

"MAN MUST REACH OUT FOR THAT WITHIN"

REVEREND WILLIAMS,

MR. JONES, STEWARDS, AND STEWARDESSES, MEMBERS, VISITORS AND FRIENDS OF WESLEY A.M.E. CHURCH. I AM FLATTERED THAT THE PRESIDENT AND ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF THE BIBLE CLASS HAVE CHOSEN ME TO SPEAK TO YOU ON THIS OCCASION. I AM FLATTERED, FIRST, BECAUSE I KNOW EVERY OTHER MEMBER OF THE CLASS IS MORE WORTHY OF THIS HONOR THAN I. SECOND, I KNOW THERE ARE MANY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CLASS WHO ARE BETTER SPEAKERS THAN I. AND THIRD, I CANNOT PRETEND TO BE THE BIBLICAL SCHOLAR OUR PRESIDENT, MR. JONES IS, OR MR WILLIAMS, MR. WASHINGTON, MR. TAYLOR, OR MANY OTHERS IN THE BIBLE CLASS. IN FACT, AS I HAVE ALWAYS SAID IN THE BIBLE CLASS AND AS I AM GOING TO SHORTLY SAY HERE, IT IS THE RECOGNITION OF MY IGNORANCE OF THE BIBLE AND THINGS SPIRITUAL THAT TO A GREAT EXTENT MOTIVATE MY ATTENDING THE BIBLE CLASS EVERY SUNDAY MORNING.

REVEREND WILLIAMS, I AM HONORED TO BE ALLOWED TO STAND IN THE SAME PULPIT THAT YOU HAVE SO ELOQUENTLY SERVED FROM FOR MANY YEARS.

REVEREND WILLIAMS, IF YOU WILL PARDON MY IMPROPRIETY, I WOULD LIKE TO HERE REFER TO OUR PRIVATE CONVERSATION ON THE PHONE LAST FRIDAY TWO WEEKS AGO. I WAS BROUGHT UP IN THE A.M.E. CHURCH FROM THE CRADLE; AND WHEN I DIE I WON'T BE A PART OF ANY ~~OTHER CHURCH~~ OTHER THAN THE A.M.E. CHURCH. THEREFORE, I WAS TAUGHT TO RESPECT AND GREW UP RESPECTING

PROFOUNDLY A.M.E. MINISTERS. NOT WANTING TO SAY ANYTHING THAT MIGHT EMBARRASS ME OR THE BIBLE CLASS I CALLED THE PASTOR TO TRY TO GET A LINE ON WHAT I MIGHT APPROPRIATELY SAY. THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND SO FORTH MIGHT HAVE A LOT TO SAY ABOUT WHAT GOES ON IN A CHURCH; BUT, I THINK, ONLY THE PASTOR HAS A RIGHT TO SAY WHAT SHOULD GO ON IN THE PULPIT. WELL, REVEREND WILLIAMS TOLD ME HE WAS NOT A CENSOR AND THAT I WAS TO EXERCISE MY OWN JUDGMENT AS TO WHAT I MIGHT APPROPRIATELY SAY. THE PASTOR PROBABLY DOES NOT REALIZE HOW DANGEROUS THAT CAN BE. IN ANY CASE IT WAS VERY COURAGEOUS AND SIGNIFICANT.

A LIAR OR MAN AFRAID OF HIS OWN CONVICTIONS FEARS NOTHING MORE THAN FREEDOM OF SPEECH. FOR IF HE ALLOWS ANOTHER TO SPEAK FREELY HE RUNS THE RISK OF HIS OWN FALSEHOOD AND PUNY IDEAS AND CONVICTIONS BEING EXPOSED. REVEREND WILLIAMS, WHEN YOU SAID THAT I MIGHT SAY WHAT I LIKE, I KNOW YOU MUST BELIEVE YOU MUST BELIEVE WHATEVER YOU HAVE BEEN SAYING UP HERE AND THAT YOU ARE A MAN OF GOD WHO HAS NOTHING TO HIDE.

REVEREND WILLIAMS, I THINK YOUR GIVING ME FREEDOM TO SAY WHAT I LIKE IS NOT ONLY A TRIBUTE TO YOUR COURAGE, CONVICTION AND CONFIDENCE BUT IT IS ALSO A TRIBUTE TO YOUR CONGREGATION AS WELL. YOU KNOW THAT THEY HAVE ENOUGH SENSE AND SPIRITUAL CONVICTION TO DISTINGUISH WORTHWHILE TALK FROM ANY NONSENSE I MIGHT UTTER.

SINCE I AM ON THIS SUBJECT OF FREE SPEECH I WOULD LIKE TO SAY A WORD ABOUT FREE DISCUSSION IN THE MEN'S BIBLE CLASS OF WESLEY CHAPEL A.M.E. CHURCH. THERE IS PROBABLY NO PLACE IN HOUSTON WHERE PEOPLE OF SUCH DIVERSE IDEAS, AS THE MEMBERS OF THE BIBLE CLASS HAVE, THAT ALLOWS THE FREE PLAY OF IDEAS AS MUCH AS OUR BIBLE CLASS. ATTORNEY SAMUEL ALLEN WHO USED TO BE ON OUR LAW FACULTY (BY THE WAY, HIS FATHER WAS BISHOP ALLEN) FREQUENTLY REMARKED TO ME THAT IN HIS TRAVELING OVER THE

WORLD AND THE UNITED STATES HE PROBABLY HAD NEVER ENCOUNTERED SUCH SUSTAINED INTELLIGENT DISCUSSION OF SIGNIFICANT ISSUES AS TAKES PLACE IN WESLEY CHAPEL'S MEN'S BIBLE CLASS. WE HAVE MEMBERS LIKE DR. IRONS WHO HAS A PH.D. DEGREE FROM HARVARD AND OTHER MEN WHO MAY NOT HAVE HIGH UNIVERSITY DEGREES, BUT THEY HAVE SOMETHING PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT -- EXPERIENCE AND LIVES DEDICATED TO THE TRUTHS OF CHRIST. I WISH I HAD THE POWER TO PAINT A VERBAL PICTURE OF THE EXCITEMENT AND LIVELY ENTHUSIASM OF THE DISCUSSIONS IN THE BIBLE CLASS. ONE CANNOT DO JUSTICE TALKING ABOUT THE BIBLE CLASS; ONE MUST COME AND TALK IN THE BIBLE CLASS TO REALLY APPRECIATE IT. MR. JONES, MR. HERBERT, MR. JACKSON, MR. WOODS AND THE MANY OTHER FAITHFUL OFFICERS HAVE DONE A WONDERFUL JOB OF MAINTAINING VITALITY IN THE BIBLE CLASS -- WESLEY CHAPEL'S MEN'S BIBLE CLASS IS BECOMING AN INSTITUTION IN HOUSTON AND WITH MR. TAYLOR TRAVELING OVER THE COUNTRY AND ATTORNEY ALLEN OVER THE WORLD WESLEY CHAPEL'S MEN'S BIBLE CLASS MAY BE KNOWN ALL OVER THE COUNTRY AND THE WORLD.

EACH GENERATION AND EPOCH OF MAN SEEMS TO PRESENT AN UNIQUE CRISIS. EACH AGE DESCRIBES ITS TIME WITH SUPERLATIVES AND WORDS OF URGENCY. THUS, I RELUCTANTLY SAY WHAT I SHALL. NO MATTER WHAT THE PAST HAS CLAIMED; NO MATTER HOW EXAGGERATED OR URGENT THE STATEMENTS OF EARLIER GENERATIONS HAVE BEEN: MANKIND TODAY IS ON THE BRINK OF AN UNSPEAKABLE HORROR! THE NEGATION OF MAN IS NO LONGER AN ALGEBRAIC HALLUCINATION OF MAD MATHEMATICAL MANIPULATORS, ETERNALLY CRAZED BY THEIR OWN PHILOSOPHICAL COMPUTATIONS. THE COBOLT AND HYDROGEN BOMB, WHICH MEASURE THEIR DESTRUCTIVE POWERS BY MEGATONS (MILLION TONS), CAN TURN MAN'S PRIOR MAD THOUGHTS INTO A PRACTICAL REALITY. IF A WORLD WAR COMES THE

EARTH WILL BECOME AN ATOMIC WASTELAND. THE GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS OF CIVILIZATION WILL BE REDUCED TO A RADIO-ACTIVE DUST HEAP. NEVER BEFORE HAS IT BEEN SO ESSENTIAL FOR MAN TO REACH OUTSIDE HIS NARROW PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS AND TAKE GRASP OF SOME TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALS WHICH WILL LEAD HIM AWAY FROM THE ABYSS OF TOTAL SELF-DESTRUCTION. INDEED MAN MUST GET THE STRENGTH TO CRY OUT IN TRUST AS THE PSALMIST: "I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS FROM WHENCE COMETH MY HELP.... THE SUN SHALL NOT SMITE THEE BY DAY, NOR THE MOON BY NIGHT." OR MAN MIGHT SAY: "UNTO THEE LIFT UP MINE EYES, O THOU THAT DWELLEST IN HEAVENS." MODERN MAN MUST BE WARNED FURTHER THAT: " EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE, THEY LABOUR IN VAIN THAT BUILD IT: EXCEPT THE LORD KEEP THE CITY, THE WATCHMAN WAKETH BUT IN VAIN."

MAN KNOWS EVERYTHING; BUT UNDERSTANDS NOTHING. MAN IS THE MASTER OF MATTER; BUT THE SLAVE OF MADNESS. MAN IS THE PERSONIFICATION OF REASON; BUT THE DEIFICATION OF PASSION. MAN IS MADNESS -- AMUCK, STUPIDITY -- ARROGANT, INTEGRITY -- LOST. AND YET  
HIGH ABOVE SADNESS

A SMILE BURSTS INTO BLOOM.

TODAY IS NOT THE TIME FOR US TO RUN FROM OUR PREDICAMENT. WE MUST CONFRONT THE TERRIBLE RISKS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE WITH NEW AND DEEP UNDERSTANDING. IF WE REALIZE THE FRACTIONAL CHARACTER OF MAN THEN WE CAN COME TO GRIPS WITH OUR SEGMENTED BEINGS. WE MUST REALIZE THAT WE ARE PARTS THAT CAN ONLY BE MADE WHOLE BY GRASPING SOMETHING OUTSIDE OF US AND YET SILENTLY SECRETED IN OUR SOULS. THE SECRET OF SALVATION IS OUTSIDE US BUT YET WITHIN. MAN HAS A RESERVE OF SPIRITUAL POWER WITHIN HIS SOUL THAT COULD OVERCOME THE FOLLY OF HIS FUTURE, IF HE WOULD ONLY REACH FAR ENOUGH OUTSIDE HIMSELF. THIS IS ONE OF THE MANY

PARADOXES OF REALITY AND TRUTH. MAN CAN SAVE HIS SOUL ONLY BY LOSING IT. MAN CAN OVERCOME HIS PERILOUS PREDICAMENT ONLY BY REACHING OUT FOR THAT WHICH IS WITHIN.

MEN OF SCIENTIFIC AND SKEPTICAL FRAME OF MIND WOULD CALL ALL OF THIS DOUBLE TALK. AS FAR AS MATERIAL THINGS ARE CONCERNED THE SCIENTIST AND SKEPTIC MIGHT BE RIGHT. THIS IS A POINT MR. WASHINGTON MAKES ALMOST EVERY SUNDAY MORNING IN THE BIBLE CLASS. TRUTH AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD IS DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE MATERIAL. BY DEFINITION ASSERTIONS ABOUT MATTER OR PHYSICAL OBJECTS MUST BE MADE IN LOGICAL ORDERLY STATEMENTS THAT POINT TOWARD FACTS IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD. BUT TRUTHS ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL WORLD REFER TO INTANGIBLE, INCORPOREAL OBJECTS.

IT IS THE VOICE OF THE POET OR MYSTIC <sup>which</sup> ~~WHO~~ HAS MOST TO SAY HERE. IT IS THE POET OR MYSTIC THAT UNDERSTANDS MOST HERE. LISTEN TO THE WORDS OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY:

THE SPLENDOURS OF THE FIRMAMENT OF TIME  
MAY BE ECLIPSED, BUT ARE EXTINGUISHED NOT;  
LIKE STARS TO THEIR APPOINTED HEIGHT THEY CLIMB,  
AND DEATH IS A LOW MIST WHICH CANNOT BLOT  
THE BRIGHTNESS IT MAY VEIL, WHEN LOFTY THOUGHT  
LIFTS A YOUNG HEART ABOVE ITS MORTAL LAIR,  
AND LOVE AND LIFE CONTEND IN IT, FOR WHAT  
SHALL BE ITS EARTHLY DOOM, THE ~~DEAD~~ LIVE THERE  
AND MOVE LIKE WINDS OF LIGHT ON DARK AND STORMY AIR.

*Dead*

WHAT MORE ACCURATELY RECOGNIZES AND STATES THE TRUTH OF THE SPIRIT THAN DAVID IN THE 19TH PSALM:

"THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD;  
AND THE FIRMAMENT SHEWETH HIS HANDYWORK.  
DAY UNTO DAY UTTERETH SPEECH, AND NIGHT UNTO  
NIGHT SHEWETH KNOWLEDGE  
THERE IS NO SPEECH NOR LANGUAGE WHERE THEIR VOICE  
IS NOT HEARD."

HIS GOING FORTH IS FROM THE END OF THE HEAVENS, AND  
HIS CIRCUIT UNTO THE ENDS OF IT: AND THERE IS

NOTHING HID FROM THE HEAT THEREOF. "THE LAW OF THE  
LORD IS PERFECT, CONVERTING THE SOUL: THE TESTI-  
MONY OF THE LORD IS SURE, MAKING WISE THE SIMPLE...  
....."

SO MUCH FOR THE LANGUAGE AND PERCEPTION OF THE PSALMIST. THE SKEPTICS  
AND SCIENTIST SHOULD ALSO HARKEN TO THE WORDS OF THE BESEIGED POET AND  
ARTIST WILLIAM BLAKE.

IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES, MEN LIKE VOLTAIRE AND  
ROUSSEAU MOCKED AND CHALLENGED THE LORE OF CHRISTIANITY, THE REASON OF  
BELIEVERS. ONLY POETRY CAN PROPERLY MAKE REPLY:

MOCK ON, MOCK ON, VOLTAIRE, ROUSSEAU  
MOCK ON, MOCK; 'TIS ALL IN VAIN;  
YOU THROW THE SAND AGAINST THE WIND,  
AND THE WIND BLOWS IT BACK AGAIN.

AND EVERY SAND BECOMES A GEM,  
REFLECTED IN THE BEAMS DIVINE;  
BLOW BACK, THEY BLIND THE MOCKING EYE,  
BUT STILL IN ISRAEL'S PATHS THEY SHINE.

THE ATOMS OF DEMOCRITUS  
AND NEWTON'S PARTICLES OF LIGHT  
ARE SANDS UPON THE RED SEA SHORE  
WHERE ISRAEL'S TENTS DO SHINE SO BRIGHT

WHAT AM I TRYING TO SAY? HE WHO HAS NEVER SEEN THE RAINBOW, THE  
PAGEANTRY OF FALLING LEAVES IN THE FALL, THE COLD STILL WHITNESS OF A  
NORTHERN DECEMBER NIGHT, THE VITAL VERDURE OF AWAKENING SPRING -- HOW  
CAN ANY SUCH MAN KNOW THE MEANING OF COLOR. EVEN THOSE OF US WHO ARE  
FOREVER SURROUNDED BY COLOR DO NOT ALWAYS RECOGNIZE ITS BEAUTY. IT  
TAKES THE ARTIST TO REALLY REDUCE THE BEAUTY OF NATURE TO A MORE TAN-  
GIBLE AND COMPREHENSIBLE FOCUS. ONE NEVER TOUCHED BY THE SPIRIT OF  
CHRIST IS JUST AS BLIND TO THE TRUTHS OF THE SPIRIT. WHAT ELSE DID  
BLAKE SAY?

TO SEE A WORLD IN A GRAIN OF SAND  
AND A HEAVEN IN A WILD FLOWER  
HOLD INFINITY IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND  
AND ETERNITY IN AN HOUR.

OH, HOW MUCH WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING ARE IN THOSE FOUR SHORT LINES! THOUSANDS OF WORDS MORE IN EXPLANATION BY ME CAN NEITHER ADD NOR SUBTRACT FROM THE SOLIDITY AND TRUTH OF BLAKE'S WORDS. I WISH I HAD TIME TO READ THE REMAINDER OF BLAKE'S "AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE." THE PULSATING PANORAMA OF LIFE IS PRESENTED SWEETLY IN CLEAN, SHORT, POETIC LINES OF SPIRITUAL INSPIRATION.

BUT I TALK TOO MUCH! I CANNOT SAY I HAVE MADE A SYSTEMATIC STATE-MENT OF ANYTHING. THERE IS NO ONE VIEW OR COMPLEXION OF OPINION THAT TYPIFIES THE BIBLE CLASS. WE ARE ALL SEEKING THE TRUTH. ONE POET'S LINE STRIKES ONE MEMBER MORE POIGNANTLY THAN ANOTHER. OFTEN THERE IS HOT DISAGREEMENT; BUT THERE IS ALWAYS WARM FELLOWSHIP IN THE BIBLE CLASS.

WHEN ONE COMES TO THE END OF WHAT HE HAS TO SAY HE SHOULD SIT DOWN, BUT THAT IS THE COWARDLY THING TO DO. IN ANY CASE IT IS NOT THE USUAL THING DONE IN CHURCH. I HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT "REACHING OUT FOR THAT WITHIN." THAT "WITHIN" HAS BEEN SUGGESTED TO BE A SPIRITUAL ANTENNA WHICH, IF TUNED IN PROPERLY TO THE SPIRITUAL WAVES FLOWING OUTSIDE US, CAN RECEIVE THE TRUE MEANING OF THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST. BUT LET ME NOT OVER-EMPHASIZE THIS SPIRITUALLY RELIGIOUS SIDE OF MAN. MAN HAS WITHIN ALSO A SENSE OF DIGNITY AND SELF-RESPECT. TOO MANY NEGROES HAVE FED AND DEVELOPED THE SPIRITUAL BEING WITHIN TO THE EXTENT OF STARVING OR DESTROYING THE ~~TO~~ OTHER.

*sense of dignity & self respect*  
*within*

HOW MANY NEGROES IN THE PAST HAVE SUPINELY SUBMITTED TO LYNCHINGS AND PHYSICAL DESECRATIONS? I AM NOT SUGGESTING THAT NEGROES SHOULD TALK OR ACT BIG IN THE FACE OF THE MUZZLE OF A GUN OR THE CRUEL MACHINATIONS OF AN UNJUSTLY ENACTED OR APPLIED LAW. WHAT IS THAT OLD SAYING? IT IS BETTER TO FIGHT AND RUN AWAY AND LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY. THE TROUBLE IS WE HAVE DONE PLENTY "RUNNING" AND NOT ENOUGH FIGHTING. WELL, THAT IS NOT ALTOGETHER TRUE. WE DO FIGHT EACH OTHER. RECENT INCIDENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS HERE INDICATE WHAT CAN ~~BE~~ BE DONE IF WE STAND UP FOR OUR HUMAN DIGNITY AND SELF-RESPECT. AGAIN WE HAVE ONE OF THOSE CURIOUS PARADOXES OF LIFE. WE HAVE STOOD-UP FOR OUR RIGHTS BY SITTING DOWN.

THERE IS PROBABLY NOTHING THAT NEEDS MORE EMPHASIS THAN THE INSISENCE THAT NEGROES ~~SHOULD~~ SHOULD CULTIVATE A STRONGER SENSE OF DIGNITY AND SELF-RESPECT. "THE PAY ENVELOPE OF THE CAPTAIN FALLS FAR SHORT OF EXPLAINING WHY HE GOES DOWN WITH HIS SHIP; WHY THE NURSE FACES DEATH WITH HER PATIENT, WHY THE COAL MINER RISKS HIS LIFE IN GAS AND UNDER A TREACHEROUS ROOF. THERE IS DEEP DOWN IN EVERY HUMAN BREST THE DESIRE TO TAKE HIMSELF SERIOUSLY AND TO BE ~~RESPECT~~ RESPECTED BY HIS FELLOW MEN." WE MUST NOT BE SO WILLING TO ENDURE HELL ON EARTH FOR A HEAVEN IN AFTER LIFE. SOMETIMES EVEN THE CHURCH PREPARES US TOO MUCH FOR A GOOD LIFE AFTER DEATH INSTEAD OF TELLING US HOW TO LIVE A GOOD ~~LIFE~~ LIFE ON THIS EARTH. TOO MANY CHURCHES ARE BUSY GETTING US TO HEAVEN INSTEAD OF BRINGING HEAVEN INTO OUR OWN HEARTS. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S COMING AS I UNDERSTAND IT WAS NOT TO GET MEN USED TO ABUSE BUT TO GIVE THEM COURAGE TO STAND UP--EVEN ~~AGAINST~~ AGAINST TOUGH ODDS.



Who is there among us who does not swell with pride and admiration for a dedicated man like Rev. Martin Luther King? His message from Christ certainly does not counsel abject surrender. Neither does it counsel violence or arrogance. He teaches peaceful militancy. Passive resistance. He has translated the message of ~~Christ~~ Christ not into the acceptance of ~~second~~ second class citizenship, but into a faith that announces that the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man are aspirations which all followers of Christ must pursue.

It has been suggested by some that in the past the Negro Church was an institution which the ~~white~~ white man subsidized so as to keep the Negro ~~satisfied~~ satisfied with nothing. I suppose the white man's theory was that if the Negro made enough noise on Sunday in Church he would not have enough strength left to protest his lot through the week. Rev. Martin Luther King is changing that if that was ever true. Apparently his Sunday message sustains and vitalizes those noble people who have in their simple but ~~firm~~ firm way shown the white man in the south that they are tired of being pushed around. Rev. King is even willing to go to jail for his Christian convictions.

I suspect there might be a few older Ministers who do not like Rev. King. How many Negro ministers in the past have gone to jail ~~to prove~~ *become* their faith in God and in their fellow man. How many Negro ministers have set the example Rev. King is setting for us these days. There ~~is~~ probably no Negro minister in America who has done more to rekindle in young Negroes a belief in the relevancy of the Christian ~~message~~ *modern* message to life.

Do not understand me to be indicting Negro ministers generally. I got better sense than to do that. They ~~might~~ might need indicting, but if I did it up here I would probably have to ~~leave~~ leave Houston

sooner than I plan. I do not underestimate the power and influence of the Negro clergy. In fact this is part of my ~~main~~ point. Look what Rev. Martin Luther King has done. Others are doing the same. The kind of example Revs Shuttelsworth and King are setting is going to make it difficult in the near future for a handkerchief to stand up in pulpits and preach to a Negro congregations. I really better stop talking. I have learned to keep ~~my~~ quiet because when I talk <sup>I</sup> always tend to say frankly what is on my mind. That is the reason it is so dangerous for any one to permit me to say what I want.

I am really happy to have this opportunity to speak to you. I love the A. M. E. Church. It is wonderful to be here and worship with you. We have a wonderful Bible Class here. It is so good that I usually just sit and listen.

Thank President of Class Mr. Jones

Thank Rev. ~~William~~ Williams