

“STOP SAYING... There’s No Such Thing As a Black Church”

Dr. Chris Williamson/ February 4, 2026/ Gather & Grow

Opening Thoughts: Some people show their ignorance whenever they open their mouths. This must be why **James 1:19** tells us to be *“swift to hear and slow to speak”* for a reason. Or to put it another way, God gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason. It’s hard to learn if we refuse to listen because we’re too busy running our mouths. See **Proverbs 18:7**.

I regularly hear well-intentioned, but ill-informed Christians say, **“Stop saying there’s a black church and a white church. There’s only one church.”** Although that answer might be consistent with biblical truth, it’s inconsistent with biblical relevance. The letters of scripture, when used self-righteously and in an insensitive manner, have a way of taking life as opposed to giving life as they were intended. The Pharisees, like the devil, knew the Bible very well and even quoted it, but they missed the spirit of the written word of God.

It’s hard for some Christians to realize that Black History is Biblical History, as well as American History. Not only that, **Black Church History is also American History, and it’s consistent with Biblical History.** This evening, we will learn from American history concerning when, where, why, and how the **“black church”** came into existence in the United States of America. **But here’s the challenge:** If we have ears to hear we might learn something, and once we learn something, God may end of giving us **“the tongue of the learned”** to speak biblical and historical truth to the world and Christian naysayers.

Poll Question: Can you articulate the history of how the Black Church began? Yes No

The **formal beginnings of the Black Church** in America began in 1792 when _____

A white usher told Rev. Absalom Jones _____

What did the black congregants do? _____

Break Out Question: How does hearing this history make you feel? _____

What happened in 1792 is **not unprecedented** in the scope of **church history**.

- **Acts 13:44 – 48,** ⁴⁴ *On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. ⁴⁵ But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. ⁴⁶ Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.”*
- **Acts 18:5 – 10,** ⁵ *When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. ⁶ But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”⁷ And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. ⁸ Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized. ⁹ Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; ¹⁰ for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.”*

What happened in these two encounters with Paul? _____

What **birthed** the “Black Church” in America? _____

How has the Black Church’s presence in America been **significant** to American history?

Wrap Up: We don’t need any more verbal quips that sound spiritual, but aren’t considerate of history or hurting people. Looking **objectively** into the annals of history to see where the racial divide in the church came about is a task too burdensome for the biased and belligerent. But for those of us who seek truth and ways to share it, this is our prayer:

Isaiah 50:4 – 5, ⁴ *The LORD God has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to hear as the learned. ⁵ The LORD God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away.*