

Howdy beloved's and welcome to colors of Hope a podcast hosted by the disciples lgbtq.

Plus Alliance where we take a text and sprinkle some queer goodness to it.

My name is Deshay Jackson pronouns, they them theirs and I'll be your host for this podcast episode come Journey with me as I read the Poetry of African poet and Akira Wahid from her work nejma to start us off.

As you are says the universe after you answer as you are says the universe before you answer as you are says the universe win you answer as you are says the universe how you answer as you are says the universe why you answer because you are happening now right now right at this moment and your happening is beautiful.

The thing that both keeps me alive and brings me to my knees.

You don't even know how breathtaking you are.

As you are says the universe through tears as you are you are the prayer.

Before I read our texts, let's take a minute to focus our breath.

So together the body inhales.

and exhales together

my text comes from the Gospel of John chapter 15 verses 1 through 8,

and I'll be reading from the inclusive Bible translation.

And it reads as such I am the True Vine and my ABBA is the vine grower
who cuts off every branch in me.

That doesn't bear fruit but prunes the fruitful ones to increase their
yield you've been pruned already.

Thanks to the word that I have spoken to you live on in me as I do and
you just as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself apart from the vine.

Neither.

Can you bear fruit apart from me?

I am the vine you are the branches those who live in me and I and them
will bear abundant fruit for apart from me.

You cannot do

Anything those who don't live in me are like withered rejected
branches to be picked up and thrown on the fire and burned if you live
on in me and my words live on and you ask whatever you want and it
will be done for you.

My Abba will be glorified.

If you bear much fruit and dust prove to be my disciples.

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

And so when I was assigned this text, I was brought back to General

Assembly 2019 in Des Moines, Iowa where our theme was abide with me or
abide in me.

And I have never had an opportunity to go over the him except for
with the choir being in the choir and I don't think I thought about it
as much of just abide with me or abide in me, but we were reminded
through the preaching each evening.

What it means to abide into the Divine and what it means to abide
within this body of believers who Proclaim.

the kingdom of God in both Proclamation and in Praxis

But there are times that I kind of got stuck on the the fruit side of
this abide with me.

There was even a story about some lemon oranges or something for give
my memory, but there's something I do know is that I don't know much
about gardening.

But I do know that plants require water good soil and occasional
pruning to help them with growth.

So can this might be said for people as well?

You know, we require a sturdy and safe home clean drinking water and
shedding former habits that no longer fit us in our stage of growth.

But if I'm going to apply a queer lens to this text, then I think this
text speaks more than just producing fruit, but it speaks to producing

fruit within the Divine Tree of Life.

And yet for some of us in the lgbtqia 2s + Spectrum.

Being called fruit or anything with fruit is not a silly been a positive name.

And so in fact when I think about it free to something I've been called, but I don't think I was ever thought of as calling to do more of like producing more.

And as I've started to mature and think about it, I have grown into my fruitiness of being sweet and tart.

But this text reminds us that if we want to live into this body of believers who want to bring change.

We have to live and be our authentic selves.

And we have to go inside and get rid of certain bugs that have been festering within sea God calls us to produce more fruit, but we can't when we have these internalized termites that we call isms phobias or oppressive systems, like, you know, internalized biphobia and transphobia heterosexism, misogyny whiteness and white supremacy.

We can really just call all these things internalised hate but these are the specifics we cannot live into the Divine Tree of Life carrying those bugs rotting out fruit.

And I think about that.

If we are to engage this we have to understand that our wholeness is key for the survival of not only our Branch but multiple branches and this is where I start to engage the text not just with a queer lens or hermeneutic, but I actually take onto a womanist lens for this as I call myself a a aspiring womanist co-conspirator.

When we talk about woman is discourse or womanist ecclesiology or ethics.

First of all, if you're not familiar with womanism, let me read you just a brief definition of one in this comes from Alice Walker's definition sees me.

This comes from Alex Walker's term that she used in the color purple. And so with a woman who loves other women sexually or non-sexually appreciates and prefers women's culture women's emotional flexibility and values tears As Natural counterbalance of laughter and women strength, sometimes love individual men.

Sexually or non-sexually is committed to the survival and wholeness of entire people.

Male and female and I'll add intersex as well.

Not a separatist accept periodically for health traditional

Universalist as in mama.

Why are we Brown pink and yellow and our cousins are white beige and

black the answer being?

Well, you know, the colored race is just like a flower garden with every color flower represented.

And I look at this text with a womanist lens.

Help me understand.

that

living into our divine selves requires us to act in audacious behavior

that is countercultural because to live into our authentic selves is

against what Society has told us is not okay is against the normative

Behavior to be same-gender loving to be anything but cis-hetero and to

a degree having the status of patriarchy or of that

Is not the norm.

So being able to produce good fruit from a space of on this

authenticity and wholeness then AIDS and Community betterment which

continues the survival and flourishing of a community.

And we as queer persons know the importance of being together and

being able to grow from each other which is why I love this woman is

lens to it.

And so if I use this as a word of encouragement to any of my people it

is that

What the Divine has placed in you?

is

divine goodness that cannot be taken from you separated from you
because nothing can separate us from the love of God and God's love to
us comes in these forms.

and I believe that God also says that

we can all operate together if we are carrying.

The aggression weight and burden of internalized isms.

Because all it does is Halo us out into a branch that eventually falls
off.

abiding

within the divine

includes wholeness because it's enters your being.

and it's entering our being

can be an act of resistance.

Then let's Embrace what it means to be us what it means to be queer

what it means to be lgbtqia to S Plus.

Let us encourage our co-conspirator or Ally friends or those that are
listening.

That you two regardless of any queerness still must strip yourselves

of these isms as well and phobias because to participate you can't

have those termites either.

2

produce good fruit

means recognizing

What your other branches your other friends are kind of needing?

And choking off their life-support so you can produce quote on quote

good fruit.

Is not godly.

So why don't I want to remind anyone listening to this of living

authentically, but specifically to my queer persons.

Take into what?

Womanism leads and it's living in its loving and its resistance by

loving yourself wholly because loving yourself is a holy Act.

And so I want to close this podcast.

with the saying reading that we opened with

And that is nakira Waheed nejma.

As you are says the universe after you answer.

As you are says the universe before you answer.

As you are says the universe when you answer as you are says the

universe how you answer as you are says the universe why you answer

because you are happening now right now right at this moment and

happening.

Your happening is beautiful.

The thing that both keeps me alive and brings me to my knees.

You don't even know how breathtaking you are.

As you are says the universe through tears.

As you are you are the prayer.

Beloved you are the fruit.

Continue to do the work being in the tree.

pruning off

these things that seek to make our Branch dead and to spoil our fruit.

Amon and Akshay