scholars unanimously agreed that Hip-Hop is not just music, but it is a lifestyle which includes the music, the beats, rap, and R&B The lifestyle is full of clothing, style and how you keep yourself up, the kind of car you drive; it's all a way to live. Hip-Hop is something you feel. Hip-Hop is a way for some people to express what they have been through—the struggle. "I think it shows how the person thinks and how he sees things in everyday life." "You have to have a passion for it. You have to know the history of it." Regarding the history of Hip-Hop, the scholars displayed very little concrete knowledge about Hip-Hop's history. They identified it as being a part of African American culture, and originated because of the struggles of the people. One scholar described Hip-Hop as being a way in which African Americans express themselves. Other positive comments about Hip-Hop include it being motivational. "It can inspire people not to give up." "If a person has a real passion for it, and can do it, they can get paid for something they love. That's on deck," one scholar commented.

Other unanimous comments were shared as it pertained to the negative aspects of Hip-Hop culture—degrading women by calling them h*'* and b******, and the constant use of profanity. They also commented on Rapper Snoop Dogg making songs with cuss words, but refusing to let his children listen to his music, and he also sends them to private Christian schools. One scholar cited that "rap music is about a gimmick and an image, not a message." "Hip-Hop is getting real commercial—everybody buying CD's, designer clothes and the imitation bling-bling." Some very interesting dialogue surfaced about maintaining a Christian identity and being a constituent of Hip-Hop culture. Several of the scholars said that you can be a Christian and listen to Hip-Hop music. There's a time and a place for it. One of the sister scholars admitted to being a party person who goes to a party every weekend, and no matter how late she gets home on Saturday night, she is expected to attend worship services on Sunday morning, and is an active participant in the worship service. A difference of opinion was shared by another scholar. She admitted being double sided on the issue. She shared the following example about being a Christian and a lover of Hip-Hop. "It's like y'all are saying come to church, and you're not supposed to kill somebody in church, but you go out of church and kill somebody. I love Hip-Hop too, but it's hard to do both." However, the general consensus revealed that even though some people love Hip-Hop culture, they still maintain their Christianity by going to church, helping out in their community, volunteering for the church.

Teaching and Learning

- What type of learning helps you to learn effectively?
- Do you experience these types of learning experiences in your church?
- Is there a need for the church to include the aesthetics of Hip-Hop Culture when teaching African American youth?

According to the scholars, teaching with examples, audio-visuals, hands on, role playing and simulation assists them in learning effectively. These forms are rarely used in their church educational settings. Church includes listening to a monologue, reading and comprehending. There was a unanimous "yes" to include the aesthetics of Hip-Hop culture when teaching African American youth. One scholar said succinctly, "If the youth the church is trying to reach like Hip-Hop and live Hip-Hop then why not use it."

The purpose of this group interview was to gain a rapport between the researcher and the scholars, as well as create a safe space for honest dialogue and discussion. This interview served as a pre-cursor for the teaching and learning sessions. In planning for Christian Education, it is my aim to have some knowledge base of who the learners are, their background and their learning styles. This was essential to my choosing and in some instances adapting various models of teaching. The models that were foundational to this study include Jurisprudential Inquiry (case study), Storylinking and Group Investigation.

Pedagogical Engagement

Session One

I. Students were introduced to the Hiphop Declaration of Peace. Principle Thirteen served as a foundation for our study on Peace and Justice. It reads:

Thirteenth Principle

Hiphop Kulture rejects the immature impulse for unwarranted acts of violence, and always seeks diplomatic, non-violent strategies in the settlement of all disputes. Hihoppas are encouraged to consider forgiveness and understanding before any act of retaliation. War is reserved as a final solution when there is evidence that all other means of diplomatic negotiations have failed repeatedly.[12]

II. Students were divided into two groups of four members each. Each group was asked to write a comprehensive (what/how/why) definition of peace and justice. After small group work, the students returned to the large group. The following definitions emerged:

PEACE—Peace is no hatred and or violence through civil agreements to end war between ourselves and others.

JUSTICE—Justice is making sure everyone gets treated fairly by carrying out the law fairly in order to attain peace.

III. The Jurisprudential (Case Study) Model (adapted)

[12] www.templeofhiphop.org Hiphop Declaration of Peace, 2001.

PHASE ONE—ORIENTATION TO THE CASE

(summary) The Young People's Connection two week retreat took place at the Garden Inn Conference Center. The twenty eight African American students and their leaders gathered for the purposes of maturing in their relationship with God as well as to learn strategies for resolving conflicts and identity and vocation formation. After the session, James, Marques and Kimberly packed up their things and headed over to the cafeteria for lunch. On their way, they saw a group of twelve Caucasian youth who were gathered in front of the dining hall. They saw James, Marques and Kimberly and said to them, "Well look, if it ain't the niggers. Here we've got some bananas for y'all jungle bunnies. As the peer leader of the group continued to call them names, the other white guys encircled them and started to make monkey sounds. James, Marques and Kimberly stood there in disbelief. Then the Caucasians placed bananas on their shoulders and in front of their feet, and said, "Here's your lunch, you porch monkeys."

PHASE TWO—IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES

Q1: What should James, Marques and Kimberly do?
Fight, knock 'em out, call names, cuss them out, don't know, tell a mentor, Retaliate, walk away

Q2: What types of Issues are Marques, James and Kimberly facing?
Racism, ignorance, Caucasian confrontation, intimidation, superiority of Race, inferiority, anger, insensitivity, depression, satanic attack, confusion and bewilderment

Q3: What does this have to do with the concepts of peace and justice?
It contradicts the definitions, what happened is the opposite of peace and Justice

ACTIVITY—MESSAGE IN THE MUSIC

Each student was given the lyrics to the song "I Want to Talk to You" by Na (album—I Am) The question for discussion following the listening of the song was—What issues diminish peace and justice in the lives of African Americans?

No jobs, starvation, rejection, no voice, incompetent black leaders, priorities, oppression, politics taking over religion, building jails instead of schools, governmental authority, negligence, denial of the rightful place for African Americans, stereotypes

Session Two

I. Students gathered, we reviewed the principle thirteen, the definitions and the case study. The teacher introduced the Storylinking model of Christian Education

II. The Storylinking Model (adapted)

PHASE ONE—Engaging the Everyday Story

Q1: How have you experienced race injustice in your own lives? Stories were Shared in great detail. Concise summaries are recorded below.

- *I have been called a nigger before.*
- *I didn't make the school choir because of the color of my skin. Remarks were made about how I sounded black during my audition*
- *I was pulled over while driving in a white neighborhood*
- *I haven't experienced racism yet.*

PHASE TWO—Engaging the Christian Faith Story in the Bible

Scripture for Study—Micah 6:1-8, key verse 8.

Q1: What does the Lord require his people to do?
Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God.

Q2: How do we do this in our everyday lives?

- *By doing the right thing*
- *Treating others the way we want to be treated*
- *Obeying the ten commandments*
- *Help others in need*
- *Standing up for people who can't stand up for themselves*

PHASE THREE—Engaging Christian Faith Stories from African American Heritage

Rosa Parks—Mrs. Rosa Parks has been called the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement." On December 1, 1955, she refused to give up her seat to a white passenger. The bus driver had her arrested for violating the law. By "sitting down" for what she believed in, and refusing to give up her bus seat, Mrs. Parks made history. The following night, fifty leaders of the Negro community met to discuss the issue. The leaders organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott that would continue until the bus segregation laws were changed. The Citywide boycott of the bus system by blacks, in which they refused to use the bus for transportation, lasted 382 days. It caused the bus company to almost go bankrupt. In December of 1956, the Supreme Court decided that bus segregation violated the constitution. The Civil Rights Movement was put into motion, which led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Today, all Americans, whatever their race, nationality, or religion must be given equal treatment under the law.[13]

Q1: What words, concepts or themes come to your mind when you hear the Rosa Parks story?
Segregation, racism, prejudice, arrested unfairly, pioneer, tired, revolution, Inspired others to stand up, boycott lasted one year, buses were equally integrated

III. The Group Investigation Model (adapted)

[13] www.girlpower.gov. Guest Rosa Parks, Black History Month, 1998.

PHASE ONE—Encounter Puzzling Situation

The case study from session one was redistributed. It was read and reviewed.

PHASE TWO—Explore Reactions to the Situation

Reactions were articulated both prior to and after the scripture passage had been shared

PHASE THREE—Formulate Study Tasks and Organize for Study

Task—Develop a Christian Based Action Plan to resolve the conflict of the case.

PHASE FOUR—Independent and Group Study

Students paired off to work on the tasks.

PHASE FIVE—Report on Task (Summary)

I. Inform the Caucasian group that they were wrong, and committing a racist act against God.
II. Walk Away.
III. Report to a Higher Authority.
IV. Forgive them, pray for them.

Foundational Models of Teaching and Womanist Pedagogical Praxis

Jurisprudential Inquiry (case study) Model—This model was designed by James Shaver and Donald Oliver. It was created for the maturing student who is studying social issues at the community, state, national and international levels.[14] It was created for secondary students in social studies. Students study cases involving social problems in areas where public policy needs to be made.[15] For the purposes of this study, this model was adapted to draw the scholar's attention to social ills and ethical issues that occur in a Christian environment.

Storylinking—This model was created and developed by Anne E. Streaty Wimberly and is a contemporary model of Christian Education (bible study) from the African American perspective. The foundation of the model draws on Christian Education approaches during slavery. It entails a teaching/learning process focused on liberation and vocation. Storylinking is a process where people connect components of their everyday life stories with a Christian faith story found in scripture. People also connect their personal stories with the Christian faith heritage stories of African Americans found outside the scripture. The intent is for African Americans to be encouraged and inspired by the lives of persons who faced life circumstances with which they can identify. Storylinking engages persons in a process that is aimed toward liberation and vocation from a Christian perspective. The model has been adapted for use with African American youth. Storylinking engages them in narrative models of teaching that will help them to critically reflect o their life stories in light of the Christian faith story. We must guide our learners to envision and

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[14] Bruce R. Joyce and Emily F. Calhoun. Creating Learning Experiences: The Role of Instructional Theory and Research. (Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1996) p.35 A discussion of models of teaching that teachers can draw from as they create learning environments.
[15] Ibid, p.36

engage in actions that hold promise for their liberation in the midst of various life situations.[16]

Group Investigation Model—This model develops a community of learners. John Dewey developed the idea and teachers and theorists extended and refined it.[17] The model leads students to define problems; explore perspectives on the problems and study together to master information, ideas and skills while simultaneously developing social competence.[18]

In addition to modifying and or adapting the aforementioned models, I actively incorporate womanist pedagogy as a means of educational praxis. This didactic is proposed by Christian Social Ethicist Katie Geneva Cannon. Womanist Pedagogy is organized into three major principles—historical ethos, embodied pathos and communal logos.[19] Historical ethos is teaching from and with an Afrocentric perspective. Embodied pathos insists that the requirement for the course must be designed to facilitate students in teaching themselves what they need to know, by maximizing experiential realities as living labs. Communal logos has to do with creating a classroom environment where conversation freely flows from teacher to student; from student to teacher and from student to student.

Conclusion

This pedagogical and curricular framework adapts and uses existing models of Christian Education. However, many of these models are used in isolation or not at all in our church's ministries of education. Oftentimes we find the church using out of date strategies with a new generation. This preliminary research study has far reaching implications for the holistic development of African American youth. As researchers, scholars and practitioners we must constantly bridge the gap between the theoretical and the practical so that our teaching and learning contexts will both liberating and transforming.

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[16] Anne Streaty Wimberly. Soul Stories: African American Christian Education. Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1994) p. 50.
[17] Joyce, Creating Learning Experiences, p.35.
[18] Ibid. p.35.
[19] Katie Geneva Cannon. *"Translating Womanism into Pedagogical Praxis"* presented at the 13th Annual Lecture—The Loy H. Witherspoon Lectures in Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, April 2, 1997.

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