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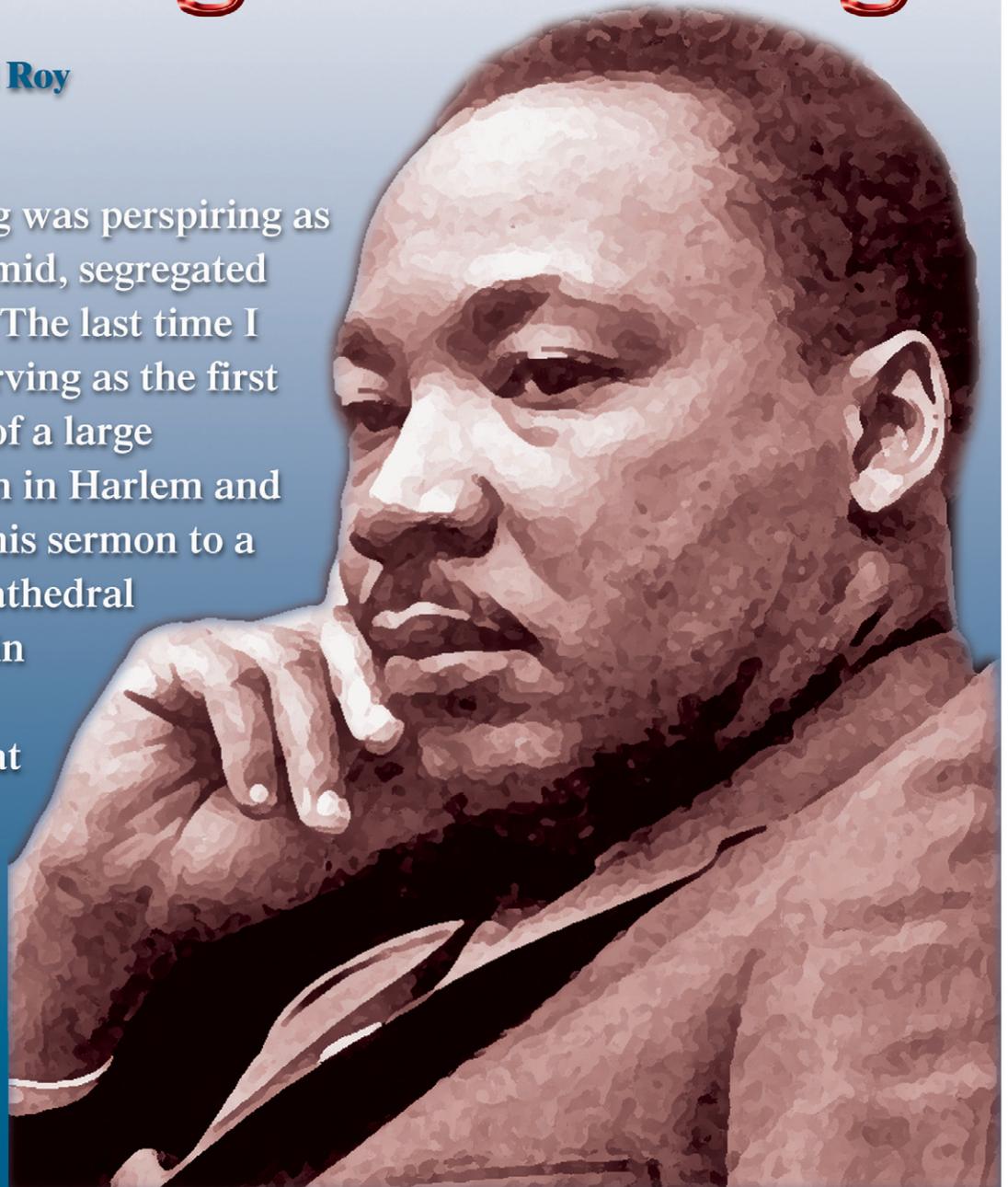
JANUARY 2010

## **Living King's Challenge**

**By Reverend Ralph Lord Roy**  
**Guest Columnist**

Dr. Martin Luther King was perspiring as he stood in the hot, humid, segregated city jail of Albany, Ga. The last time I had seen him, I was serving as the first white assistant pastor of a large Methodist congregation in Harlem and had greeted him after his sermon to a packed house at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in Upper Manhattan. He was vibrant. But on that sweltering day in Georgia, he appeared tired, though welcoming.

see  
**LIVING KING'S  
CHALLENGE**  
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## Central Florida Business Excellence Heralded During Eagle Award Ceremony



**Picture: (left to right) Ronald O. Rogers, Chairman, African American Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida; Derrick Wallace, President/CEO, Construct Two Group; Deborah Rios-Barnes, Asst. Director Multi-Cultural Marketing, Orlando Magic; Courtney R. Powell, President, Ace Application, LLC; Jabari Jackson, Sr., CEO, Pure Platinum Enterprises, Inc.; and Dr. Robert M. Spooney, Executive Director, African American Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida.**

Orlando, FL - The African American Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida recently recognized exceptional business achievement and leadership in diversity during its annual Eagle Award Ceremony held at Epcot, November 14, 2009.

Central Florida businesses were selected in four award categories by the Chamber's Board of Governors and honored during the event. This year's honorees were: Construct Two Group, a leading minority owned construction firm, Eagle Award recipient; Jabari Jackson, Sr., Pure Platinum Enterprises, Inc., Entrepreneur of the Year Award recipient; Ace Applications, LLC, Courtney R. Powell, President, Emerging Business Award recipient; and The Orlando Magic, Corporate Recognition of the Year Award recipient.

"Our annual Eagle Award Ceremony recognizes dedication to exceptional business delivery and industry expertise," said Dr. Robert M. Spooney, Executive Director, African American Chamber of

Commerce of Central Florida. "We are pleased to be able to showcase organizations that are diligent in their determination to help set the standard for excellence in the Central Florida African American business community."

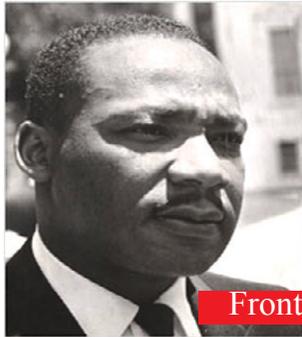
The event's title sponsor and host was Walt Disney World Resort. DoubleTree Resort, Orlando-International Drive served as platinum sponsor. The Orlando Magic, Orlando Health, and SunTrust Bank also served as event sponsors.

### About the Chamber

The African American Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida is an advocate and resource committed to fostering economic success and empowering Central Florida businesses through improved corporate sensitivity and business responsibility. For more information about the Eagle Award Event or the Chamber, visit them online at [www.blackcommerce.org](http://www.blackcommerce.org), email them at [info@blackcommerce.org](mailto:info@blackcommerce.org), or call 407.420.4870.



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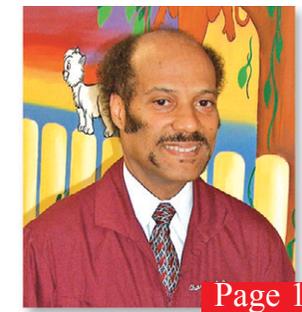
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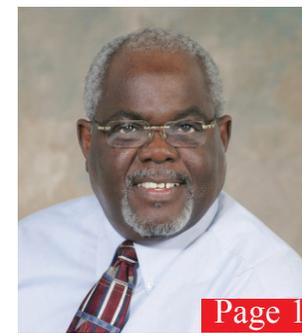
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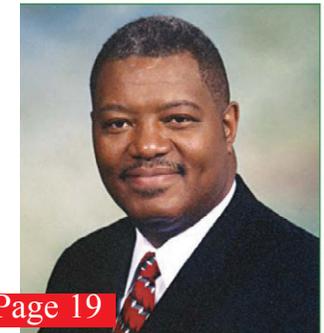
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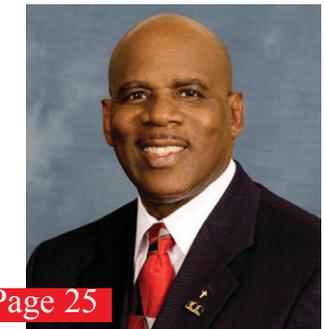
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# Congressman Alan Grayson

## Florida - 8th Congressional District



### GRAYSON MAKES HIS MARK IN 2009

#### “No One Has Come Onto The Scene More Gangbusters”

(Orlando, FL) – It is not surprising that the Orlando Sentinel placed Congressman Alan Grayson among the top “Power Players” in Central Florida. As the Sentinel wrote: *“No one has come onto the scene more gangbusters than Orlando’s freshman congressman.”* To understand the statement, you only need to review his list of local accomplishments in his rookie year. They include:



- **Congressionally-Directed Spending** – Congressman Grayson increased targeted federal spending here by more than 500% in a year when we needed it the most. The \$12 million creates jobs and meets basic human needs. The money does not appease lobbyists.
- **Foreclosure Mediation** – Congressman Grayson dealt with the housing crisis by getting our local judges to institute a mediation program to prevent foreclosures. The Supreme Court of Florida just expanded our model throughout the state.
- **Boosting Tourism** – Congressman Grayson busted through years of delay and procedural logjams to pass the Travel Promotion Act, establishing a fully-funded federal commission that will spend \$200 million a year promoting our #1 industry, tourism.
- **Saving Our Schools** – Congressman Grayson’s vote helped deliver more than \$200 million in additional federal money to Orange County schools. The money directly prevented schools from closing. The bill also provided \$80 million for schools in Lake and Marion Counties.
- **National Hurricane Research Center** – Congressman Grayson secured a commitment from both the House Leadership and the White House to build a \$50 million National Hurricane Research Center in Orlando as part of the climate change bill.
- **Pinecastle Jeep Range** – Congressman Grayson arranged for funding and progress in the cleanup at the Pinecastle Jeep Range, to help keep our children safe.
- **Unparalleled Constituent Service** – Congressman Grayson established offices in Ocala, Tavares, and Winter Garden, to meet the needs of people in our 140-mile-long district. He and his staff responded individually to almost 100,000 e-mails sent to his official website, [grayson.house.gov](http://grayson.house.gov). He also held more health care town hall-type events than other Member of Congress from Central Florida.

Congressman Alan Grayson pays attention. He works hard. He gets things done.

**[grayson.house.gov](http://grayson.house.gov)**

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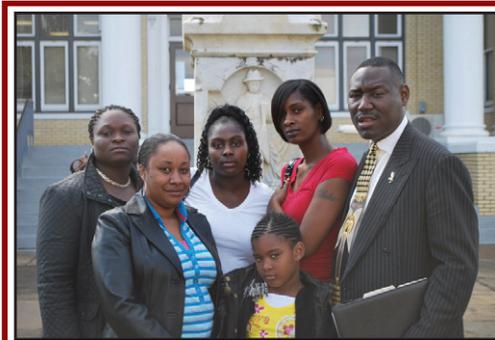
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## \$5 Million Judgment Entered In Drunk Driving Case For Parks & Crump

By Adner Marcelin  
Parks & Crump, LLC  
Tallahassee, Florida

On Monday, December 28, 2009, a judgment of \$5 million dollar was entered in the 2nd Judicial Circuit Court in Gadsden County for the family of Shanesia Cox. While the 7 year old was playing in her grandmother's yard with her two sisters and cousin, she was killed by Bryce Crosby, who was 19 years old at the time. Florida Highway Patrol concluded that Crosby's blood alcohol level was almost three times the legal limit at the time of the accident.

The accident occurred when Crosby left the road traveling several hundred feet across three yards hitting several objects, killing Shanesia Cox, and injuring the other girls. After hitting Cox, Crosby never stopped. He continued to drive back onto the roadway with flattened tires but was



**“Cox's Family members along with their attorney, Benjamin Crump, leaving the Gadsden County Courthouse after the criminal proceedings.”**

**Pictured (Back to Front, Left to Right): Jojuanna Asbury, Erica Jordan, Kenyatta Jackson, Regina Jackson, Attorney Benjamin Crump, and Diamond Cox (sister).**

apprehended by authorities a short distance from the scene.

Crosby was charged with vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of an accident involving death. He pled guilty to the charges and is now serving a 12 year sentence at the Wakulla Work Camp. In addition, he has 10 years probation and his license is revoked for life.

The judgment was entered pursuant to an agreement on behalf of the parties, thus preventing the necessity of a trial. “I feel the main reason the Cox family accepted a settlement in this matter was to prevent Shanesia Cox's 6 years old and 9 years old siblings from having to testify about this horrible tragedy. Every night

those little girls have to go to bed with the memory of seeing their sister's face ran over by a drunk driver. No one wanted them to relive the nightmare in a courtroom,” said Attorney Benjamin L. Crump, representing the family along with Don Hinkle.

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# HE AIN'T HEAVY

After years of struggling with his weight, activist **Al Sharpton** leads the way to fitness

By **Tomika Anderson and Dr. Ira Riley – Dental Rx, Jacksonville, FL**

He may not have a washboard stomach or the pecs of an Adonis, but don't be fooled – the Reverend Al Sharpton has spent many hours fine-tuning his physique. Having shed nearly 90 pounds and having maintained that weight loss over the past few years, America's most visible civil rights leader is in fighting form for the first time ever.

Overhauling a fatty diet while breaking in his walking shoes six years ago – dropping down from about 300 pounds to a svelte 210 – Sharpton has finally conquered a struggle with weight that has plagued him his entire life. "I have more endurance; my focus is sharper; and I don't need as much sleep as I used to," the political activist boasts cheerfully. "I can honestly say I'm a new man."

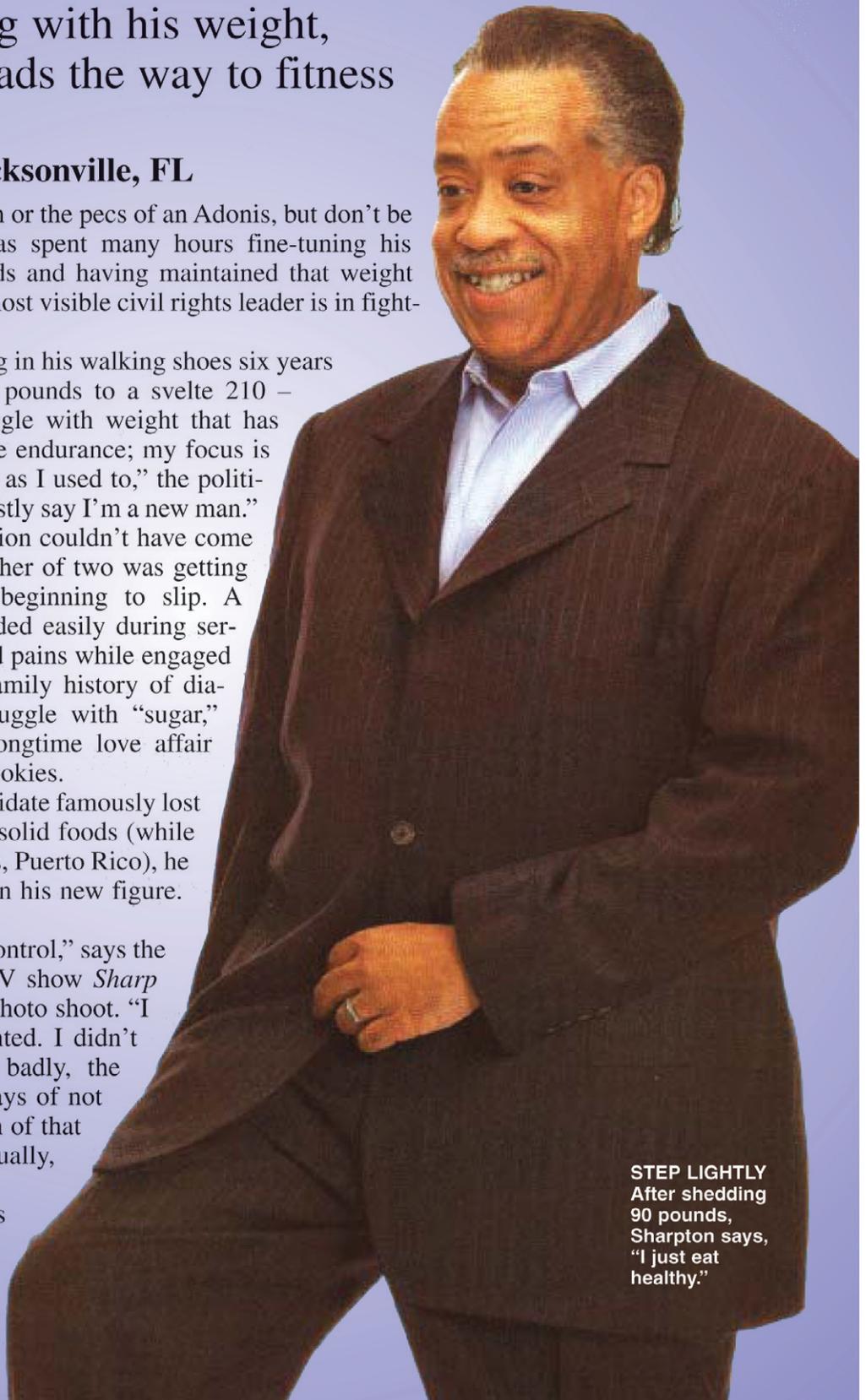
Sharpton's dramatic body transformation couldn't have come at a better time. At 52 years old, the father of two was getting daily reminders that his health was beginning to slip. A Pentecostal minister, he would get winded easily during sermons. He began to suffer from aches and pains while engaged in moderate activity. And Sharpton's family history of diabetes, not to mention his personal struggle with "sugar," threatened to permanently derail his longtime love affair with fried chicken and chocolate chip cookies.

So when the onetime presidential candidate famously lost over 30 pounds in 2001 after giving up solid foods (while in jail for 90 days for a protest in Vieques, Puerto Rico), he vowed to do whatever it took to maintain his new figure. Not to mention his health.

"Before Vieques, my diet was out of control," says the syndicated radio host and star of the TV show *Sharp Talk with Al Sharpton* on the set of his photo shoot. "I ate whatever I wanted, whenever I wanted. I didn't exercise. But when I stopped eating badly, the weight came off. And since I had 90 days of not having to do anything else, I spent much of that time walking around the pier. Eventually, exercising became a lifestyle."

Not that he hasn't struggled with this weight since then.

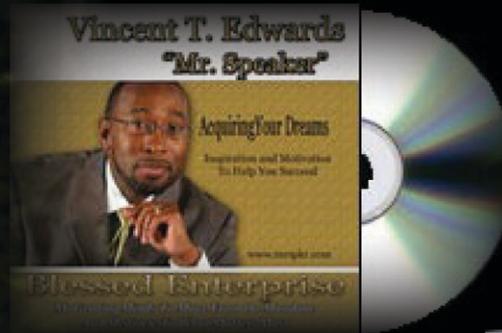
When Sharpton campaigned for president in 2004, the stress he was under – not to mention the rich food he ate at



**STEP LIGHTLY**  
After shedding 90 pounds, Sharpton says, "I just eat healthy."

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## President Obama May Improve the Image of African Americans, But Being Black or Brown In America Is Still Tough For Kids

*Sandy Lynne Holman urges educators and parents to action*

Davis, CA — The media is touting new films about image and the African American experience - Chris Rock's "Good Hair," Oprah's "Precious," CNN's Black in America, Disney's Princess and the Frog and Tyler Perry's films - but talking about self-image is a mission for Sandy Holman, director of The Culture CO-OP, Davis, California. Holman has dedicated the last twenty years of her career to boosting the body-image and self-esteem of the nation's youth. Her focus is on diversity and children who are disproportionately affected by negative messages such as African Americans and Latinos.



**Sandy Lynn Holman**

Her first book -"Grandpa, Why Is Everything Black Bad?"- won national awards in spite of what her critics called its "negative title." Holman reads this and her other titles, "Grandma Says Our Hair has Flair" and "We All Have a Heritage," to the nation's children. The children who read her books know exactly what they mean, and they feel validated by the positive messages inside. Holman observes that from age three, kids notice when their skin and hair doesn't measure up to their role models in movies and television.

"Things have reached an epidemic level for our children and the messages they internalize," Holman said, "And still we debate why there are achievement gaps in education, high dropout rates, high incarceration rates and worse." The negative messages that children of color receive, coupled with insidious institutional systems, are taking their toll.

Holman says it is vital to take collective action because ultimately all of society is affected. By working with schools, creating community conversations, giving presentations and creating books, songs and other

materials, she encourages individuals to intervene in the lives of youth during their formative years.

Sandy Holman has degrees from the University of California and California State University in psychology and counseling. The Culture CO-OP (Caring, Optimistic, Open-minded People) promotes understanding and respect for diversity, reading and quality education for all. They accomplish their mission through dynamic presentations and research-based multicultural products that incorporate reading, music and the arts for people of all ages and backgrounds. They are preparing to launch the national campaign "We All Have a Heritage" to increase cross-cultural awareness and understanding. For more details, visit [www.cultureco-op.com](http://www.cultureco-op.com) or contact Sandy Lynn Holman, Director, Business Phone: 530-792-1334, Cell Phone: 530-902-4534 [sandy@CultureCo-op.com](mailto:sandy@CultureCo-op.com)

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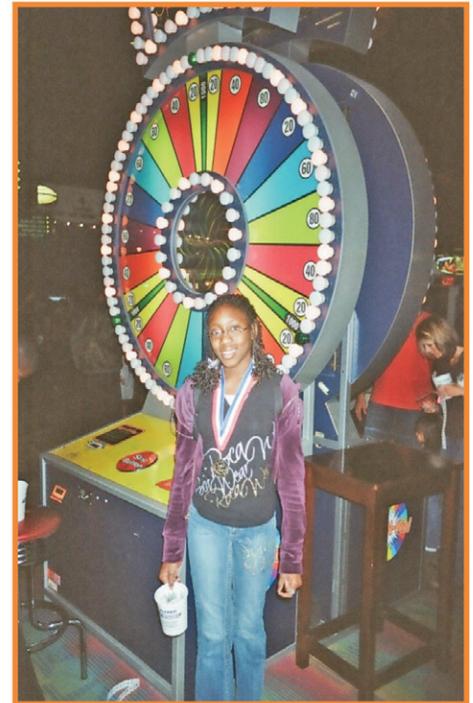
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# Simmons Pediatrics 2010 A/B Honor Roll Awards



*Proud Parents of the A/B Honor Roll Students*



ment as proud parents and children received game cards to play various games and were served a full banquet meal as the children were awarded medals for their grades and hard work. "It was a time of celebration, and excitement like none other. We are very proud of our children's success realizing that without God and the help of their parents it's impossible to achieve but with both, all things are possible in 2010 when believing our children shall succeed. Again we salute our Scholars and will continue to support and champion their success," explained Dr. Simmons.



Simmons Pediatrics salutes their honor students for excellent achievements in 2009 at Dave-&-Busters on January 2, 2010 at 12:00 noon. This is the eighth year Dr. Charles E. Simmons has invested in high achieve-





Name	Grade	Honors
Jordan Harris	K	A
Kaleb Bell	1	A
Damian Bell, Jr.	6	A/B
Jah'kel Teamer	4	A/B
Tiyahn Teamer	6	A/B
Michael White	6	A/B
Keith Shannon	5	A/B (two sem) A (two sem.)
Tracy Moss	5	A/B
Michael Smith, Jr.	2	A
Kaila Johnson	5	A/B
Jaida Spicer	1	E (Excellent)
Darius Wilson	3	A/B
Daisja Clark	7	A/B
Marcus Evans	3	A/B
Alexis Hills	5	A
Lexie Greesham	6	A
Katanya Champion	4	A/B
De'Von Powell	4	A/B
Bobby Powell, Jr.	6	A/B





Catherine Andres

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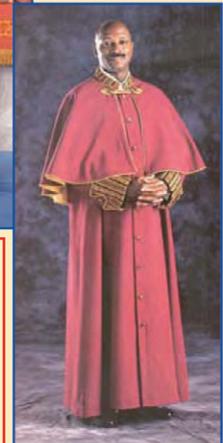


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## Harvard University Waves Tuition for Undergraduates of Low-Income Families

Harvard University released a statement recently that from now on undergraduate students from low-income families will not have to pay tuition. When making this announcement Harvard’s president, Lawrence H. Summers said, “When only ten percent of the students in elite higher education come from families in the lower half of the income distribution, we are not doing enough. We are not doing enough in bringing elite higher

education to the lower half of the income distribution.”

This new program means that undergraduate students from families whose income is less than \$60,000 a year can attend Harvard for free. The University will pick up their tuition which means no student loans.

Please share this information with all family and friends, even if you do not have a college aged child at home. To find out more about Harvard offering free tuition to low-income families, visit Harvard’s financial aid website <http://www.fao.fas.harvard.edu>, call Harvard’s financial aid office at (613) 495-1581, or contact Michelle Fowler at State Representative Jennifer Carroll’s office (904) 573-4994

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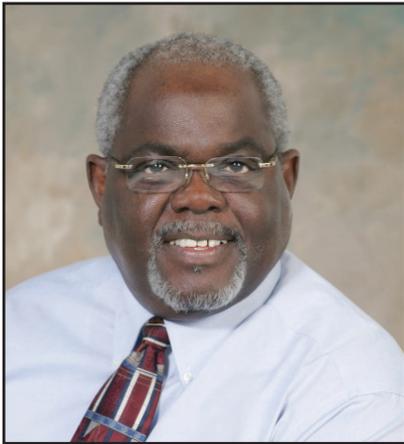
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# 400 Years of Silence

## What Led to the Silence of God?

By Pastor Leon R. Bing  
North Jacksonville Family Worship Center

We often speak of the 400 years of silence, but do we know why there were 400 silent years, from Malachi to Matthew, where God did not speak prophetically to his people? Do we take this for granted the way we take God for granted in many other areas of life? As we have entered into a new decade, the 2010, it is time that the people of God wake up to the fact that we have been our own worst enemy. We are supposed to be the seed of Abraham, engrafted into the family of God. We are supposed to be the head not the tail, blessed in the city and in the country. Many of God's people seem to be doing well, but too many of those are making things happen on their own. They are working two or three jobs, or sad to say, they are taking advantage of people by lying or scamming people.

All of God's people should see God performing miracles in their daily lives. Most people are not seeing it because they are suffering from the same things that the people of Malachi's day were going through, and the consequences were that God stopped speaking to man for 400 years. So we will take a look at what led to the 400 years of silence of God and see the warnings that we must learn so that we won't suffer individually the same sad event in our lives.

The prophet Malachi gave a prophetic word to the Israelites where he ask no less than 23 non rhetorical questions to God's people after they had completed the rebuilding of the Temple and the Wall around the city of Jerusalem. The Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi, were written between 460 – 420 BC. Ezra & Nehemiah were one book until the 3rd century. I only mention this so that we can see that these events took place not long after God's people were released from bondage in Babylon.

There were seven areas that did not please God in the Book of Malachi. These same seven areas are what are holding back God's people today! The people had

gotten to the place that they no longer worshiped God in several areas. The priests were allowing the people to turn away from all that Ezra had taught them.



Pastor Leon Bing

### Argument about God's love for Israel

Although God loved Israel, some of the Jews in Jerusalem questioned whether He really loved them. Malachi reminded these people that one day God will be glorified around the world, thus encouraging there recommitment to Him. **(Read Malachi 1:1-5)**

Today we have allowed the world system to cause many to doubt God's love for them. Because of the failure of the financial system last year, many were led to question if God still cared? Many began to seek the world system for away out of this mess. God's people are still people of faith! As Paul said in **Romans 8:35-39**

**35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?**

**36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.**

**37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.**

**38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,**

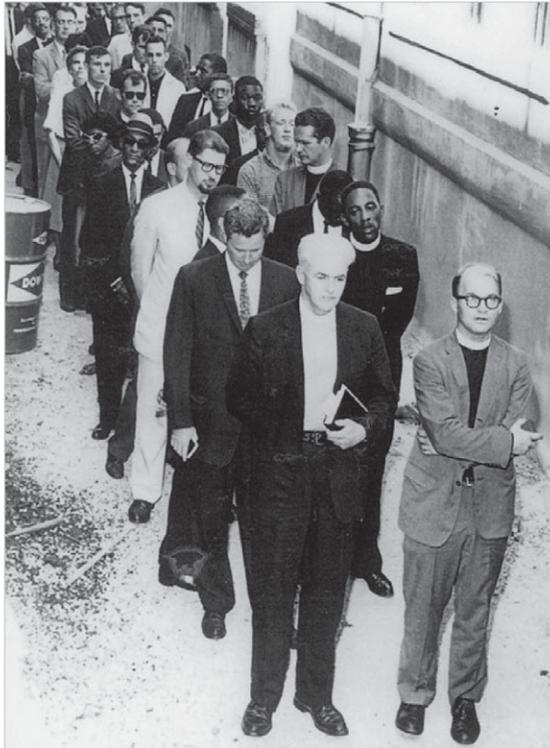
**39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**KJV**

**See Silence of God page 26**

# Living King's Challenge

from Page 1



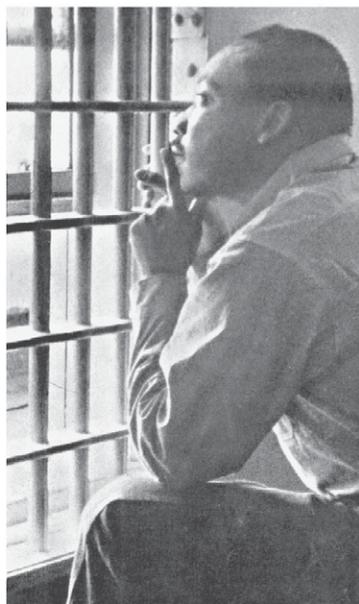
**GOING TO LOCKUP**  
*The Rev. Ralph Lord Roy, front right, at the head of a line of clergy members arrested after a prayer pilgrimage in Albany, Ga., in 1962.*

As my friend Rabbi Israel Dresner and I approached him, young men and women, crowded in the two adjoining cells, belted out one of

the signature songs of the civil rights movement: "Oh, freedom, Oh, freedom, Oh, freedom over me. And before I'd be a slave I'd be buried in my grave, and go home to my Lord and be free!" Most of them were students at the all-black Albany State College who had been arrested for engaging in public protests.

The singing was powerful but so loud that Rabbi Dresner and I wondered how we could carry on a conversation with Dr. King and his lieutenant and cell mate, Dr. Ralph Abernathy. Dr. King motioned for us to put our ears to the prison bars. "They're singing like that," he explained, "so that they won't hear our conversation." As he spoke, Dr. King pointed to two white prison guards nearby. Our conversation was brief, mouth to ear, ear to mouth. We basically told Dr. King that we planned to attend his trial.

A few days earlier, in that summer of 1962, Rabbi Dresner and I had joined a vigil held by mostly black clergymen in front of the White House; the group was hopeful that we could see President John Kennedy and ask that he speak more forcefully on civil rights. That meeting never happened. Before we disbanded, we were asked, probably by the coordinators of the vigil, if any participants could attend Dr. King's approaching trial in Albany. Rabbi Dresner and I had become fast



friends during the previous year, when we were jailed together as Freedom Riders in Tallahassee, Fla. We looked at each other, nodded simultaneously, and shot our hands up.

Albany is a key city in southwest Georgia, an area noted for cotton, peanuts, pecans and, more recently, corn. The Albany Movement was seeking an end to rigid segregation and other forms of flagrant discrimination, and Dr. King had been invited there to give impetus to the effort. He had been arrested for leading a public protest without a permit.

I remember Dr. King being addressed at the trial as Martin, his status as a prominent Baptist minister with a Ph.D. from Boston University deliberately ignored. The prosecutor depicted him as a dangerous leftist, an outside agitator who had come to sabotage the "good relations" that existed between the races in the area. Dr. King and the other defendants were found guilty and given a \$200 fine and 60 days in jail, but the sentences were suspended.

Over the next few days Rabbi Dresner and I stayed in Albany, hoping to contribute in any way we could to the civil rights movement there. During that time we had an opportunity to get to know Dr. King, usually over meals with some of the leaders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, including Andrew Young, Wyatt T. Walker and Dr. Abernathy — all of them ministers.

My memories of Dr. King may be a bit clouded by the intervening 46 years, but several vivid impressions remain. The most obvious was his rare ability to inspire, with the same message, both cum laude graduates of our finest universities and illiterate sharecroppers. Another was his keen appreciation of humor. Jokes and funny stories would be shared over dinner, and Dr. King would throw his head back and roar with laughter.

Dr. King spoke with ease across the table — about Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, eminent American theologians who had been my professors in seminary, about a favorite professor of his at Boston University, Dr. Edgar Brightman, whose son was a classmate and close friend of mine at Swarth-

more College. But he led with fierce conviction from the front lines, prepared to confront persistent rejection and slander, imprisonment, bombings and death itself.

I was surprised that some of the students who were working on voter registration in the Albany area poked fun at his religiosity, lampooning him as “De Lawd,” while a few powerful leaders within the black church felt that Dr. King was “pushing too hard,” preaching social revolution rather than the gospel. Today, of course, he is revered for his emphasis on reconciliation. While sharply critical of our racist society, he challenged us to leave behind our bigoted past and fulfill the true promise of America. But at the time, although we met several white Southerners who secretly encouraged us and our work, that message was difficult for many in the segregated South to accept.



While in Albany that August, Rabbi Dresner and I saw firsthand what Dr. King and the black community were up against. The main library had closed rather than integrate. When we went to play tennis at a “black park,” the net was quickly removed because we were white. If accom-

panied by African-Americans, I was turned away at restaurants, by taxis and even refused admission to three churches.

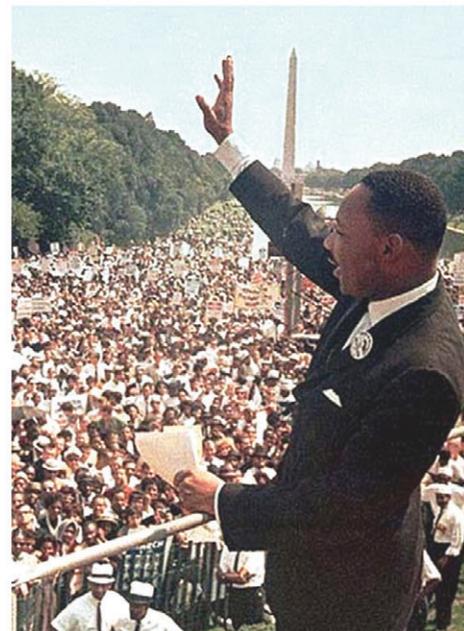
On a Saturday night Rabbi Dresner and I spoke at a voter registration meeting sponsored by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. It was held at Shady Grove Baptist Church in nearby Lee County, identified to us as the county where the largest number of lynchings had taken place over the years. The next Tuesday night the church burned to the ground. “Lightning,” the sheriff suggested. We knew better. Scores of black churches that defied “Southern tradition” were set afire.

On the following Wednesday night, Rabbi Dresner and I spoke at a voter registration meeting at Mount Olive Baptist Church in Terrell County. As we headed back to Albany along a dark and dirt road, we felt a loud thump against our back bumper. We were being tailgated by men yelling threats,

waving what appeared to be guns, their car’s high beams turning on and off. We suggested to the driver that he go faster. I remember how calm his reply was. It went something like this: “No, probably the county sheriff is in that car, and if we exceed the speed limit by even a mile or two he could stop us, and then we might be in real trouble out here in the country.” If we were lucky, he explained, they were chasing us out of the county, and a few miles down the road they would bump us several more times, shout more threats, then turn around. We were relieved when that was what happened. Two weeks later Mount Olive church burned to the ground.

When Rabbi Dresner and I were ready to return north, Dr. King suggested a follow-up. Could we organize a prayer pilgrimage to Albany to support the movement there? On Aug. 28 we returned, 75 strong, nearly all of us ministers or rabbis from the New York City and Chicago areas. Dr. King addressed us before we were to make our witness.

We should not risk arrest, he warned, unless we met three conditions. First, we needed to have \$200 in cash as bail money. Second, we must not have anything on our record — arrest record — that could embarrass the movement. Third, we should step aside if we were not fully committed to nonviolence.



Our moment had arrived. We carefully lined up in front of City Hall, a scripture was read and a prayer offered. With that, Police Chief Laurie Pritchett bellowed: “O.K., you’ve had your prayer meeting. Now go home!” He added a bitter scolding, berating us for coming south when there were more than enough problems in the North. Four hundred

**see KINGS’ CHALLENGE page 23**

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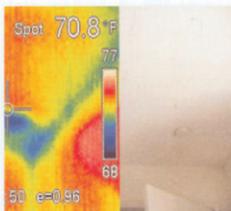
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# Living King's Challenge

from Page 21

onlookers cheered as we were loaded into police wagons, then delivered to four jails in the Albany area. As we rode through the streets, we defiantly sang some of the freedom songs that had earned Albany its reputation as a center of powerful protest music for that time.

We were never tried, and 20 years later I was informed that we could request our \$200 bail money back. It was returned, without comment. Today, Albany has a black mayor and an African-American majority on the Board of City Commissioners. Last year about this time, one day before Barack Obama was inaugurated as our 44th president, we observe the 80th birthday of Dr. King, the only American of any race who has a national holiday named solely in his honor.

I too turned 80 last year, and still saddened by that day in 1968



when I walked behind his casket with thousands of others in Atlanta. As I remember this great man, I feel honored to have been among the 200,000 people who gathered before the Lincoln Memorial on the National Mall in Washington in 1963, when he gave his "I Have a Dream" speech, and I feel intensely privileged to have laughed and chatted about friends and professors over fried chicken and sweet potato pie that seemed to appear out of nowhere in those brave, historic days in Georgia.

*Ralph Lord Roy, a retired United Methodist minister living in Southington, Conn., was part of the Clergy Freedom Ride from Washington to Tallahassee, Fla., in 1961; the following year in Albany, Ga., he was one of the leaders of the largest group of clergy members jailed at one time in United States history. He has written several books, including "Apostles of Discord" (1953).*

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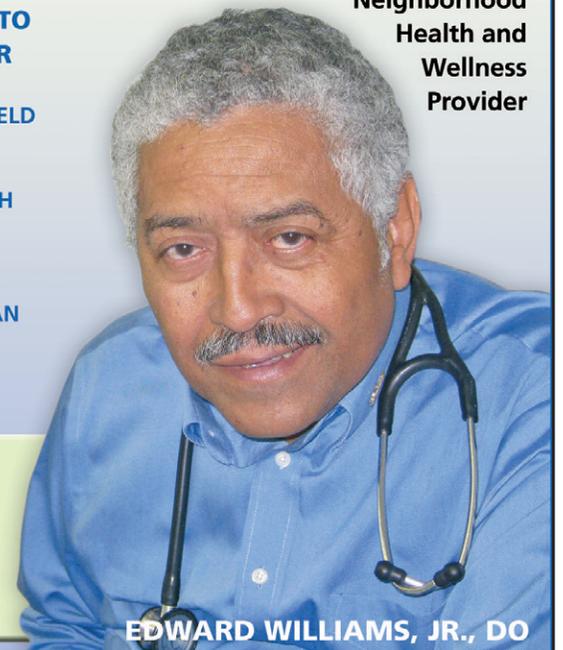
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Now that the holiday season is over, what better way to ring in the New Year than to start making plans for a Black History Month Celebration? Only a few weeks away, the month of February is set aside to focus on the many momentous events and courageous feats of Black Americans. Just in time to commemorate some of these great contributions, internationally acclaimed artist, Thomas Blackshear unveils several new designs of historical significance. Each piece of his collection can be purchased from Blackshear Online for yourself or as a thought-provoking gift that will arouse interest and inspire style for any decor.

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In a candid interview, Thomas explains the inspiration that led him to create the Obama figurine. "The reason why I wanted to do the Obama piece was because something was happening in this country that had never been done before. This was a piece of history that was unfolding right before our eyes. Who ever thought that we would have a Black president in our life time, and it's already happened."

Winner of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize, Obama's election was a historic event, not only for Black History but for the history of the United States. In addition to the figurine, Blackshear is introducing the Barack Obama Bust, a stately sculpture that adds distinction to any room. Both presidential pieces ship February in plenty of time to celebrate Black History Month.



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### AL SHARPTON continued from page 23

mandatory receptions and black-tie events – caused the weight to creep back.

"I went up because [when you're running for public office] you go from a lunch to a dinner to a brunch. I think I gained about 45 pounds. But it bothered me. For the first time in my life, it bothered me. So I would constantly start exercising, and immediately when I stopped running [for president], I dropped it all down. Unlike in my younger days, I became very weight-conscious and knew how much better I felt being leaner."

Once Sharpton strengthened his commitment, he hit his stride, and the temptation to return to his old ways fell away. Now, he says, he tests his willpower by dining out with friends who are eating his favorite foods. "I think I've always had discipline. I just never applied it to eating," he says, laughing. "When I was in Vieques, a guy told me that if you can control the way you eat, you can control your life," he says. "I've never forgotten that lesson."

His health-conscious lifestyle has rubbed off on his family and friends as well. "The people in his studio, his producer, they're watching their diets now," says his daughter Dominique Sharpton. "Everybody is trying to live, and he's been a great motivator. I'm very proud of him." "Black people, you can't have all this focus and determination in every other aspect of your life and then turn around and eat too much," he warns. "It means something's off. It means you've still got some work to do. God wants us to be in control."

To be clear, Sharpton insists that you don't have to go hardcore – like adopting the liquid diet he was on when he was jailed for the Vieques protest – in order to lose the weight. "I just eat healthy," he says. "I eat a chicken Caesar salad every day. It's all about lean meats, water, fruits and vegetables. And [I eat] soups, especially chicken noodle or tomato-based soups. I've found things that I actually like to eat, so I don't miss the old stuff as much."

And when he's on the road – which is most of the time – Sharpton chooses his hotel, in part, according to how good its fitness center is. "I work out first thing in the morning, before I even read the paper," says the self-described news junkie. "It's 30 minutes on the treadmill while I'm watching the news or listening to some music [and] 15 minutes on the elliptical trainer. Then, I'll play around with some weights – I might even hit the track afterward."

And even though Sharpton's resolve now is primarily to maintain good health, he's found that his trimmer waistline is a hit with the ladies. Talk about motivation. It's never been my focus," he grins sheepishly, "but it helps."

## The Influence of the Black Church on the Local Economy

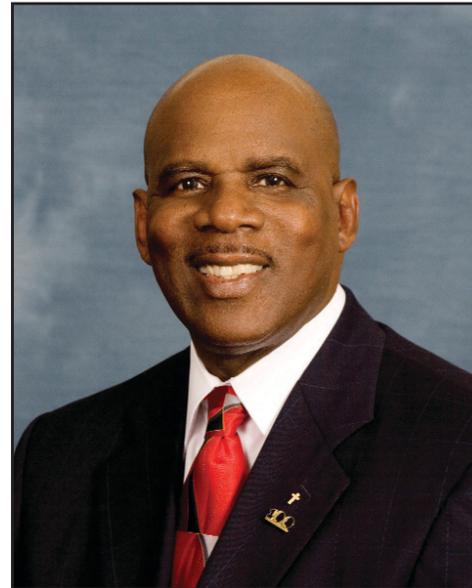
By: Rev. Dr. Robert M. Spooney

Executive Director/CEO, African American Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida  
Pastor of Christian Education, Fellowship Baptist Church of Pine Hills

The Black church has always had a positive influence or affect on the spending habits of Black America. It is apparent, however, that some of that influence has dwindled over the last ten to twenty years. This may be one of the reasons our community has been so hard pressed during this economic downturn. Now is the time for the church to turn back to teaching sound biblical economics. The black church can influence the spending habits of Black America by teaching the biblical principles that govern spending. The church must teach biblical principles of self - discipline to control spending and keep the triune nature of spending... that is Needs, Wants and Desires, in their proper relationship.

When it comes to spending we must consider our Needs. These are purchases such as food, clothing, housing, medical coverage and others that are necessary for our basic requirements. 1st Timothy 6:7- 8 says, “7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.”

Then we must consider our Wants. These are choices about the quality of goods to be used. Dress clothes versus work clothes, steak versus hamburger, a new Lexus versus a used Ford. 1 Peter 3:3-4 provides



**Dr. Robert M. Spooney**

sight of God.”

guidance in wants as it says, “3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward - arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel— 4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the

Finally we must consider our Desires which are those choices according to God’s plan that can be made out of the surplus funds after all other obligations have been met. 1st John 2:15-16 tells us, “ 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world.”

The Black church has a role in the local economic plan of the communities they serve. The role of the Black church includes the mission of empowering or edifying its members. The church is an economic engine in the community as it has individuals who are employed by the church in various capacities. Most churches employ at least one person. In addition, the church should hold seminars in biblical economics as I mentioned earlier and the church should be involved in entrepreneurial programs that help members develop and execute business plans.

Think about this for a moment, if the local church and its members used the same bank, that concentration of

**See Black Church page 30**





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## **Silence of God**

**continued from page 19**

### **Argument about honoring God in worship**

Some questioned this accusation. How did they dishonor God? By offering blind and lame sacrifices that even their own governor would not accept. **(Read Malachi 1:6 -14).**

People today still have this issue to overcome that is giving God their best. Many have stopped attending services like they use to, they have stopped serving in the various ministries at their local churches, and basically many have just flat out stopped attending church. Some will say that times have gotten tough! Well, if you had been attending church, you would have known that times are going to get even tougher! But God is able to bring us out of whatever may come our way! And even as Malachi said, try being slake with "Uncle Sam", it won't work, and the government will not accept anything less than what it asks for! But we don't have a problem giving any old thing to God.

### **Argument against the priest**

God was not worshiped properly because the priest did not act as godly priest by honoring God, giving the

people true instruction in God's law, walking in righteousness and peace, or turning people from wickedness. Because they corrupted the Levitical covenant, God will despise and curse them. **(Read Mal. 2: 1-9).**

Even the Ministers of God are not exempt! There are Ministers, or Pastors who care more about what they can get, rather than giving people truth. God was not pleased then, and he is not pleased now!

### **Argument on marriage and divorce**

The Jewish family was defined by its relationship to one father, Abraham, and one God, the God of Israel. But many Hebrew were destroying the traditional family, some by marrying foreign wives and others by divorcing their Hebrew wives. This profaned the people's worship of God at the temple and made it impossible for him to accept their sacrifices. **(Read Mal. 2: 10 -16)**

Today, one by one, states are legalizing same sex marriage. And many in the church are accepting it as though God has changed His mind about it. As well as

**See Silence of God page 28**

# Pageant 2010

*Mrs. Corporate America 2009*

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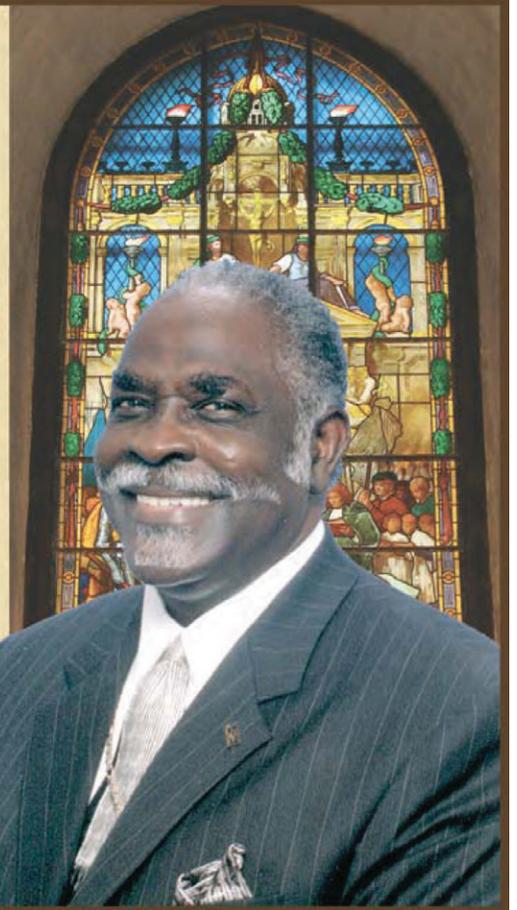
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*Pastor*



## Silence of God

**continued from page 26**

Ministers who leave their wives for other women, many who married women in the church that they lead. Don't be mad at me, God made this argument back in the Book of Malachi!

### Argument with God's justice

Things were so bad that some actually questioned the justice of God, suggesting that God delights in those who do evil. But God will demonstrate His justice on the earth when He sends His messenger to prepare the way for the coming of the messenger of the covenant "the Messiah". (Read Malachi 2: 17 - 3:6)

With all the events that have taken place in the past few years, many would have the same argument with God today. But for the faithful, we know that God is a just God!

### Argument with tithing

God asked the people to repent, but they did not seem to know what to repent about. God revealed that they were not tithing. If they would stop robbing God, He would

end the plague He had sent to destroy their crops and pour out a blessing so large that they would not have room to store their produce. (Read Malachi 3:7 – 12)

Well we seem to know more about this passage of scripture than any other in the Book of Malachi. Simply put, we must be faithful to our God and do as He said and put Him to the test. Many want to portray themselves as tithers, but the proof is in the pudding, tithers see God do miracles in their total lives! The key promise is that He would hold back the devourer from us! It's not just having finances come, but to keep back the things that take away the finances. Health, mechanical, the government, or anything else that would suck away our finances!

### Argument with the value of serving God

Finally, God accused some arrogant people who began to think that it was vain to serve God or to repent. They were so mixed up that they called the proud the blessed ones and the wicked the strong ones. (Read Malachi 3: 13- 4:6).

**See Silence of God page 30**

# Savor the Moment.... Ignite the Spirit

**W**hether it is a small gathering or a large event, make your next event the star event of the season. The holiday season is here. With it comes promises of great times and good memories.

Your ability to manage your many holiday responsibilities in effortless fashion will depend on your time, budget and creativity. What is the one thing that is on your list when you are planning that special event? Imagine...a grand ballroom decorated with elegant accents...soft music floating through the air...an event to remember...an event of elegance!!!

When you host an event you are showing your appreciation for the people in your life, while building a bridge that links friends, family, associates or co-workers. You set the stage for people to laugh, have a good time and create lasting memories.

The following tips will help you have an event to be remembered:

## ✦ **Planning That Special Event**

Whether the event is for family or friends, at home, restaurant or elegant ballroom, you want to add special touches that will help your guests get into the holiday season.

## ✦ **Shop Wisely**

You can shop for artificial or real decorations. Pine cones, holiday ribbons and bows, candles, and miniature lights add a festive touch.

## ✦ **Select a Color Scheme and Stick To It**

Red and green with gold or silver are great colors for the holiday. You can be different and create your own unique color scheme.

## ✦ **Pay Attention to Details**

You may want to assign family, or friends to attend to people as they come and go. Give them that personal attention.

## ✦ **Make Restrooms Special**

Place scented candles and along with hand towels that reflect the theme. Be sure to place extra toilet tissue in view.

## ✦ **Have Fun**

When you are the host or the guest at a holiday function, bring your best self to the event. Be cheerful, friendly, and open to those you meet and greet.

## ✦ **Hire an Event Planner**

When your time is limited, select an event planner to organize the whole thing! They can make your event one that your guest will enjoy and remember.

*A Spirit of Excellence Event Planning* is here to make your life easier as you plan your next event. The company is committed to providing personal, prompt, professional service and is passionate about making every event the BEST it can be!

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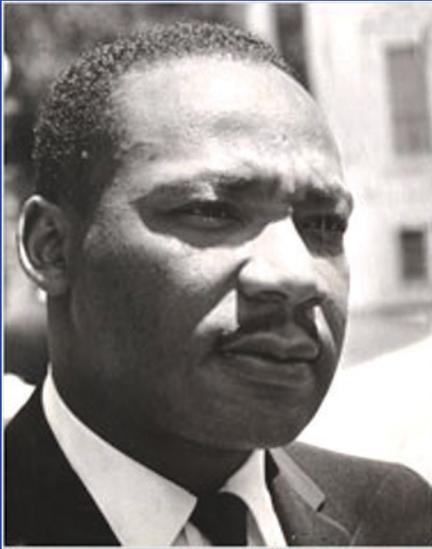
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*President/CEO*



## Celebrate A King



**Jan. 15, 1929 to April 4, 1968**

*“Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I’m not concerned about that now. I just want to do God’s will. And He’s allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I’ve looked over. And I’ve seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!”*

With these words, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. built a crescendo to his final speech on April 3, 1968. The next day, the civil rights leader was shot and killed on a balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tenn.

At the roots Dr. King’s civil rights convictions was an even more profound faith in the basic goodness of man and the great potential of American democracy. These beliefs gave to his speeches a fervor that could not be stilled by criticism.

He rose in 1955 from a newly arrived minister in Montgomery, Ala. to a figure of national prominence. It was Dr. King who dramatized the Montgomery bus boycott with his decision to make it the testing ground, before the eyes of the nation, of his belief in the civil disobedience teachings of Thoreau and Gandhi.

In the summer of 1963, Dr. King led the March on Washington, stirring the emotions of millions with the words “I have a dream.” On Dec. 10, 1964, he won the Nobel Peace Prize.

His strong beliefs in civil rights and non-violence made him one of the leading opponents to American participation in the war in Vietnam.

At the time he was assassinated in Memphis, Dr. King was involved in one of his greatest plans to dramatize the plight of the poor and stir Congress to help Blacks. He called his venture the “*Poor People’s Campaign.*”

## Black Church continued from page 25

wealth could give that local church such financial clout that banks would think twice before denying members business loans and/or mortgages. I agree with Tony Evans who stated in his book entitled “The Kingdom Agenda” that if every church would empower one responsible welfare family per year, we could eliminate the need for social welfare in five years or less.

Over the past 20-30 years the Black Church has become more than a political arena or an economic engine; it is also the hub of spiritual and moral instruction. The Black Church has always been a beacon in the community, and we find ourselves at a point where we are being told that letting our light shine is acceptable as long as it doesn’t shine too brightly or clearly proclaim truth and potential consequences.

The last 20-30 years has seen a rise in teaching that focuses on getting more. Many pastors and preachers are proponents of the prosperity ministry. However, the church of late has been concentrating on the business of creating economic institutions. The real issue is jobs, people being laid off through all this corporate downsizing is affecting every Black community in this country. The church is now finding itself in a situation where it is the best continuing organized entity in the Black community for the acquisition and redevelopment of land, the building of business enterprises and the employment of people. In other words the influence has not dwindled but it has been rekindled.

## Silence of God continued from page 28

We are witnessing this event take place right before our eyes. There are many in this country that comes against the People of God. They don’t want you praying in school or on the job, they don’t want you calling on the name of Jesus, they don’t want you praising His name at all! Remember Isaiah 5:20; **Woe unto them that call evil good , and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!** KJV

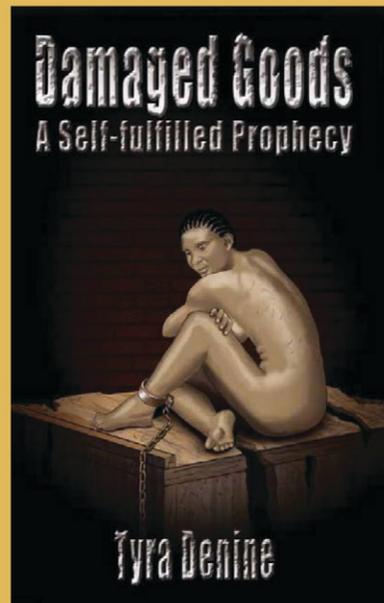
All of this led to 400 years of the silence of God. There can be no greater punishment than for God to be silent in your life! As we enter this new decade, my prayer is that we learn from not only the last decade, but from what the Book of Malachi taught us! It is a very dangerous thing when we get to the point that God stops speaking to us, when he stops leading us by His Spirit. We understand that we have direct access to His throne by Christ Jesus, but sin can cut us off when there is no repentance. How important is it for the Holy Spirit to speak to you and lead you? In this New Year may we all start fresh and get to the place where the people of God should be! I love you all, let’s share the love!

**In 2010, become more than a conqueror!**

## “DAMAGED GOODS” - A Self-fulfilled Prophecy

*She's tired. She's weary.  
Her spirit has been stripped  
and beaten to the depths of her  
core. The bruises that were  
inflicted, not only bruised the  
flesh of her back, but the hope  
of anything good as well.*

*Even though she escaped  
from the hell in which  
consumed her, she is still  
mentally enslaved in her past,  
trying desperately to free  
herself completely. She has  
one foot out of the door,  
but desires to escape and  
emerge as a whole person.*



Confidence and self-esteem are deeply rooted from early childhood. Unfortunately, many parents and children fall victim to the ugly realities of child abuse. *Damaged Goods*, a book of memoirs and poetry, explores this reality.

From childhood abuse, promiscuity, and self-hate the author recover from these damages. While looking back at life's traumas, she blossoms into a loving and confident Christian woman, finding closure and peace.



Tyra Denine was born in Sandusky, Ohio. She moved to Decatur, Illinois at agesix. She joined the United States Navy in 1987 and served over ten years. She currently resides in the Atlanta area with her two sons, Dante and Darius. “*Damaged Goods*” is her first published book.

**Tyra Denine**

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Excerpts From Chapter Five

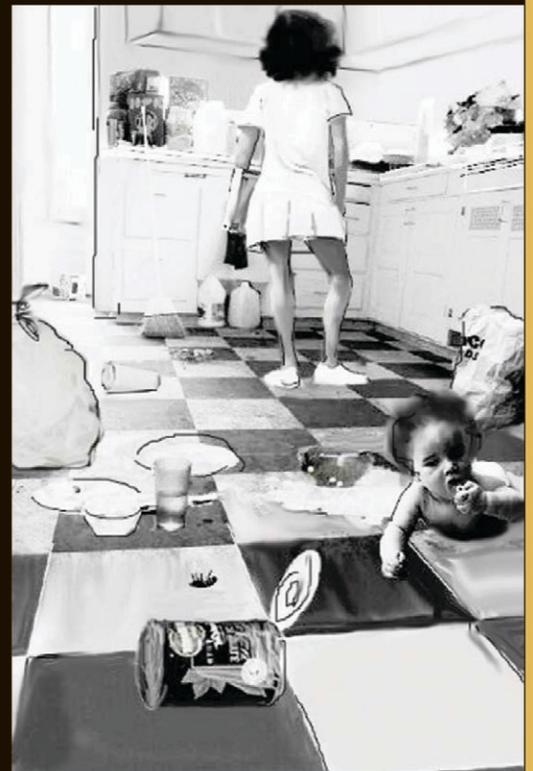
### Just Call Me Cinderella

I had grown accustomed to coming home and being welcomed with “Get in here and wash them dishes!” or “I need you to walk to Kroger and get some milk and bread, so don’t get too comfortable.” I usually came home from school, a game, or work with tons of homework or aching feet from standing at the counter all evening at McDonald’s asking, “May I take your order?” Away from the house, I could escape from reality. I could pretend that I was loved and that I was the apple of my mother’s eye...

Our house became the official drop-off station for every relative who birthed a child. Diapers needed to be changed, noses had to be wiped, and crying babies longed to be rocked to sleep. And after all that, the dishes still hadn’t washed themselves...

After everyone had picked up their kids (or they were staying the night), and most everyone else had gone to bed, I would be awake, standing in the midst of a disaster. Massive near-empty pots of collard greens, brown beans, black eyed peas, beef and potatoes, chicken n’ dumplings, or some other soulful dish my mother had concocted, sat waiting to be emptied and cleaned. Cockroaches scattered about the floor and countertops, eager to become their usual nuisance...

I finished scrubbing the pots and pans, washing the dishes, wiping down the countertops and table, and sweeping and mopping the kitchen floor. I was exhausted and thinking of finally going to sleep. But I remember that I had unfinished homework due the next day and still needed to find some school clothes to wear and iron them. I closed my eyes for a moment and allowed my thoughts to take over. Dreaming of a quiet place, I lost myself, once again, in my fantasies...



*I'm sick of life's deceptions. I'm fed up with despair.  
Why should I have to fabricate a life that isn't there?  
Is destitute my destiny? Is wealth just not my fate?  
Is pleasure a prospect for me, or my life meant to hate?  
With poetry's security, my fortune I will make.  
I well intend to gratify myself, make no mistake  
It may not buy me happiness. It may just purchase hate.  
It will however, pay the rent on my millionaire estate!*



*"We are the pleasant place, where the worship is exciting and the word is explained"*



Rev. O'Hara C. Black  
Senior Pastor-Teacher

**Worship Schedule**

**Sundays**

7:30 – Early Morning Worship  
9:30 – Sunday School  
10:45 – Mid Morning Worship

**Tuesdays**

5:30 – 6:30 – Family Fellowship Dinner  
6:30 – 7:15 – Prayer Meeting  
7:15 – 7:30 – Praise and Worship  
7:30 – 8:30 – Pastoral Adult Bible Study  
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# BREAK THE CHAINS OF FINANCIAL SLAVERY

By Darlene Robinson,  
President/The Steeple HOME Team

In the state of today's economy, with millions losing their homes to foreclosure and their jobs due to downsizing, many people turn to prayer to relieve themselves of their stress and burdens of life. Most people don't know that the bible contains almost 500 verses on prayer and a little less than 500 verses on faith, yet over 2,300 verses that address in very practical, specific ways how to earn, save, spend, invest and give money. Two-thirds of the parables deal with money. The Bible has more to say about money than heaven and hell combined, even more to say about money than salvation. The Bible has more to say about money than any other subject except love. So isn't it time we take charge of our own finances and break the chains of financial slavery and eliminate our debt?

Biblical financial principles that applied yesterday, also apply today, and they will apply tomorrow. These principles apply if you have a little or a lot of money, if you are single or married, if you are young or young-at-heart. Listed below are just a couple of the Bible verses that cover different financial advice.

- 1) Proverbs 22:7 "The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is slave of the lender."
- 2) Proverbs 13:22 "A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children,"
- 3) Romans 13:8 (NIV) Don't run up debts, except for the huge debt of love you owe each other.

One of The Steeple H.O.M.E. Team's primary goals is to save homeowners from foreclosure by negotiating an affordable mortgage payment with their lender. Hundreds of homeowners have enjoyed tremendous success through our modification system, therefore the



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*Darlene Robinson*



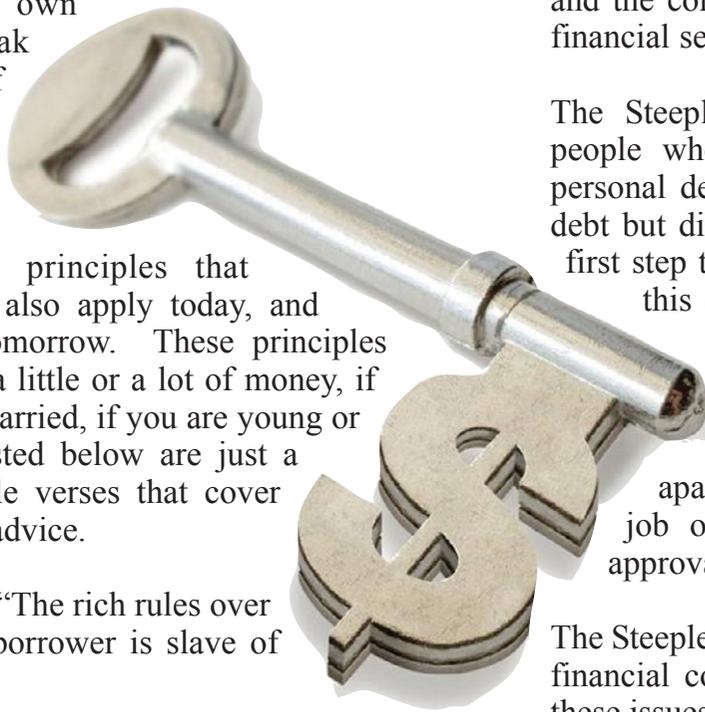
*Lawrence Robinson*

next logical extension of services for the homeowners and the community is financial planning that leads to financial security.

The Steeple H.O.M.E. Team consulted with many people who said they were overwhelmed by their personal debt situation. Or they wanted to get out of debt but didn't know how to get started to make that first step to take charge of their financial destiny. In this economy, it's more important than ever to take steps toward getting out of debt. A good credit score can impact the cost of homeowner and auto insurance. Whether you are approved to rent a house or apartment and in some cases, whether you get a job offer or even the type of job or license approval.

The Steeple H.O.M.E. Team has partnered with a global financial company to guide people through resolving these issues and to create a personal plan to show them how to take charge of their finances. When you have a financial plan you can visualize your success, whether it's getting out of credit card debt, paying off other bills/debt quickly, debt consolidation or paying off mortgages in one-half to one-third the time.

Call 407-615-4066 to schedule your financial needs analysis or for your personal invitation to our Financial Empowerment Seminars (Wednesdays/7pm) at The Steeple H.O.M.E. Team Center located at 771 Kirkman Road, Suite 108, Orlando, FL 32811.



# The Real Reasons 70% Of Black Women Are Single: It's Not What They're Telling You!



By J.J. Smith

**W**e've all heard on Oprah, CNN, ABC News, and the Washington Post that 70% of black women are single, and 42% are unmarried. We've even recently

heard a young black women (Helena Andrews) say that she is successful, black and lonely and that "Bitch is the New Black". Helena's story is probably the most heartfelt as I can relate to her, when I was in my 20s that is... but now at 40, I can say that there are many things that I have learned about Black men and 2 that stand out the most are that:

1) "Being a bitch" was never going to get me the love I desired from black men. (Note: Being a bitch as in being mean, argumentative, hard to get along with, bitter, etc.)

2) Our "credentials" don't attract men! Just because WE feel that we are successful, independent, professional and educated doesn't mean that we're attractive to men, or even datable for that matter. I have learned that it is our EXTERIOR that gets a man's attention (smile, look, personality, non-bitchy attitude, confidence and overall attractiveness) and our INTERIOR (our love for God, family, friends, being honest, supportive, respectful, emotionally stable, goal-oriented) that keeps a man coming back for more.

Even though many news organizations have provided the statistics I mentioned above, I've rarely seen these media outlets offer any real solutions. In fact, I've yet to hear anyone really explain the REAL reasons so many black women are single, as it's much more complicated than the "numbers". I personally don't believe in allowing the media to exploit this issue and give an appearance that Black people have issues and challenges that we cannot solve on our own. As a single, successful black women, I refuse to allow the media to make me feel bad or desperate about the plight of the single black female, especially given the personal and professional success sistas have made in a male-dominated world. So, Black men and women, WE can facilitate our own discussion on this challenge and identify real solutions that work for us. I'll begin by offering a 2-part article to address this challenge. In Part 1, I will discuss the real reasons why so many Black women are single... because you know the media isn't

telling the whole story and in Part 2: I will offer 10 practical solutions for women who are looking to find a "good man". Please feel free to share other suggestions!

## The Real Reasons So Many Black Women are Single:

*\*Note: Some of the reasons could apply to women that are not black, but the focus of this article is on Black women because that's all we keep hearing about in the media these days.*

There are many factors that have lead to why so many Black women are single, but I believe the most significant factors are listed below:

### 1) The Black Man Shortage (as I read on [Essence.com](#)):

42% of Black women are unmarried. 70% of professional Black women are single. The numbers don't lie and there is a real gap between "datable" Black women and men. Even if there is some degree of inaccuracy in the numbers, if you just talk to Black women, many will agree that there are some challenges finding a "good black man," that is ... one that is not behind bars, gay, or with other races. I'm also fully aware of this challenge due to the number of Black women who write me about it every week. So, the statistics do play a role in this challenge, but it does not tell the whole story. Please read on!

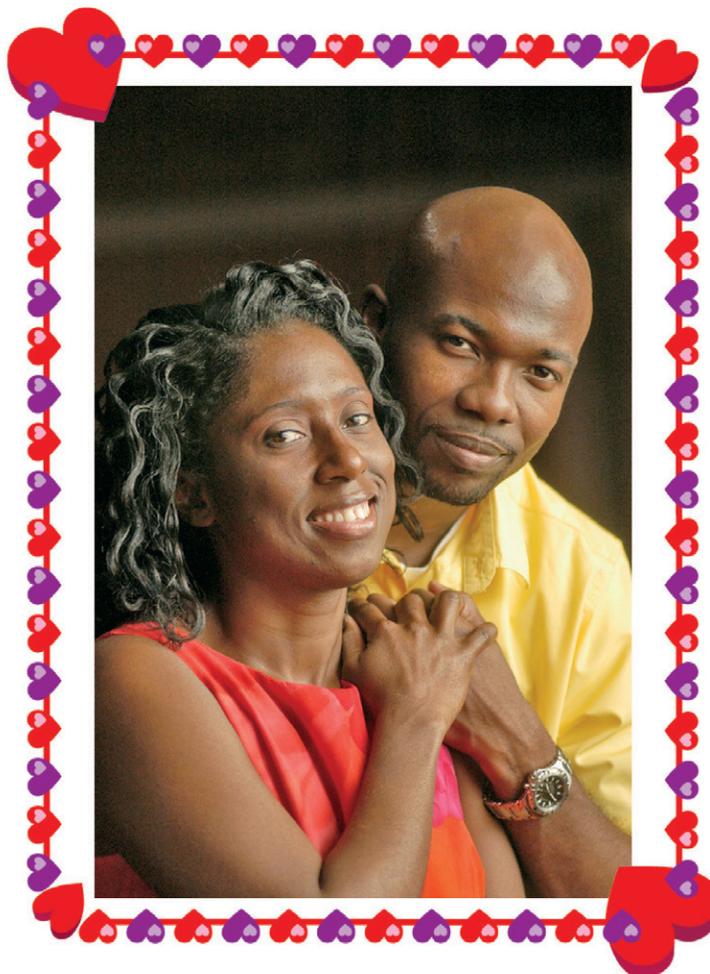
### 2) Too Many Black Women Have Bought Into the Stereotypes On Who They Are:

The perception that Black women are hard to get along with, mean, bitchy, argumentative, bitter, etc. has become a reality for too many black women. I know, because I used to be that way (and still have relapses on occasion but irrational behavior and constantly "going off" on people, especially your man, is not an attractive quality to have when trying to maintain a relationship with a man. I had to LEARN that just because I was running things at work, didn't mean I was going to run things with my man. So, I had to "check my attitude" at the door when dealing with my black man. Maybe a man really needs to be the head of the household, and if you don't trust that he can be, then leave him alone and move on. A wise man once told me that anything with two heads is a monster, so only 1 can be head of the household, and for me, I prefer it to be my man. Sistass, we

know we have carried too much of the financial and emotional burden of raising our families alone, but we should use that to draw strength from and not allow that to make us emotionally weaker. I remember being in my 20s at a management consulting firm I worked for and this brother told me that I would definitely make Partner but no one would ever like me because I was so damn mean, and I actually was naive enough to take that as a compliment; not realizing that my “meanness and bitchiness” had spilled over into my personal life and keeping me from attracting and keeping good men in my life.

### 3) Many Black Women Have Made a Conscious Decision To Be Single:

I know you’re saying yea right. But this is actually true. I know personally for me, I have been married before, but I prefer to be single, especially since I don’t want to have children. Personally, I am not looking to get married again, but I’m not opposed to the idea either. If I meet someone who makes me feel that being married to them is better than my freedom and the luxuries of my single life, then I would consider getting married again. The most important thing to me is to have quality, meaningful relationships with men with similar dreams, goals and interests in life. People fall in love and marry because it’s the tradition. Men and women have been getting married since before recorded history. Until recently, America was the most “married” nation in the world. But now many ask, “Do I have to be married to live happily ever after?” In today’s society, people have a strong desire to simply be happy, whether that means being married or unmarried. Being single is not synonymous with being “alone”. Many single people do have a meaningful love relationship in their life. Society makes people think that end goal of two people who love each other is a “traditional monogamous marriage” but I don’t believe everyone fits that model. Whoever said dating has to end in marriage? If marriages were so great, why do more than half of them end in divorce? So, there are really some women who are happy being single... Seriously!



### 4) Black Men Don’t See Many of the Qualities That They So Much Admire in Their Mothers and Grandmothers:

To say it’s just a shortage of black men is only a small part of the problem, but as Black women we have to re-evaluate who we are and who we’ve become today. Black men don’t see the strong, quiet strength of their mothers and grandmothers; neither the homemaking/cooking skills either. In my book *Why I Love Men*, I have a section called “Never Underestimate the Relationship Between a Man and His Mother” that discusses this further. A wise woman understands the precious bond between a man and his mother. You’re not going to change it nor would you want to. A mother is very proud of her son, especially if he’s a good man. His mother values him. His mom and grandmother has loved him unconditionally all his life, and well, you, not so long. If you want a smooth relationship with a Black man, be sure you understand WHY he loves his mom so much and it will help you build a stronger relationship with him. And, if you don’t know why he admires and loves his mom so much, ask him. In fact, a huge red flag for me is when a guy doesn’t have any relationship with his mother, and she is still living. Or if he speaks to his mother in a disrespectful or harsh manner, he will likely treat you the same way.

### 5) Black Women Have Spent Their Best Years Pursuing Their Education and Career Goals not Realizing that Their Strongest Assets (e.g., Looks, Fertility) Decrease With Age:

I know this may be unpopular, but it is the truth. A woman who wants to have a family should capitalize on her looks, age, and fertility while she is young instead of only focusing on chasing the high-powered career. I believe (and of course I could be wrong) that a man would more likely be with a young, fine woman that is less educated and makes him feel good (in terms of stroking his ego) then an average looking woman with a great career and education.) If marriage and having children is important to you, you may want to NOT focus as much time on pursuing your career goals, but spend more time pursuing and developing meaningful love relationships while you’re young, perky and fertile. If you want a husband and family, you have to pursue it with the same focus and attention you did to achieve your career goals, and by all means, don’t let your looks, fashion sense, and overall attractiveness go downhill. Note: In my book, *Why I Love Men: The Joys of Dating*, I share insider secrets, practical advice and techniques that any woman can use to

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# The Real Reasons

## Continued from page 35

maximize her physical beauty without cosmetic surgery, because as shallow as it may sound, how physically attractive you are is very important to men, and should also be to you if you are seriously looking to attract and keep a man.

### 6) Black Men Struggle More Than Any Other Group of People in Society and in the Workplace:

You have to ask why are there so many black men in prison and under-educated? Why is the unemployment rate so high for black males? Why is the suicide rate so high for black males? Why are so many black men absent in their child's life? Why are black males struggling more than other group of people? We have to better understand the struggles of Black men to really increase the number of datable black men...and I'm no expert on the answers to these questions and I know when I'm out of my lane, but there are others who have studied Black males and written on this topic and could surely provide some answers to these questions.

### 7) Black Women Haven't Adjusted to the New Hypercompetitive Dating Environment That Exists Today:

Many of the traditional rules of courtship don't exist, for better or for worse, Black women have to do things differently to attract and maintain a long-term relationship with a man. And, if you think about it, most of us have never been taught how to date to find a compatible partner. There was no college course for it. Yes, many women have received advice from family or friends. We may have taken advice from other single women. But most of us are winging it as we go. There are some women who are obviously better at it than others. In *Why I Love Men: The Joys of Dating*, I've consolidated the best strategies that I have learned from friends, relatives and my own experiences and frankly some of the best practical advice that I have ever received and successfully applied to attract the type of men I wanted in my life and they did show up. These strategies have worked for others and they can work for you. You can't continue doing the same thing and expect different results. It is time to change your approach to dating!

So, those are my thoughts, I'd love to hear why you think so many Black women are single and please be sure to read Part 2: 10 Things Single Black Women Should Do to Find a Good Man.

Also, check out Real Talk with JJ and The Fellas see [www.jjsmithonline.com](http://www.jjsmithonline.com), as we will dedicate our radio shows the entire month of January (1/13 and 1/27) we to discuss this topic so that Black men and women can have real dialogue and discuss real solutions. You can check out the show nationally, so please join in the discussion!

*J.J. Smith is a Dating and Relationship Expert, Author, Radio Host, Life Coach and Corporate Executive. J.J. is also the host of "Real Talk with JJ and The Fellas," a radio show that provides advice to single women looking for real answers on love, dating, sex and relationships. J.J. has appeared on NBC, FOX, NewsChannel8, Glamour Magazine, Ladies Home Journal, the Jamie Foxx Show, Montel Williams Show, Michael Baisden Show, HOT97, KISS 98.7 and many others. J.J. is also the Dating and Relationship Columnist for Black Star News. J.J.'s engaging personality, and no-holds barred dating books offer sometimes controversial guidance that has been grabbing readers and listeners, both men and women alike, and keeping them coming back for more!*

*J.J. Smith is available to discuss this topic on print/radio/TV. Feel free to contact her at [info@jjsmithonline.com](mailto:info@jjsmithonline.com) at 202-230-7195 or visit her at [www.jjsmithonline.com](http://www.jjsmithonline.com) to view her demo reel and media clips.*

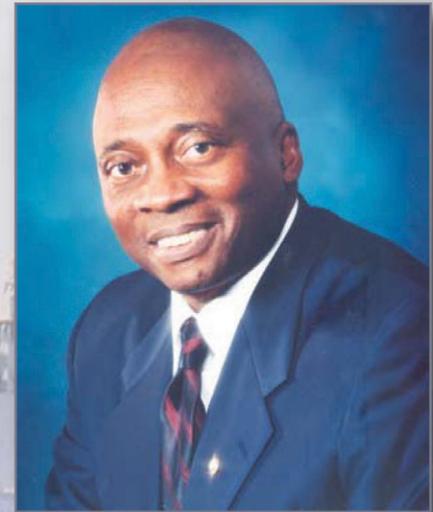




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# HEAL THE LAND

## ARTISTES UNITED AGAINST VIOLENCE IN NIGER DELTA

Musicians from the Akwa Ibom State have come together to produce a musical album in support of the nation's avowed quest for peace in the Niger Delta region. This **HEAL THE LAND United Peace Song Project** is an initiative lead by Mrs. Ima Ikon Jackson (a.k.a. Lady I), a Nigerian and a top flight broadcaster and radio personality who resides in Daytona Beach, Florida. She has lived through the violence of the brutal Nigerian Civil War (1967-970) and was a teenager during Nigeria Civil war. "With our music and song, we want to inspire our brothers to lay down arms and embrace dialogue. We want to let the entire world know we are a peace loving people," explains Ima Jackson.

**HEAL THE LAND United Peace Song Project** is a CD featuring songs like: "It Takes a Village," "Heal the Land" and "Niger Delta,"

performed by over 20 Akwa Ibom State musicians and written and composed by Ima Ikon Jackson. Proceeds from the project will go toward providing quality education at post primary school levels to children in the Niger Delta region.

The launch of this peace project was well received in Uyo, the capitol of Akwa Ibom State by dignitaries and celebrities, and Ima Ikon Jackson hopes that the cause will be greatly supported in the United States with purchases being made by individuals, churches, social communities, sororities and fraternities.

**HEAL THE LAND United Peace Song Project** CD makes a great gift to children as a special addition to their music collection.



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450 Cameron Street,  
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# Publisher's Editorial



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



## The 2010 Winning Team

“The world is such that what appears to be an end is only a new beginning.” As we close out another year, we begin a new one with a fresh start and the ability to do better and be better. This New Year may prove being better a tall order with the many obstacles our economy presents. Yet it is still our goal to make 2010 the beginning of the best of our life.

As a nation we just closed out another college football year and a new National Champion was crowned. Hundreds of teams from all across the nation competed but only one received the crown and appeared to succeed. However, success comes in many forms and to many people. In the sport of college football, not only one, but many are winners and many succeed.

The national title game presented two teams, to get to that game was a success – both teams are winners. There were over 32 bowl games of which over 64 different teams with over 5,000 players from 64 different colleges participated and each received from \$3 million to \$16 millions for education - each of these teams succeeded and their colleges are winners.

Of the 240,000 athletes who participated in college football this year, all came out winners because of the various goals they set and fulfilled. One's goal was to set their college's rushing yards record. Another's, their college's passing yards record. Yet another, the field goal points record. It was an honor for one to adorn the college jersey as a team member for the first time. Some times we are tempted to see only one winner in life's contests; however, all those who compete find themselves winners in many ways including self fulfillment and countless inspiration to others.

This New Year 2010 like all others embarks on us setting new goals. To many, getting a job tops their list. Our nation's unemployment rate is 10% and in some areas as high as 15%. This does not seem like such an enormous problem when analyzed by the simple number 15 out of 100 not having a job and viewed by someone who does have a job. However, when equated in actual life figures of 1 million people, for whether we live in a major metropolitan city, a large county, or even a large region of our state, there is 1 million people in your given area. Consequently, when your unemployment rate is 15%, 150,000 people are unemployed

in your area, and that means 150,000 families are adversely affected.

This number of 150,000 should bring the magnitude of the problem into perspective, but just in case not, here is a different perspective. If the average church membership is 300 people, then can you see the entire memberships of 500 churches without jobs? If you can place 10 churches to an average community, that would mean 50 communities in your area would exist with not a single person employed. When we see a small percentage number diminish a major calamity it is easy for those of us to carry on with no empathy until the problem knocks at our door...

Hello, it's 2010 and 150,000 people in your area are without jobs. This is a problem that affects us all, one way or another. Therefore, when a person sets their goal for 2010 to get a job, this is a goal we should all support. It takes a village because it affects a village. This is not a “personal” goal; it is a “person” goal. To make it through, we will all need to be more humane and become members of a Support Team, which in 2010 is the Winning Team!

We can learn a lot from a football team. We can learn the value of working together for a common goal. We can learn the hard work of rudimentary practice of drills, realizing that practice does not make perfect, but perfect practice makes perfect, not just doing, but doing it right. We can learn how supporting and making another person strong can lead to your own personal success and accomplishment. We can learn that it does not matter how little you contribute nor how much another contributes over you, when the team wins, everyone stands on the mountaintop of success and receives the prize...

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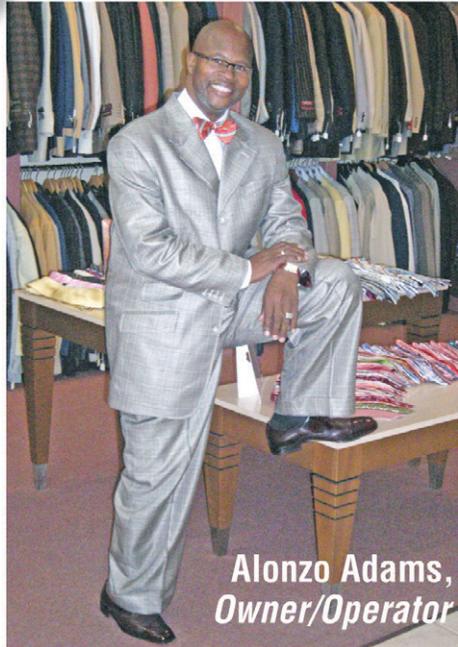
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