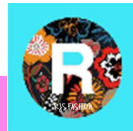


SHAKE**S**PEARE



Make Vacation COUNT

Tanela Hicks

Summer Time

STAY WOKE

Christians

Daphene Baines Cospy

Wedding

Season

Kaleiah KJ Jacobs

**I HEAR MUSIC
RECAP**

What in the TRENDS?

Rebecca Armstrong



HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

**Words for a Father
By Tanela Hicks**

**Love and Dedication; Strength and
Dependability are the compliments.
Sometimes, Sorrow and Angry; Peace and
Resolve is all some can recall.
Either way; Fathers impact lives and drive
memories.
This Father's Day celebrate the good ones,
pray on the bad ones but never fail to
recognize the importance of, FATHER.**

Make VACATION COUNT

Las Vegas

TANELA HICKS

I recently took a vacation trip to Las Vegas. Now I know what you are thinking...party time! While this may be true, as the saying goes, "What Happens in Vegas Stays in Vegas."

However, Vegas is more than casinos, drinking, and partying. Just like any city, there is more than just what is advertised at your local airport. I encourage anyone traveling on vacation, whether it be friends, family focused, or a romantic getaway, look for the interesting and uncommon activities. Unique experiences will make a memorable trip.

Now about my trip to Vegas.

I have been to Las Vegas multiple times. Each visit was fun and different, and I stayed on the strip becoming totally engulfed in the Vegas Life. This trip was different. My best friend and life sister moved to the city of lights and my accommodations were much more suburban. For the first time, I realized that Vegas was not just buffets and casinos. By staying outside of the tourist area my experience was totally different and I now have an appreciation I would have never received no matter how many strip stays I made.

THE MOUNTAINS

The most intriguing part was seeing all the mountains. Las Vegas, Nevada is a location amongst a melting pot of mountains. With a little research, I found that there are approximately 15 mountain ridges in the Nevada playground. I had the pleasure of viewing two different ones. Spring Mountains rose high and felt very close versus the distant feelings that large land masses normally yield. Red Rock was leaner and red of course. Against the sunshine, Red Rock was a beautiful backdrop to my day of massages and spa treatments in the local Summerlin South area of Las Vegas. I spent the first two days of vacation laughing with locals, enjoying the views and relaxing.



Las Vegas

TANELA HICKS

The local restaurant industry is a opposite to the strips dining and finery. Hot and Juicy Crawfish does not offer cloth napkins or fancy glasses. But if you enjoy fresh and awesome seafood served with flavor, Hot and Juicy's is where you should go. The bag of steamed or boiled whole crabs or shrimp are seasoned to perfections and the staff is friendly. After two days of local fun, I did go to the strip and enjoyed one tourist activity. The High Roller Observation Ferris Wheel was a wonderful evening experience. At 550 ft. in the air this ride features a full bar in a futuristic Ferris wheel pod.

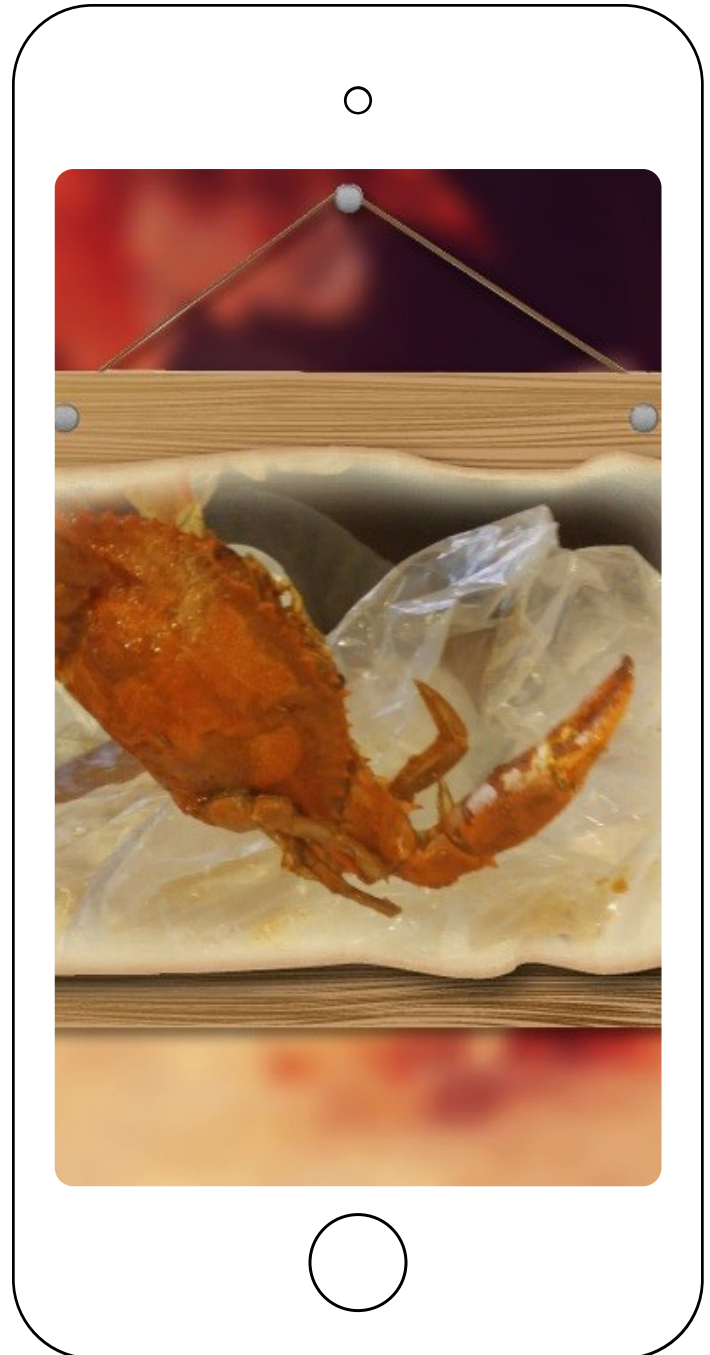
I got to see the city life from up high. In all the trip was amazing. I am thankful I had the opportunity to view the city through different lenses. My next trip will be somewhere new, but I am dedicated to having another local friendly experience. That is where the memories stick. Vacation should not just be about tourism, shopping, and staying up late. Vacationing should include new experiences, some relaxation, and connecting with loves ones. Wherever you chose to spend that precious week of well-deserved time, do something worth writing about.

- Tanela Hicks, Co-Editor

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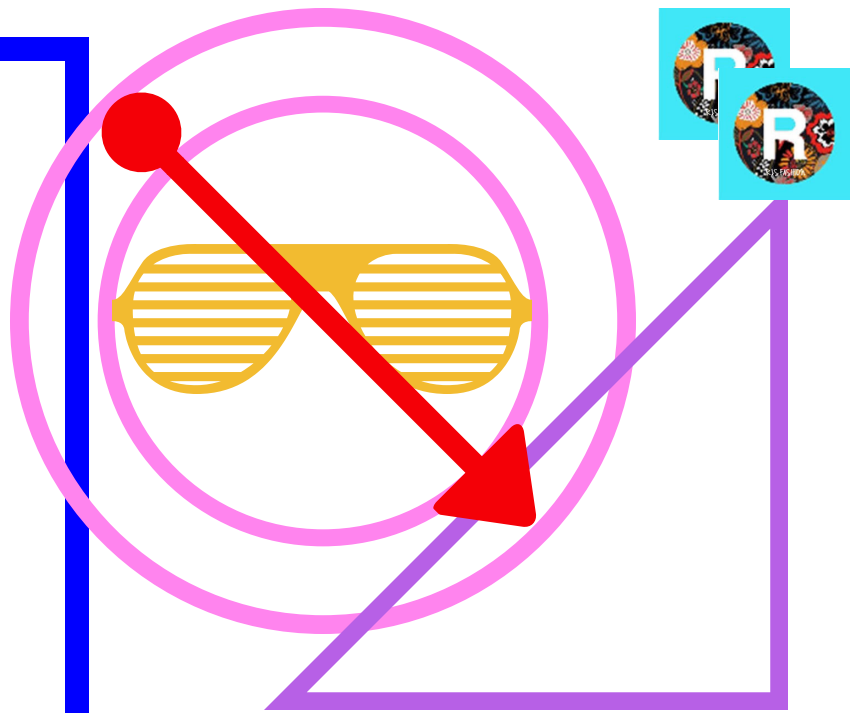


WHAT IN THE TRENDS?

REBECCA S. ARMSTRONG

Fashion trends can run cycles and come back the following decade or two. Right now, trends from the 90's have come back and set in. That being said, the crazy, risky styles that people are willing to take have come back as well. During that time, having clothing creativity was big and it was dramatic. People would wear plastic-like material slacks, a suit jacket and jelly shoes! Right now, everywhere you turn, there is something made with hologram reflected material in every retail store and puff ball headbands on the shelves.

Although these trends are funky, expressive, and colorful, some looks can only be worn in certain arenas. I have categorized some looks [in my opinion] that need to be worn either at home or special events. I also gave a list of clothing items that may be considered more a fad than a classic so you can choose what you are willing to spend your money on.



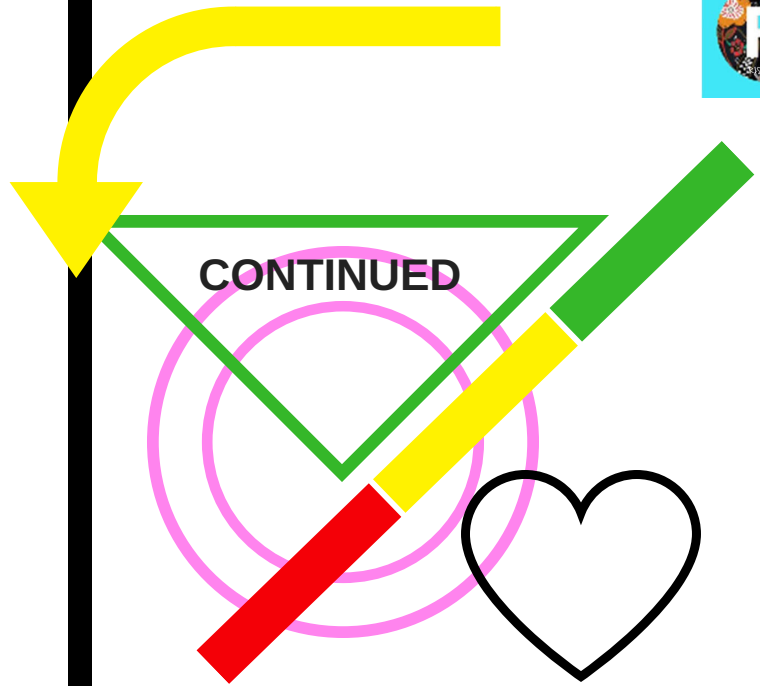
Some Trends that Need to Be Worn at Home;

Denim “Booty” shorts- booty shorts are shorter than short shorts or average shorts. The length of these particular shorts often times stops 1/8 before the crease of the buttocks. So, if you want to go to a cookout, park, or plan on sitting in public seating area (like a bench or taking a subway train), you may not want to wear these after thinking about how much bacteria could be getting on your butt. IM JUST SAYING!

Thin cotton or nylon leggings – they may have been \$3 but that sale shouldn't cost you, your thigh or your lower torso 's support. If you like to have a smooth look to your shape, invest in thicker leggings. When shopping, hold the prospective pair in the light. That way you will be able to see if they are see-through and could eventually show the print of your panties. Cheaply made leggings will often get ruined in washer and tear, thin out even more or rip while in the dryer. Brands like Hue, Jessica Simpson and INC (a Macys brand) make durable, quality-made leggings.



WHAT IN THE TRENDS?



Special event trends;

Crochet tops or dresses – the reason I suggest this item be worn at a special occasion because how delicate the detail and design is. Depending on where you are going, a crochet top or dress can snag very easily by someone's jewelry, a door handle, or even your own accessories. I would not wear a crochet top to a child's party because there may be a lot of activities there that may cause you to bump into a child and snag the whole thing!

Velvet dresses or jump suits- if you sweat a lot, this trend may not be for you unless you plan on wearing this look in an air condition facility. Although this look is super cute and flattering for almost any body structure, doesn't mean it's best for a picnic or outdoor concert without the proper perspiration preparation.

Fads and Classics

Fads:

Clear purses or bookbags
Corsets with dress shirts
Mules (oldy but a goody)

Classics:

Wide leg pants
High waisted skirts
Printed pencil pants
Off the shoulder tops and dresses

I hope all this information was helpful and you have a very fashionable summer :)

- Becca

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It's wedding season ladies and gents!
A time for love to fill the air and memories
to fill our photo albums!

As a soon-to-be bride myself, (yes I
squeezed that in there; sue me), I have
realized that there are a TON of ins and
outs to wedding planning that are both,
vital and downright, a pain in the
"you-know-what", to accomplish.
Therefore, I have taken it upon myself to
create a list of wedding necessities, tips,
and just all around wedding know-how,
called KJ's Wedding Words to the Wise.
This is a list I comprised of 5 main lessons
that my fiancé and I have learned
throughout our wedding journey and want
to share, in hopes of making someone's
wedding planning experience easily, one
to remember!

"K.J's Wedding Words to the Wise"

1. TAKE YOUR TIME!

The excitement and joy that comes with
getting engaged can sometimes blind you
to what realistically needs to be done
when it comes to setting a date. My
fiancé and I, regrettably, have our date set
in September. Having gotten engaged the
December before, we have less than a
year to plan. Therefore, it is easy to say
we are overwhelmed! Luckily, we have
simple tastes and extravagance is the
least of our worries. Nevertheless, that is
who WE are. Other couples may expect or
demand a great deal more for their special
day, so planning, budgeting and research
are necessary, which means, time is
required to plan accordingly. There are
outside sources like The Knot, Zola, and
My Wedding that allow you to create
budgets, to-do lists, personal wedding
websites, keep you informed of your
countdown, and even pair you with
professional concierges to make your
experience that much easier.

IT'S WEDDING SEASON

2. GET THE BIG STUFF DONE FIRST

Although our wedding is right around the corner,
we made 4 seriously smart moves, that has made
this process easier; the venues, dresses,
tuxedos, and guest list. Before we did anything
else, all four of these things were done prior to
worrying about cakes, decorations, catering etc.
Why? Because these are the 4 main parts of a
wedding that usually take the LONGEST (at least
from my experience)! Also, you must think, you're
not the only one getting married! Venue
availability goes FAST, especially if the wedding
is in the summer months, or what is referred to as
wedding season (generally June, July, August
and early September). Also, if you're looking to
have your reception at separate location, you
must find a venue that accommodates your
timeline, remember to think of your guest and
distance that must be traveled between the
wedding venue and the reception venue.

As far as the clothing, you must keep in mind that
you not only have to find the right dresses and
tuxedos, you also should allow enough time for
the tailors/seamstresses to make any
adjustments; this goes for all involved in the
wedding party (bride, groom, bridesmaids,
groomsmen, parents of the bride/groom). Most
places, for both tuxedos and dresses, require the
clothing to be picked and measurements taken at
LEAST 3 months in advance, so they have time
to work on the garments and make any changes
if necessary. Not to mention, if you want your
bridesmaids and groomsmen to match, you have
to take the time to find companies that offer
similar hues and materials like David's Bridal and
Men's Warehouse, who have a partnership and
offer matching materials and colors. Talk about
convenience!

prepping for the wedding



3. IT TAKES TWO!

Many women, and even some men, dream of their wedding day long before they meet the person they are meant to spend that day with, therefore, it is easy to have a plethora of “visions” for that day based on things we have seen and heard of, or even, been momentarily inspired by. However, you must remember, that this is a day to celebrate the oneness of TWO individuals. That being said, this should be a day that represents the two of you, who you are, and your values. This means there is going to be a need for DISCUSSION, SHARING, and even some COMPROMISE (what a way to really practice for marriage, right?). For example, I wanted our colors to be rose gold, champagne, and gold. I was so confident in the idea that I began researching and looking into all of the decorations, dresses, etc. until one day my fiancé pointed out to me that the colors were too, “feminine”, for his tastes and he couldn’t see any of his groomsmen wearing any of the colors I chose. Yes... my feelings were hurt, but I quickly understood that this day was just as much his as it is mine. Now this will be a day we mutually, not only enjoy, but had a say in as well.

4. CHOOSE YOUR TEAM WISELY!

One of my favorite quotes is, “teamwork, makes the dream work”- John Maxwell. It’s not the entire quote, but bear with me. Your team, in this case, is your wedding party. The wedding party, generally, consists of the parents of both the bride and the groom, the maid of honor and bridesmaids, the best man and groomsmen and, of course the bride and the groom. Some consider the flower girl and ring bearer to be included, but that is beside the point.

Obviously, you cannot choose who your parents are, however, you do have a say in who fills the other positions. You have to realize that as the bride and groom, unless you have an abundance of time on your hands, wedding planning is not a one person, or even two-person job. It requires a team. Even if you never delegate a task out to a bridesmaid or groomsman, your best man and maid of honor were chosen for a reason; you can rely on them. These are the people you can call to pick things up, set appointments when you can’t, and even be your point of contact for the bridesmaids/groomsmen. The last thing you want to be is stressed on your wedding day, these should be the people that you know will do everything in their power to ensure that your wishes are followed to the T. Sounds a little dictator/bridezilla-ish, but it shouldn’t be. These individuals should WANT to see your day go effortlessly.

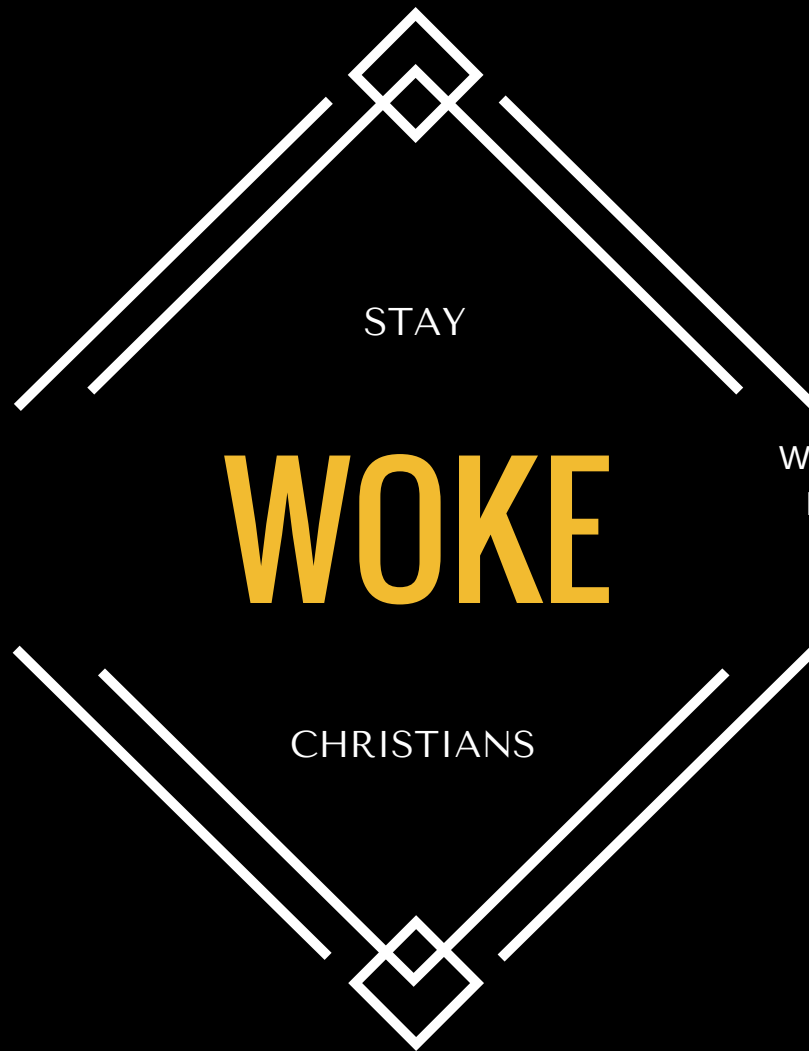
Finally, 5. DON'T BE AFRAID TO BREAK THE RULES!

With wedding bells, come wedding tales, and for a while now, a majority of the tales have been eerily similar. Same itinerary, same rules, same traditions. However, who ever said there was a wedding rule book? Who said that the maid of honor has to be your sister, or cousin? Who says you can’t wear a different color wedding dress, other than white, who said your engagement ring has to be silver and diamonds? All of these unwritten rules can drive any one into a stressed frenzy because now, you’re operating in a realm outside of your own, trying to accommodate everyone else’s “ideas” rather than embracing your own.

Simply put, let us not forget the most important part of this endeavor... IT IS YOUR WEDDING! You are allowed to bend the rules, or even scrap them all if it suits your fancy. This is a time for you to express and convey the love and values you and your significant other share. If that means the two of you have your wedding at the amusement park where you had your first date because you’re thrill seekers and your first date was that important to you; it’s ok! It shows those in attendance that you take who you both are seriously and want to share and celebrate it in that way (The amusement park was kind of a reach, but you get my point).

For my fiancé and I, our families kept badgering us to pick a cake, however, after about 20 minutes of deep, confectionary thought, he and I both came to the realization that we hate cake... so why in the world would we spend money from our budget on a cake we won’t eat?! The responses we received ranged from, “it’s tradition” to “what about the cake cutting ceremony” to “I think your guest will be disappointed”. Which are all valid statements and concerns, however, we decided to make our own “traditions”. And as far as the guests are concerned, (because they are a vital part of the wedding day) there will be a sweet-tooth-satisfying alternative, but it will be done in a way that expresses who we are and what WE enjoy. I mean, this is the one day that is all about the two of you.

Right? Weddings are a time of celebration and rejoice. Yes, the preparation is sometimes extensive and utterly overwhelming. Nevertheless, this is a day that you should look back on with no regrets, a day that, in the moment, feels effortless. Therefore, don’t be afraid to take the time to think it through, converse with your partner, make the plans, choose your team and most importantly, make it your own.



WRITTEN BY:
DAPHENE
BAINES
COSPY

STAY WOKE AND PRAY: A Christian Response to the Problems of the World

Daphene Baines Cospy

“Then he said to them, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.” (Mt 26:38, NRSV)

Approaching the climatic point of His ministry, Christ wrestles with the most important task He will complete in His ministry on Earth: dying for the sins of the World. He is grieved, but instead of crying, running, doubting, delaying, or getting angry, Jesus goes into the garden to pray.... but He doesn't go along. He brings His three closest disciples. He doesn't ask them, however, to circle up and pray with Him. He doesn't ask them to lay hands on Him to remove His fear, anguish, or grievances. He doesn't give them each a prayer to pray. He doesn't even assign each of them a prayer time a piece like “Ok, James I need you take the first 20 mins.... then, Peter, you tap in...”. Rather, He leaves them at the entrance with a simple instruction: stay awake and pray.

A simple instruction and task, right? I'm not asking you to fight. I'm not asking you to figure out how to keep me from dying. I'm not asking you to give your life instead of mine. I'm not asking you to figure out that it's Judas who will betray me and then go kill him. Nope! Just don't fall asleep and since you're awake.... I need you to pray. The disciples failed to complete this simple task.....not just once, but THREE times, that night! We read, as we continue through this pericope, that Jesus returns, after throwing Himself on the ground and praying that the cup of suffering may pass Him, and finds the disciples, not just not praying but, SLEEP! Why did Jesus take these disciples with Him when He is all-knowing? Why would He bring disciples, whom He knew would fail Him, into the garden with Him on the night He would be betrayed? Would He not want, perhaps, one of the prayer warriors of His crew like Mary Magdalene who had just shown how much she was willing to sacrifice when she poured an alabaster box of perfume on Him just to wash His feet?! Surely, she would stay awake for a few hours and pray....

I dare suggest that Jesus brought the disciples to Gethsemane, not for His protection, nor for their covering, but for their development. He gives the intent of His invitation, in His first rebuke of the sleep of His disciples, when they were to be praying: "Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

The disciples were about to face temptations they had not, yet, met. Yes, they were with Jesus as He cast out demons. Yes, they were with Jesus when He commanded hearing into the ears of the deaf, when He called sight back into the eyes of the blind, when He brought strength to the legs of the lame, and even when He forgave the sins of adulteresses.... all in the face of adversity. The religious leaders and government and norms of their culture disagreed with His doctrine, with His methods, with His teaching.... but what would they do once He was gone?



**WAKE
UP**

Would they continue in ministry? Would they heal, deliver, and teach? What about in the face of persecution? What would they do when the Pharisees and Sadducees called their Gospel heretical, blasphemous, irrational, irrelevant to the issues of today's world? What would they do when their very lives were in danger for the Gospel they carried and preached? Jesus brought these disciples with Him to teach them how to respond to the troubles of this world: stay woke and pray. Not pray as an escape. Not pray as an excuse. Not pray because there's nothing else to be done. Rather, pray to ready our hearts for what God is calling us to do next. In this life, we will be tested, tempted, and persecuted. The very essence of who we believe God to be, what we believe God to do, what we believe our Gospel preaches will be tested, not because of the problems in our lives, but, often because of the issues we see in our world.

Being Woke, as a Christian, calls us to not just speak about the issues of our times, nor even just shake our head at how horrible times have become.... but we must be witnesses of the Gospel; especially during such tense and wicked times. Just as Dr. Marvin McMickle urges us, in Be My Witness, we must wake up and SEE the issues of our world and in our immediate contexts. We cannot SEE if we don't read. We cannot SEE if we don't pray. We cannot SEE if we don't study. We cannot SEE if we are not strengthening our spiritual discernment to go beyond merely reading newspapers, blogs, and watching the news. Rather, we have to SEE the warfare presented in the attack on our communities physically, mentally, and spiritually.

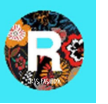


This is, however, still not enough. We have to be bold enough to SAY SOMETHING and be willing to SUFFER for what we say about what we've SEEN. This type of Holy Ghost boldness, however, only comes through prayer and fasting. We can't just be WOKE.... we have to actively pray about what we see. Prayer is not a cowardly response to problems, but a strategic response. When we pray, as WOKE believers, we are reporting to the Commander's post to receive instructions on how we are going to respond to these issues. How are we to bring the Gospel of Christ, the power of God to SAVE, to the unbeliever, the wicked, the victim, the orphan, the angry, the oppressed, the discouraged, the apathetic...?

I urge you to wake up from your slumber of comfort, tradition, apathy, and even sinful responses to the Jesus way to respond to the troubles of the world. We have been called to be salt and light. We are called to preserve but also change. We are called to call out and illuminate. We are also called to be the mouthpiece, the hands, and the feet of Christ. We are to give others hope and correction, love and instruction, and to bring safety and deliverance.

This task is great, but let us not forget the words of our Savior, Christ: "In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!" (Jn 16:33, NRSV)

- Daphene Baines Cospy



MAY

2017

I HEAR MUSIC

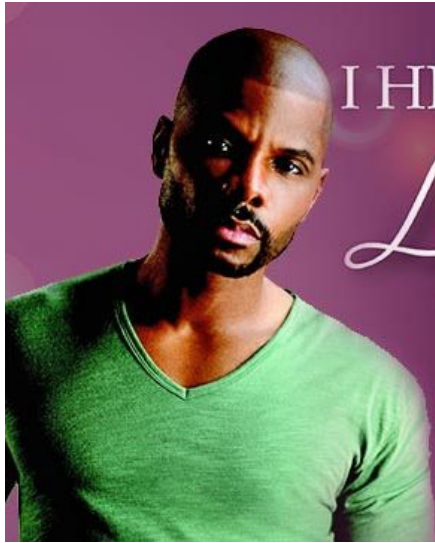
Recap



I Hear Music Recap – Rebecca S. Armstrong

This year's I Hear Music was held at the Duke Energy Center Downtown Cincinnati. People came from all over the tri-state to hear Kirk Franklin [who is celebrating 20 years of successful recorded hits], Anita Wilson, and many other amazing local artists. I Hear Music is one of the biggest Christian events that occur in the city annually. Numerous gospel celebrities have been a part of the affair in the past years such as Tamela Mann, Byron Cage, Tye Tribbett, and many more. I got a chance to interview Jillian Ellis and some of her singers who are all from Cincinnati and have gained experience singing Gospel and Christian Contemporary music over the years. I asked everyone, "How does it feel singing with a psalmist from your hometown?" one of Ellis singers, Christian Hilton, stated it was rewarding to share the stage with someone who is from his city and genuine. Another singer by the name of Charlesza Neal, specified he enjoyed watching Ellis ministering and it felt good to sing with her because it made him feel like he was a part of a family rather than just a singing group. Soprano Ciara Harper, expressed that Gospel music means a lot to her and she loves that Jillian is real and sweet. She appreciated on and off the stage. She always looked forward to sing with Ellis.

When I spoke to Ellis herself, she said she was excited to sing at this year's I Hear Music because it was such an honor to be a part of such a big platform in her hometown. Yet, she was a bit nervous because she has never been a part of the program's line up before. However, when it was time for Ellis to sing, you couldn't tell she had a nervous bone in her body! She also had the privilege of going up right before the legendary, Kirk Franklin. She and her group worshipped freely with no anxiety and encouraged the audience to do the same.



I HEAR MUSIC IN THE AIR PRESENTS ...

An Evening With Kirk Franklin

Grammy Award Winning Artist



Back stage in passing, I got to meet Kirk Franklin right before he performed. He was very down to earth and kind. He even took silly pictures with Ellis' group. The next day, Franklin spoke at another I Hear Music event for kids ages 18 and under at the Lincoln Heights Baptist Church for a Youth Summit. More local artists and musicians performed there as well. His message was "Be Humble, Sit Down" inspired the recently released secular song by rapper, Kendrick Lamar. The message was not directly relatable to the song but Franklin's was expressing to the youth that the previous didn't do a good job at "passing the baton" to them in a godly manner and have done more complaining about the currently generation rather than teaching them how to seek Christ and still be creatively, individually unique from the world. It was powerful and needed for the times we are living in. He stated that instead of the previous generation acting like "we did ever right" we needed to be humble and sit down. I appreciated him sitting to the youth in such a relatable way and it put a lot of things in perspective for the youth and the adults/parents that were also in the room that we all needed to come together and build each other up. I definitely recommend you plan to attend next year's I Hear Music festivities.

