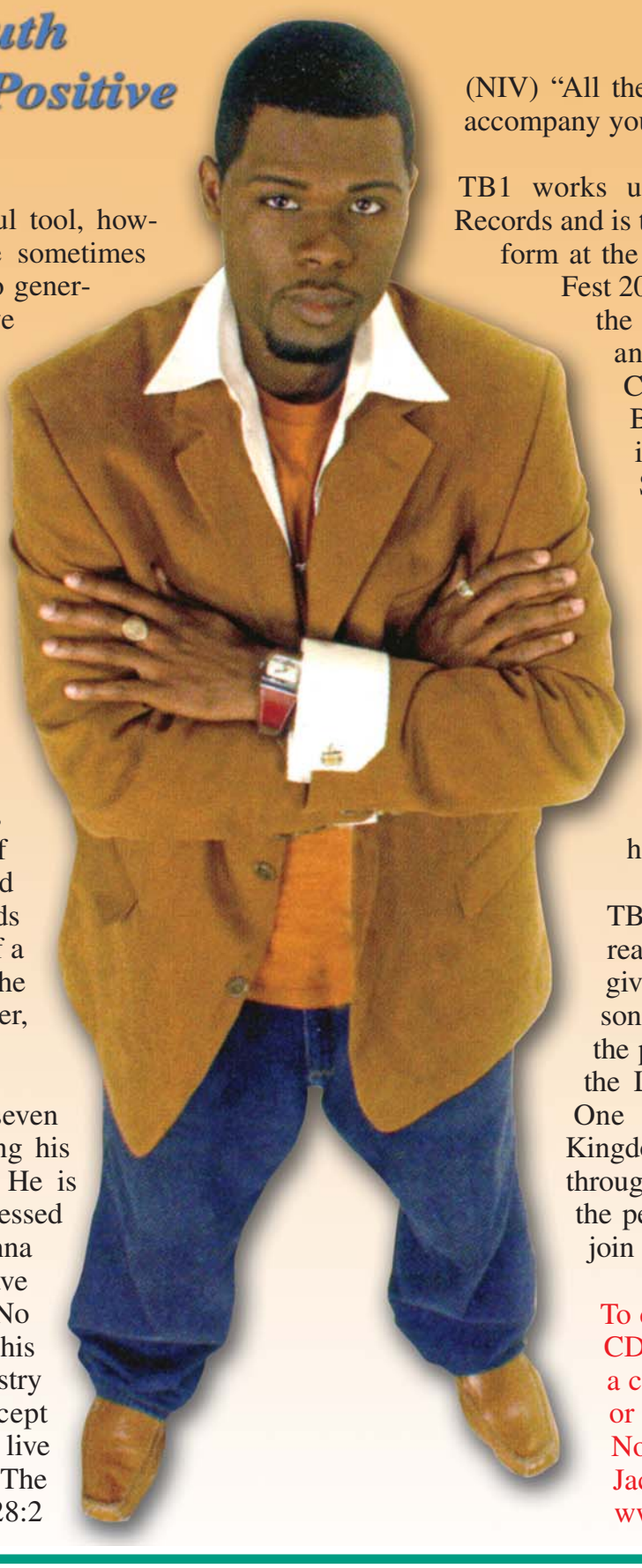
The "Good News" Newspaper • Serving North Florida & Central Florida

Christian Reader

Vol. 15 No. 6 JUNE 2007 FREE MONTHLY

THE BLESSED ONE

Leading Today's Youth To Christ Through Positive Rap And Hip Hop



Music is a powerful and useful tool, however, it's the lyrics that are sometimes harmful and destructive. Two generations of Black youths have been lost because of the destructive power of gangster rap and venomous message and lifestyle. The problem is not the music for the same songs that inspired us in the 70's and 80's is now used in gangster rap – just different words and messages. Therefore it's the words that matter… it's the words that make the difference.

Stephen Bernard Wright figured it out as a young Christian in college attending Savannah State University. This Jacksonville, Florida native realized that we could not take the music away from his generation for it was an important part of their culture. However, the message could be changed to a better word or better words to inspire, encourage, and uplift. Instead of a bystander, Stephen became a player in the Gospel Hip Hop Movement as a rapper, writer, producer and performing artist.

Today Stephen Bernard Wright after seven years in the business is on tour promoting his new CD "Turn Up The Radio Project". He is known as TB1 which stands for The Blessed One, a name his pastor Rev. Dr. Tywanna Estell of New Life POWER Ministries gave him. "Boldness in Christ" and living a "No Compromise Lifestyle" is the emphasis of his ministry to lukewarm Christians. His ministry also encourages Non-Christians to accept Christ as their personal Savior so they can live out the true purpose God has for their life. The Word of God states in Deuteronomy 28:2 (NIV) "All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God."

TB1 works under the label of No Compromise Records and is thanks that God has blessed him to perform at the Super Bowl's Convoy of Hope, Mega Fest 2005, open for Vickie Winans, perform at the Houston Black Expo, MLK Festival, and the National Inspiration Youth Convention. Truly blessed, Stephen Bernard Wright is bound to make a dent in the world and cause a problem for Satan. TB1 is excited about the launching of his "Turn Up The Radio Project." The emphasis of the Project is to produce Christian Rap Music. No Compromise Records feels that our young generation needs beats and sounds that they like, yet with lyrics that are positive, uplifting and filled with the Word of God. TB1 knows that the anointing of God will work through this project and touch the hearts of all who hear it.

TB1 continues to stay humble through the reading of God's Word daily. He strives to give God his all through his powerful songwriting together with his dedication to the piano, bass guitar and making beats for the Lord. His uplifting name The Blessed One is sure to be a blessing to God's Kingdom as He pushes the cause forward through his personal motto: "For I walk not so the people may follow me, but so they may join me as together we follow Christ."

To contact TB1, receive a copy of the new CD "Turn Up The Radio Project", arrange a concert at your church or conference, or for speaking engagement, contact No Compromise Records, Jacksonville, Florida (904) 394-0393, www.nocompromiserecords.com

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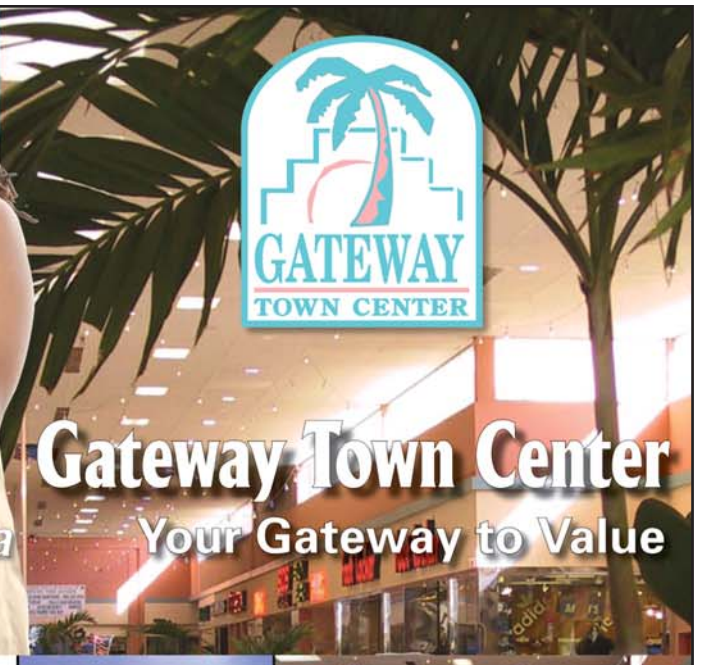

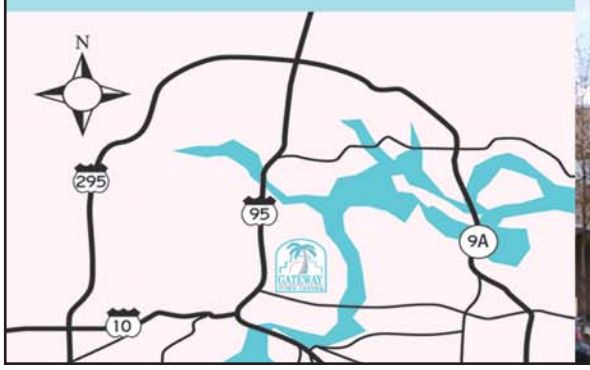

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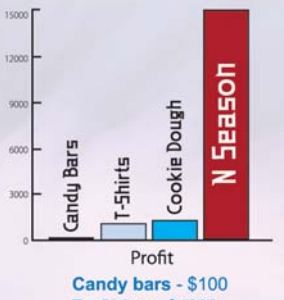

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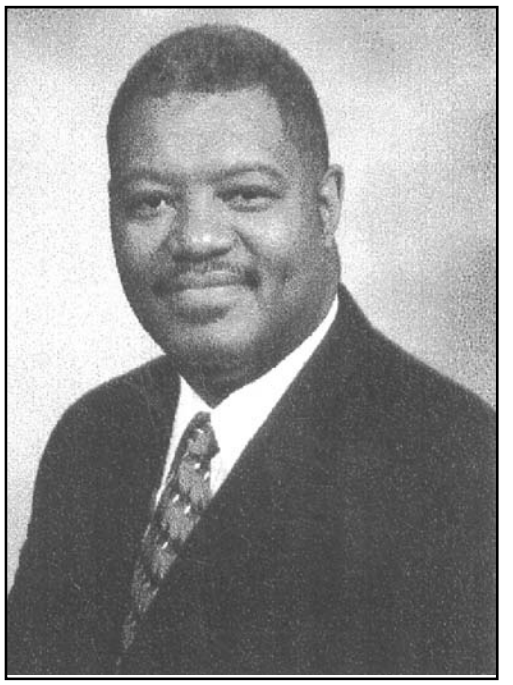
The Rise and Fall of a Great King

By Pastor Leon R. Bing
North Jacksovnille Family Worship Center

This Father's Day message is about a man who served as King of Judah, and as many men who served as king, Uzziah had these familiar words spoken about him, "He did what was pleasing in the Lord's sight." And sadly the word pride comes into play as it became the downfall of many of those same men. The same can be said for husbands, fathers, and sons. We can do some great things in life, and then turn around and do some things that can tarnish our names. My former pastor always said, "Don't let your good be evil spoken of." Sometimes it is not so easy to do, but it is up to us to make the effort to do what is right in the Lord's sight! Let's read the story of King Uzziah and see what caused his fall. This is the New Living Translation.



Pastor Leon R. Bing

2 Chronicles 26
Uzziah Rules in Judah

1 The people of Judah then crowned Amaziah's sixteen-year-old son, Uzziah, as their next king.
2 After his father's death, Uzziah rebuilt the town of Elath and restored it to Judah.
3 Uzziah was sixteen when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. His mother was Jecoliah, from Jerusalem.
4 He did what was pleasing in the Lord's sight, just as his father, Amaziah, had done.
5 Uzziah sought God during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God. And as long as the king sought the LORD, God gave him success.
6 He declared war on the Philistines and broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod. Then he built new towns in the Ashdod area and in other parts of Philistia.
7 God helped him not only with his wars against the Philistines, but also in his battles with the Arabs of Gur and in his wars with the Meunites.
8 The Meunites paid annual tribute to him, and his fame spread even to Egypt, for he had become very powerful.

As long as Uzziah sought the Lord we see that God was with him and helped him with victories over his enemies! Men, it should be obvious to us that as long as we seek the Lord He will also help us with those who come against us in our daily lives as well. We know that there are some who seek to destroy us in any way they can. But greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world praise God! Let us continue to read on.

9 Uzziah built fortified towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the angle in the wall.
10 He also constructed forts in the wilderness and dug many water cisterns, because he kept great herds of livestock in the foothills of Judah and on the plains. He was also a man who loved the soil. He had many workers who cared for his farms and vineyards, both on the hillsides and in the fertile valleys.
11 Uzziah had an army of well-trained warriors, ready to march into battle, unit by unit. This great army of fighting men had been mustered and organized by Jeiel, the secretary of the army, and his assistant, Maaseiah. They were under the direction of Hananiah, one of the king's officials.
12 Twenty-six hundred clan leaders commanded these regiments of seasoned warriors.
13 The army consisted of 307,500 men, all elite troops. They were prepared to assist the king against any enemy.
14 Uzziah provided the entire army with shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows, and sling stones.
15 And he produced machines mounted on the walls of Jerusalem, designed by brilliant men to shoot arrows and hurl stones from the towers and the corners of the wall. His fame spread far and wide, for the LORD helped him wonderfully until he became very powerful.

We see here how God had given Uzziah great wisdom in protecting his nation, raising livestock, and farming. Judah was prospering under king Uzziah, and the army became a true fighting force. And the inventions of warfare that God gave to Uzziah were a defining moment for military battles for centuries to come. We see today that God is still giving men witty inventions, and abilities that are causing many men to prosper in various areas of their lives. But I want each of you to really take a look at where you are and analyze whether are not you are taking full advantage of your lot in life. Are you being all that you can be? Are you using the gifts and talents that God has so willingly placed upon you? The days of saying "The man is keeping us down" are well behind us. We each need to be progressing forward and stop being comfortable with the mundane way of living. But this is where so many make their greatest mistake, let's read the remaining verses!

Uzziah's Sin and Punishment

16 But when he had become powerful, he also became proud, which led to his downfall. He sinned against the LORD his God by entering the sanctuary of the Lord's Temple and personally burning incense on the altar.
17 Azariah the high priest went in after him with eighty other priests of the LORD, all brave men.
18 They confronted King Uzziah and said, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD. That is the work of the priests alone, the sons of Aaron who are set apart for this work. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have sinned. The LORD God will not honor you for this!"
19 Uzziah was furious and refused to set down the incense burner

see GREAT KING page 10

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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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THE CHRISTIAN READER
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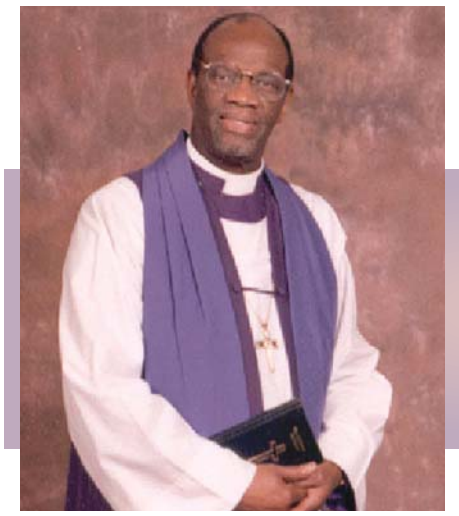

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The Big Pour

By Deborah K. Thompson, President
First Coast African American
Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

Over the years, trying to get small minority and especially Blacks in the construction industry to a level of parity has been a challenge for me and many of the clients and members of the First Coast African American Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

But on April 28, 2007 at 12:00 a.m. in the morning, one of my proudest moments was realized. Mr. Aaron Ferguson, President and Owner of AC Concrete Enterprises broke through many a barrier and made his way through the challenge. Aaron Ferguson has made his biggest pour. I'm calling it the "Big Pour". With over thirty (30) men on the site, and a reserve crew for backup on call friends and relatives from three states along with the Technical Assistant Specialist from Blackmon Roberts an FDOT consultant and the President of the First Coast African American Chamber of Commerce, Inc. Minority Business Outreach Program… Aaron had plenty of support.

From a distance and up-close, we watched Mr. Ferguson take charge, set the stage and begin pouring concrete that would not stop, but for brief moments to refuel, for just over sixteen hours. From approximately 1:17 a.m. when the first Florida Rock truck arrived at the site, the action begun as muddy concrete was strategically placed into three Pumpco pumps. AC Concrete, Enterprises headed by Mr. Ferguson

took its first crew to the task. With three crews on standby, from 1:17 a.m. until 3: p.m. over three hundred trucks dumped over 3,800 cubic yards of concrete into an 8 foot deep hole for the foundation of a six story building located at JEA-site off New Berlin Rd. in Jacksonville, Florida. Once the task was over, what started as the Big Pour, seemed like an easy job.

Aaron can be quoted as saying that "I began in this trade over thirty years ago. I was only sixteen years old working beside my brother-in law." This same brother-in-law, from Mississippi and now eighty years old, along with a host of cousins and nephews was on hand at the site to assist and support Aaron with his "Big Pour".

Aaron, a laborer as a child in Mississippi, poured concrete and continued to until 2002. At that point he was encouraged by several primes to strike out on his own and become a subcontractor. Following their advice, he began pouring and finishing concrete as a business owner. Participating in various certification programs at the state and city levels, he has gone up the ranks, building a small company as he goes and today he has reached a new height. Mr. Ferguson feels that now he can now compete at new levels in the construction sub-trade of concrete with new competence.

The Prime contractor on the job was Williams Industrial under the leadership of the President Mr. Tom McDowell. The company has worked with AC Concrete over the past year and has seen him grow. They gave AC Concrete an opportunity to show its ability and perform on a sizable contract. From the JEA site on New Berlin Road, Mr. Ferguson thanks God and his immediately family - a wife and two daughters for supporting him to his success.

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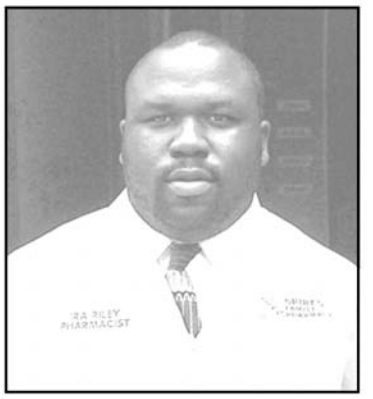

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15,000 Expected at National Baptist Congress June 10-15, 2007 in Orlando, Florida

Orlando, FL – The National Baptist Congress is expected to bring more than 15,000 delegates and attendees to its 101st annual session when it convenes in Orlando on June 10th. The Congress, which is dedicated to providing excellence in Christian education and training to youth and adults, will be held at the Orange County Convention Center.

The Congress is headed by Dr. T. B. Boyd III, president and CEO of the R.H. Boyd Publishing Company in Nashville, Tennessee. The local host pastor is Rev. Alvin White Jr., senior pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church. "This is a particularly challenging time for our young people," said Dr. Boyd. "Dramatic changes have transformed the religious landscape of our society during the past 101 years. What used to be unacceptable is now accepted and actively promoted," he added. "Ethics have become situational, and too frequently morality has become less absolute. We must teach our young people that God's principles have not changed."

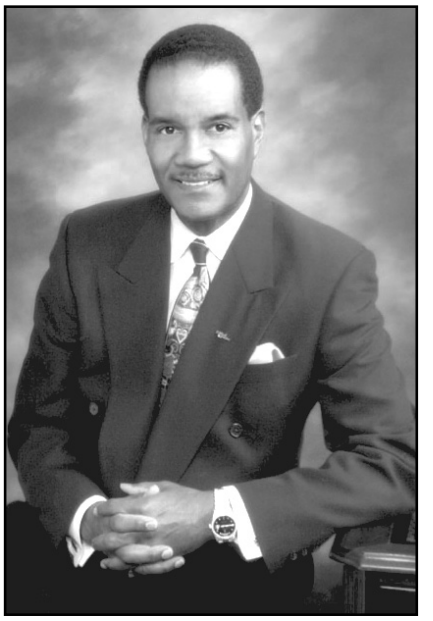
Rev. Alvin White Pastor Shiloh Baptist Church, NBC Host

"We are extremely grateful and honored to be hosting this year's National Baptist Congress," said Rev. Alvin White, host pastor. "In addition to the Congress' outstanding teaching curriculum, the local host will sponsor a spiritual-filled extravaganza and late evening worship featuring work renowned expositors. The Congress provides a tremendous opportunity to witness – especially through the participation of our children and youth. We also expect up to 5,000 Floridians participating in this year's Congress," he added.

Many of the activities during the six-day conference are focused on the more than 2,500 young people who are expected to attend the Congress. Activities and events during the Congress aimed at young people include:

- o Session on the impact of religion on today's youth
- o The majesty of the "March for Jesus" parade: Why 2,000 kids from across the U.S. march for Jesus — and not drugs
- o The performance and leadership of the drill team
- o The beauty of the youth dance workshop
- o The eloquence of the Boyd oratorical competition
- o Life challenges for youth
- o Youth Night

One of the highlights of the Congress will be its "March for Jesus" parade, which will be held on Wednesday, June 13th, at the Orange County Convention Center at 9:00 a.m. The drill teams will come from hundreds of churches from throughout the United States.



Dr. T.B. Boyd III, President National Baptist Congress

Not far behind the drill teams – which include young people from the elementary school to high school level — will be the Dance teams, dancing through the streets of Orlando, demonstrating religious choreography, and illuminating the streets with their wonderful array of beautiful and colorful attire. Christians, young and old, from across America will participate in the National Baptists Congress' Orlando parade.

In addition, there will be sessions focusing on key issues facing African American families today, a black women's health seminar and discussions about the evolution of the Black church to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Among other features of this year's Congress are:

- o Strategies for growth and evangelism in the church seminar
- o Black Preaching seminar
- o Black Church Seminar examining dominant issues affecting Black church and Black community
- o General Assembly sessions

Late Night Worship Services at Congress

World-renowned ministers from across the country will be featured in late night worship services at the National Baptist Congress' upcoming convention. The Congress will be held June 10-15 at the Orange County Convention Center.

The late night services — which are being sponsored by the local host of the Congress, Shiloh Baptist Church – will be held June 12-14 at the Rosen Center Hotel in Ballroom C at 10 p.m. each evening. Featured at the late night worship services are: Pastor A. Louis Patterson of Houston's Mount Corinth Baptist Church on June 12th; Pastor E. Dewey Smith of the Greater Travelers Rest Church in Decatur, Georgia on June 13th and Dr. Joel Gregory of Fort Worth, Texas, who will preach on June 14th.

"We are so pleased to have these world renowned expositors in Orlando at this spiritual-filled extravaganza at the National Baptist Congress," said Rev. Alvin White, senior pastor of the local host, Shiloh Baptist Church. "We are truly blessed to have them join us."

More than 15,000 delegates and attendees are expected at the Congress' 101st annual session. The Congress is headed by Dr. T. D. Boyd III, who is also president and CEO of R. H. Boyd Publishing Company in Nashville, Tennessee. For further information on the National Baptist Congress, contact the Congress' staff at 1-800-382-6772. Registration remains open for the sessions.

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CARLTON JONES continued from page 5

Jesus used the power of his word to fight this conflict and if we look back in the text, we will see Jesus fought his oppressors with words not physical force. Jesus who in the beginning created us knew how to change a heard heart.

After they heard Jesus speak they marveled, and left him and went their way. Jesus has given us this same power when demonic people come upon us. We should strive to be Christ like when evil attacks us, that does not mean that we should be wimps or roll over and allow someone to oppress us, but pray for discernment and guidance on how to overcome life's challenges. Remember that no weapons formed against us shall prosper and that we can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens us.

I am not ashame of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...
- Romans 1:16

GREAT KNIG continued form page 3

he was holding. But as he was standing there with the priests before the incense altar in the Lord's Temple, leprosy suddenly broke out on his forehead.
20 When Azariah and the other priests saw the leprosy, they rushed him out. And the king himself was eager to get out because the LORD had struck him.
21 So King Uzziah had leprosy until the day he died. He lived in isolation, excluded from the Temple of the LORD. His son Jotham was put in charge of the royal palace, and he governed the people of the land.
22 The rest of the events of Uzziah's reign, from beginning to end, are recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.
23 So Uzziah died, and since he had leprosy, he was buried nearby in a burial field belonging to the kings. Then his son Jotham became the next king. NLT

Verse 16 says it all; pride can destroy the best of us. The moment pride became an issue, King Uzziah fell out of favor with the Lord. Pride has away of also bringing out the worst kind of anger in us. When we give into pride we also fall into a bit of insanity, which is why we can get so angry that we don't realize that we are actually taking out our anger against God.

Who in their right mind would want to challenge God? But when God has proven Himself to us by blessing the very works of our hands and then we give into pride, God has away of quickly bringing us back to realizing who He is. For King Uzziah, God struck him with leprosy, a real attention getter! King Uzziah was once the most powerful man in Judah he quickly became an outcast, living in isolation until his death.

Take a look at some of the men of our day, politicians who went into office with a promise, but fell flat on their faces because of pride. The same goes for athletes, and even ministers to name a few, who fell from grace because of pride. While it is easy to name these groups of men, there are four times as many husbands and fathers that fall daily. Men that are mostly known only by their families; men who at one point were kings in the sight of wives and children, but fell for whatever reason from that plateau.

There are too many families suffering because of prideful men. Families should be prospering not breaking up! Families should be stronger from the head down, not being ruled by wayward children who seem to be running some fathers away from their own homes! Fathers should be leading families not lying around the house while everyone else is working to pay bills, feed the family and keep the fridge stocked with beer for him!

My prayer is that one day, and I know you all know this saying, I'll be glad when God's people will get tired of being sick and tired of the same ole foolishness that we see going on day after day! Brothers, remember this, we are kings and priest of our homes, let's all begin to act like it! Rise up and stay on top! God bless each of you and have a wonderful Father's Day!

The Christian Reader Newspaper
Established 1993

Help Caring For Your Elderly Family Member
ANOINTED COMPANION HOME CARE, INC.

By Erica Jennings
Guest Columnist
Jacksonville, Florida

Many things in life are inevitable. Getting older is one of these inevitable changes that we spend all of our life preparing for. Unfortunately things do not always work out the way that we would like. As people get older the need for help grows severely. One can go from being completely self-sufficient to being fully dependent on the help and support of others. In this situation the aid of a private duty home care worker would prove highly beneficial. These individuals are trained to assist in the everyday needs of their clients.

Certified Home Care Aides provide the opportunity for the client to remain in their own environment while still receiving the care and attention that they need. Many of the everyday chores and tasks can become increasingly taxing on the already strained bodies of elderly and home bound individuals. Clients can receive a wide range of services from a Certified Home Care Aides. The services include but are not limited to assistance with the Activities of Daily Living (ADL) such as bathing, dressing, feeding and providing reminders about medication and appointments.

Evelyn Moore
President / CEO
Anointed Companion Home Care, Inc.

Another service provided by Home Care Aides are services related to helping with the Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs). Included in these services are shopping, making medical and other appointments, transportation, meal preparation, household chores and general companionship. The ability of a person to receive these services can increase their comfort in their elderly years, or in their time of incapacitation.

Anointed Companion Home Care, Inc. (ACHC) is a privately owned company that provides all of the above services and many more. Research shows that people are happier and recover more quickly in the privacy of their own home. Since one can't always depend on friends and family ACHC is there to fill in wherever needed. Not only are basic non-medical services provided, but also any services needed to make the client more comfortable. The client can benefit from having someone to read and sort mail, run errands, prepare grocery lists and do the shopping.

Our services are not limited to the everyday chores but we also build lasting relationships with our clients by spending time. We are companions, chauffeurs, chefs, personal shoppers, housekeepers and beauticians. The need or needs of our clients determine the hat that we wear. While one client might only need services related to making doctors appointments and planning meals, another might need a varying array of our services. Our business is making sure that people in our communities are receiving the help and care that they need and deserve.

We believe that when physicians, patients and caregivers work together, the quality of life for the patient can only improve. ACHC is a privately owned agency; we are licensed, bonded and insured. Currently we accept private payments as well as payments from insurance companies.

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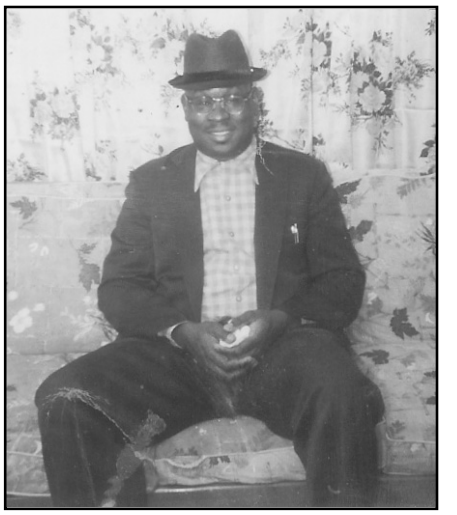
Our Father - Harrison Edwards, Jr.

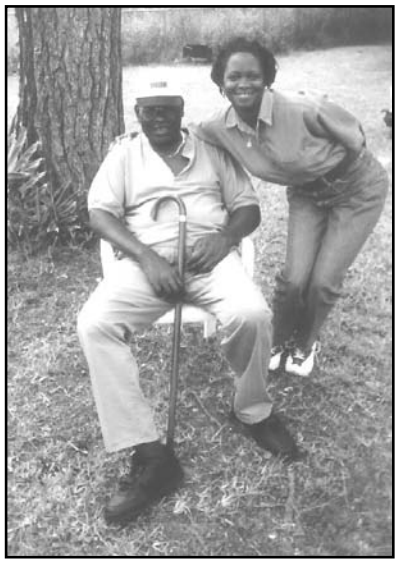
By Gwendolyn Edwards Barrs
General Manager / CEO
The Christian Reader
Newspaper

Choosing the right words to describe a man who had so many great characteristics should be easy. However when there are so many to choose from, the right ones can be challenging. Harrison Edwards Jr., was a man of Honor. A prominent business man in the Putnam County area of Florida. His business, Putnam Electric Motor Repair, was started back in 1961 as the only black owned pump repair business in Putnam County.

Known to many as the Pump Man, he made sure that every household in the country had water running in their home. Being well established in the community of East Palatka, not only did he make sure folks had water, he also served on many boards in the City of Palatka and Putnam County. One of his main goals was to try to make sure that people weren't in need of things. If it was food, he would supply meat and vegetables. If it was money to pay a bill, he tried his best to make sure that was taken care of. If it was a listening ear they needed, his business, better known as the Shop, was a stopping point to chat about life.



Harrison was also a dedicated Deacon in his church, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church of East Palatka. He was one of those old fashion Beacons that made sure the church was warm in the winter before the church doors were open, to being cool in the summer. No matter what was needed, he supplied it before a request could be asked. Without effort he was the greatest giver.



Harrison Edwards, Jr. was married to his childhood sweetheart Rosa Lee Bradley for 54 years. He would always tell the story that he bet a friend 1 dollar that he could take her from him. Then he would say, "I won and have been stuck with her every since." Then he would smile and say "I'm just kidding, I loved her from the moment I laid eyes on her." His son Harrison Edwards, III came along soon after.

Thirteen years after their son, they decided they wanted a daughter. Gwendolyn Edwards Barrs was adopted at the age of 6 months old. "God gave me the perfect parents. My father was the King of my life. He was there for our every need. As a family we didn't know to want because he never showed that there was a problem. Everyday was a blessed day with him and he made sure that every life he came across understood that their life was blessed too. I Love You Daddy!"

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Our Father - Amos J. Barrs

By Darryl A. Barrs
Publisher/Managing
The Christian Reader Newspaper

The measure of a man can be calculated in many forms. When it's the memories of events and conversations that bring forth a smile, you know you miss a very special person. Amos James Barrs is my father, a great man I shared with an entire community. I can remember others sharing with me events that championed even those special moments I shared with my father. Become jealous, only for a moment, then the realization that he had enough for me and my sibling and even more left to share with others.

A Preacher and a teacher, giving guidance was a way of life for him. The patriot of an endless-extended family, his life lived biblical examples helped saved many marriages and straighten many lives. Rev. Amos J. Barrs taught in Putman and Volusia Counties Schools Systems. For years he delivered Baccalaureate addresses annually for local graduates that set their course as future adults rooted in God.

His union with my mother Violet Daughtery produced seven children, three girls and four boys after 40 years of marriage. That small clan has multiplied to a countless sea of grand's and great-grand's. At one time, four of my brothers and sisters were in college at one time. How they did it is still a mystery to our modern times. His faith was exemplified by God's providence.

My father's modest home in the heart of the community was a place you could always get a meal. Known as a gourmet cook, Polynesian dishes, smoked fish, and his renowned BBQ seasoned the life lessons served between bites. I feel blessed and am sure my brothers and sisters also feel blessed from the legacy of our father unselfish giving. Amos Barrs left us at the age of 60, a short time yet a huge positive impact as a leader in the village.

The steps of a Good Man are ordered by the Lord and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

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Melbourne Blast Kills Father and 8-month-old Daughter

Attorney Benjamin Crump on Case to Ensure Justice

By Dominique D. Barrs
Staff Writer

Despair. ***Attorney Benjamin Crump and his client Amanda Lewis stand in front of the apartments where her boyfriend and daughter died April 11. Crump arrived the day after the blast to represent Lewis.***

"Where's the glory in having Goliath beat David?" These words were uttered from Benjamin Crump, the big-time Tallahassee attorney, who is infamous for winning huge settlements for the under privileged. In the Bible, the parable of David and Goliath portrays David killing the giant named Goliath with his sling shot. Like David, Crump takes on cases that others may find intimidating, but in the end, comes up victorious. Benjamin Crump is a 37-year-old high-profile lawyer who partnered with another high-profile attorney Daryl Parks in 1996 to establish The Law Firm of Parks and Crump. One of Crump's more recent cases involve a Melbourne, Florida blast at the Tucker Heights Housing Complex, which killed Joshua Leigh Jackson, 18, and his 8-month-old daughter.

On April 11th, just after 3 a.m., an explosion destroyed one unit completely and engulfed two other apartments immediately in flames at the Brevard County Housing Authority-owned complex in Melbourne. The explosion was said to be heard as far as 8 miles away. Feeling like an earthquake, tenants were awaken out of their sleep with the rattling of the walls and the falling of debris. Everything from bricks, doors, wood, windows, and twisted sheet metal were blown across the yard of the complex. Evacuees from the explosion were placed in hotels where officials from the American Red Cross distributed donated food and supplies from nearby stores and diners. The apartment housed 40 tenants. Some were seriously injured, but only the two lost their lives.

Melbourne police are investigating claims that a stolen dryer was the cause of the fatal explosion and fire at the apartment complex. Either someone had previously stolen a clothes dryer which left gas lines exposed, or there was faulty wiring in the pipe line. Either option resulted in the blast triggered by the gas leak, but the complaint about the gas smell was noticed and reported by all of the tenants at one point or another. Several of the Tucker Heights tenants said that they had noticed the rotten-egg odor of gas prior to the incident.

Explosion scene. ***The building is demolished from the explosion at the Melbourne fire.***

The explosion occurred in a vacant townhouse Unit C. Next door, in Unit D was where Joshua and his daughter Ja'Miya were found dead in the second floor rubble. Fire fighters found them wrapped in each other's arms, father cradling his daughter. Amanda Lewis heard her boyfriend Joshua cry out to her for help shortly after the explosion and the apartment ceiling collapsed. With nothing she could do physically, she leaped from the second floor to get some help. Immediately following the blast, tenants worked together to get all of the tenants and their children out of the building.

Fire dispatchers received the emergency call at 3:03 am and were reported to arrive at the scene at 3:10 am. For residents, many disputed the actual time of arrival. "It was not seven minutes, "Kean Williams said. "I was in the apartment for 15 minutes pulling people out of the building before anyone arrived." Seven people were taken to the hospital in five ambulances, as five fire trucks stayed to extinguish the fire. By 4:30 am the fire was under control. Red Cross volunteers were next to arrive at the scene to assist the survivors. It was at this time when people were being accounted for that they realized that two were still missing. Around 7:15 am, the scene was cool enough to begin the search for Joshua and Ja'Miya. At 7:47 am, the two bodies were found.

Benjamin Crump is now helping the family look for some answers. Was there foul play involved? Were there complaints filed about the gas odor that fell on deaf ears? What could have been done to prevent this? Crump has some of the best experts on explosions helping with this case. Referring to this case, Crump says, "It is going to be controversial. It is going to be unpopular. But we are not going to shy away."

How Do Creditors View My Debt To Income Ratio?

Cynthia Harris
Sr. Loan Officer

You were informed your credit was challenged when you tried to get a home mortgage and told your debt income ratio being deficient. As we have discussed in the last few weeks, we see that credit is a valuable asset in our spending power. We have learned that we must educate and understand why we are required to put down payments on simple items such as cell phones and utilities. We have visited the three credit bureaus so that we can examine our credit reports and now we are considering owing a piece of the American Dream of Homeownership.

Let's see how we can get a better understanding of our debt income ratio for general rule creditors usually follow the percentages below when they are looking to grant you credit approval. If your debt to income ratio is less than 10% this is the best range for obtaining credit. With less than a 10% debt to income ratio you are in great financial shape. Keep up what you're doing to stay within this range.

If your debt to income ratio is between 10% and 20% you are still in a good range where creditors will see you as a potential candidate for credit. With this range you should be able to get your ratio down to less than 10% if you keep up what you are doing. Maybe paying off some of your debt and making a budget plan can assist you.

If your debt to income ratio is between 20%-35% you are starting to get into a questionable level with the creditors. They will start to take a look at your take home income and monthly debt payments that you have. You may need to supply the creditor with documents to show your take home pay. In this range you will need to take a good look at your spending habits. Try and decrease your debts and increase your income. A credit counseling company like ours may be the solution for you to regain your financial stability.

If your debt to income ratio is greater than 35% you are then considered high risk and your chances of obtaining credit is very slim at best. At this percentage creditors will consider that your take home income is not enough to support your current debt payments and monthly bills. You need help, and need a professional debt consolidation service to assist you in getting on the right track financially I suggest www.creditamendservices.com for the do it yourselfers. This service provides 399 pages of credit repair info all for the low price of $14.95. Most credit repair services start at $250 and up to do what you could be doing yourself. As the Steak n Shake commercial shows us why go to a "work-a-raunt" when you can go to a restaurant.

Your debt to income ratio goal should be anything less than 20% once it goes over 20% your credit worthiness becomes questionable. To fix your debt to income ratio you can increase your monthly take home pay and decrease your monthly debt payments.

Staying within the lender's debt to income ratio limits is only one part of qualifying for a home loan. If the overall picture looks good, a lender may allow you to carry more debt. It's always best to be pre-approved before you begin home shopping, so that you'll know exactly what price range (and loan payment) fits your budget.

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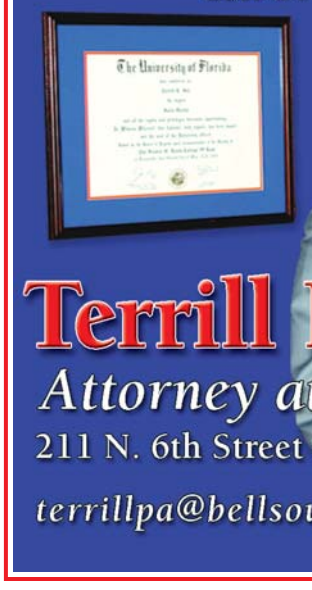

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Applying the Books of Matthews, John & Luke To Fathers in the 21st Century.

By William Jackson, M.Ed.
Jacksonville, Florida

William Jacksonville, M.Ed.

Being a father is a magical and humbling event in a man's life regardless of his age. Fathers go through many transformations as their children grow. The Gospel according to Matthew starting in chapter one from verse one to sixteen reads who beget whom. These are men who beget children through out the chapters. In verse six of chapter one, David who is King beget Solomon, but from an affair with Uria's wife. Despite this affair, Solomon grew to become one of the wisest men in history. In the sin of David a good thing became of it. Reading further, in verse sixteen Jacob beget Joseph who went on to marry Mary who was carrying Jesus, later called Christ. Jesus was not the result of intercourse between Mary and Joseph, but from an event that is Biblical in nature. Joseph took upon the role and responsibility of an earthy father to Jesus and eventually a husband to Mary.

The responsibilities of a father are sometimes the result of influences and circumstances that are beyond understanding. Affairs of the heart and of the body cannot be justified, but God can bring a good thing from sin. "He spoke a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint (Luke 18:1). Temptation comes in the flesh, and we are all tempted, but the result of fainting is in one's spirit when we as men give in to the temptation. Being a man also includes making decisions not just for us, but for others in our care.

In the case of Joseph, how many men would care for and raise a child from a situation of Mary's? Joseph listened to the Word of God. How many men would listen or ignore those words? What about David's situation, many men have circum to the temptations of the flesh, but this does not mean the sin has to consume them. There is a need to pray for forgiveness and accept the responsibility of the sin and more importantly not repeat it. We are all born into a world of sin, but we do not have to have sin in us. God punished David for his sins as we all are punished, but as men we must recognize and respond accordingly to our sinful urges. We are models to younger men who watch us and seek guidance. This guidance does not always come in words, but in our actions, we are often watched as men, but rarely questioned about why we do what we do.

Throughout time many men have not worshipped God openly. As fathers, our spiritual energies do not compare to our emotional energies in support of our favorite sports teams. How different would our lives be as fathers and men if our prayer life is as strong as our enthusiasm for sports. As men we love to model "manly behavior" for our sons in sporting events, but how many of us display the same amount of dedication and devotion in our prayer life?

When was the last time we drank a beer watching football or hockey and thought or said, "I can't wait for my son to be old enough to join me!" To coincide with this when was the last time we had our sons pray with us and share in devotion? Is it easier to share beer time than prayer time? The time is at hand now fathers, our sons are killing each other for drugs, sex, and other things they view as momentarily satisfying, but easily fleeting.

In Matthew Chapter 3:17 God says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". Our young men in today's society need to hear this more from their fathers, if our heavenly father can say it to his son, why can't earthly fathers say it to their sons?

Fathers must realize the responsibility of their place in a child's life regardless if they are in the home or not, regardless of the "Baby Mama Drama" that sometimes happens that we cause from disrespectful language and actions. It is cowardice to make excuses for not calling or writing just to say "I love you" and "How are you doing" to our children. It is inexcusable for not taking time to eat lunch with your child, but we can take the time to "run with the boys". How many more cases of our young men dropping out of school, physical aggression towards women, drugs, crime and violence will it take for more men to tell their sons, "I Love You" and "I'm proud of you." Fathering is a balance of discipline, love, negotiation, trust and communication. It does not come easy as I can testify being a parent and stepparent. The goal is to help raise productive adults who will lead positive and God loving lives. As the African proverb states, "it takes a village to raise a leader" (Paterson, K 2001, http://www.racematters.org/ittakesavillage.htm).

Our village - the African American community needs to unite our Black men and start loving and teaching our young Black men to pray and be prayerful in all things before we lose yet another generation. It is not the Mayors, nor the Governors, nor the Presidents responsibility to raise Black men, but the responsibility of Black men to raise Black men. Men that respect women, respect community and respect and pray to an almighty God who is loving and forgiving. We as men have a bond that extends generations and that transpired from the Mother Land. We must live up to our legacy of Kings, Generals, Teachers, Physicians, Pastors, Scientists and Community Leaders.

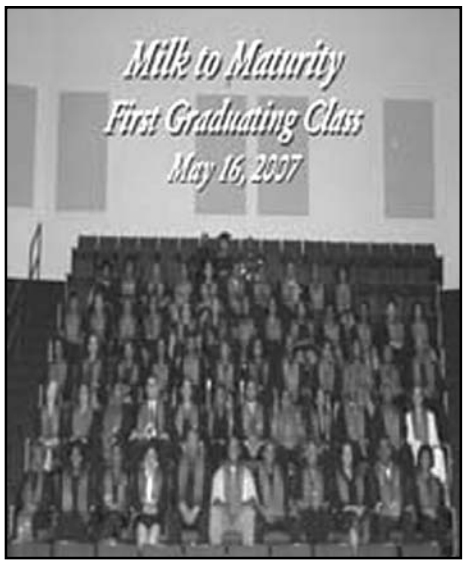
For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.
- Romans 8:18

FAITH LIFE GRADUATES CELEBRATE A FIRST

Lewisville TX - Depression, marital discord, sexual promiscuity, defiant children, addictions, panic attacks and similar maladies dominate our society including persons of the Christian faith. Few people in the faith realize that persons fully and appropriately developed as believers assume a hedge or buffer against these illnesses according to Dr. Steven B. DavidSon.

He continues, "This does not mean that believers in Christ, Jesus will not be challenged with these difficulties. However, it does mean that persons who are developed in all aspects of the faith-life in Jesus Christ possess faith-life skills to control and limit these conditions." Dr. DavidSon, the nation's foremost Christ-based Counselor, and a leading Christian educator developed the National Faith-life program to assist the Christian maturation process, and he coined the term, "faith-life deficiency" representing the root-cause for the epidemic.

DavidSon continues, "Unfortunately, ministries responsible for developing believers can be so distracted by other agendas, they lose sight of their principal objective. If they are Christ-based enterprises, they were designed to develop mature believers in all aspects of human functioning represented by Jesus Christ. This includes relational, cognitive, and behavioral disciplines based on spiritual realities. This empowers believers to proceed with fulfilling the Great Commission of reaching and developing persons in His faith-life principles.



However, numerous believers become so overwhelmed by errant ministry agendas, or their personal circumstances, it is not unusual to find leaders and followers who are Commission bankrupt. Therefore, we're offering solutions to help any ministry to God's glory."

Sponsored by Westside Baptist Church in Lewisville, Texas the first graduates completed the nine month, 30 course program. They are expected to become involved in several life-changing ministries. K.W. Blake, the pastor of Westside and state consultant with the largest protestant denomination in the United States, believes the program has the potential to impact the Church in an extraordinary way.

Using web-based technology, DavidSon designed the National Faith Life curriculum so that individuals and ministries worldwide can benefit from the program. K.W. Blake concludes, "It is my belief that a thorough understanding of God's word is what every believer needs to live a victorious life in these dark days in which we find ourselves."

Contact Information: Ministry Contact: Timothy R. DavidSon
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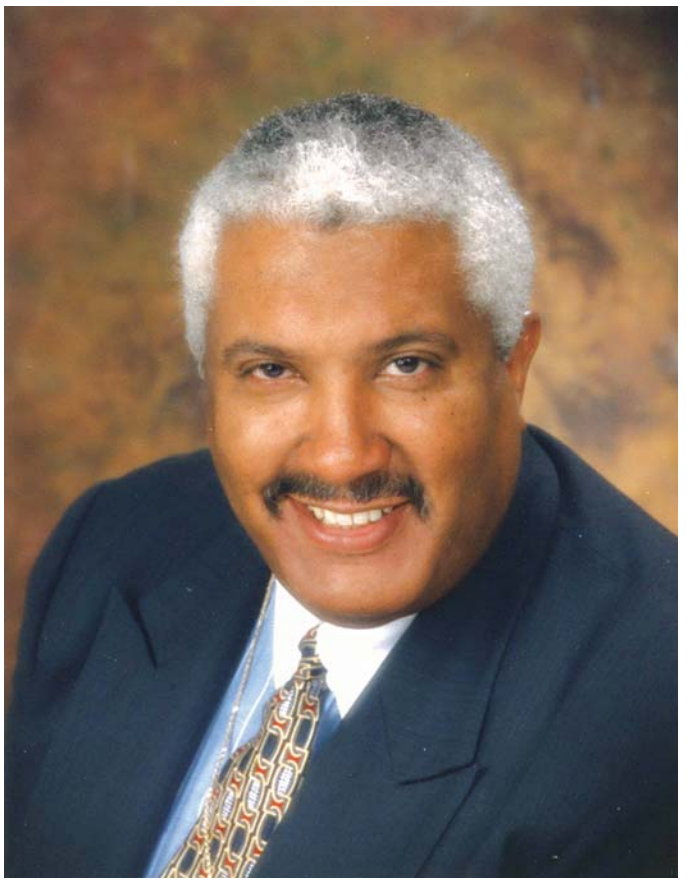
IT IS JUST A TEST OR IS IT A TRAP?

By, Rev. Dr. Carlton D. Jones
Jacksonville, Florida



Life is full of up's and down's. We all are faced with some type of problem or opportunity. It does not matter who we are or how little or how much money one has. Life is a challenge. We all will face health, spiritual, and financial challenges. A client shared with me early in my career that my attitude would determine my altitude in life. Jesus went through many snares, traps and tests so that He could show us how to live life more abundantly.

We have just finished the federal tax season, which might make this text appropriate. Most of us feel we will have to pay taxes until we die. Jesus shows us how to deal with the tests and traps of living in Matthew 22:15-22, King James Version of Nelson's Study Bible. "Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do you care about anyone, for you do not regard the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what do you think, is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" But, Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test me you hypocrites? Show Me the tax money." So they brought him a denarius, (It is equal to about a penny) and he said to them, whose image and inscriptions is this? They said to him Caesar's." And he said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left him and went their way.

We have to be mindful that God loves us so much that he God came in the flesh of Jesus, and yet with all the prophecy's of his coming, his own people would not accept him as Lord. The Sadducees and Pharisees the religious elite constantly tested and tried to trap Jesus so that the Romans would get rid of him. Jesus was a threat to their power and hold over the Jewish people of that day. Today we still have religious leaders who see the Gospel of Jesus Christ a threat. However, God the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son and with power of the Holy Spirit is the same God who created the universe, molded man out of clay and breathed the spirit of God into Adam. God is the same God yesterday, today, and forever.

Not much has changed today. We still have envy, jealousy and evil in high places. We have conflict in our Courts of Law, City Government, our State House, our Congress and the White House. We have conflict in our schools, our fraternities, sororities, in our schools of higher learning and yes even in the religious community. We can call the roll but the list would be so long and will ultimately include all of us.

After they heard Jesus speak they marveled, and left him and went their way.

Jesus has given us power over our circumstances. We have to develop a relationship with the Holy Spirit that will guide us through life's journey. This test shows us how Jesus overcame the plot to entangle him in his talk. The Pharisees, like people we work with or play with will set us up to say something or do something that will reflect negatively on our character.

However, God has allowed us to develop a relationship with Him that will allow us to discern or perceive someone's wicked intentions. When Jesus perceived their wickedness, in verse 18, he said why do you test me you hypocrites? The Devil is a hypocrite and acting is one of his tools. An actor can make you believe something that is not real or factual through trickery and deceitfulness. The Pharisees were pretending to honor him by addressing Jesus as Master, which meant Teacher in order to trick Jesus into saying something that would have condemned him. That is why we should call out something that is perceived to be evil, harmful or hurtful. When we call evil out into the marvelous Light it can not survive, because it dwells and hide in darkness. Do not find comfort in words of praise, for within one week Jesus was praised and then crucified.

If Jesus who is God is in the flesh was tested, then who are we? Jesus had a positive attitude and called out the evil ones to show him the tax money. Jesus discerned that the Pharisees were attempting to trap him with his own words. Jesus would have been accused of insurrection against the Roman government if he had denounced the tax, and to side with the Herodians would have lost him favor with the people. The Roman government put a tax on every adult and the Jews despised paying the tax to their oppressors.

Jesus used the tax money to embarrass the hypocrites. He asked whose image was on the denarius. And he had them respond back to him 'Caesar's'. The Jewish people hated the image of Caesar and the inscription that called him divine for they only worshipped the God of Israel.

Jesus knew his people and that they would interpret the word render from the word his oppressors were using to "pay taxes." Jesus said render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things of God's. The word render meant to pay back and his followers have an obligation to earthly governments and to God.

See CARLTON JONES page 10

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Title Insurance Helps Protect Your Real Estate Investment

Gwen Bennett

What is title insurance?

Title insurance is a type of insurance that helps protect against losses that could occur if you discover after closing that someone else can claim ownership of your property.

What is a title examination, or title search?

It's a close examination of all public records that involve title (deed) to a piece of real estate. The person conducting the search looks at past deeds, wills, and trusts to make sure the title has passed correctly to each new owner. The examiner tries to verify that all prior mortages, judgments, and other liens have been paid in full.

A title search should uncover potential problems, such as rights others may hold (right of ways, view easements, power line easements, mineral rights), claims by prior undisclosed heirs, and pending legal actions.

What are "clouds" on a title?

A "defect" or "cloud" on the title is a problem that makes ownership questionable. For instance, a previous owner sold the property 15 years ago. His wife was listed on the deed but for some reason did not sign-off at closing. Her interest in the property is a "cloud" and must be removed to clear the title.

If the title looks good why do I need title insurance?

Because no one is perfect, in my state the examination covers all aspects of ownership during the 40 years prior to closing. Even an expert title examiner can miss a defect that might crop up to create problems for you later.

Do I have to buy title insurance?

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To whom is the policy issued? Who is paid if there's a problem?

- A lender's policy is usually issued for the amount of the mortgage. It pays the lender if a problem surfaces.
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BRIDES OF COLOR MAGAZINE FILLS GAP AND GOES BEYOND THE WEDDING

Houston, TX - Bliss The Magazine, one of the first-ever complimentary bridal magazines for women of color has launched in Houston, Texas.

Bliss fills the gap and addresses a unique and viable niche. It features current, fresh, informative content relative to diverse backgrounds, creating a vital connection to an underserved market.

Cover of debut issue - Spring 2007

"In the face of the prevailing presence, purchasing power and rare beauty reflected in tones from ebony to ivory—women of color, specifically African-American, are consistently underrepresented in mainstream bridal publications," said K. Broussard, Founder and Editor-in-Chief.

As one of the first-ever complimentary bridal magazines for women of color, Bliss is considered a cross between Modern Bride and Essence. Fusing the before and after of a wedding, the Houston-based magazine

Founder & Editor-in-Chief,
K. Broussard

presents an exquisite preview of wedding possibilities for the diverse bride and guides her into the journey of marriage.

"Bliss is tapping into a market, which has not been actively addressed nor included in the Houston area, much less nationwide, on a consistent basis. Also, Bliss goes a step further than the basic wedding magazine, featuring an entire department to address issues that are relative to making a marriage work."

Each edition will provide everything from wedding dresses to hard-hitting nuptial issues. Through the local focus segment, readers will read about the best of Houston's caterers, bakers, artists, designers, decorators and so on. As well, 'A Blissful Affair,' highlights selected Houston brides through a wedding day photo collage.

In the first issue, Bliss informs readers on what to do right after the engagement, provides a look at interracial marriage and gives tips on planning a wedding in another state. In future issues, there will be stories including celibacy before marriage, jumping the broom and other wedding traditions as well as fusing households just to name a few.
Through such content, Bliss is supplying the necessary resources for women of color to be enthused about, engaged in and educated on their wedding day and marriage.

Bliss, which debuted last month, is published quarterly by SaJhan Publishing, LLC. Complimentary copies are available at various locales in Houston. For $20, readers nationwide can subscribe to the publication. SaJhan Publishing, LLC will be launching Bliss in other metropolitan cities in the near future.
Founded in 2006, SaJhan Publishing, LLC is an independent publishing entity that produces and distributes publications catering to the diverse masses. For more information, please visit www.blissthemagazine.com

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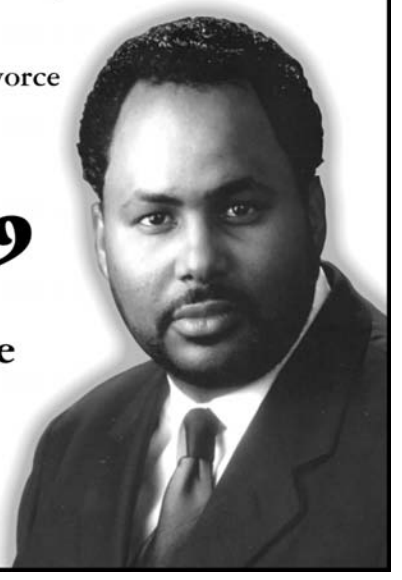

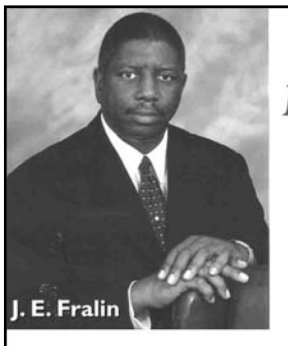

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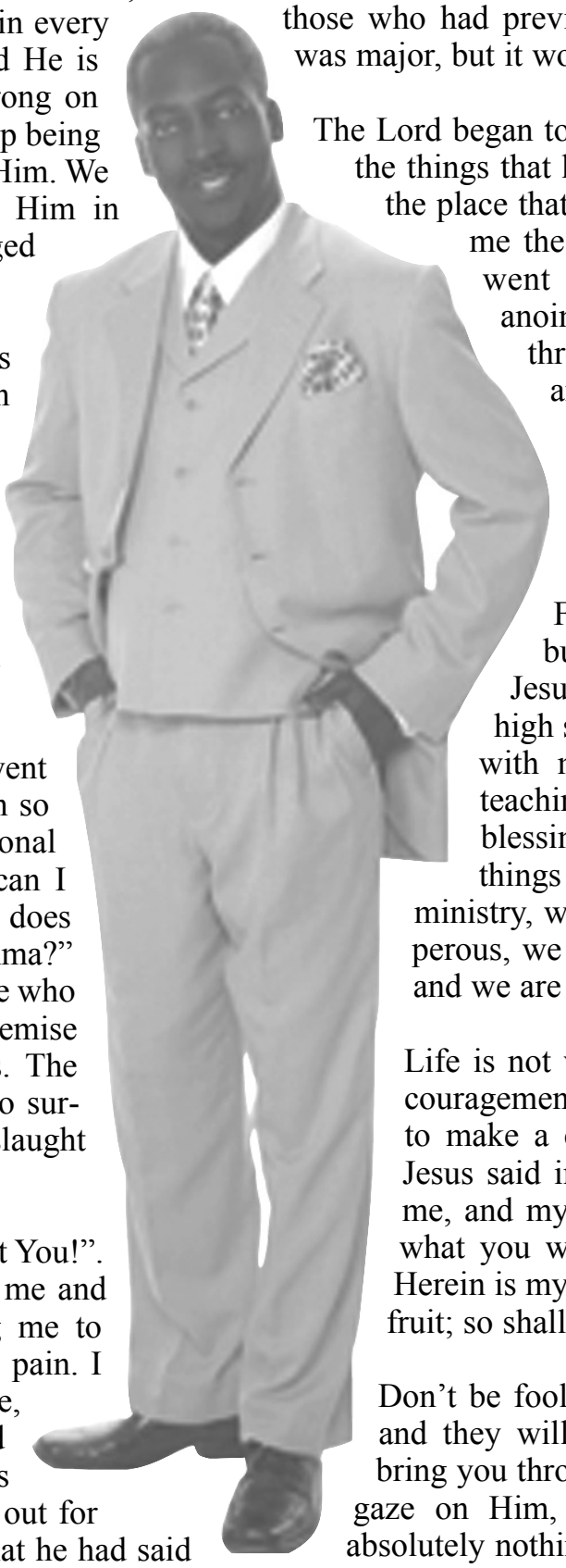
Every season brings different ventures, some sweet, some bitter, and some even bittersweet. But in every venture, we can know that God is there and He is always there to work and show Himself Strong on our behalf; everything that we face will end up being a blessing and will bring Glory and honor to Him. We don't always know why, but we can trust Him in everything. I had to choose to be encouraged and faithful to the ONE that called me.



When we receive prophecy or the Lord speaks to us through the preached Word, or through our own personal Bible Study, we must remember that the thing that he has promised will come to pass in time. In the meantime, we are to continue to seek His will in our lives and to always keep him as our focus. Even when what we think He should have done does not come to fruition like we think it should.

Five years ago, Easter Sunday, my wife went home to be with the Lord. I asked God, with so much grief, frustration, and many emotional woes, "Where is my life headed?", "How can I continue raising my sons alone?" And "Why does it appear that nobody understands our dilemma?" These questions were being asked by someone who had been in ministry for over 20 years. The demise of my wife caused much grief and sadness. The next few years were filled with just trying to survive ridicule, misunderstandings, and an onslaught of concerns that arose.

I remember the day I said to the Lord, "I Trust You!". It was then that the Lord began to speak to me and remove the scales from my eyes; allowing me to begin living again, and slowly removing the pain. I began to see differently, not like I did before, but with a new Mindset, Attitude, and Perception (MAP). In other words, God was giving me a course that He had already laid out for my life. He brought back to my attention what he had said to me many years ago over in the book of Jeremiah, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall you call upon me, and you shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And you shall seek me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD; and I will turn away your captivity and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places… (Jeremiah 29:11-14). He began to instruct me on how to encourage my sons, and move in the Spirit of God. He brought Stability into my life in a new way. He assisted me in areas of how to forgive, release, and allow the Lord to work in the lives of those who had previously, spiritually, injured me. That was major, but it works!

The Lord began to show me the life of Joseph and all the things that he went through in order to get into the place that God had called him to. He showed me the Life of David and all the hurts he went through just because he was anointed; even before he made it to the throne. He showed me the life of Ruth and Naomi and what a mighty miracle that was to see God take a bleak situation and turn it into something powerful, something that can be used for His Glory!

Five years later I am still unmarried, but stable, at peace, and in love with Jesus. Both my sons have graduated high school and are in college; both serve with me in ministry through preaching, teaching, singing, etc. That is a major blessing all by itself, with some of the things we have experienced. We are still in ministry, we are still blessed, we are still prosperous, we are still healed, God is on our side and we are winners because of JESUS.

Life is not without mishaps, pain, or even discouragement. But against all odds, we are able to make a comeback if we continue in Jesus. Jesus said in St. John 15: 7-8 "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples".

Don't be fooled. When you go through troubles, and they will come, tell God you trust Him to bring you through all that He needs to. Place your gaze on Him, and never let Him go. There is absolutely nothing that God cannot take and change for our good. Jesus said "…and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. A-men".

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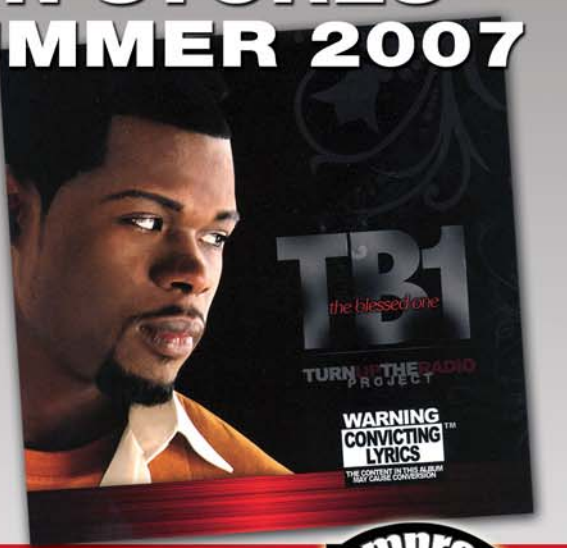

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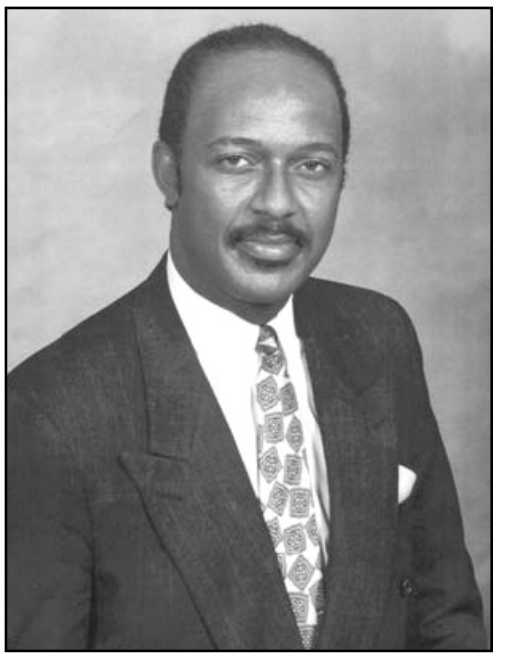
Matthew 6:24

"THE OUTSIDE CHILD"

By Aundra Bryant
Tallahassee, Florida

When you hear the title of this article, please do not jump to the conclusion that I am talking about an illegitimate child or one we may term as being born out of wedlock. To the contrary, this article is about the brother to the Prodigal Son which is recorded in the Fifteenth Chapter of the Gospel of St. Luke verse twenty-eight which reads "The older brother became angry and refused to go in".

I have heard many sermons on the Prodigal Son but you don't hear much about the other brother and that is who I want to focus in on today. There are three things that happen when we don't come inside the house. Firstly, when I was growing my mother would call us when it started getting dark "children its time to come in now". On Sunday mornings we should be in church to give God praise, honor and glory.



Aundra Bryant

However, some of us approach the throne of God as if we are doing the Lord a favor by coming to church on Sunday. The psalmist said "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord". Just like the older brother, we can develop a sense of self-dependency and self-righteousness.

Secondly, the older son said he heard music and dancing and this upset him greatly. The son is only showing the attitude that we have sometimes about new people coming into the church. We make the mistake of thinking that we are the only one that can pray, sing or work in the church and when someone new comes in and excites the congregation with truth and spirit, we get mad and jealous. Can't you hear us now, "that is my choir, my usher board, my church school or my ministry. Brothers and sisters, we must remember that Christ said "upon this rock, I will build my church" and I don't see our name recorded anywhere.

Finally, the father attempts to convince the older son to come on inside and join in the celebration. Many times we see people come down the isle to give their lives to the Lord and we don't act excited but we view this as if it was going to take away what God already has for us. The song says "what God has for me is for me". Its time out for us to think that we have a monopoly on God's blessings but we need to rejoice when others make a step to Christ. When others come to Christ, that is one less burglar, one less murderer, one less rapist, one less prostitute and so on. The Word of God teaches us that "there is a crown of life laid up for me and not to me only but to everyone who loves his appearing". As gospel artist Donnie McClurkin writes "A saint is just a sinner who fell down and got up".

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HURRICANE SEASON RAPIDLY APPROACHES

By United States Congresswoman Corrine Brown

As hurricane season is rapidly approaching, I am disappointed to learn that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has announced it will not meet the June 1st deadline to implement a new national response plan. The national response plan is our guidelines and procedures for handling natural disasters. Lack of awareness and preparedness during natural disasters exacerbate an already precarious situation.

On the heels of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FEMA being ill-prepared for the 2007 hurricane season, is unacceptable and a dangerous. What I saw in Louisiana and Mississippi in 2005 was a complete meltdown of the Federal Government, and in particular, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. If a direct hurricane strike is one of the top 3 catastrophic scenarios facing our country, why does FEMA need more time to develop a plan that should have been developed a long time ago? For over a year and half I have been asking FEMA the same question over and over again, but I haven't heard a response.

The people of this country are tired of excuses and want to see results. Hard-working Americans are not allowed to miss deadlines at their place of work without threat of dismissal. Why should we let the federal government miss a deadline for an important policy such as the natural response plan?

I encourage each of you to have a plan in place in case of a hurricane. FloridaDisaster.org is a great resource for you and your family. It leads you through an interactive site that helps you develop your own specific disaster plan. The hard lesson learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita is that preparedness can make the difference and families must be prepared on their own.

A few tips from the Florida Division of Emergency Management:

- Discuss the type of hazards that could affect your family. Know your home's vulnerability to storm surge, flooding and wind.

- Locate a safe room or the safest areas in your home for each hurricane hazard. In certain circumstances the safest areas may not be your home but within your community.

- Determine escape routes from your home and places to meet (Rally Points); including a child's school, a neighbor or a public place.

- Have an out-of-state friend as a family contact, so all your family members have a single point of contact. Have at least 2 ways of contact; e-mail, phone, etc.

- Make a plan now for what to do with your pets if you need to evacuate. Post emergency telephone numbers by your phones and make sure your children know how and when to call 911.

- Check your insurance coverage - flood damage is not usually covered by homeowners insurance. Stock non-perishable emergency supplies and a DISASTER SUPPLY KIT.

- Use a NOAA weather radio. Remember to replace its battery every 6 months, as you do with your smoke detectors.

- Take First Aid, CPR and disaster preparedness classes.

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PRIORITIZATION OR PROCRASTINATION -

WHERE DOES YOUR HEALTH STAND?

By Makeisha Lee, Health and Nutrition Consultant
www.CleanseFormula.com and
www.GuideToCleansing.com

Are you truly living the life you want to live? Are you as healthy and vibrant as you would like to be? Do you wake up every morning refreshed, energized and ready for whatever may come your way? Too many of us today are not able to answer yes to even one of those questions because of the condition of our health. We say we want change and we say we want to feel better, be better, do better but rarely does it result in the latter.

What happens in those cases is that we allow procrastination to creep in and take us further and further away from our goals. We may reason that, my life is so full already that I just cannot find the time to try to live healthier by adding anything new in the mix. We say to ourselves, Maybe when things settle down. I will go to the doctor's - next month, or when my income tax refund comes, I will start that new healthy eating plan because that's when I can afford to make that money sacrifice. We prioritize paying our bills such as house note, car note, life insurance, and car insurance in order to be provided with a level of security. What about paying for our own "health assurance?"

Perhaps we will look for some other justification as to why taking care

Makeisha Lee

of our health is not all that pressing since we feel okay for the moment. Some may start a healthy plan but when faced with a little discouragement, let it fall by the wayside, convincing themselves that they will get back on the saddle - one day.

What if one day is too late? Our body is smarter than we give it credit for and gives us signs that something is malfunctioning within us that we do well not to ignore. When you experience recurrent headaches, sleeping problems, chronic fatigue, problems with elimination and acne breakouts, these are all signs. They may seem miniscule, but they are signals that something greater is going on. Those are just a few examples, but sadly the list goes on... In actuality there are many diseases that may go unidentified within us if we continue to take our health for granted by procrastinating. That is why prioritization must be placed on our health. When we prioritize we decide we are going to allocate time way up at the top of our to do list to reach our health goals. We don't put it off and make excuses and self defeat ourselves.

We understand that we may be feeling fine today but over the long haul if we don't prioritize our heath now, that we may very well succumb to any range of diseases currently known to man. When we make good health a priority we begin to focus, not on letting go of bad habits but rather on building new, healthier, positive ones. Once these good habits have become ingrained in us we will start to live our full potential of overall success. As Waldo Emerson once stated "make the most of yourself, for that is all that there is of you."

There are 45% of the American population that make resolutions every year to get healthier, eat healthier, lose weight, and the like, however only a mere 8% succeed in reaching their goal. That figure results from those who fail to plan when they have a goal, allow procrastination to set in like gangrene and inevitably the only thing they succeed in is failing. So let go of procrastination and embrace prioritization with your health. Start experiencing the good health and prosperity that is your birthright!

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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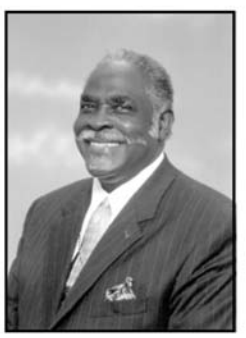

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Bible Wordsearch

CORNELIUS

Puzzle #141

Fit the words in the list into the diagram below reading forward, backward, up, down, diagonally, always in a straight line.

ACTS 10:1-13

A	S	K	E	D	E	N	E	P	P	A	H	H	F	B
A	T	I	O	L	J	O	U	R	N	E	Y	K	E	L
N	N	L	D	E	V	O	U	T	Y	T	I	C	A	B
S	A	L	S	R	E	N	R	O	C	N	A	R	R	I
W	D	H	U	N	G	R	Y	E	D	M	G	I	T	R
E	N	H	E	A	V	E	N	S	E	E	N	A	Y	D
R	E	V	E	R	Y	T	H	I	N	G	L	A	V	S
E	T	E	A	N	U	F	C	E	I	I	D	L	B	E
D	T	S	N	R	A	A	R	W	A	E	S	Y	A	D
O	A	U	I	M	E	O	Y	N	T	E	I	S	C	C
J	A	O	M	S	U	I	L	E	N	R	O	C	K	H
O	N	H	A	S	G	N	I	W	O	L	L	O	F	E
P	G	R	L	L	A	E	M	O	C	N	W	O	N	K
P	E	Y	S	M	I	S	A	N	A	M	U	O	R	E
A	L	L	E	F	S	T	F	I	G	R	G	O	D	D

AFTERNOON
AIR
ANGEL
ANIMALS
ANSWERED
ASKED
ATTENDANTS
BACK
BECAME
BIRDS
BRING
CAESAREA
CALLED
CAME
CENTURION
CITY
COME
CONTAINED
CORNELIUS
CORNERS
DAY
DEVOUT
EVERYTHING
FAMILY
FEAR
FELL
FOLLOWING
FOUR
GAVE
GENEROUSLY
GIFTS
GOD
GONE
HAPPENED
HEAVEN
HOUSE
HUNGRY
ITALIAN
JOPPA
JOURNEY
KILL
KINDS
KNOWN
LARGE
LORD
MAN
MEAL

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right.

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Psalm 111

More Puzzles At:
http://biblewordgames.com

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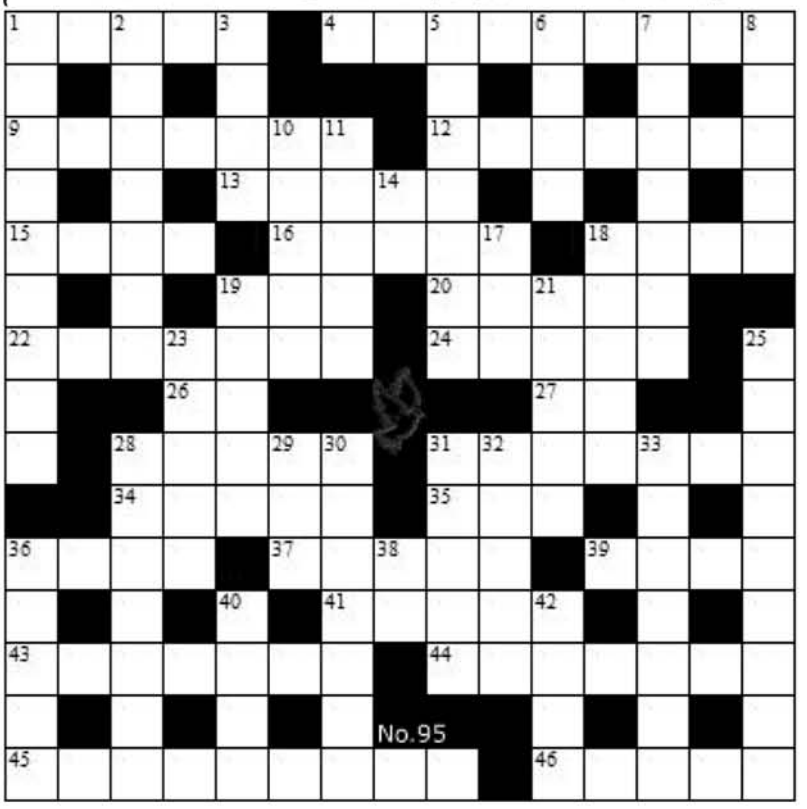
Bible Crossword



ACROSS

1 indispensable to No.22 across (Jer 18:3)
4 But if we judged ___ , we would not come under judgment (1 Cor 11:31)
9 the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth ___ (Rev 21:19)
12 When he was ___ by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no (Matt 27:12-13)
13 and lift up your ___ , because your redemption is drawing near (Luke 21:28)
15 brother of Jacob (Gen 27:6-7)
16 He has given ___ of this to all men by raising him from the dead (Acts 17:31)
18 Do not turn to idols or make ___ of cast metal for yourselves (Lev 19:4)
19 He who has ears, ___ him hear (Matt 11:15)20 In the month of ___ in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes (Neh 2:1)
22 workers of clay (Jer 18:3)
24 In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his ___ (Prov 16:9)
26 "___ ! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth?"(Luke 4:34)
27 ___ are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32)
28 the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast ___ (Gen 2:1)
31 then her vows or the ___ by which she obligated herself will stand (Num 30:7)
34 Would all of you throw him down—this leaning wall, this tottering ___ ? (Ps 62:3)
35 Peter said to him, "We have left all we ___ to follow you!" (Luke 18:28)
36 the one who was born of God keeps him ___ , and the evil one cannot (1 John 5:18)
37 creatures of the sea are being ___.... but no man can tame the tongue (James 3:7-8)
39 Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands ___ in the heavens (Ps 119:89)
41 Far be it from us to ___ against the LORD and turn away from him (Josh 22:29)
43 Tell us then, what is your ___ ? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? (Matt 22:17)
44 version
45 Jesus Christ is the same ___ and today and forever. (Heb 13:8)
46 Priests must not shave their heads or shave off the ___ of their beards (Lev 21:5)

DOWN

1 Suffer me that I may feel the pillars ___ the house standeth, (Judg 16:26) KJV
2 ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an ___ robe (Luke 23:11)
3 wife of Isaac (Gen 49:31)
5 If anyone else thinks he has ___ to put confidence in the flesh (Phil 3:4)
6 Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what ___ would get (Mark 15:24)
7 old men will dream dreams, your young men will see ___ (Joel 2:28)
8 a scroll with writing on both ___ and sealed with seven seals (Rev 5:1)
10 Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the ___ (Matt 26:6-7)
11 ye shall be able to quench all the fiery ___ of the wicked (Eph 6:16) KJV
14 when you give to the needy, ___ not announce it with trumpets (Matt 6:2)
17 who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not ___ to carry (Matt 3:11)
18 They ___ upon me with their mouths, as a..... roaring lion (Ps 22:13) KJV
19 Our people must ___ to devote themselves to doing what is good (Titus 3:14)
21 they ___ fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves (Gen 3:7)
23 "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in ___ days." (John 2:19)
25 the priests in their ___ and with trumpets (Ezra 3:10)
28 The elders who direct the ___ of the church well are worthy of double (1 Tim 5:17)
29 God who works in you to will and to ___ according to his good purpose (Phil 2:13)
30 Desired strongly (1 Kings 3:26) KJV31 I commend unto you ___ our sister, which is a servant (Rom 16:1) KJV
32 and ___ every man his ass, and returned to the city (Gen 44:13) KJV
33 Judas came to the grove, ___ a detachment of soldiers (John 18:3)
36 He also went down into a pit on a ___ day and killed a lion (2 Sam 23:20)
38 "Come, follow ___ ," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Matt 4:19-20)
40 They sound like the roaring sea as they ___ on their horses (Jer 6:23)
42 I am sending you out ___ sheep among wolves (Matt 10:16)

see ANSWERS page 32

YOLANDA KING WAS MORE THAN KING'S DAUGHTER

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson
Guest Columnist

The applause was loud and sustained virtually every moment that Yolanda King was on stage performing her one-woman theatrical performance. The audience beamed with love, joy and most importantly appreciation for her. This writer did too as I sat spellbound in the first row of the Los Angeles church where King performed. The occasion was the annual King Day celebration last year held at a popular Los Angeles church.

Yolanda King

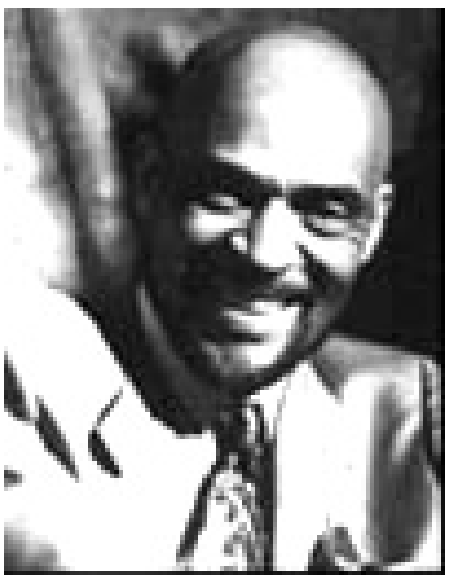
The audience didn't embrace and idolize King solely because she was the daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Most of those in the audience weren't even born when King was alive. And the applause for her wasn't solely out of a misty nostalgia for the civil rights movement. Most there had no first hand knowledge or involvement in the civil rights battles four decades. No, their applause and respect was for her, and her moving on stage recapture of the pain, suffering, and sacrifice as well as the triumphs of the civil rights movement. The ir sustained applause was also given out of deep appreciation for her impassioned crusade to keep Dr. King's dream alive by actively opposing Bush's wasteful and ruinous Iraq war, championing women and gay rights, and fighting for economic justice for the poor.

In between her theatrical skits, she would pause take a deep breath, and in measured but passionate tones remind the audience that King's dream still was unfulfilled. She in turn prodded, cajoled, and implored the audience that the best way to keep her father's dream alive was to be active fighters for peace and social justice.

Yolanda King understood that decades after the great civil rights battles of the 1960s blacks are still two and three times more likely to be unemployed than whites, trapped in segregated neighborhoods, and that their kids will attend disgracefully failing, mostly segregated public schools. It ignores the reality that young black males and females are far more likely to be murdered, suffer HIV/AIDS affliction, to be racially-profiled by police, imprisoned, placed on probation or parole, permanently barred in many states from voting because of felony convictions, are much more likely to receive the death penalty especially if their victims are white, and are more likely to be victims of racially motivated violence than whites.

She well knew that middle-class blacks that reaped the biggest gains from the civil rights struggles often find the new suburban neighborhoods they move to are re-segregated and soon look like the old neighborhoods they fled. They are ignored by cab drivers, followed by clerks in stores, left fuming at restaurants because of poor or no service, find that more and more of their sons and daughters are cut out of scholarships and student support programs at universities because of the demolition of affirmative action, and denied bank loans for their businesses and homes.
Then there are the fierce battles over affirmative action, police violence, the segregation laws still on the books in some Southern states, and the nightmarish scenes of thousands of poor blacks fleeing for their lives from the Katrina floodwaters in New Orleans, and the big fight over what if anything should be done about the plight of the black poor. These are further bitter reminders of the gaping economic and racial chasm in America. Yolanda knew that as well, and was a resolute fighter for the poor. In the decades after King's murder, Yolanda stormed the barricades against racial injustice, economic inequality, military adventurism, and against hate crimes and violence. She wrote countless letters, gave speeches, and participated in direct action campaigns. She continued to fiercely protect King's legacy from the opportunists that twisted and sullied his words and name.

The civil rights struggle has now become the stuff of nostalgia, history books, and the memoirs of aging former civil rights leaders. Yet, millions remain trapped in poverty, and racial discrimination still pervades much of American society. Dr. King's dream was to free them from that plight. Yolanda King and her father shared that same dream. And like her father she did more than dream.



Earl Ofari Hutchinson

She brought her relentless passion and vision for peace and social justice to that battle. Her and her father's vision of what America still can be continues to challenge us to do our part to make that vision a reality for millions of Americans of all races. We'll deeply miss Yolanda King. But it can be truly be said that she was more than Just A King's Daughter.

BlackNews.com columnist Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and political analyst. His new book "The Latino Challenge to Black America: Towards a Conversation between African-Americans and Hispanics" (Middle Passage Press and Hispanic Economics New York) in English and Spanish will be out in October.

Answers From Page 30

W	H	E	E	L	■	O	U	R	S	E	L	V	E	S
H	■	L	■	E	■	■	■	E	■	A	■	I	■	I
E	M	E	R	A	L	D	■	A	C	C	U	S	E	D
R	■	G	■	H	E	A	D	S	■	H	■	I	■	E
E	S	A	U	■	P	R	O	O	F	■	G	O	D	S
U	■	N	■	L	E	T	■	N	I	S	A	N	■	■
P	O	T	T	E	R	S	■	S	T	E	P	S	■	V
O	■	■	H	A	■	■	■	■	■	W	E	■	■	E
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O	P	I	N	I	O	N	■	E	D	I	T	I	O	N
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Y	E	S	T	E	R	D	A	Y	■	E	D	G	E	S

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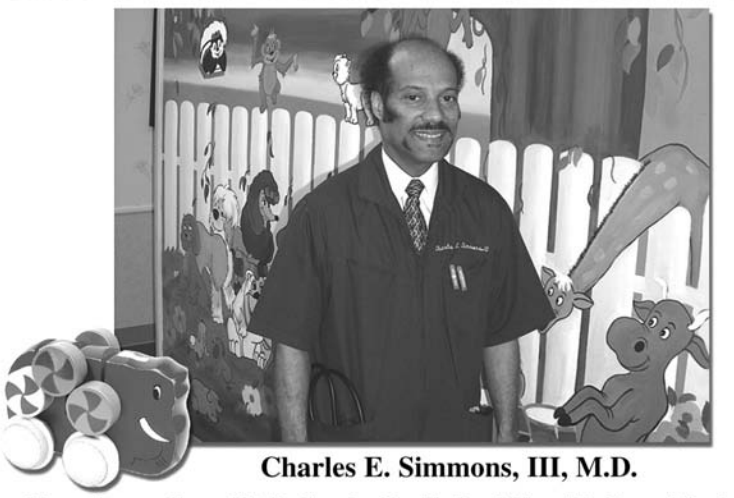

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Solution to Puzzle No.141

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	A	S	K	E	D	E	N	E	P	P	A	H	**H**	F	B
2	A	T	I	**O**	**L**	J	O	U	R	N	E	Y	K	E	L
3	N	N	L	D	E	V	O	U	T	Y	T	I	C	A	B
4	S	A	L	S	R	E	N	R	O	C	N	A	R	R	I
5	W	D	H	U	N	G	R	Y	E	D	M	G	I	T	R
6	E	N	H	E	A	V	E	N	S	E	E	N	A	**Y**	D
7	R	E	V	E	R	Y	T	H	I	N	G	L	**A**	V	S
8	E	T	E	A	**N**	U	F	C	E	I	I	**D**	L	B	E
9	D	T	S	N	R	**A**	A	R	**W**	A	**E**	**S**	Y	A	D
10	**O**	A	U	I	**M**	E	O	Y	N	T	**E**	**I**	**S**	C	C
11	J	A	O	M	S	U	I	L	E	N	R	O	C	K	**H**
12	O	N	H	A	S	G	N	I	W	O	L	L	O	F	E
13	P	G	R	L	L	A	E	M	O	C	N	W	O	N	K
14	P	E	Y	S	M	**I**	**S**	A	**N**	**A**	**M**	U	O	R	**E**
15	A	L	L	E	F	S	T	F	I	G	R	G	O	D	D

Letters in BOLD above are the hidden verse

reading left to right starting at the top left hand corner and going down through the letters the hidden verse is:

Holy and awesome is His name

Psalm 111:9 niv

Share Your Christian Reader With A Friend

(Over,Down,Direction)

AFTERNOON(7,9,N)
AIR(13,6,N)
ANGEL(2,11,S)
ANIMALS(4,8,S)
ANSWERED (1,2,S)
ASKED(1,1,E)
ATTENDANTS(2,10,N)
BACK(14,8,S)
BECAME(15,1,SW)
BIRDS(15,3,S)
BRING(15,3,SW)
CAESAREA(8,8,SW)
CALLED(15,10,NW)
CAME(13,3,SW)
CENTURION(10,4,SW)
CITY(13,3,W)
COME(10,13,W)
CONTAINED(10,13,N)
CORNELIUS(13,11,W)
CORNERS(10,4,W)
DAY(15,9,W)
DEVOUT(4,3,E)
EVERYTHING(2,7,E)
FAMILY(8,15,N)
FEAR(14,1,S)
FELL(5,15,W)
FOLLOWING(14,12,W)
FOUR(14,12,SW)
GAVE(12,5,SE)
GENEROUSLY(12,5,SW)
GIFTS(10,15,W)
GOD(12,15,E)
GONE(12,15,NE)
HAPPENED(12,1,W)
HEAVEN(3,6,E)
HOUSE(3,12,N)
HUNGRY(3,5,E)
ITALIAN(15,4,SW)
JOPPA(1,11,S)
JOURNEY(6,2,E)
KILL(3,1,S)
KINDS(13,2,SW)
KNOWN(15,13,W)
LARGE(15,2,SW)
LORD(12,12,SE)
MAN(5,14,NE)
MEAL(8,13,W)

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Curried Chicken
Jerk Chicken
Brown Stew Chicken
Jerk Chicken Wings
Jerk Chicken Wrap
Crispy Jerk Wrap
Chicken Fingers
(served w/french fries)
Jerk Chicken Salad

Seafood
Shrimp
(Curried, Jerked, or Brown Stewed)
Red Snapper
(Jerked, Steamed, Grilled, Brown Stewed, or Curried)
King Fish
(Jerked, Steamed, Grilled, Brown Stewed, or Curried)
Conch Fritters

Beef
Oxtails
Pepper Steak

Other Meats
Curried Goat
Jerk Ribs

Patties
Beef
Jerk Chicken
Vegetable

Sides
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Kids are Eating up Cornbread and so are Teachers

Jacksonville, FL - Local school teacher releases second book in his Cornbread Series entitled ***Cornbread Has a Bad Habit***.

Vincent Taylor, the author of the highly anticipated children's chapter book, presents a publication that is a humorous yet poignant story of a kid (Cornbread) who has a deep love for music. His passion leads to an obsession where he's constantly reprimanded for beating on objects to produce his favorite sound. Well, one day Cornbread's habit will lead to an accident that involves his little sister named Tiffany and a pot of boiling hot water.

There is always a necessity for rich, multicultural literature in our schools and libraries. This is why Cornbread is such a huge magnet for educators around the country. **"With there being an enormous disparity in academic achievement between males and females, I wanted to have a book that catered to our young guys, especially those who are reluctant readers,"** says Mr. Taylor.

In addition to the publication, Mr. Taylor offers a free CD-ROM that's replete with comprehension questions for each chapter in the Cornbread book. This is part of the classroom set. **"I'm ecstatic over this feature because the questions correlate with the various skills students are tested on during their state standardized test,"** explains Nicole Barker, a 3rd grade teacher in Hillsborough County Public Schools.

Mr. Taylor, along with Cornbread the mascot, conducts energetic workshops at schools across the country entitled 'How a Book is Published'. Books in the Cornbread series sell for only $5.

To find out more information about Vincent Taylor, you can log onto www.VincentTaylor.net.

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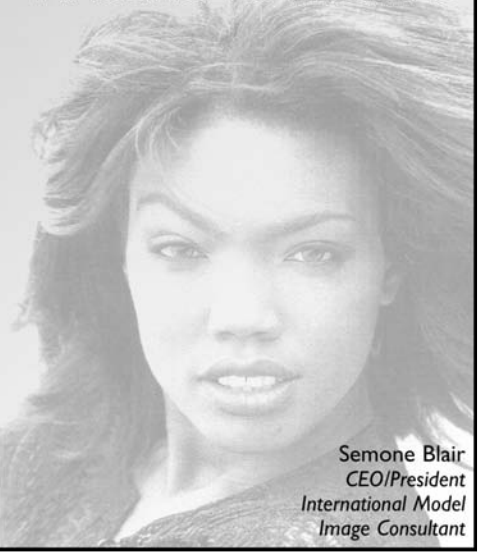

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Publisher's Editorial

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

"Is The Lord Amongst Us Or Not?"

Today our country is engulfed in decision making that will inevitably affect and change our prospective by others and our position in history. It is a good time today for us as a Black people to reflect and regroup to intentionally reposition our status in America, the world, and in history for the better. Let's be real with where we are and where we need to be.

As a **People**, there are many of us who have faired well. We own businesses, live in affluent neighborhoods, and have membership in prestigious clubs. You might even say, these people have for themselves a reserved seat at the "table of success." Be not deceived my friends, those of us who have achieved high levels of success and are privileged to special inner circles, are viewed by Whites as being "Special" and "Different." Interpretation: You are still Black, but your special-ness and difference means that you don't count and is therefore discounted just as a teacher cast out the very high score on the grading curve.

The White community does not accept us individually but as a whole. Whatever connotation applies to Blacks as a whole applies to you regardless of your financial success and level of achievement in life. When Blacks are seen on the news throwing people out of cars, beating the elderly, portrayed as salvages, that stroke of the brush paints us all. Fair or not, we succeed as a group, as one race of people. We were one in Africa, one in slavery, one in the civil rights, still one today – all good or all bad.

Let's turn off the television and stop allowing it to raise our children. Shame on any mother that allows her child to wear their hair in dreads, dress hip-hop, put gold in their mouth, tattoo their skin, or do any other thing that is counterproductive to that child's education or becoming gainfully employed.

Blacks today must accept the same challenges as other races do. We must love one another. Do for one another. Help and encourage one another. Patronize one another. Help to improve one another. Only our ability to build our communities, raise properly our children, save and multiply our money, and solve our own problems will ensure us a seat, as a people, at the table of success. Let's get busy.

Let improve our **Businesses**. There was a time in our history when our businesses strived. Mainly because we had no other choice but to do business with one another because of segregation. Integration proved that we couldn't wait to give our money to anyone other then ourselves. For years we have done just that. In the business community it is rumored that the first million anyone makes, regardless of race or foreign origin, is in the Black community, money given by Black people.

We brag of the tens of billions of dollars Blacks have as an economic impact, not realizing we are laughed at by the world for doing so little to help ourselves. The Black dollar barely circulates once in the Black community before leaving to go to others, while other communities circulates their money seven to ten times in their community. It's time for us to support one another. Make it a point to spend your money with someone Black. It may not be convenient, but it's essential for the success of our community. You may not eat lunch at a Black restaurant everyday, but at lease twice a week make it a point to do so. Seek out a Black mechanic, a Black printer, a Black accountant, a Black realtor, a Black painter, a Black yardman, a Black doctor, and so forth.

Let us invest in Black businesses, not the stock market. Wall Street don't need our money. There are many Black businesses in our communities that we can invest our money in and even receive greater dividend. As a people we have been trained to educate ourselves for the sole purpose of getting a job. We need more of our young people using their expertise to start businesses, become self employed and employing other Blacks. However, this becomes impossible without the investments of older and more successful Blacks, who may have worked traditional jobs for years, and now have the financial means. Banking Institutions will give a Black man $40,000 for a car but won't give him $40,000 to start a business. The car cost you money and keeps you further in bondage, while the business makes you money and liberates you and your family.

Let's improve our position in **Politics**. We need more Corrine Browns. Blacks who are not afraid to lay it on the line for what is right and conducive for our betterment as a people. Corrine Brown's slogan is that she delivers and she really does. Because of it, she is slandered daily by the media and her opponents. Let's support her more by rallying in great numbers to the causes she fights for us. Let's make it a mandate to register to vote and a mission to vote in numbers in every election.

Let's improve our families – **The Black Family**. A real battle is waging here. It seems no one cares about your marriage or even that you get married. Our children are raised without encouragement to marry and no incentive to stay married. We must make the family top priority and give it the best of our attention and resources. The Black man and woman must start loving one another again. We are all we got. For life to be better, it will only by us coming together in support and commitment one to the other. Two can make it better than one.

Let's turn off the television and stop allowing it to raise our children. Shame on any mother that allows her child to wear their hair in dreads, dress hip-hop, put gold in their mouth, tattoo their skin, or do any other thing that is counterproductive to that child's education or becoming gainfully employed. We must prepare our children for a world that is cold and uncaring. A world of survival for only the fittest and the strongest. Our children don't need any more handicaps. Their inferior high school education must to be offset by strong family support and guidance.

And lastly, let's improve **The Black Church**. Excuse me for having strong feeling in this area. The Black Church, started in slavery,

see EDITORIAL page 38

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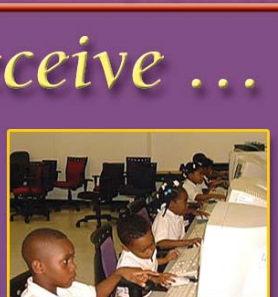

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Financial considerations for the single parent

It's tough enough bringing up children as a single parent. As both mother and father, single parents have so much to do that they can often forget about taking care of their finances. If you are a single parent, here are some ways to ensure that financial considerations don't slip through the cracks.

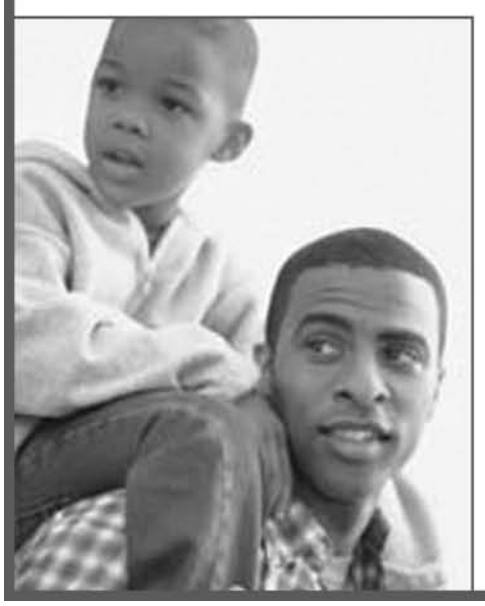
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 27% of children – more than 19 million – live in households with only one parent. (U.S. Census 2000 Special Report, *Children and the Households They Live In*, issued February 2004.) Some children were formerly in two-parent households in which a divorce or death occurred, while the rest have always lived in a single parent household.

On your own

If you are a newly single parent after going through a divorce, there are a few items you will want to consider taking care of immediately. First, make sure that you have a checking and savings account and credit cards that are in your name. Don't assume your credit is clean; check it out through one of the three major credit rating agencies. Next, make sure any assets, such as a home, are titled in your name. You'll also want to check your beneficiary designations to update your new situation.

Basic estate planning

It is extremely important to establish a will and power of attorney whether you are newly single or always have been. If you don't have a will, consult an attorney and make one out as soon as possible. One of the major issues you will need to address in the will is guardianship of your minor children. Don't assume that a person you name guardian will want the responsibility. Talk it over with that person first.



Protect your family

Life insurance and disability income insurance are important in two-parent households, but they are vital in a single-parent household. Adequate life insurance can help ensure that your plans for your children, including a future college education, are financially possible should you die prematurely. Just as important is the need to protect your earning power with disability income insurance. You may be able to buy low-cost group disability income insurance through your employer, or you can check out buying an individual disability income insurance policy through your licensed financial professional.

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Protect yourself

Saving for retirement in the face of more immediate financial challenges can seem like an impossible task, but you owe it to yourself to try. Consider saving as much as possible through a 401(k) plan or other qualified retirement plan that your employer might have. You also may consider putting money aside for retirement on your own by contributing to an IRA.

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Is The Lord Amongst Us Or Not?

EDITORIAL continued from page 25

preached a gospel that was strong enough to liberated us as a people. The Black Church unified us to fight economic omission and political injustice in the civil rights movement. The Black Church started and supported Black business. The Black Church founded and built Black colleges and universities. This skeleton of a church I see today in the Black community is a far cry from what it should represent.

Today in the Black church we see very little unity, and even less family. We see more money taken in the church today than at any time in church history, yet little to no services being provided by the church. No programs to keep our children off of drugs and out of jail. No human sexuality programs to keep teenage girls from becoming pregnant. No family crisis programs. No relief for the poor. All the church has today is church expense. There is always a struggle just to pay the monthly bills.

The Black church today is powerless in the political arena and silent in the court's halls of justice. And the scandals you hear on the streets about the Church. One pastor sexually involved with multiple women in the church. One pastor impregnation a minor child and the Deacons covering it up. A pastor disassociating and kicking members off the church rolls who doesn't go along with his program.

Deacons and Trustees stealing money from the church treasury. The list goes on. When we look at the Black church today, all the problems, division, fussing and fighting, you can't help but ask yourself the question, "Is the Lord amongst us or not?"

We have become a people of tolerance. In our churches today, we have permitted acts that in the past would have been considered criminal. We use to hold our leaders to the highest code of ethics and standards. Now in the name of "we are all are human" we turn and look the other way. In turn we are minimizing the standard of God, but only to ourselves… not to God. God will not bless us as a people until we get right and do right.

The church has become the poster symbol for Isolationist. Every church is to itself and seem to think of its members as "more-christian" than members of other churches. Let's open the doors of fellowship again and share with one another. Preachers make yourselves accountable to one another. Everyone must answer to someone.

Let's begin to preach from the pulpit the value of the dollar. After all it was the church that first mislabeled money as "the root of all evil." Money is the means that will lead our community to a fruitful future - its misuse will continue our demise. It's time for us to learn to leave financial legacies. We are now facing our third generation where the children faired worst financially than their parents. This slide must stop.

Insurance is an excellent product that provides wealth that can be passed from one generation to the next. There's no reason why at your passing your family is not enhance financially for generations to come. The same goes for your church. You can leave your church an endowment or trust that is funded by an insurance product worth millions. Let's learn to use money as a tool.

Our prayer to God should be:

God send us Preachers that are not afraid to go against the system. Lord send us Christian Leaders that pray and read the Bible. We need Churches that are filled not necessarily with people, but filed with the Holy Spirit.

Lord give us eyes to see our problems, feet to go to the problems, and hands to fix our problems. Our theme song for the future should be "Got to be There." Be there when in the morning, when young teenage children wake up with no hope. We must be there to inspire them against dope.

The Church "Got to be There" on Tuesday nights to read the Bible, study together and prayer together… for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

We as members of the Black community have all "Got to be There" with our time, talent, treasure… our understanding, our forgiveness, and our love. Whenever there is a problem, wherever there is trouble, in the time of pain, in the mist of sorrow when the world shall ask "Is the Lord amongst us or not?" They will see the Lord, hear the Lord, and touch the Lord by the fruit we bear and the lives we live.

Lord give us Hope for a world grown so cold,
Hungry for power and greedy for gold.
Lord give us Faith to believe within and without,
Blameless fear in a world full of doubt.
Lord give us Love that is bigger than race and creed,
To cover the world and fulfil each need.
Lord we need Hope, Faith & Love from above,
For only these three can change Man's hatred into Love.

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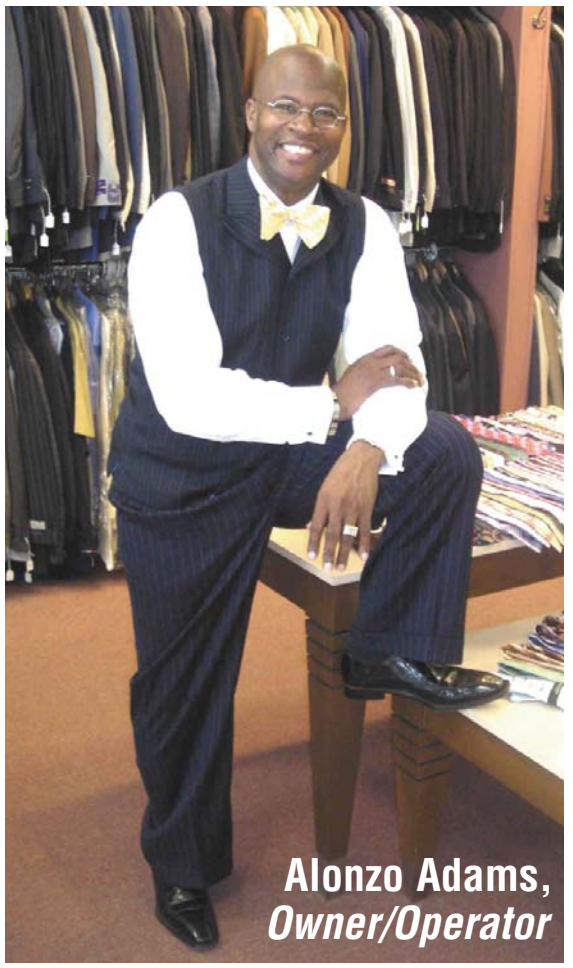

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