

ARE WE A
BLACK MISSIONARY
BAPTIST CHURCH
IN NAME ONLY?
WHAT DO WE BELIEVE



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FREE CHAPTER ONE SAMPLE

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A FREE READER PREVIEW

ARE WE A BLACK MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH IN NAME ONLY?

What Do We Believe?

A biblical and historical call for Black Missionary Baptist churches to understand their identity, live their mission, and pass the faith forward with clarity and conviction.

The complete first chapter from the published book is included in this complimentary reader sample.



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Chapter 1: The Roots of the Black Missionary Baptist Church

Scripture Foundation: Psalm 78:4 – “We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.”

The story of the Black Missionary Baptist Church is more than a religious label—it is a testimony written in blood, sweat, and tears. To understand who we are today, we must revisit where we came from. Our name did not come cheaply; it was birthed in struggle, nurtured in pain, and sustained by faith.

The Emergence of a Distinct Identity

During slavery, Black men and women were often forced into the balconies of white churches, if they were allowed in at all. They were told when to shout, when to sing, and sometimes even what to believe. But the Spirit of God was too strong to be confined to chains. Out of the hush arbors—those secret places in the woods where enslaved believers gathered to

pray and sing—the Black church was born. It was there that the foundation of our Missionary Baptist heritage was laid: a people determined to worship God freely, despite man’s restrictions.

When freedom came after the Civil War, African Americans began establishing their own churches, not as acts of rebellion but as acts of survival and empowerment. They needed a place where they could worship without constraint, teach their children, train their leaders, and build communities. It was not enough to be “Baptist” in doctrine; they became *Black Baptists* in lived experience.

Why “Missionary” Matters

The “Missionary” distinction came in the 19th century as Baptists in America divided over the role of missions. Some felt no responsibility to send the gospel beyond their local areas, but others believed the Great Commission was binding for every generation. Black Baptists embraced this call wholeheartedly. They understood that the gospel which sustained them in slavery and gave them dignity in freedom was too precious to keep to themselves.

Thus, to be a **Missionary Baptist** was to declare: *we are a sending people, not a sitting people*. The church was not only a place to gather for worship, but a launching pad for evangelism, education, and community transformation. Sunday morning worship fueled Monday through Saturday service.

The Strength of Being “Black”

The word “Black” in the name has always carried weight. It is not about exclusion but about identity. For centuries, Blackness in America was tied to oppression, but in the church it was reclaimed as a badge of resilience. To be a Black Baptist was to declare that one’s faith and one’s heritage were not enemies but allies. It meant that cultural expressions—songs birthed in sorrow, prayers soaked in struggle, sermons rooted in liberation—were not distractions from the gospel but demonstrations of it.

Lessons from Our Roots

From the beginning, the Black Missionary Baptist Church was more than a religious institution; it was a schoolhouse for children, a bank for the poor, a hospital for the broken, and

a meeting hall for justice. It was the heartbeat of the community. Leaders like Richard Allen, Charles Price Jones, and others in the broader Black church tradition reminded us that the gospel had both a personal and a social dimension: Christ saves the soul, but He also empowers us to change the world around us.

This is why the roots matter. Without knowing them, we risk becoming a church with a great name but no great mission. Without remembering them, we risk singing songs without power, preaching sermons without conviction, and gathering on Sundays without transforming lives on Mondays.

A Closing Reflection

The Psalmist reminds us not to hide God's works from the next generation. Our foreparents told their children of slavery, of freedom, of segregation, and of survival—all through the lens of faith. Now the baton is in our hands.

Will we pass down a vibrant faith rooted in our history, or will we allow the next generation to inherit a hollow name? The choice is ours.

Prayer:

Lord, thank You for the roots of the Black Missionary Baptist Church. Thank You for the faith of our mothers and fathers who held on when life tried to strip them of everything. Help us never to forget where we came from, and never to let go of who You have called us to be. Amen.

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