


Holy Lockdown: Does the Church Limit Black Progress?

By Jeremiah Camara



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Holy Lockdown: Does the Church Limit Black Progress? Why are there many churches, yet major problems in Black communities? Why are Blacks amongst the most Jesus-Praising people in the world, yet the most fragmented and economically dependent? Is there a correlation between high praising and low productivity? Holy Lockdown addresses the paradox that exists within the Black community. One that reflects the abundance of Black churches coupled with the abundance of Black problems. There are approximately 85,000 predominately Black churches in this country, meaning, we could have 1,700 Black churches in every state! Holy Lockdown takes a critical and long overdue look at the psychological impact the church and sermonic rhetoric has made on the Black collective, and it explores the possibility of the church as being a contributing factor to many social problems facing Blacks.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Jeremiah Camara is the author of the books *Holy Lockdown: Does the Church Limit Black Progress?* and *The New Doubting Thomas: The Bible, Black Folks, and Blind Belief*. He received national attention as a frequent guest on the Michael Baisden Show and Lib Radio. Camara continues to speak nationwide about the perils of blind belief and religious preoccupation. Camara, was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1989, he created a video documentary titled *Psychological Wars*, which examined subliminal messages in sitcoms, cartoons and commercials that negatively impacted the psyche of African Americans. The documentary was endorsed by noted Black educators Na'im Akbar and Jawanza Kunjufu. Camara was once a member of one of the largest Black churches in Cincinnati, Ohio. Baptized at an early age, he moved to Cleveland, Ohio, shortly after high school, where he began his quest toward a deeper understanding of spirituality. While in Cleveland, he began to diligently study the Bible and gave serious thought to becoming a minister, or at least living an active life in the church. During that time, he attended a Baptist church at least two or three times a week. Like many, he felt the church could provide him with the substance he was missing in the way of answers, meaning and purpose in his life. There came a time, however, when he began to distance himself from the church not because of a particularly bad experience or negative incident, but because he had begun to expose himself to other forms of thought, spiritual concepts and ideas. I began to see the church as just one source of knowledge. The diversity of the world and its kaleidoscopic array of infinite ideas and wisdom would not permit my spirit to be confined only to the teachings of the church. It also disturbed me deeply to witness Blacks praising so much, but producing so little, says Camara. Camara returned to church, but this time as an investigator. Visits to churches of varying denominations brought to light a common thread linking the vast majority. Mostly all, in his opinion, were preaching a gospel of powerlessness. Following a long investigative hiatus, he rediscovered this same theological impotence when he moved to the Atlanta-metro area, where he quickly discovered that church was big business. He knew then the time had come to write a book shedding light on the many psychologically crippling aspects within the church. Camara adds, African Americans have been theologically conditioned to rely upon supernaturalism and divine intervention to solve problems. In the long run, this has hampered the ability to think logically and practically when it comes to addressing critical issues. The time has come to sober up and reevaluate our relationship with religion.

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