Zora Neale Hurston

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Martin Luther King, Jr.

WHY WE CAN'T WAIT

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize
As we enter this new year and new decade we do so against the backdrop of hard/harsh realities that threaten the future of our communities, our churches and our very existence. The growing reality of climate change, reverse white flight, the rise of automation, growing food insecurity, toxic theology, political buffoonery reanimated white nationalism and poisonous predatory patriarchy to name a few.

While these things have and will continue to create challenges, the question we have to ask ourselves is, do we believe that God can provide us with an alternative view, vision and perspective concerning divine possibilities?

Furthermore, we must consider the priceless value of having an anointed alternative lens and language that we employ and deploy for the purposes of bringing into fruition that which pleases God, drives us toward destiny and makes our world a better place.
Cost- What might I have to endure, confront, sacrifice or overcome? 

Conception- How open/receptive am I to the move of the spirit or the unorthodox and unusually way spirit might reveal itself?

Cast- The showing or sharing what God has revealed to you. (Luke 4:16-19)
1. Have I invited God in or sought the spirit to saturate my imagination?

2. Have I considered what I can glean from the/my past to propel me forward?

3. How will my vision bless me and others?

4. What things are a threat to my vision?
V-Life Pt.2
Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”
Language- What words, phrases and verbal examples are used to inscribe value and convey meaning to us.

Lens- How we see and ascribe value to God, self and others in ways that either build or bind, destroy or deliver, liberate or incarcerate.

Living- How we orient our and govern our daily actions in accordance to what has and is said and how we interpret that and intentionally live either up or down (beneath our divine potential) to that reality.
What are some of the best/most powerful or affirming words people have ever said to you about you?
“Not just bout being seen but how do you see yourself.”

“The greatest and most powerful gift I had was that my mother told me she loved me everyday as a child.”

“You is kind, You is smart and You is important.”
Committed- Remaining focused and unwavering in the pursuit of that which is for our highest and greatest good.

Thus, our ability to remain committed to our vision is based on being Connected to a greater sense of self rooted in divine affirmation because we know we are loved/ beloved and belong.
She wrote and recorded 16 songs in ten days.
Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened,

Jesus demonstrates a willingness to appeal to a spiritual and communal tradition.

Reasons: To identify with humanity and our sin and need for cleansing.

To provide an example for humanity to follow.

To give proof of his willingness to publicly submit to a process.
Water purifies/cleanses is life-giving and sustains!!

A willingness to commit an act of divine alignment/allegiance.
Some ways we can show and demonstrate OUR divine allegiance

1. Showing kindness to others.
2. Showing up for people during difficult moments. (sickness, court, schools etc.).
3. Using our power or privilege to give others a platform.
4. Affirming the dignity and value of other self and others.
and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven,

This public and communal act creates a cosmic response.

The dove is symbolic of a divine plan, presence, purity and sacrifice.
Gen 8:6-12,
At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more. Gen 8:6-12.

When the days of her purification are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb in its first year for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering. He shall offer it before the LORD, and make atonement on her behalf; then she shall be clean from her flow of blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, male or female. If she cannot afford a sheep, she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement on her behalf, and she shall be clean. Lev 12:6-8.
And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved;[g] with you I am well pleased.”[h] (NRSV)

A public declaration of his divine identity.

A personal public affirmation of his mission and sense of belonging/being claimed.
A new view of self as divine, and valued led to a new vision for community!
"The Marathon Continues"