

Proposed Title:

Black Christian Witness and the Struggle for Freedom: A Call to Pan-Africanist Solidarity

Thesis Statement:

An authentic Black Christian witness is intrinsically linked to the struggle for freedom; therefore, it is the primary task of Black Christians to locate where God is at work against exploitative and dehumanizing systems antithetical to freedom, namely capitalism, imperialism, and white supremacy, and plunge uninhibited into the fight to dismantle them. That fight is concretely expressed in the Pan-Africanist movement for the total liberation and unification of Africa under scientific socialism, and must be won by any means necessary.

Purpose:

Growing up in the African Methodist Episcopal tradition, I was taught about the relentless emphasis on justice in the Bible and that justice is central to God's character. Justice is meant to be a spiritual discipline in the lives of Christians—especially Black Christians, who for centuries have been forced to live under the subjugation of unjust and inhumane systems. As a Black person committed to following the teachings of Jesus Christ, when I enter organizing spaces created to build the power to dismantle these systems, I am often an outlier. The purpose of this project is to affirm Black Christians who recognize that systemic violence perpetuated by structures of domination and exploitation demands a radical response, and to stand in solidarity with revolutionary movements and all forms of resistance when they serve the cause of justice and liberation. By linking Black liberation theology to an ongoing historical project whose goal is to liberate the entire diaspora of African people, this project will provide theological grounding for the work being done by Black Christian liberationists and broaden the possibilities for Black Christians seeking to close the gap between their theology and their actions. Black Christians—particularly those living in the imperial core—cannot afford to allow an institutional church beholden to empire to dictate their idea of resistance. Our freedom is bound up in our ability to organize solidarity with revolutionary struggles against Western hegemony.

Intended Audience:

This work is intended primarily for Black Christian activists and organizers that also identify as revolutionary Pan-Africanists, socialists, communists, and/or Black nationalists. It is also intended for progressive Black Christians who are influenced by Black liberation theology but have reservations about the role of armed self-defense and armed struggle in liberation movements.

Learning Goals:

- To provide a historical overview that demonstrates the intrinsic link between the Black Christian tradition and the struggle for freedom
- To identify the theologies of freedom at work in the writings of James Cone and Kelly Brown Douglas
- To argue that in this moment the locus for Black Christian witness to freedom is solidarity with the Pan-African movement
- To equip Black Christians with a broader historical consciousness, deepen their understanding of solidarity, and resource the struggle for freedom today

Preliminary Outline:

Introduction

Chapter 1: Preferential Option for Freedom in Black Christian Thought

Chapter 2: Freedom and the Pan-African Movement

Chapter 3: Black Christian Witness in the Pan-African Movement

Conclusion

Sample Bibliography:

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Proposed schedule for the work:

1. May to August 2026 - Foundational Research and Sources
2. September to December 2026 - Develop First Draft of Thesis
3. February to March 2026 - Develop Second Draft of Thesis
4. March 31, 2026 - Submit Completed Draft to Advisor
5. April 2026 - Receive reviewed Thesis from Advisor and Reader
6. May 2026 - Submit Completed Thesis to Library