Twitter Thread by Ally Openly Black Henny



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It’s funny how, when Black people leave toxic church spaces we are the ones called “divisive.” We always have to bear the weight of judgment and have to explain ourselves.

When you see Black people leaving a predominantly white church space en masse, you should be asking...

Why are so many people walking away? Why are their stories all similar or exactly the same? Why is this not being addressed by leadership? Why does it feel like it’s being swept under the rug? Why is Black folks’ departure deemed as their issue or fault?

Why does the leadership of my church or organization only take the slightest of responsibility (if any at all)? Why do the sermons end teaching in my church seem to change for a season directly after departures? Why are the Black folks who remain given promotions or visibility?

I have observed a pattern of behavior around Black folks leaving white Christian institutions.

There’s a lot of folks who leave who won’t make public (or private) comment about their departure. Often it’s out of fear of what opportunities that it could cost them.

This allows the institution to shape the narrative around the departure and make it seem more amicable than it actually was. I’ve seen this pattern multiple times.

Another pattern of behavior that I’ve observed is when people are vocal about their departure, they are cast as being bitter or not willing to “play ball” in the institution’s effort. They are cast as being a problem and seen as being destructive.

The institution is able to blame shift and make it about the person’s tone and to cast them as angry and unwilling to cooperate and appreciate all that the institution is “done.”

Occasionally and institution might do a soft mea culpa. They might talk about all the work that they “have to do,” but still continue to lay the blame squarely on Black people for leaving the toxic place.