



# Fannie Lou Hammer

**Sister Deborah Howell**

**Day 23**  
**March 20, 2023**

## **Scriptures for Mediation**

### **Read Galatians 6:9**

“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

### **Critical Race Facts!**

In 1899, pieces of Sam Hose’s heart, liver, and bones were sold after he was lynched; that same year, spectators at the lynching of Richard Coleman in Maysville, Kentucky, took flesh, teeth, fingers, and toes from his corpse. Spectacle lynchings were preserved in photographs that were made into postcards and distributed unashamedly through the mail.

These killings were not the actions of a few marginalized vigilantes or extremists ; they were bold, public acts that implicated the entire community and sent a clear message that African Americans were less than human, their subjugation was to be achieved through any means necessary, and whites who undertook the duty of carrying out lynchings would face no legal repercussions.

### **Today’s Prayer:**

Lord, sometimes our motivation is stimulated by aggravation. Help us to transform the negative energy of aggravation to the motivation to change things for the better of ourselves and all humankind. In Jesus Name, **amen**.

## **“I am sick and tired of being sick and tired.”**

Civil rights activist Fannie Lou Townsend Hammer was born on October 6, 1917, in Montgomery County, Mississippi. As the daughter of sharecroppers, her family often struggled financially and often went hungry. Fannie married Perry “Pap” Hamer in 1944. She turned her suffering in a racist society into being a passionate civil rights and women’s rights activist. She brought national attention to the plight of African Americans in the South.

The summer of 1962 changed everything. Fannie attended a protest meeting where she met civil rights activists that encouraged African Americans to vote. Fannie became active by helping with voter registration. Because of civil rights activist like Fannie Lou Hamer, I too participated in many voter registration drives, campaigned for candidates, and worked at polling centers on election day.

Hamer dedicated her life to the fight of civil rights. She worked for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). These were mostly college students who engaged in acts of civil disobedience to fight racial injustice and segregation in the South. You could say the SNCC got into “good trouble”. Hamer was often threatened, arrested, beaten and shot at by angry whites. Hamer remained steadfast and let nothing deter her from her work. In 1964, (the year I was born) Hamer helped found the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and served as Vice Chair. That same year she gave a televised speech at the Democratic National Convention that brought national attention to the civil rights struggle in Mississippi. Because Fannie Lou Hamer said, “I am sick and tired of being sick and tired” and put action to her words, we continue to hold voter registration drives, ensure that our elders receive transportation to the polls, and have the voting rights restored to convicted felons. It’s been so effective we were able to elect the first African American President, Barack Obama, for two terms. In addition, we elected my Howard University classmate, Kamela Harris, to be the first African American Woman Vice President of the US.

We’ve come a long way, but there is still much work to do. Zion are you sick and tired of being sick and tired? Let’s change the narrative! Use your voice and put action to words! “You can pray until you faint, but unless you get up and try to do something, God is not going to put it in your lap.” Never to forget where we came from, and always praise the bridges that carried us over. ~ Fannie Lou Hamer

### **Questions to Ponder**

Name a time something aggravated you so much that it stimulated you to make a change in your life. Name a time when it challenged you to stand up for your rights, or the rights of others. How do you transform aggravation to motivation?

