Our thematic focus for the month of April is taken from the classic book by Howard Thurman entitled *Jesus and the Disinherited*. Throughout this month we will not only examine the unique and intentional Religion of Jesus (ministry witness, practical theology, W.D.J.D.). We will also examine the particularity of his personal (ethnic and ethical orientation) and public identity (socio-economic prophetic agenda) and what that has meant and means for those who have found and often still find themselves disinherited because of a toxic inheritance of hate, violence, discrimination, systemic sexism, racism, exclusion etc.. Which can only be challenged and changed through/with a power that the grave could not hold, that empire could not erase and that conspirators could not control.
The Life and Times of JC
God in the Ghetto.
Luke 4:14-20
“Because Christian theology is human speech about God, it is always related to historical situations, and thus all of its assertions are culturally limited...Although God, the subject of theology, is eternal, theology itself is, like those who articulate it, limited by history and time. Our image of God is a finite image, limited by the temporality and particularity of our existence. Theology is not universal language, it is interested language and thus is always a reflection of the goals and aspirations of a particular people in a definite social setting.”

James Cone- God of the oppressed.”
The question facing the disinherited in every age

“What must be the attitude towards the rulers, the controllers of political, social, and economic life? This is the question of the Negro in American life. Until they have faced and settled that question, they cannot inform their environment with reference to their own life, whatever may be their own preparation and pretensions.” Jesus and the Disinherited pg. 23
“The System” reveals a sick sociology based on a faulty anthropology, which emanates from a false theology. A person's attitude towards others reflects the nature of their ultimate values.” God in the Ghetto pg. 13
Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together.

One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:34-39
Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. 15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. 16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read. 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

( V14-16) His fame and increasing popularity did not cause him to forget the places that nurtured him.
Ghetto “Any area....characterized by poverty and acute social disorganization, and inhabited by members of a racial or ethical group under conditions of involuntary segregation.” (Kerner Commission) A cultural condition based on pigmentation within a certain perimeter of pain. *God in the Ghetto (definitions of terms)*
He was a kid who once joined the Crips and went on to make it big, but didn’t abandon his home even as he talked about the post-traumatic stress that went along with life in the gang. Instead, he invested in the neighborhood, started businesses, offered jobs, donated to good causes.
Upon returning home to Nazareth—
Jesus is Jew
Jesus is a poor Palestinian Jew
Jesus is part of a community that is in a socio-economic and political reality that
governed and guarded by roman presence and power.

He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed
to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

(V17) Jesus also appeals to the spiritual and cultural memory bank of those in his
community/in the synagogue. Isaiah 61.
“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

Jesus Theology and Anthropology:
Divinely covered/sanctioned and underwritten with a specific focus on a particular demographic.

“The Gospel/Good news of God’s work of total redemption and liberation of persons and peoples through Jesus Christ.”- God in Ghetto.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,

Jesus sociology- An agenda of Liberation of Restoration

Reflective of a mission that will change/challenge the social and political arrangements of a society.

Results in upsetting the imbalance of power that exists. A challenge to the gaps that exists in resources, health care and even geography (Lynn Stoute) policy and theology.
Prisoners, Blind, Oppressed—Not just the physical maladies that exist/s but the spiritual, moral and ethical, prisons, strongholds, chains, barriers and boundaries that keep people from operating in ways that reflect the divine’s agenda rooted in . Love, Grace, Peace and Mercy.

Why would this demographic be central to Jesus’s mission and focus?

“Humanities capacity for justice makes democracy possible but humanities inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.” Reinhold Niebuhr’
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

A call for economic liberation and justice: forgiveness of debt and redistribution of resources: reparations.

Economy---Oikonomia which means “Household”
Contingent upon spirit and station in life you hear this a certain way.

Introduced in House (01/03/2017)
Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act
This bill establishes the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans to examine slavery and discrimination in the colonies and the United States from 1619 to the present and recommend appropriate remedies.