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Christian Reader

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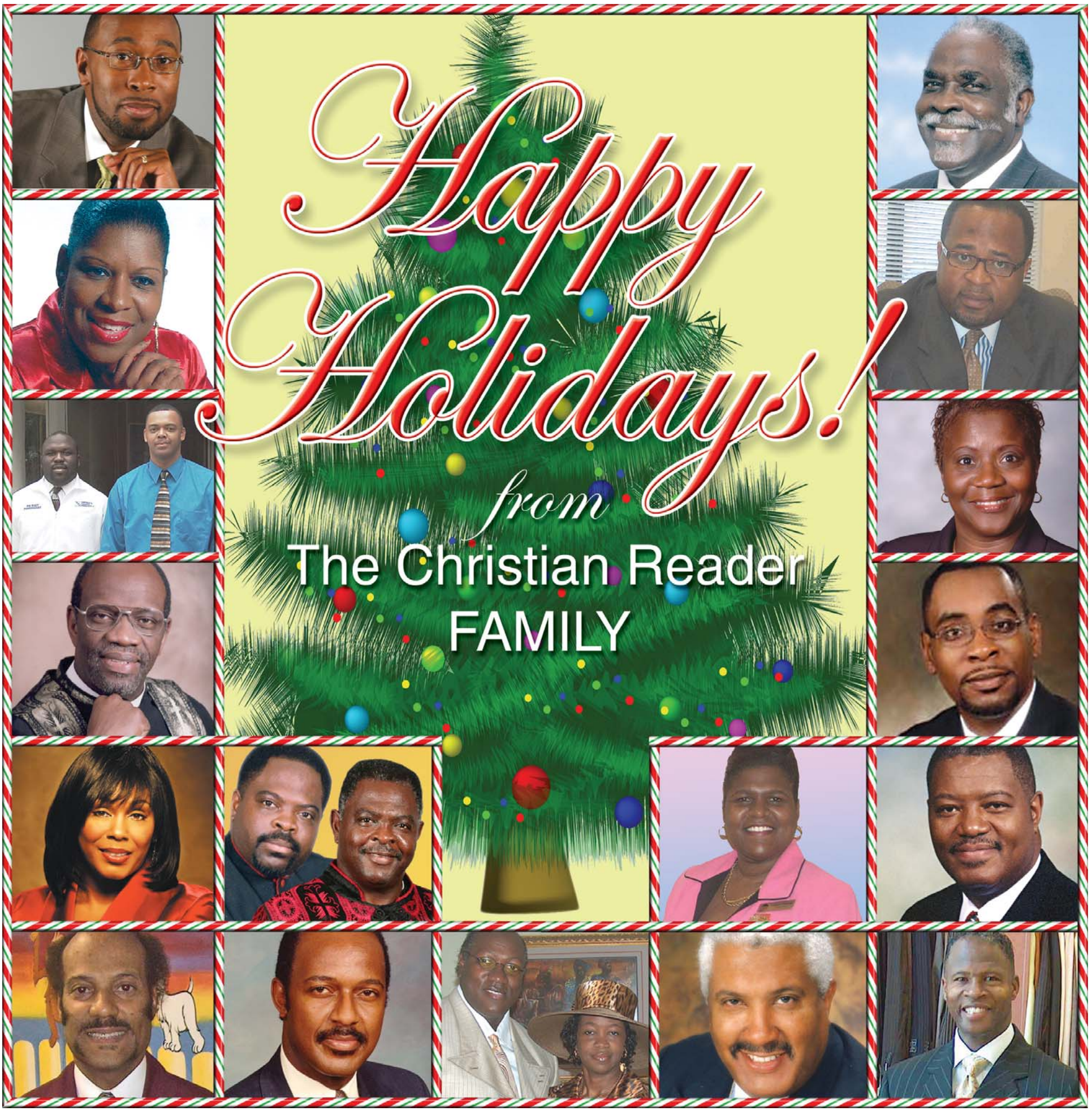

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Christian Reader

The "Good-News" Newspaper

The ***Christian Reader*** is a monthly publication that seeks to strengthen our community through the knowledge of God our Creator, Christ our Redeemer, and The Holy Spirit our Guide.

It is our goal never to criticize, condemn, or complain, but instead to inspire, encourage, and enhance the lives of all people through Christian principles, teachings, examples, and knowledge.

Our purpose is to renew the total person - mind, body, and soul, that he/she may be well equipped to experience without hindrance the "life more abundantly" that Jesus promised to all that seek His face and do His will.

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Daytona Beach Loses Its First Black Mayor

A Champion for Unity and Equality

Yvonne Scarlett-Golden died peacefully at home Tuesday, December 5, 2006

Born in 1926, Mayor Scarlett-Golden was a native of Daytona Beach. In 2003, she became the first African American mayor to be elected in the history of the city of Daytona Beach. Prior to becoming mayor, she served four terms (eight years) as city commissioner of Zone 5 (1995 through 2003).

She attended elementary schools at Campbell and Kaiser Laboratory, respectively, and graduated from Campbell Senior High. She received a Bachelor of Science degree, with honors, from Bethune-Cookman College. Her graduate work was done at Boston University where she received her Master of Education, with membership in Pi Lambda Theta honor society. In 1999, she received an honorary Doctor of Law degree from Bethune-Cookman College.

As an educator for more than 38 years, Scarlett-Golden's teaching career began in the Florida school system where she taught elementary, middle, high school, and junior and senior college levels. She continued her career in the San Francisco Unified School District serving as both teacher and counselor on a high school level and as principal of San Francisco's Alamo Park High School in for 20 years.

Upon retirement, San Francisco Mayor Frank Jordan declared Yvonne Scarlett-Golden Day in San Francisco on May 22, 1992. Congressional and community leaders, academicians, political and community activists, parents and students, acclaimed her as a profound exemplar of academic excellence and principled leadership.

Yvonne Scarlett-Golden rose above the racist climax of Daytona Beach growing up. "Who would have thought when I was a little girl, that I could grow up to be the mayor of Daytona Beach?" she was fond of saying. Once described as "an island of enlightenment in a sea of bigotry," Daytona Beach was forever reshaped under the leadership of Mayor Scarlett-Golden. Her marks shine on the city's beautification, services to the elderly, the boosting of the city's tourism base, professional city management, and a restored fiscal solvency.

Mayor Scarlett-Golden small frame was not exemplary of the huge fiery passion the burned in her heart to see her city grow and prosper. It was common to see her in the fight on the front line whether the fight was with the media or simply a young man wearing his pants too low in public. Her tenacity was needed to win battles such as cleaning up dilapidated parts of the city, and restoring respect to events like Black College Reunion.

Yvonne Scarlett-Golden was a dedicated and passionate leader with uncompromising honesty and integrity. She will be greatly missed. Her mark of excellence has been stamped on the shores of Daytona Beach as she joins the greats of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune and Jackie Robinson.

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Shewanda Riley

Loving In The Red Zone

Second Guessing God

By Shewanda Riley

But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt. – Genesis 19:26.

What's worse than not making a decision? Second-guessing the decisions that you have already made. Not making a decision is really a decision….kind of ironic way of saying that I like things the way they are. In making a decision and then second guessing it, you are essentially saying "I don't really like things they way they are…but I'm too afraid to move forward." To me, that is an even worse torment.

Think about Lot's wife…she had her own battles with second-guessing and looking back. Genesis 19 describes how the angels came to Lot and warned him of the impending destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. They specifically told him not to look back at the punishment that was to come to the wicked city. It's not really clear why Lot's wife looked back. Lot, her husband, was also hesitant having to be urged by the angels to flee and not look back. Hearing all of this, she was probably asking herself "Why do we have to leave now? Surely it can't be that bad." The next thing you know she was a pillar of salt. God was trying to deliver her from a life-threatening situation…but she was still dragging her feet.

The New Testament also speaks of the issue of looking back in Luke 17:31-33, "On that day no one who is on the roof of his house, with his goods inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. Remember Lot's wife! Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it."

Through a recent of chain of unfortunate events, I also found myself tempted to look back at my past and wonder what I was leaving behind. Despite the fact that God had made it clear in a number of ways that it was time to move on, I still was fighting the nagging urge to move forward. I knew they weren't the best circumstances, but I still wasn't ready to move on. Just when I started to turn my focus to the past, God blessed me to be able to see more clearly his future direction for my life.

Second-guessing is not yet regret but is rooted in unresolved issues including insecurity and rejection. Perhaps most significantly, second-guessing is mixed with just enough of those painful memories of past failures to keep us from successfully transitioning to new and more wonderful seasons in our lives. Looking at my own life and some recent circumstances, I can understand how Lot's wife was tempted to look back. Her faith could only take her so far….and at that point, she just needed to be obedient.

Shewanda Riley is the author of the Essence best-seller "Love Hangover: Moving From Pain to Purpose After a Relationship Ends." She can be reached at lovehangover@juno.com

John 3:16

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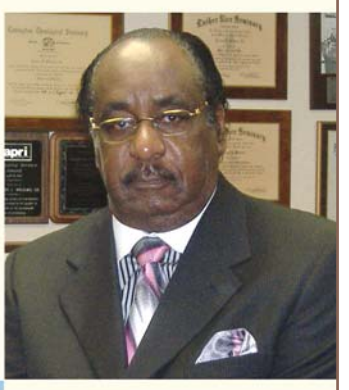

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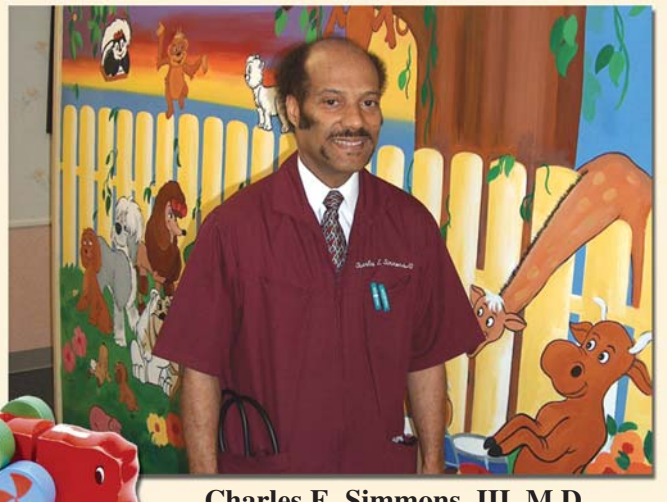
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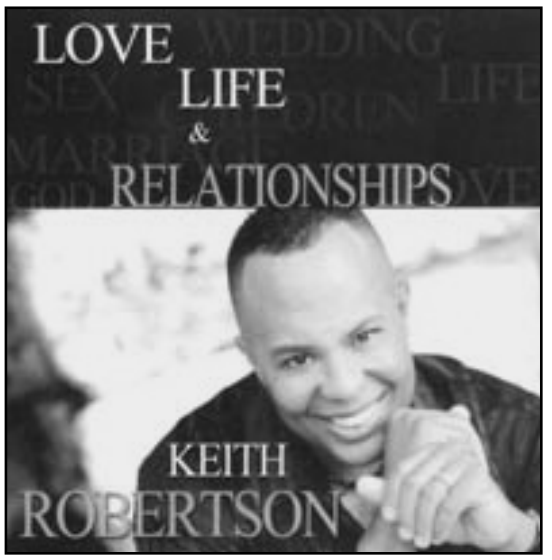
CAN A CD REVERSE THE NEGATIVE TRENDS OF SHACKING UP AND DIVORCE?

Keith Robertson, Nephew of the Famed R&B Legends, The Isley Brothers, Has Set This Goal With The Release Of Debut CD, "Love, Life & Relationships"

Amid declining marriage rates and divorce statistics for Christians that equals and sometimes outpaces non-believers, award-winning music industry veteran Keith Robertson has released a CD that aims to turn the tide against unrealistic views of love.



Robertson's first solo effort, Love, Life & Relationships is a 12 track homage to authentic spirit-filled love with lyrics that detail not only what it takes to walk down the aisle, but also the type of attitudes and actions needed to live out the marriage commitment.

According to recent numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau, the percentage of U.S. households with married couples is below 50 percent for the first time ever – alluding to the fact that more couples are deciding to just live together rather than risk marrying and divorcing. And a report by Barna Research Group indicated that even multiple divorces are common among Christians, with nearly one-quarter (23%) of married believers getting divorced two or more times.

Love, Life & Relationships was designed by Robertson to start a movement that would combat these negative statistics. In addition to being the nephew of Chris Jasper and Rudolph Isley of the Isley Brothers, Robertson is a Writer, Performer, Musician, and Producer who has received a multi-platinum award for his participation in N-Sync's No Strings Attached CD and is frequently called on to produce tracks for some of network and cable TV's most popular shows.

Steered by Robertson's incredible songwriting talent and musical instincts, "Love, Life & Relationships" is strictly R&B. But unlike other soul artists, Robertson has seamlessly integrated his Christian faith into subject matter covering the issues of marriage, divorce, homelessness, singleness, courtship and conviction. "There doesn't seem to be much music in these areas that truly minister's to people," remarks Robertson. "I wanted to fill that void."

And fill the void he does, with intimate and realistic portrayals of love on songs like "Love You Like Crazy" and the instant wedding anthem "My Baby". A classic heartbreak song and the first single released from the project, "Mi Corazon (My Heart)", has already garnered top 10 single status in the United Kingdom.

The Love, Life & Relationships CD is spawning other forms of entertainment – including a companion book and other soon to be revealed life changing ministries. Through it all, Robertson intends to give his audience a realistic view of love while still recounting the joy of marriage – in hopes to change the course of divorce and matrimony for future generations.

To book Robertson, request an interview, or purchase the CD, visit www.KeithRobertson.net

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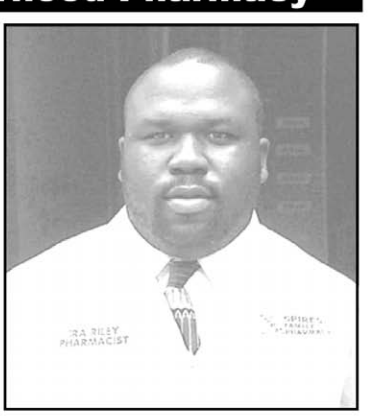

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Now After 20 Years -

How Will You Celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday?

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who knew it takes time for attitudes to change, would not have been surprised that nearly two decades were required to make his birthday a legal holiday. If anything, King, whose magnificent dream always had a pragmatic cast, would have been surprised that it has happened at all. Even putting aside King's controversial career and his minority race, the odds against the new holiday were imposing. The arguments opposing it — cost to taxpayers, singling him out over others — have been used for decades to resist creation of any new holiday.

His birthday today is an official holiday, on the third Monday of January since 1986. To place the new date in some perspective, consider: It is the first new holiday since 1948, when Memorial Day was created as a "prayer for peace" day. And it's only the third in over a century (the other is Veterans Day, created as Armistice Day in 1926 to honor those who died in World War I).

King is the only American besides George Washington to have a national holiday designated for his birthday (those of Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, Robert E. Lee and others have been celebrated in some states but not nationwide). Internationally, King is one of the few social leaders of any country to be honored with a holiday (Mahatma Gandhi's birthday is observed in India). Such status by a member of a country's racial minority is almost unheard of. Generally, the honor is reserved for military or religious figures.

Given such obstacles, the holiday is a powerful tribute to King's philosophy and stature. "As is usually the case with great figures, particularly controversial ones who are fighting for a philosophy condemned by many, Dr. King was well ahead of his time," says Joseph Lowery, King's contemporary counterpart as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Atlanta. "Even those very much opposed to him during his lifetime have come to see that segregation, injustice and militarism are concerns which must be addressed by modern society."

When President Reagan signed legislation creating the holiday in November 1983, it marked the end of a persistent, highly organized lobbying effort spanning the nation for 15 years. "We worked hard to put together a national effort and make a powerful network," recalls Cedric Hendricks, legislative aide to Rep. John Conyers, Michigan Democrat. It was Conyers who, four days after King was assassinated in Memphis, submitted the first legislation to commemorate his birthday. Petitions carrying more than 6 million signatures — said to be the largest petition drive in history — were submitted to Congress in 1970. With help from New York Democratic Rep. Shirley Chisholm, Conyers resubmitted the legislation during each congressional session.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which coordinated the petition campaign, also kept continuous pressure on Congress for the holiday. Mass marches in 1982 for voting rights and 1983 to mark the 20th anniversary of King's dramatic speech in Washington, D.C., also contributed. It took bipartisan support to overcome the opposition of Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., who labeled King a Communist, and President Reagan's lukewarm attitude toward the legislation, Lowery said.

In the final analysis, what may have sealed approval of the holiday was a compromise offered by Rep. Katie Hall, Indiana Democrat who marshalled support in the House for the legislation. Hall, responding to criticism that the holiday would be too close to the Christmas-New Year's week, moved its observance to the third Monday of the month. The notion of a three-day weekend, plus the fact that the third Monday often follows Super Bowl Sunday, helped put the measure over the top, supporters say. Arguments concerning money dominated opposition to the holiday. Costs associated with lost services on the King holiday were estimated at $18 million for the federal government; at $7 million to Washington state; at $1.18 million to Seattle. The estimated total was an astronomical $8 billion for government and private sector combined.

"Every time we'd bring the bill up in the Legislature, people would say, '$7 million! Are you kidding?! What about all the people starving in the streets?!'" recalls Washington state Sen. George Fleming, Seattle Democrat, who has led legislative efforts since the early 1970s. Another common argument, Fleming notes, was "why put Dr. King above other famous people?' They didn't think his legacy would stand the test of time." Both arguments, Fleming feels, are used to conceal racist resistance to the holiday.

See DR. KING HOLIDAY page 34

LOCAL COLLEGE VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS FIGHTS BREAST CANCER AND WINS

By LeaVonda Battle
BattleGroup Communications
Jacksonville, Florida

October was National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM). Since the program began in 1985, mammography rates have more than doubled for women age 50 and older and breast cancer deaths have declined. This is exciting progress, but there are still women who do not take advantage of early detection at all and others who do not get screening mammograms and clinical breast exams at regular intervals.

Dr. Karen Buckman, the Vice President for Student Affairs at Edward Waters College, is the exception and a yearly physical with mammogram led to the early detection of breast cancer in her body and helped saved her life. "In July of 2004, I was visiting the doctor for a regular check up, when they found a mass in my breast," shared Buckman. "Through mammogram technology and a follow up exam, the doctor discovered I was in stage two of breast cancer.

"After the exam, my doctor scheduled me for surgery to remove the cancerous mass and 17 other non-cancerous lymphoids." The operations were only the beginning of the treatment. Dr. Buckman shared the battle with the doctor, who explained to the nest step in treatment, chemotherapy, was going to claim all her hair.

"I told the doctor there was no-way I was going to lose my hair," she shared with a chuckle. Dr. Buckman shared after only a month of treatment her hair was completely gone. "It wasn't as bad as I thought it was going to be," she explained. "My sister Carolyn purchased several scarves for me in about every color and a few wigs, but I didn't like those well.

This medicine was difficult for her body to adjust to. "Chemo-therapy made me very sick and I was in the house a lot," exclaimed Buckman. "During this illness, the leadership (at Edwards Waters College) allowed me to work a flex schedule."

The next stage in her treatment was radiation. "After the Chemo-therapy, I received 37 treatments of radiation. My faith in God helped me through this season of my life. I held to the belief that nothing could happen to me God couldn't handle. "Although she has a history of breast cancer in her family, she believed she was totally immured from the disease attacking her body. One of the misconceptions I carried was my older sister didn't have it, so that meant it would also miss me."

According to Dr. Buckman, this experience has changed her perception about life and the various challenges she went through. One of the most profound ways it changed me is I learned to put problems in the right perspective," shared Buckman. For instance, I learned to let go of bitterness and anger from a recent divorce of over 25 years. I realize I was carrying a great deal of resentment. I am a believer your mental health is tied into your physical well being."

Dr. Karen Buckman

Dr. Buckman shares her experiences with women in her community stressing the importance of regular check ups. "Women must get their yearly check up, explained Dr. Buckman. "Even after the doctor found the lump, I still couldn't feel it, when I exam myself.

If all women age 40 and older took advantage of early detection methods – mammography plus clinical breast exam – breast cancer death rates would drop much further, up to 30 percent," says National Cancer Institute experts. "The key to mammography screening is that it be done routinely – once is not enough."

For additional information, please call one of the following toll-free numbers: American Cancer Society, (800) 227-2345, National Cancer Institute (NCI), (800) 4-CANCER, Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization, (800) 221-2141.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord"
Luke 2:11

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LIVE YOUR LIFE WITH FAITH NOT FEAR

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If God instructed you to walk away from everything would you do it? If God only gives you a little bit of the vision and the plan at a time would you continue? If the plan takes you through valleys of heartbreak, loneliness, disappointments, mbarrassment, shame, and ridicule would you continue? If you know, that you know that you know that God has spoken to you, is leading you, guiding you, and ordering your steps in the midst of the FACTS would you continue to hold to his unchanging hand?

Many today are not fulfilling their destinies and are not walking in what God has ordained for them because of FEAR. Fear of what people may say or think. Fear of what may happen in the process of becoming what God wants you to be. Fear of losing things. Fear of death. If you have God how can you lose? Remember Abraham and Job?

FEAR (False-Evidence-Appearing-Real)

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear ; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7 KJV)

I have learned that **FAITH WALKED** is totally different from **FAITH TALKED**. As I spoke with a friend of mine he said to me "People tend to prefer safety over the things that are sanctioned by God." In simplest terms it means that people would rather stay on the boat than walk on the water as did Peter when Jesus said "Come." In their mind it is safer on the boat. We have become comfortable, complacent, and trust more in the things (The Resources-Job-Money-House-Prestige etc.) that God has provided rather than God and His Word (The Source).

When God speaks we get caught up in the facts. Rather than obeying we get caught up in our senses (what we can see, hear, taste, touch and smell) and fail to move out on what God has said. When the resources (Husband-Wife-Friends, Family-Money-Job etc.) are gone what will you have? I have learned that with the source you can always acquire more resources.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1 KJV). "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7 KJV)

FAITH (Forsaking -All-I-Trust-Him)

The safest place in the whole wide world is in the will of God is a phrase that we say so often. To walk in the will of God requires FAITH in God. Simply put you must believe that God will keep/perform His Word. Faith never denies the facts (The Natural). The facts are overcome by faith (The Supernatural). Trials and adversity come to make you better not bitter. They reveal what is truly inside of you at that time. They reveal the areas in your life in which growth and development are necessary in order for you to move forward.

Whatever your purpose in life have faith in God and Do It Now. Based on my own experience I know the road is not easy and the path seems treacherous at times but I also know as the Saints of Old would say "The LORD will make a way somehow."

Vincent T. Edwards "Mr. Speaker" is an Inspirational & Motivational Speaker/Radio Talk Show Host. On the web at www.blessedenterprise.com or by email at mrspeakerspeaks@blessedenterprise.com.

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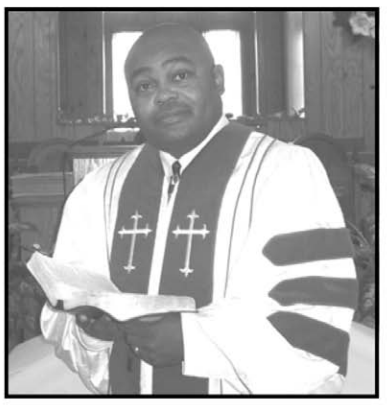

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Pastor

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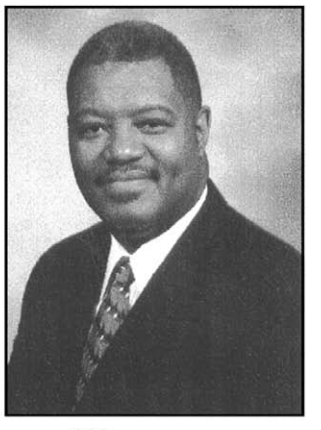

North Jacksonville Family Worship Center
10224 Lem Turner Road
Jacksonville, Florida 32218

Taking Matters Into Your Own Hands

By Pastor Leon R. Bing
North Jacksonville Family Worship Center

Taking matters into your own hands. This has been a serious and dangerous issue for thousands of years. And it appears that we will never learn from this mistake no matter how many examples we have seen before. We must always seek the Lord first in all that we do and follow His protocol, for it is better to be blessed in a thing rather than be cursed!

If you would, please follow along with me as we glean through 1 Kings Chapter 1. We will observe one of David's sons who decided to take matters into his own hands by declaring himself king while his father David was very old and bed ridden.

1 Kings 1 (New Living Translation)

David in His Old Age

1 **Now King David was very old, and no matter how many blankets covered him, he could not keep warm.**
2 So his advisers told him, "We will find a young virgin who will wait on you and be your nurse. She will lie in your arms and keep you warm."
3 So they searched throughout the country for a beautiful girl, and they found Abishag from Shunem and brought her to the king.
4 The girl was very beautiful, and she waited on the king and took care of him. **But the king had no sexual relations with her**.

These first four verses let us know the state of King David by telling us that he was now very old, and they could not keep his body warm. David was close to death as Chapter 2 lets us know in verse 1. As the custom of that time was, they brought unto David a young nurse to take care of him. And yes she even lay beside him in his bed, but, as verse 4 states, there was no sexual relations between them. (Just in case someone's mind wandered too far).

Adonijah Claims the Throne

5 About that time David's son Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, **decided to make himself king in place of his aged father**. So he provided himself with chariots and horses and recruited fifty men to run in front of him.
6 **Now his father, King David, had never disciplined him at any time, even by asking, "What are you doing?"** Adonijah was a very handsome man and had been born next after Absalom.

Here we get our subject. Verse 5 says that Adonijah "decided to make himself king in place of his aged father." He took matters into his own hands! One cause of Adonijah being so foolish is the fact that David was too lenient with him as stated in verse 6. Parents take note: Proverbs 13:24 says, "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him."

7 Adonijah took Joab son of Zeruiah and Abiathar the priest into his confidence, and they agreed to help him become king.
8 **But among those who remained loyal to David and refused to support Adonijah were Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and David's personal bodyguard.**
9 Adonijah went to the stone of Zoheleth near the spring of En-rogel, where he sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened calves. He invited all his brothers – the other sons of King David – and all the royal officials of Judah.
10 But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, or Benaiah, or the king's bodyguard, or his brother Solomon.
11 **Then Nathan the prophet went to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, and asked her, "Did you realize that Haggith's son, Adonijah, has made himself king and that our lord David doesn't even know about it?"**

Nathan the true prophet of God is given a plan to correct Adonijah's foolish plan. And I find it amazing that the plan involves Bathsheba. Remember it was David's foolish plan with Bathsheba where we were first introduced to Nathan.

12 "If you want to save your own life and the life of your son Solomon, follow my counsel.
13 Go at once to King David and say to him, 'My lord, didn't you promise me that my son Solomon would be the next king and would sit upon your throne? Then why has Adonijah become king?'
14 And while you are still talking with him, I will come and confirm everything you have said."
15 So Bathsheba went into the king's bedroom. He was very old now, and Abishag was taking care of him.
16 Bathsheba bowed low before him. "What can I do for you?" he asked her.
17 She replied, "My lord, you vowed to me by the LORD your God that my son Solomon would be the next king and would sit on your throne.
18 But instead, Adonijah has become the new king, and you do not even know about it.
19 He has sacrificed many oxen, fattened calves, and sheep, and he has invited all your sons and Abiathar the priest and Joab, the commander of the army. But he did not invite your servant Solomon.
20 And now, my lord the king, all Israel is waiting for your decision as to who will become king after you.
21 If you do not act, my son Solomon and I will be treated as criminals as soon as you are dead."
22 While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet arrived.
23 The king's advisers told him, "Nathan the prophet is here to see you."

Nathan went in and bowed low before the king.

see TAKING MATTERS page 22

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Family:
- Married October 25, 1980 to Sheila "Nelson" Sampson.
- One daughter, Jaime; three sons: Rev. James J. (Meia), Joel and Min. Alvin; three grandchildren.

Ministry:
- Called to Preach in 1979.
- Ordained as a Licensed Minister – March 25, 1986.
- March 15, 1986 to present – Pastor of First New Zion Missionary Baptist Church.

Education:
- 1977 – graduated, Stanton High School, Jacksonville, Florida.
- 1978-79 – attended FCCJ, Jacksonville, Florida.
- 1995 – completed Dale Carnegie Course, Dale Carnegie Association, Inc.
- 2000 – Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree, Southern Baptist School for Biblical Studies.
- 2002 – graduated, Harvard Divinity School Leadership Summer Conference.

Affiliations & Boards:
- 1998 to Current – President of Baptist Ministers Conference of Duval and Adjacent Counties.
- Lifetime Membership – NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People).
- Member of SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference).
- Founder and President of HOPE Inc. of Jacksonville.
- Founder and President of HOPE Town Production.
- President of Excel Consultants.
- National Board Member – AAMLC (African American Minister Leadership Council of America).
- Member of Board of Directors – Clara White Mission Center and Northwest Behavioral Services.
- Past 2nd Vice President and Director of Finance and Budget, Florida General Baptist Convention, Inc.
- Past Board Member – Shands Medical Center.
- Numerous other awards and accomplishments.

Sampson Leadership DELIVERS. As I survey the landscape of the Florida General Baptist Convention, Inc. it has become vividly clear that it is time for a new direction. 1st Chronicles 12:32 states: "And the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." These are crucial times and God has given me an understanding of the times to know what must be done to bring direction and guidance to our convention.

During my tenure as 2nd Vice President (under the leadership of the Late Arthur Jackson, Jr.) God enabled me by the aid of the Holy Spirit to successfully create an operable budget, refinance and reduce the interest rate of our retreat site in Palatka, and construct a professional informative website.

I honor and solicit your prayers, support, and vote as we bring glory to our Heavenly Father through the Message, Mission and Mandate of the Florida General Baptist Convention, Inc.

"Moving In A Positive Direction"

OBESITY, LIFESTYLES AND AFRICAN AMERICANS – WHAT ARE THE CORRELATIONS?

By Makeisha Lee, Black Health Consultant
www.CleanseFormula.com

Eating is one of life's greatest pleasures. The taste, smell, the texture, how it makes us feel, can be a great source of satisfaction for us all. However, this very thing that is so pleasurable can be a danger to us if not kept in its proper place.

We can enjoy food but the primary job for food is to nourish our bodies. When we don't have the right balance of foods and don't have adequate exercise we end up with "obesity". Obesity is more common in African Americans than other ethnic groups.

According to the CDC of Vital Health Statistics, 60.1% of African American males are overweight and 78% of black women lead the population in obesity and being moderately overweight. In order to get to a solution, we must identify the problems.

Since we're specifically looking into facts surrounding blacks and obesity we must address issues indicative to our community as we do have some unique concerns. For African Americans there tends to be certain factors that play a role and influence our food choices such as our history, religion, our culture, friends, family and environment. Lets discuss three in particular.

First, is our culture. Studies show African Americans tend to accept larger body sizes. On one hand it's a good thing but it ends up hurting us more because our tolerance of these larger sizes has lead us to be more obese and subsequently left us with more obesity/health related illness. We also tend to feel less guilty about overeating thus making it less likely for us to diet.

Second, is our environment including what seems to be available to us, and the cost associated with our choices in food. In our neighborhoods, we have these fast food carry-outs on nearly every corner and mini markets that only offer us fried fatty foods laden with sodium. Then there is processed foods and sugar filled drinks to wash it down with.

Third and lastly, one of the most important culprits is our family and upbringing. What we're taught as children from our families sets the tone for us in regards to our food choices. Many of our families do not make nutrition a top priority. So this gets passed down generation after generation. For us, our family tradition as a community is "soul food". Nothing is wrong with this tradition in and of itself, but there is a problem for our less active lifestyles these days in combination with the fact that this soul food diet is laden with high fat content, sugar, and sodium for flavor.

So continuous consumption of these foods without adequate exercise causes our body's nutritional system to get clogged up, confused and stuck in fat storing mode. But not to fret my brothers and sisters - we don't have to give up our tradition of enjoying soul food, we just have to make some much needed adjustments.

If we have had these unhealthy eating habits, we must begin to correct this by cleansing our bodies to naturally remove harmful substances and allow it to return to it's normal metabolic function. Cleansing will enable us to overcome food cravings, and re-establish natural hunger so we can cultivate a true and balanced appreciation for food.

Once we have done this, we just have to modify how we prepare our food by cutting back on the fat, use alternatives for white

see OBESITY page 22

PULL-UP YOUR PANTS

The Other Day, A friend of mine came to my dorm room just to chat while her laundry was drying. As we were chatting, two young freshmen came by. One of the boys wanted to "talk" to my friend (as in date). She asked him how old they were, and both of the boys replied 18. My friend and I both laughed hysterically because we are both 22 years old. After my friend left, the young men were still hanging around and one wanted to know how he could gain her interest.

The first thing I told him to do was to pull up his pants! He asked why, then said he like saggin' his pants. I told him to come over to my computer and spell the word saggin'. Then I told him to write the word saggin' backwards.

S-A-G-G-I-N
N-I-G-G-A-S

I told him the origin of that look was from prison. Men in prison wore their pants low when they were spoken for. The other reason their pants looked like that was because they were not allowed to have belts because prisoners were likely to try to commit suicide.

We as young black people have to be the ones to effect change. We are dying. The media has made a mockery of the Black American. Even our brothers and sisters from Africa don't take us seriously. Something as simple as pulling up your pants and standing with your head high could make the biggest difference in the world's perception of us. It is time to do right by ourselves. We need to love and embrace each other. No one is going to do it for us.

It all comes down to perception. What people perceive is what is reality to them. We have to change not only the media's perception of us, but we need to change our perception of ourselves. Remember all eyes are on you Black Man. All eyes are on you Black Woman. All eyes are on you Black Child. People are waiting for us to mess up. We have let not only the media, but the government and the world taint the pure essence of us.

They have stripped our culture down to the point where we only believe we can become rappers and athletes. We are so much more.
To all my black men: Its time to stand up. There are billions of Black Women who want to do nothing more than worship the ground that you walk on. We are so in love with your potential. We want to have your back, we want to love, support and cherish every ounce of your being. But with that you have to show that you are willing to be the head of our households. You have to prove yourselves worthy of our submission. We need you to be hard working...Not a hustler. We need you to seek higher education, to seek spirituality. We need you to stand! And trust us; we will have your back. We know that it gets hard, we know you get weary. Trust and believe that there is nothing that a Black Woman and a Black Man can't handle with GOD on their sides.

To all my Black Women: It is also time for us to stand up. It is time for us to stop using our bodies as our primary form of communication. It is time to be that virtuous woman that Proverbs spoke of. We can not sit by the wayside while our men are dying by the masses. We are the epitome of Black Love. It starts within us. We need to speak with conviction to let not only our Black Men know, but the world knows that we are the Mothers of this world. We are so powerful. We are so beautiful. We need to love and embrace every blessing God has given us physically, emotionally and spiritually.

For all My Black Children: We need to love them. We need to teach them. We need to stand up for them . We need to protect them. We need to show them that there are no "get rich quick" schemes. We need to tell them that they WILL die trying if they submit to a life of crime and deceit.

We need to teach our children that no one will love them the way we can. And being a basketball player, a rapper, or a drug dealer is not reality. It's not realistic and only a small percentage of people ever make it as a rapper or professional athlete. We need to teach our children that we can be more than rappers and athletes. We can be the owners of these sports teams; we can be the CEO's of our fortune 500 companies. We need to believe in literacy. I am almost certain if we were to look back to the 1930's and 40's, the literacy rates for Black American Children are probably still the same.

Ok...I am stepping off of my soap box now. Pull Up Your Pants!

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BOOKER T. WASHINGTON'S GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER INSPIRES ORDINARY PEOPLE TO CREATE EXTRAORDINARY LEGACIES

— Booker T. Washington descendant—the last born of the great-grandchildren of this former slave, turned famous educator and founder of Tuskegee University, launches public speaking and personal life coaching business, EXTRAORDINARY LEGACY, to carry forth the vision of Booker T. Washington of breeding hope, and inspiring ordinary people to achieve extraordinary legacies. —

Through EXTRAORDINARY LEGACY, author, speaker, personal life coach, and mental health professional, Sarah O'Neal Rush, M.A., intends to travel the country, giving back some of the blessings that have been bestowed upon her by speaking and imparting wisdom that helps others rise above difficult circumstances. Her passion is working with young to middle age adults in colleges, churches and women's organizations.

She credits her ability to succeed to the grace of God, and having the blood of Booker T. Washington running through her veins, although growing up she did not recognize either. When giving talks, Sarah often parallels her story of overcoming tremendous obstacles, with that of her great-grandfather's story of rising above his circumstances as a former slave. She refers to her earlier years as her own personal "Up From Slavery" story.

Against tremendous odds Sarah graduated from public high school in Oakland, California, six months ahead of her class, despite living on her own as a teenage mother, and having the responsibility of raising her son alone in a high crime, drug infested housing project in East Oakland, way on the other side of town from her high school.

While growing up, and for most of her adult life, Sarah did not fully understand the significance of her great-grandfather's work. It was not until she first stepped foot on the campus of Tuskegee University just ten short years ago, that she realized the extent of her incredible lineage, and her life began to transform dramatically.

"When we arrived on campus, students, staff, news reporters and community leaders were all there to welcome us. They were awe-struck that direct descendants were still alive, and I was awe-struck that they cared so much. I was amazed by the original buildings that still stand today—built by hand, brick by brick, by Washington and his students—all former slaves, using bricks that they made." —Sarah O'Neal Rush

This year Sarah returned to Tuskegee, where she and her first cousin and coauthor, Gloria Yvonne Jackson, blessed their book at the gravesite of their great-grandfather, Timeless Treasures–-Reflections of God's Word in the Wisdom of Booker T. Washington, published by AuthorHouse(TM), to celebrate 150 years since his birth.

Through lots of hard work and determination, today Sarah holds an undergraduate degree in business, and a master's degree in professional psychology. She works relentlessly as a public speaker, passionate writer, and coach to inspire others who desire to improve their current life's circumstances.

Sarah Rush
Great-Granddaughter of Booker T. Washington

"Years ago I resolved that because I had no ancestry myself I would leave a record of which my children would be proud, and which might encourage them to still higher effort." —Booker T. Washington

A WORD ABOUT BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

Booker T. Washington founded Tuskegee Normal School, later named Tuskegee Institute, and today known as Tuskegee University, on July 4, 1881, at the age of only 25 years old. At five-years old he was a slave, valued at only $400.00, yet he rose to become one of the greatest black leaders to have ever lived. He was an advisor to Presidents McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft. His autobiography, Up from Slavery, was a bestseller. It was translated into more than 17 different languages, and has never been out of print. He was the first Black to be commemorated on a fifty-cent coin, and the first Black to have a U.S. postage stamp named in his honor.

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HONEY

Honey is a sweet treat. In fact, it is man's oldest sweetener. It can be a good substitute for sugar in our drinks and food. The history of honey and its uses goes back to the beginning of written history. It is mentioned in the bible and in all many religious writings known to man. John the Baptist lived on honey and carob (locust) alone while teaching and meditating in the hill and mountains of the holy land. Menelik, King of Ethiopia, planted Coso tree under which he places hives. This honey was eaten to remove worms and other intestinal parasites. In the Middle Eastern countries Eucalyptus honey is used to cure coughs, asthma, tuberculosis, allergies and bronchitis. Tupelo honey is an excellent choice because it is absorbed slowly into the bloodstream and does not cause a rise in blood sugar level which makes it excellent for diabetics. Honey is a predigested food. It contains all known vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C, A, B, calcium, potassium, iron , magnesium, and protein. Natural honey is also good for many other things such as beauty and health conditions.

Looking for an alternative to commercial beauty products. Warm honey is also great for the skin and is an excellent mask, which makes the skin soft, minimizes wrinkles, cleans pores, and normalizes oily skin. It has the ability to attract water, and absorbs unnecessary moisture. You can use honey instead of alpha hydroxy masks because of its high content of the acid. It is also safe for sensitive skin.

If you have a sore throat, take some honey. Honey is the best natural cough medicine, especially when mixed with pure Olive oil or lime juice. It will break up mucus and phlegm. Germs cannot live in honey because it destroys bacteria by absorbs moisture which keeps them alive. It also has different photochemical-chemicals found in plants and different foods—that kill viruses, bacteria, and fungus making it a good substitute for wound dressings. Due to its natural anti-inflammatory effect, it will help to heal the wounds quickly and stops bleeding. The taste may also take your mind off the pain.

Do you have a cut? Honey is a natural antiseptic. Medical journals cite more than 600 cases in which honey was employed to treat wounds. By applying honey to your wounds, you prevent infections. Honey contains antimicrobial agents, which prevents infections by killing the bacteria in and around your wounds. When using honey it may help to heat it up before putting it on your wound (caution test the heat before you place it on the wound). Many types of bacteria can't survive in honey, so wounds heal, swelling eases, and tissue can grow back.

Remember you are what you eat! With honey you are always sweet.

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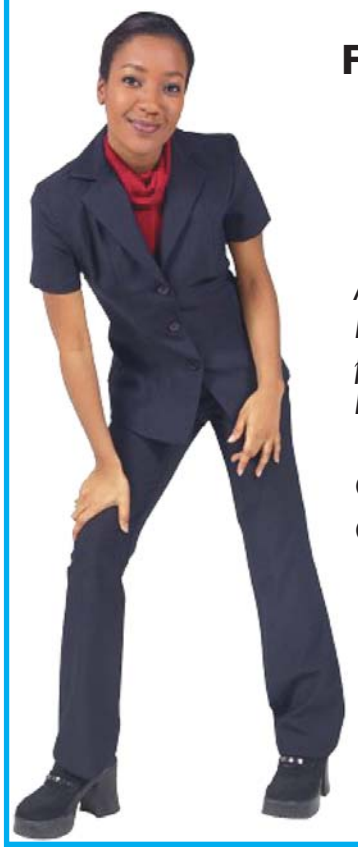

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The Christmas Story

As told by Matthew

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'" Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead." So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene."

Matthew 1:18 - 2:23 New International Version

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OBESITY continued from page 16

processed sugar, and switch to sea salt instead of table salt to decrease sodium. Even these small adjustments can make a difference and you can still have great tasting food. In fact, cooking with natural foods organically grown is the best option for nutritious and flavorful food.

As a side point: Significantly decreasing your intake of fast foods while increasing physical activity and exercise will be an added benefit overall. So hopefully thru more education and awareness on this matter of obesity, this trend within our community can be reversed and we all can feel healthier, more energized and better equipped to enjoy life's possibilities!

Makeisha Lee is a health and nutrition consultant. For more information about cleansing and detoxifying your body, contact her at 614-595-1425 or makeisha@cleanseformula.com or learn more at www.CleanseFormula.com

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TAKING MATTERS cont'd from pg. 13

24 He asked, "My lord, have you decided that Adonijah will be the next king and that he will sit on your throne?
25 Today he has sacrificed many oxen, fattened calves, and sheep, and he has invited your sons to attend the celebration. He also invited Joab, the commander of the army, and Abiathar the priest. They are feasting and drinking with him and shouting, `Long live King Adonijah!'
26 But I myself, your servant, was not invited; neither were Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, nor Solomon.
27 Has my lord really done this without letting any of his servants know who should be the next king?"
Nathan's plan worked as he said and now David would set the matter straight.

David Makes Solomon King
28 "Call Bathsheba," David said. So she came back in and stood before the king.
29 And the king vowed, "As surely as the LORD lives, who has rescued me from every danger,
30 today I decree that your son Solomon will be the next king and will sit on my throne, just as I swore to you before the LORD, the God of Israel."
31 Then Bathsheba bowed low before him again and exclaimed, "May my lord King David live forever!"
32 Then King David ordered, "Call Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came into the King's presence,
33 the king said to them, "Take Solomon and my officers down to Gihon Spring. Solomon is to ride on my personal mule.
34 There Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet are to anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpets and shout, `Long live King Solomon!'
35 When you bring him back here, he will sit on my throne. He will succeed me as king, for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."
36 "Amen!" Benaiah son of Jehoiada replied. "May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, decree it to be so.
37 And may the LORD be with Solomon as he has been with you, and may he make Solomon's reign even greater than yours!"
38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the king's bodyguard took Solomon down to Gihon Spring, and Solomon rode on King David's personal mule.
39 There Zadok the priest took a flask of olive oil from the sacred tent and poured it on Solomon's head. Then the trumpets were blown, and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!"
40 And all the people returned with Solomon to Jerusalem, playing flutes and shouting for joy. The celebration was so joyous and noisy that the earth shook with the sound.
41 Adonijah and his guests heard the celebrating and shouting just as they were finishing their banquet. When Joab heard the sound of trumpets, he asked, "What's going on? Why is the city in such an uproar?"
42 And while he was still speaking, Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest arrived. "Come in," Adonijah said to him, "for you are a good man. You must have good news."
43 "Not at all!" Jonathan replied. "Our lord King David has just declared Solomon king!
44 The king sent him down to Gihon Spring with Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, protected by the king's bodyguard. They had him ride on the king's own mule,
45 and Zadok and Nathan have anointed him as the new king. They have just returned, and the whole city is celebrating and rejoicing. That's what all the noise is about.

See TAKING MATTERS page 24

Ten Tips for African American Boys

By Professor William Jackson
Edward Waters College
willaim.Jackson@ewc.edu

1. Every Black young man needs to know that they are unique. They have talents and skills that go beyond sports. They are intelligent, crafty, articulate and diverse in their abilities to meet and exceed all expectations. They are special and unique in God's universe.

2. No other race is better than you as a Black youth. There are various colors, shades and combinations, but you are all equal from birth to death. It is what you are exposed to and chose to learn that makes a difference along with how you apply it.

3. Reflect on your heritage. As Black males you are descendents of Kings, Generals, Scholars, and Educators. Take responsibility for your destiny as greatness awaits you.

4. You don't need big muscles to show you are strong. Real men use their hearts, intellect and prayers to guide them. Project strength and confidence not cockiness and self-centeredness. Having real power means not having to your fists, but your heart and mind after you pray first. Reinforce these in yourself and other brothers to promote Peace and Respect.

5. Don't be scared or ashamed to ask for help. Remember great men stand on the shoulders of other great men to achieve profound things. No man is an island unto himself.

6. Surround yourself with talented people. Make acquaintances with other talented men. Black, White, and Multicultural men, each with talents to make this world a better place. Support each other to do the right thing for their families. Put God first, family second, and yourself third.

7. Have a mentor or confidant that you can talk to. Someone older with experience and willing to teach you the ropes. Someone honest, open, ethical, but who can respect you and know you will make mistakes, but guides you in the right direction.

8.Try to establish a good relationship with brothers that are doing positive things. Be open to help brothers that need guidance. Get rid of the slave mentality, "I got mines, you get yours".

9. Always believe in yourself. You will face challenges through out your days. Always believe in your abilities and be willing to learn new things. Keep an open mind. Bad times or rough situations don't last forever, but strong spirited and prayerful brothers do.

10. If you look for heroes remember to put them in perspective. Watching T.V. is fantasy, but there are real human heroes everyday who lead normal lives. They take care of their families, work normal jobs and look for no credit for it.

Fabyoulous™ AT FIFTY

Dr. Debra Ann Nixon, marriage and family therapist professor unites 50-something women with a new innovative and interactive cyber community: FABYOULOUSAT50. A proud boomer herself, Dr. Nixon is excited to don the title "fabyoulousat50" and is inviting other fabyoulous women to join her in the celebration. The blog and web store reflect her excitement about being a woman of ageless wisdom, health, and beauty. Nixon, an ordained minister and founder of Liberation Outreach Ministries, uses her life to inspire others to be their best selves and live with gusto and intention in service to others.

Dr. Debra Nixon

FABYOULOUSAT50 is committed to empowering women to embrace life, welcome the gift of another birthday, and to spend time with friends and loved ones. The blog is designed for women turning 50, but also welcomes inspiring messages from boomers over 50. FABYOULOUSAT50 inspires hope that the best is yet to come and dispels the myth that all women are ashamed of their age. "This kind of FABYOULOUSNESS, first of all, comes with age and consciousness. It also requires a commitment to health, happiness and wholeness," said Nixon.

The FABYOULOUSAT50 blog targets boomers turning 50 but welcomes all women born between 1946 and 1964. The blog celebrates this time in a woman's life and encourages this generation of women to sound off on the issues that are important them. The FABYOULOUSAT50.com store boasts a diverse line of products featuring the sassy and classy FABYOULOUSAT50 logo. Nixon believes that this movement will catch fire and that boomers will be inspired to live their best lives. "I'm just getting started," said Nixon, who's writing a book about marriage. "The best is definitely yet to come."

About Dr. Debra Ann Nixon

Dr. Debra Ann Nixon is a college professor and mentor for Family Therapy students at Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, FL. An ordained minister, founder of Liberation Outreach Ministries, and dynamic instructor and presenter, Dr. Nixon has presented compelling workshops nationally and internationally on topics ranging from women's issues to diversity in curriculum training. Debra is an inspiration and her messages of "unity in diversity" and "singleness of humankind" are heartfelt and compelling. Her love for life and living permeates her very spirit as she believes "Spirit" is what connects us. For more information about Dr. Debra A. Nixon visit her website: www.debranixon.com or contact her through nixond@nova.edu

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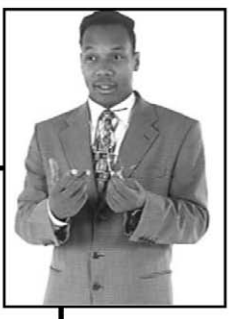

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TAKING MATTERS continued from page 22

46 Moreover, Solomon is now sitting on the royal throne as king.
47 All the royal officials went to King David and congratulated him, saying, `May your God make Solomon's fame even greater than your own, and may Solomon's kingdom be even greater than yours!' Then the king bowed his head in worship as he lay in his bed,
48 and he spoke these words: `Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who today has chosen someone to sit on my throne while I am still alive to see it.' "
49 Then all of Adonijah's guests jumped up in panic from the banquet table and quickly went their separate ways.
50 Adonijah himself was afraid of Solomon, so he rushed to the sacred tent and caught hold of the horns of the altar.
51 Word soon reached Solomon that Adonijah had seized the horns of the altar and that he was pleading, "Let Solomon swear today that he will not kill me!"
52 Solomon replied, "If he proves himself to be loyal, he will not be harmed. But if he does not, he will die."
53 So King Solomon summoned Adonijah, and they brought him down from the altar. He came and bowed low before the king, and Solomon dismissed him, saying, "Go on home."

Adonijah's foolishness nearly cost him his life. If it were not for a good-hearted king and brother, Adonijah would have been killed. But, what about us? What happens when we take matters into our own hands? Will we be as fortunate as Adonijah? It may not bring death to us but there are other situations that are just as grave to us.

Let's compare David to Joseph; we know that David took matters into his own hands when it came to Bathsheba. It caused David to even commit the murder of Bathsheba's husband Uriah. Where as Joseph did not take matters into his own hands when it came to Potipher's wife. Joseph even asked, How could he do such evil in God's sight. This is important for us to know because when you look at recent headlines, many which took matters into their own hands have had a serious penalty to pay.

Here are four areas we need to look at that I believe will help us to avoid the trap of taking matters into our own hands.

Remember God will not give you more than you can bear.
Publishers, Inc."But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.
1 Corinthians 10:131
Job we know went through a lot, losing his children, livestock and even his health. But when it was over, Job had double in what he had lost!

Be slow to become angry! James 1:19,20
19 My dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.
20 Your anger can never make things right in God's sight.
We know Cain allowed anger to cause him to kill his brother Abel.

God's grace is sufficient.
And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8 (New Living Translation)
Matt. 6:19-21

See TAKING MATTERS page 34

FROM GOD'S CORNER

HOW DO YOU SPELL SUCCESS?

By Aundra Bryant
Tallahassee, Florida

Several weeks ago, I was flipping through the television channels and I came up on the National Spelling Bee Championship. I was amazed at how well these young people could spell and articulate words. Suddenly, the thought came into my mind, how do you spell success?

One way to spell it is Money. Let me first say that the Lord has nothing against us as the body of Christ being prosperous and possessing things as long as these things do not possess us. We cannot avoid the fact that we live in a capitalistic society, which puts great emphasis on capital, land, investments and assets. However, just as the psalmist declares "the flower groweth and withereth away". This assures us that the same thing can happen to possessions.

Secondly, we may try to spell success Education. Many people believe that they are who they are now because of the knowledge and education that they received from books and centers of higher learning. The Word of God says "the fool says in his heart that there is no God". I am not declaring that the Lord does not intend for us to develop our mental abilities to elevate mankind, however, when education is not put in its proper perspective it can become an obstacle between God and his divine purpose for us. We must remember that Solomon was considered the wisest man in the Bible but he even realized with all his wealth and intellectual milestones in the book of Ecclesiastes that "all is vanity" unless we are in the presence of God.

Thirdly, we can try to spell success Fame but we will run into some problems there. We live in a generation where people will praise you one day and try to kill you tomorrow. Much of this defamation of character is done by what we call the "pink tornado" the tongue. Many entertainers and athletes reached fame and fortune when they were young, strong, and healthy but time has caused their footsteps to get shorter, their voice to become weaker and their minds are not as sharp as they once was.

Finally, one may ask the question, well how do you spell success? We can look in the book of Job Chapter 1 verse 21 which states, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord". When I think about many of the trials and tribulations that we as Christians go through, the only consolation that we have is that it did not come to stay but *"it came to pass"*. The Lord smiles on us when we show our commitment, faith, hope and trust in him in situations that would devastate the unbeliever. The songwriter sums it up when he says "when peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll, whatever my lot thou hast taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul".

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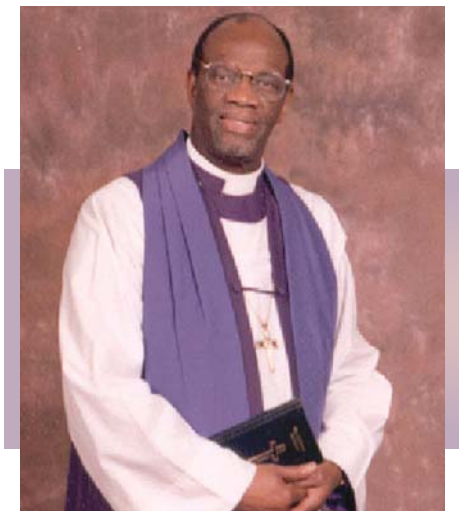

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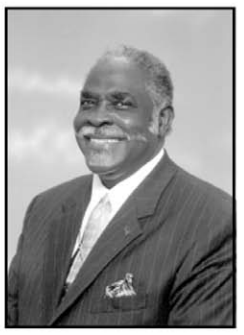

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I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. **Psalm 121**

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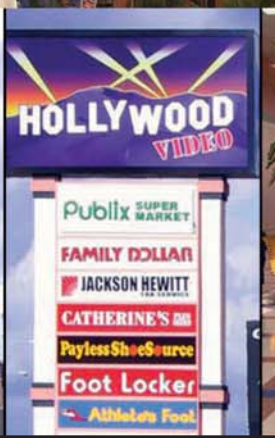

"ARE WE AFRAID TO BELIEVE THAT GOD SENT US THE HOLY GHOST?"

By, Rev. Dr. Carlton D. Jones
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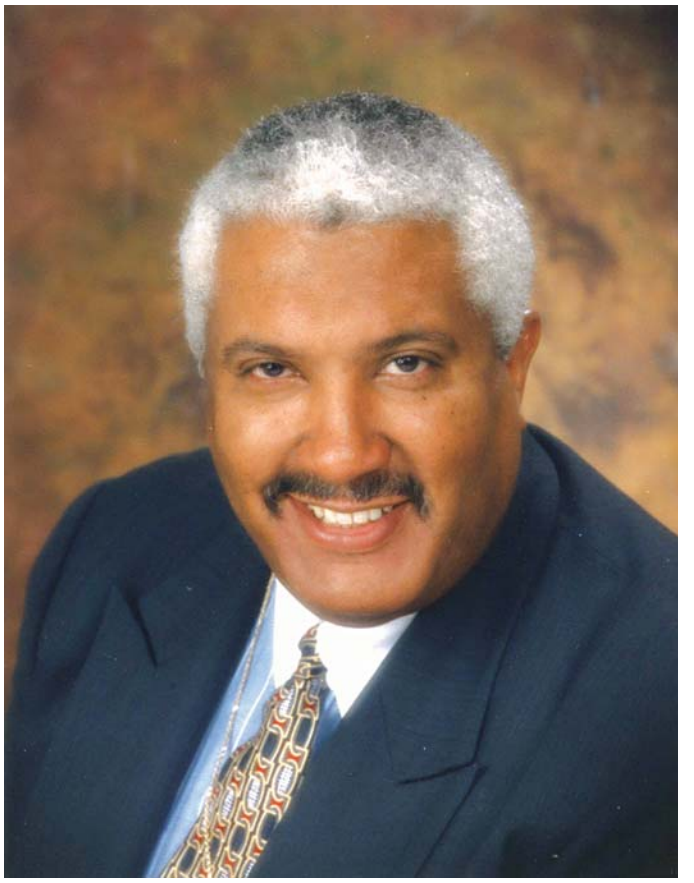

Many believe on the name of Jesus Christ and are saved but do not receive the fullness of Jesus dying and resurrection. Why? Because there is not a personal relationship with the Comforter - The Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is the third personality of the Godhead, the Holy Trinity of God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. We should be born in the Spirit of God, Baptized in the Spirit of God, lead by the Spirit of God, and walking in the things of the Spirit of God, so that we can receive all the benefits of God. The Holy Spirit is my Director. He is my Enabler and He is my Organizer. Why? Because, I believe that Holy Spirit is and that the Holy Spirit walks with me.

The Holy Trinity created the earth. Look at Genesis 1:1-2, "In the beginning God created the heaven and earth. And the earth was without form or void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water." I believe the spirit that moved across the face of the water was the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was the same in the beginning; He is the same today and forever. Genesis 1:26 also illustrates the Holy Trinity when God said; "let us make man in our image, (the let us means the Divine Trinity which is the plural personal pronoun) after our likeness (the likeness of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit) and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all the earth and every creeping thing that creepth upon the earth."

The Holy Trinity gave man dominion over the earth with powers in their likeness. Man and woman had power over Satan and over every creeping thing. Adam and Eve had power over the creeping serpent spirit of Satan. Adam and Eve lost that power, and man was cast into sin, sickness, disease, death and the grave, but the resurrection of Jesus gave us power over Satan and death (the fear of death). Jesus death and resurrection by the Father assured those of us who believe that Jesus is our Lord and Savior will receive eternal salvation with God and death no longer holds us captive.

It was the Spirit of the Godhead that planted the seed in the womb of the Virgin Mary, which bore Jesus the Son. It was Jesus by the aid of the Holy Spirit that taught us how to heal the sick, raise the dead, how to forgive, how to love, how to die, and how to live eternally with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Yes, Jesus was bruised for our sin, sickness and disease. With His strips we are healed, and yes He died, and yes God the Father raised Jesus up on that third day with all power over sin, sickness, death, and the grave. Jesus gave us power over Satan, and yes He went up to sit on the right hand of the Father, but He sent the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. And yes Jesus is coming back again, yes He is, He is coming back again. That's good news, but until He comes He sent us the Comforter - The Holy Spirit.

Jesus blood atonement on the cross restored us with a right relationship with the Holy Trinity thru Jesus Christ the Son, who sits on the right hand of the Father as an intercessor for our sins. Jesus has given us power thru the Holy Spirit.

Do you know the Holy Spirit for yourself? Well He walks with me, He talks with me, He directs me and I know that He is my Comforter. Many of us do not mind talking about Jesus, but we do not want to talk about ghosts and spirits. But we must understand that there is a spirit world and that we are spiritual. Remember that we are made in the image and likeness of God. God is a Spirit. Jesus said that we would do greater works than He by the aid of the Holy Spirit. We strengthen our spiritual relationship with God by studying the Word of God.

He that believeth on me as the Scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water.

It is important that we believe in the Divinity of the Holy Spirit and know His personality. It is only when we learn these truths that we can give the Holy Spirit honor, worship, adoration and the same respect that we give God the Father and God the Son Jesus. The Holy Ghost is not a mere spirit like Satan. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent; He gives us the power that Jesus talked about. He guides us, He is infinitely wise, Holy, Just, and Gracious. He seeks to get a hold of us so that He can give us the fruits of His Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that gives the anointing to our lives.

God the Father and Jesus the Son left us a Comforter, the Holy Spirit. It is up to you and I to develop a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Trinity said: I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. Also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, said the Lord of hosts. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He. . . shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

He that believeth on me as the Scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him was to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given. I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever: Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whosoever have said unto you. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Lather, He shall testify of Me. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning.

It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me:

See CARLTON JONES page 32

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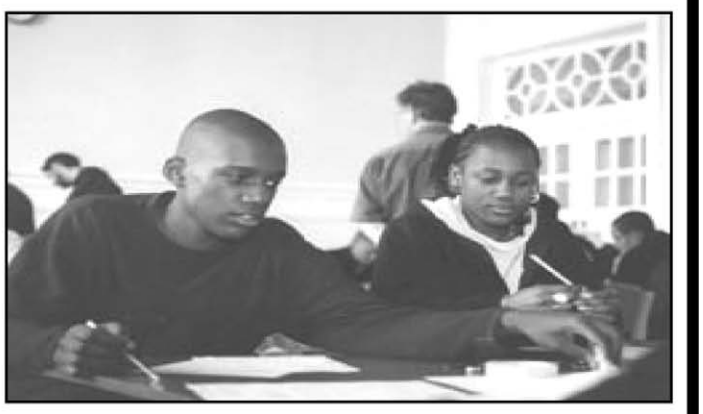

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HOLY GHOST continued from page 31

Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come.

He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, and the Spirit gave them utterance.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, and faith. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit dwells in us only in the sense of UNION with us, but never by bodily entrance into the human body to live there like an incarnation. God and man are in perfect union and are considered as being one and dwelling with each other. We need to get to know the Holy Spirit for He is there when we cannot depend on anyone else. He is there when we are in our darkest hour. He is there when we are on our sick bed. He is there, and He is here right now.

I can see God the Holy Spirit In Hebrews chapter 4:12 when He states that the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than a two edge sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. God is saying that He is inside where there is conflict, He is inside where our spirit wants to do right, but our mind can't get it together.

The lusts of the flesh is pulling us one way, He is inside where we are hurting, inside where I want to be a better Father, inside where I want to be a better person, but this turmoil is pulling and turning me. The Bible says that where He comes, He comes right there, and when He comes He is fully briefed. He knows why I am hurting, knows where the conflicts are and He tells me there is no condemnation. Don't be guilty, God loves you and I. He knows us. He knows what's in our hearts. I can fool you but I cannot fool God. All things are naked before Him.

I would like to close by asking you if you are saved and know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior? If there is someone who does not know Jesus, accept Jesus right now as your Lord and Savior and unite with a Bible teach Church immediately. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will come upon you and guide you to a Pastor and Bible teaching Church. Amen.

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Many of us have difficulty saving for future financial goals when the allure of things we want today is so strong. Yet, there are ways you can train yourself to put money away for your future goals, even if you think money is tight today.

■ Detail every dime you spend over a month. You may be surprised to learn that a bunch of small purchases for things you can do without add up quickly over time. For example, do you need a designer cup of coffee on your way to work or can you make your own and put it in a thermos? How about those newspapers you buy at work each day and never get around to reading? Do you really need to eat out at a restaurant twice a week? These and other cutbacks can save you hundreds of dollars per month.

■ Detail your major expenses over a year or two. Did you really need the $3,000 plasma television or other new technological toys? Could you have driven to that vacation 300 miles away instead of taking a plane?

■ Keep track of how you can reduce your current bills. In recent years, many people have refinanced their mortgages to lower payments. Evaluate all other loans for cost cutting opportunities, including student and car loans.

■ Spend more to save more. This sounds contradictory, but it isn't. Energy-efficient appliances can cost you more, but save much more on energy costs over the long term. Even smaller purchases, like energy-efficient light bulbs, can save you money over time. Value isn't always the cheapest initial price.

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The Shame of the Nation:

The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America

By Jonathan Kozol
Guest Writer

Public school resegregation is a "national horror hidden in plain view," writes former educator turned public education activist Kozol (Savage Inequalities, Amazing Grace). Kozol visited 60 schools in 11 states over a five-year period and finds, despite the promise of Brown v. Board of Education, many schools serving black and Hispanic children are spiraling backward to the pre-Brown era.

These schools lack the basics: clean classrooms, hallways and restrooms; up-to-date books in good condition; and appropriate laboratory supplies. Teachers and administrators eschew creative coursework for rote learning to meet testing and accountability mandates, thereby "embracing a pedagogy of direct command and absolute control" usually found in "penal institutions and drug rehabilitation programs."

As always, Kozol presents sharp and poignant portraits of the indignities vulnerable individuals endure. "You have all the things and we do not have all the things," one eight-year-old Bronx boy wrote the author. In another revealing exchange, a cynical high school student tells his classmate, a young woman with college ambitions who was forced into hair braiding and sewing classes, "You're ghetto-so you sew."

Kozol discovers widespread acceptance for the notion that "schools in ghettoized communities must settle for a different set of academic and career goals" than schools serving middle-and upper-class children. Kozol tempers this gloom with hopeful interactions between energetic teachers and receptive children in schools where all is not lost. But these "treasured places" don't hide the fact, Kozol argues, that school segregation is still the rule for poor minorities, or that Kozol, and the like-minded politicians, educators and advocates he seeks out, believe a new civil rights movement will be necessary to eradicate it.

TAKING MATTERS continued from page 24

19 "Don't store up **treasures here on earth**, where they can be eaten by moths and get rusty, and where thieves break in and steal.
20 Store your **treasures in heaven**, where they will never become moth-eaten or rusty and where they will be safe from thieves.
21 Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be.

This is an area we really take matters into our own hands. It is because we are so worried about treasures here on earth. Too many people are living well above their means and finding themselves nearly on the brink of bankruptcy! The word tells us to store up treasures in heaven. The point being, trust God even in your finances! We are about to enter into the biggest spending time of the year, remember, you can't make everybody happy! So don't go broke trying to!

Forgiveness Matt.6:14,15
14 If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you.
15 But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.
Forgiveness, what can I say, if you can't forgive, you open yourself up to taking matters into your own hands and yes, it will lead to no good. You may see good in it for you now, but there is coming a time of judgment.

I close with this, we are entering the celebration of the birth of our Savior. Why did we need a Savior? Because mankind could not make it on his own. From the time that Adam and Eve fell in the garden, mankind has been taking matters into his own hands. But we don't have to! If we can just learn to trust in the Lord with all our heart, mind and soul, we would not make so many bonehead decisions. Lord knows, I have made mine! But I thank my God that I am finally trying my best not to take matters into my own hands anymore. What about you? My pray for you all is that you have a blessed and prosperous Christmas season. May Christ be exalted in each and every one of you!

DR. KING HOLIDAY continued from page 8

Most holiday proposals encounter strong opposition, particularly today. Moreover, just about every constituency has some day it would like to commemorate. Feminists have long fought for a Susan B. Anthony Day on the suffragist's birthday Feb. 15. The Irish would prefer to have St. Patrick's Day off, the Finns St. Urho's Day (March 16). Tree lovers and environmentalists can make a case for Arbor Day to be an official holiday. Commercial interests push Valentine's Day.
While legislation supporting these holidays has never gotten beyond the lip-service stage, special interests have created a number of holidays not universally observed. Longshoremen, for instance, take off Harry Bridges' birthday to honor the popular labor leader. In the south, Robert E. Lee's birthday has long been observed by various states on the third Monday of January. This creates an interesting historical contradiction for those that, like Virginia that added the observance of King's birthday to that date as well.

Not specifically patriotic or religious, the King Holiday does not fit any traditional category. But black leaders hope it will become a deeply spiritual day. "I think it should be devoted to some activity which expresses love of our fellow person, or spiritual recognition of some kind," says Dr. Donald G. Phelps, chancellor of Seattle Community College District, which for 12 years before the national holiday, conducted a widely attended memorial service in King's honor on his birthday. "As we've celebrated it in the past, it's become a day where more people come together in an ecumenical way — go to other churches, worship together the way we don't on Sunday — than any other. It's a day when we can honor Dr. King's principles, which are really American principles in their truest form. "It shouldn't be a holiday where we all go fishing."

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Publisher's Editorial

Darryl A. Barrs, Sr., Publisher / Managing Editor

The World's Ugliest Christmas Tree

Because of God's tender mercy, the light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace. (Luke 1:78-79)

I can remember when I was a young boy how we always used to go throughout the city to find the prefect live Christmas tree. There always seemed to be the perfect pine just waiting for us to purchase, we just had to have patience to keep looking until we found it. Then as a family we would decorate it with happy hearts.

One year as we searched, I saw probably the ugliest, most lopsided, and scraggly pine tree ever, however, to me it seemed like a great choice for this year's tree. I can remember my Dad purchasing it and wondering if we made the right choice and later watching us decorating the weak, sagging limbs as best we could. I still can picture today all our family presents under the world's ugliest Christmas tree.

What warms my heart about this memory is that my Mom and Dad didn't mind if the tree didn't look good or decorate up nicely. They only cared that we loved it and wanted it for our tree. They knew that the true meaning of Christmas didn't come from the lights, decorations, or presents. They knew the true meaning of Christmas came from the love and joy we shared with each other and the love that God had for each and everyone of us.

These days my tree is artificial and I smile when I think of the live ones we had over the years and especially that ugly little Christmas tree. Today, the love and joy I share with my family and everyone else remains the same as the Christmases past, no matter how our tree looks. It is the glorious gift from God that keeps on giving and giving and giving.

Merry Christmas to you and your family.

May your tree always be full of light and your heart always be full of love no matter if your tree is scraggly, artificial, or perfect.

From The Barrs Family
Darryl, Gwendolyn, Dominique and Darryl Jr.

Kulcha Gospel Korner

Lisa Canton, President
Kulcha Gospel, International

PAPA SAN & FRIENDS LIVE IN CONCERT

This concert was held on Nov. 18th in Miami, at Norland Senior High School, featuring **Papa San,** (Jamaica) **Chevelle Franklyn,** (Jamaica) **Kerron, Ennis** (Jamaica; 2006 Marlin Award Winner), **Glacia Robinson** (Jamaica), **Wendy Mitchell** (Trinidad & Tobago), Christian Comedian **Waterboot Man** (Jamaica), and several other Caribbean gospel artists. **Rev. Renford Williams** (Jamaica), DJ for a radio program on WFLL 1400 AM "*Mystik Radio*" (Ft. Lauderdale) served as Emcee and host of this event. **Papa San**, well known as the first Caribbean gospel artist to cross over to mainstream American gospel, was definitely surrounded by his friends. **Kirk Franklin** assisted in presenting him to the Christian American audience and "San" (as he is affectionately called) was definitely accepted by the Saints of God! As he crossed over into mainstream, he looked back and pulled some of his "friends" with him. **Papa San**, a legend in Jamaican Dancehall style music, accepted the call of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, he then left the "worldly" scene and began ministering the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Sister Ernzie Joseph (Haiti) (Host of Kulcha Gospel's Haitian radio ministry) reported that the show was a winner! Joseph states that "It was amazing to see so many artists showcasing their own unique style of ministering praise and worship music. She also stated that "You can see that they were truly friends and really loved one another! Comedian Waterboot Man, dressed up in a bright yellow rain coat and REAL water boots gave hilarious Christian jokes in his thick Jamaican patois and kept the crowd in stitches! **Kerron Ennis**' took command of the stage as she rocked the crowd with anointed reggae gospel!" Joseph exclaims. **Glacia Robinson, (**an anointed worship leader with a powerful testimony of healing) truly ushered the Holy Spirit into the building! According to Joseph, Emcee **Rev. Renford Williams'** stage presence kept the audience excited as he introduced each worship minister! You knew he was a true Man of God and that this event was about worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ! The audience was excited and whole heartedly received **Papa San** as he came to the stage and everyone enjoyed the good vibes of this event!" proclaims Joseph.

Kerron Ennis (Left) **& Kulcha Gospel's Ernzie Joseph** (Right)
(Photo Courtesy of Kulcha Gospel)

GERARD PLACIDE BRINGS THE GOSPEL MUSIC CHANNEL TO NEW YORK

The ***Caribbean Fall Gospel Extravaganza-The Return,***" presented on Nov. 18th in Brooklyn, NY, at New York Technical College; featuring **Gerard Placide**, (Trinidad & Tobago) and **Pastor Singh** (Trinidad & Tobago), **Q the Prophet** (Guyana), **Wayne Johnson** (Trinidad & Tobago), **Neal Lalgee** (Trinidad & Tobago), **Cora Williamson** (Guyana; 2006 Marlin Award Winner), & the **Bible Faith Choir** was a show stopper from all accounts, the Holy Ghost rained on this event.

Gerard Placide warms up the mike!
(Photo Courtesy of Javan Music)

Placide, based in Atlanta, GA, became the first Caribbean national to ever win the McDonald's Gospel Soloist Award (2001), and is currently a member of the U.S. Army. He is pioneering in Caribbean gospel by being the first artist to bring a live Caribbean gospel event to cable network. This event was recorded live and is currently airing on The Gospel Music Channel! This is historic because it will be the 1st time that a major cable network has ever presented a Caribbean gospel event produced by Caribbean gospel artists. Placide also presented the 2005 Caribbean-American Gospel Showcase Awards, in Atlanta which was attended by dignitaries (ambassadors and general counsels) from various islands and local Atlanta politicians like Jewel Scott (Jamaica), District Attorney for Clayton County. Kudos go to Mr. Placide in bringing our KULCHA to the forefront. This is truly trailblazing in Caribbean gospel ministry and his efforts should be recognized as the beginning of great Caribbean gospel events being produced by our community, coming to television in the future!

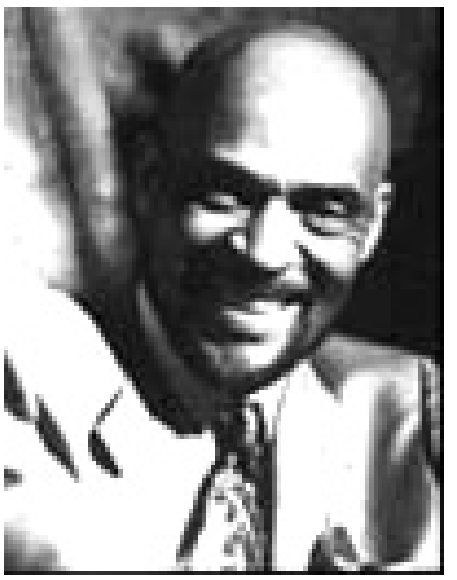
Sister Lisa Canton, Founder of ***KULCHA GOSPEL****, is also the President of the* ***Caribbean-American Business Association of Gainesville*** *(CABAG) and is currently in ministerial training. She will be a periodic contributing writer to the Christian Reader on Caribbean, African, and Latin-based ministries. To contact her send an email to kulchagospel@hotmail.com, or you can write to* P.O. Box 140282, Gainesville, FL 32614-0282.

KRAMER GOT CALLED OUT FOR N-WORD DIATRIBE, SO SHOULD BLACKS THAT USE IT

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson
Guest Columnist

Former Seinfeld star Michael "Kramer" Richards quickly bowed to public pressure and apologized for his boneheaded N-word laced diatribe against black customers who allegedly heckled him during his appearance at the Laugh Factory. But Richards was a soft target. He's a white man that sprinted way over the line of racial etiquette. It was a no brainer that blacks would rage against him. They have done the same against the legion of other white celebrities, politicians and public figures that have gotten caught with their racial pants hanging down.

When the predictable firestorm hits, they back peddle fast, do their mea culpas and declare they're not racist.



Earl Ofari Hutchinson

The same can't be said for the legion of black comedians and rappers that have virtually canonized the word. They sprinkle the word throughout their rap lyrics and comedy lines, and black writers, and filmmakers go through lengthy gyrations to justify using the word. During a panel discussion at the Summer Television Critics Association tour in 2005, Aaron McGruder, creator of the popular comic strip, Boondocks, defiantly told the audience that he'd use the N-word as much as he pleased in his comic strip and in his series on the Cartoon Network's Adult Swim. If folks didn't like it, well tough.
McGruder and N-word users and apologists serve up the lame rationale that the more a black person uses the word, the less offensive it becomes. They claim that they are cleansing the word of its negative connotations so that racists can no longer use it to hurt blacks. Comedian, turned activist, Dick Gregory had the same idea some years ago when he titled his autobiography, Nigger. Black writer, Robert DeCoy also tried to apply the same racial shock therapy to whites when he titled his novel, The Nigger Bible.

The black N-word apologists tick off an endless storehouse of defenses to justify use of the word. They claim that that it is a term of endearingly or affectionately. They say to each other, "You're my nigger if you don't get no bigger." Or, "that nigger sure is something." Others use it in anger or disdain, "Nigger you sure got an attitude." Or, "A nigger ain't s..." Still, others are defiant. They say they don't care what a white person calls them since words can't harm them.

They forget, ignore or distort one thing. Words are not value neutral. They express concepts and ideas. Often, words reflect society's standards. If color-phobia is a deep-rooted standard in American life, then a word, as emotionally charged as nigger, will always reinforce and perpetuate stereotypes. It can't be sanitized, cleansed, inverted, or redeemed as a culturally liberating word. Nigger can't and shouldn't be made acceptable, no matter whose mouth it comes out of or what excuse is tossed out for using it.

There are still dozens of daily examples where whites (and other non-blacks) taunt, and harass blacks by calling them nigger, spray paint the word on their homes, businesses, churches, physically assault and even murder blacks. In the FBI's annual count of hate crimes in America, blacks still make up the overwhelming majority of victims.

The N-word reigns supreme at the top of the stack as the favorite racial epithet hurled at blacks during these crimes. Even when the word isn't used, the sentiment is that blacks are still fair game too be abused and dehumanized, and the N word reinforces that belief. The word nigger is and will always have, grotesque, and deadly meaning to them. And, even if some blacks do occasionally go off the deep end and wrongly harangue whites for using the word, maybe that's because nigger, pricks agonizing historical and social sores.

In all fairness, a handful of black activists have waged war against the N word. There's a website that hawks T shirts, DVDs and exhorts blacks, especially young blacks, to solemnly pledge not to use the word or patronize anyone who puts out products that use the word. Presumably that's aimed at those rappers and writers that have turned the N word into a lucrative growth industry.

But they have been the exception. Blacks have been more than willing to give other blacks that use the word a pass. The indulgence sends the subtle signal that the word is hardly the earth-shattering, illegitimate word that black and white N word opponents brand it.

Richards gave no public hint before his profane outburst that he was a closet bigot who routinely used the word in reference to blacks. But he didn't have too. The obsessive use of and the tortured defense of the word by so many blacks gave Richards the license to use the word without any thought that there'd be any blow back for doing it. He was terribly wrong and got publicly called out for it. The blacks that use and defend that word should be called out too.
Who's willing to do that?

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