

ALFRED STREET BAPTIST CHURCH PRESENTS

CAN I PUSH IT?

LIVE ON YOUTUBE 

TUESDAY
7:00 PM ET



WITH
**REV. DR.
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EPISODE 4:

“WOMEN IN MINISTRY”

MAY 5, 2020

PREFACE

Our three guests shared examples of how both blatant and subtle patriarchy in the black church have personally affected them in their ministries.

INTRO

DEFINITIONS

Patriarchy: The privileging of male being, male voices, and male bodies over females that is often grounded in the mis-interpretation of Biblical texts

[A Practical Illustration of Patriarchy from Min. Barbara Florvil: Imagine having a large Zoom call and sending the invite to everyone, but leaving out the meeting ID or password in the invitations that are sent to women and keeping them on mute when they enter the Zoom call.]

Mis-interpretations stem from lazy approaches to scripture that ignore the context and audience of biblical texts

Biblical Sources of Patriarchy:

- 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 - “Women should remain silent in the churches...”
- 1 Timothy 2:11-12 - “A woman should learn in quietness and full submission...”
- Household codes: Colossians 3:18-25, Ephesians 5:22-33, Titus 2:2-10, 1 Peter 2:13-1 Peter 3:7
- Various “evil” female characters: Jezebel, Herodias, Gomer, Lot’s Wife, Potiphar’s Wife, Delilah, Athaliah

*When focusing on these we miss the narratives of Mary, the female disciples, Esther, Hagar, and countless others who can inspire the empowerment and equal treatment of women. It’s also important for us to consider the ways these texts contrast with the message of love preached by Jesus.

We combat these mis-interpretations of Biblical texts by valuing our lived experiences alongside scripture. Many of us had women introduce us to God and the faith and in valuing their legacy we can build a better future where all women are respected and valued. Let’s look at how else we can practically reduce patriarchy and make our churches more equitable:

PART 1

How Do We Make Churches Better?

1. Admit that Patriarchy Exists
 - It's time to be honest about inequality in our churches
 - We need to be fully aware of how patriarchy has hurt and harmed individuals in our midst
2. Have the Necessary Conversations
 - Create space for safe and open dialogue
 - Listen to and value the voices and perspectives of women
 - Find value in the diversity of experiences and interpretations of those around us
 1. Facilitate multi-generational dialogue
 2. Bring women and womanist together in dialogue
3. Refuse to Dismiss Gender Equality from Broader Conversations About Justice
 - Ensure that we are having holistic conversations about justice
 - Advocate for women in our conversations regarding police violence, health disparities, and economic inequality
 - Make it clear that our lives and our spirits are on the line
 - Help others to understand why these conversations about patriarchy are so urgent
4. Develop a New Rhetoric of Equality
 - Unpack the mentality that women are lesser
 - Eliminate self-hatred
5. Affirm Women in their Authenticity
 - Embrace the voices and call narratives of women
 - Celebrate diverse preaching styles
 - Don't force women to wait till they get to the "top" to fight for change because that forces them to embrace toxic patriarchy as they "rise to the top"

Dr. Robinson highlighted that women are often reduced to their dress, mannerisms, or voice, and we fail to be concerned with the context of the sermon as we focus on the vessel.

Reflection: How have you found yourself being distracted from the content of the sermon? Can you explore the root cause of those distractions?

PART 2

Subconscious Male Privilege – How Do Men Become Allies & Advocates?

We invite you to consider the following recommendations shared by our panelists:

1. Equal Honorariums
 - Ensure your church finance office is paying women equally
2. Invite Women to All Occasions
 - Don't limit invitations to women's days and mother's days
3. Check Your Circle
 - Be sure you have accountability and conversation partners who can check you on your patriarchal tendencies
4. Lift Up Women in Scripture
 - Preach major women in the Bible as well as those "background characters" that are too often ignored
5. Bring Women Into The Boardroom
 - If you find yourself in a space where the presence of women is restricted it is your responsibility to bring up the issue of patriarchy

Our faith walk shouldn't be concerned with our personal soul salvation. It should also be concerned with the well being of the souls of others. The black church is long overdue for being honest about the damage that patriarchy, misogyny, and sexism has done to the souls and lives of women in our midst. As we repent for the sins of our past we can work together to build churches where all souls are valued and given dignity and respect. This week we commit ourselves to two important tasks:

1. Soul Searching
2. Embracing the Fullness of God

This week's reflection questions are geared towards our male audience in recognition that the responsibility of undoing oppression belongs to the oppressor and not the oppressed.

Reflection Questions:

- List a few examples of patriarchy you've witnessed in the black church, both in your childhood and in the present moment. Where have you seen progress? What progress do you feel compelled to work for?
- Create a devotional schedule with scriptures that lift up women in scripture.
- How has sex appeal affected the way you view sermons?
- What are some practical ways for you to honor the women in ministry who've had an impact on your life?

REMEMBER OUR JOB IS NOT TO TELL YOU WHAT TO THINK, JUST TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU'RE THINKING.

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- Join us for next week's episode on Women in Ministry**
- **How do we dismantle patriarchy in the Black church without destroying the Black church?**