

# THE LIGHT

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 EVERY  
**FIRST & THIRD TUESDAY**  
**OF THE MONTH AT**  
**7:00 PM**  
**BLACK HISTORY MATTERS!!**

**2023 Theme**  
**“The Survival Of The Redeemed In the End”**  
**Luke 21:28**

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## THE VOICE FROM THE VILLAGE ~Prime The Pump of Faith~

Dr. Eric H. Jones, Founder/Senior Pastor



**Faith** is an act of the will, inspired by the love of God. Our faith at times can be challenged by the appearance of the shortcomings, irresponsibility, and even sins of the Church and its ministers, but one who has genuine faith will not allow those reasons to turn them back. Those who are inwardly transformed by the Blood of Christ are not controlled by what they see but what they believe. They live by trust and confidence in the faith that enables them to BELIEVE GOD. The story is told of a man who got lost in the desert. After wandering around for a long time his throat became very dry, about that

time he saw a little shack in the distance. He made his way over to the shack and found a water pump with a small jug of water and a note. The note read: "pour all the water into the top of the pump to prime it, if you do this you will get all the water you need". Now the man had a choice to make, if he trusted the note and poured the water in and it worked he would have all the water he needed. If it didn't work he would still be thirsty and he might die. Or he could choose to drink the water in the jug and get immediate satisfaction, but it might not be enough and he still might die. After thinking about it the man decided to risk it. He poured the entire jug into the pump and began to work the handle, at first nothing happened and he got a little scared but he kept going and water started coming out. So much water came out he drank all he wanted, took a shower, and filled all the

containers he could find. Because he was willing to give up momentary satisfaction, he got all the water he needed. Now the note also said: after you have finished, please refill the jug for the next traveler." The man refilled the jug and added to the note: " Please prime the pump, believe me it works"! We have the same choice to make, do we hold on to what we have because we don't believe there are better things in store for us, and settle for immediate satisfaction? Or do we trust God and give up all that we have to get what God has promised us? The choice is obvious. We need to pour in all the water, trust God with everything. Then once we have experienced what God has to offer, the living water, we need to tell other people, "**GO AHEAD PRIME THE PUMP, BELIEVE GOD IT WORKS.**"

**Koinonia Celebrating BLACK HISTORY**  
 365 days a year



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**Special Points of Interest:**

- New Addition to The Light - Spirit Corner Notebook
- Self Care
- Catbird Seat - Fatherhood and Faith

# T.E.S.T.I.F.Y

By Gisla Bush

## THE TEST: In times of trouble, lack, or sickness, do you have faith in God to the end?



I was pregnant with my 7th child. The dread of morning sickness again was upon me. However, this pregnancy took morning sickness to another level. Instead of the normal nauseousness and queasiness, vomiting was added to the plate. Regardless of the attempted remedies, the barfing was unrelenting. Desperation soon set in. I drove myself to the emergency room in the fear that I was dehydrated. Upon arrival at the ER, I explained to the attending physician my concern, and he ordered the requisite tests and bloodwork. When the results returned negative, the nurse said that she would bring back the discharge paperwork. I was relieved, Matthew 8:26. But before finalizing the discharge procedure, she checked for the baby's heartbeat, but could not find one. So, she made some adjustments. Still nothing. She left and returned with another nurse. The other nurse brought a different device to check for the baby's heartbeat. She glided the device over and around my stomach, but still there was no detectable sound. Fear never entered my mind, although I had contrary indicators. It was as if God was protecting me from something, because my brain never registered the possibility that my child was dead. The nurse

discreetly stated, "I will need to get the doctor to assist." The doctor was lead to my bedside where he proceeded to squeeze the cold gel onto my stomach and move the Doppler up, down, and around as he pressed in in the hope of hearing a heartbeat. Yet again there was no sound. "We will not be able to release you until we can hear the baby. I'm going to have you transported upstairs for a sonogram," the doctor explained. I responded jovially, "Okay." I was excited that I would see my baby. In Proverbs 4:23, Solomon admonishes us to guard our heart, for everything you do flows from it. Also see Isaiah 26:3. Transportation wheeled me to the ultrasound room where the sonographer was awaiting my arrival. As soon as she gelled her wand and placed it on my stomach, we heard the clear reverberating sounds of the baby's heart. My eyes were glued to the monitor as I waited for the first sight of the baby. How beautiful was the view. After she finished taking measurements, she inquired, "Do you want to know?" I thought, "Wow, technology has really advanced. They can determine the gender of the baby already." Although my other children's gender was not revealed until the time of their birth, I said to myself, "What difference does it make, Yes," I responded. She said, "It's twins!" Instantly, the sensation of heat rushed throughout my body. Starting at the head, the sensation proceeded downward to my toes. I was overcome with weakness. Had I been standing, I would have collapsed to the floor. I was in shock! As I collected myself, I questioned her, "How do you know?" I had been watching the monitor and I only saw one baby. She made me a believer when she displayed both babies side by side on the monitor.

After reporting the news to my obstetrician that I was pregnant with twins, she warned that the medical industry standard is to deliver twins by Cesarean (C-section). I could comprehend having such a procedure if the mom or baby were in danger. However, being pregnant with twins is a normal part of life, RIGHT? My twin sisters had been delivered naturally with no problems. I reasoned that twin births in the Bible was not an anomaly and women throughout the ages have given birth to twins without the intervention of C-sections. This was out of the question for me and did not represent the character of God, in my humble opinion.

**Testimony:** I immediately began searching for doctors who would deliver twins naturally. As I had been warned, I was unsuccessful in finding one that would accept my health insurance. In that regard, my husband was considering changing his insurance plan to accommodate the situation. This would mean that our insurance premiums would increase. I was not willing to spare any cost if it required being cut merely because I was pregnant with twins. Providence would have it that any changes to the insurance plan had to be completed that very day, since it was the last day to enroll in an insurance plan for the year. I told my husband to give me until 4 pm that day to identify a doctor under our existing plan who delivered twin babies naturally. I commenced my search for a doctor, but each effort was met with a "No, the doctor does not deliver twins naturally" or "I will deliver only if the baby is not breached." Things were looking bleaker and bleaker. Rather than trusting God, I began to "box" God in. I considered that maybe God would cause my breach baby to turn for proper delivery. I even seriously pondered the idea that I would prepare to deliver from home but then call EMS in the "nick of time." In the run against time, my niece called. She suggested that I call the birthing center office to get a referral. This sounded hopeful, so I immediately contacted them. The center's secretary indicated that there was only 1 doctor in the surrounding three counties that delivers breach twins under my insurance, but she proceeded to issue the caveat that the doctor was arrogant. Truly, bedside manners were the least of my concerns. It was nearing my 4 o'clock deadline and I had become anxious, despite God's command to be anxious for nothing but with prayer and supplication make your request known, Philippians 4:6-7.

*Testify, continued on page 5*



## Views From the Catbird Seat

Join Alvin C. Romer for commentary about life and faith in the African-American Diaspora.



### Fatherhood and Faith - Ideals for Familial Harmony

By Deacon Alvin C. Romer



The genesis for this essay started with a recent conversation I had with a man who sought me out for counsel and prayer, a broken man missing in action who had abandoned his family. He didn't come unnoticed by me, simply because for several weeks our paths crossed, and I sensed that something was amiss. Discernible options usually surface when you are able to deduct reason to exact semblances of order, especially if you can see it unfold quite visibly before you. To make a long story short, he came out with an issue that made me stop what I was doing to offer my help. Without hesitation, he blurted out—"I want my family back." Immediately I knew I had to not only listen, but hear him intently and empathetically. In his diatribe he shared years of being a deadbeat dad, bouts with alcoholism, infidelity, gambling and other unfathomable things that destroyed his family. This situation wasn't foreign to me. I used to be a deadbeat dad myself, mired in child support malaise grossly behind in the state-ordered payment plan to my ex-wife. I knew what he was experiencing, and on the spot we bonded. We prayed and I opened my heart to him. I gave him the same remedy that cured me. Basically, my whole train of thought centered on how a renewed sense of accountability via a changing of the mind for mental acuity would be par for this course. My articulation to him dealt with how fatherhood and faith initiatives would galvanize him and strengthen harmony and love for his family. I told him it would be a journey with road blocks, detours, and barriers that he would need to overcome for stability as he won back the respect and the spiritual dominion that the Lord gave all men for familial harmony. I gave quite a bit to chew on, and told him—"no more excuses" that he needed to become a Kingdom Man! When I plaintively mentioned the aforementioned, I knew I had his undivided attention.

The term, 'missing in action' has quite a few implications, but when attributed to how men neglect responsibilities to the oath sworn for holy matrimonial vows, well, it becomes a contradiction and you disappoint God. Simply put, the man depicted in this essay, and all other men missing from their families must express authority within their domain whether in the bedroom, boardroom, or the business. It is my opinion that far too many men are walking through life with unresolved trials and tribulation under bridges of troubled waters when it comes to lack of familial accountability. They continually struggle trying to overcome issues that won't allow them to rise above mediocrity. Questions will always be asked, how can they be magnificent? Where can they seek atonement? If you are thinking as I am, I can only think how spiritual authority would fit the bill. Answering these questions varies depending on circumstances and certain dispositions. What else did I tell this man? I conveyed to him the message attributed to **Colossians 3:21**— about maintaining harmony and stability in the home. Moreover, it was significant to ideals where contentment in families that fathers are Protectors, Providers, and as Disciplinarians, among others. We hear a lot about motherhood. Before I discuss the importance of these roles, I would be remiss if I didn't note that in many two-parent households others are left with the responsibility of a patriarchal role. This should not be. Here are the rest of my ideals:

- As a **Protector** — He is in the position to nurture and keep his family safe from outside interferences; he shelters them; keeps a roof over their heads;
- As a **Provider** — He's a breadwinner with a sense of duty providing food and clothing
- As a **Disciplinarian** — He instills the virtues of doing all things in a righteous manner; He prepares them for the future, aspiring them for bigger and better things, teaching them how to handle their impulses, how to stay calm under stress, and how to deal with adverse conditions.

*Fatherhood and Faith, continued on page 5*

# The History They Don't Want You To Know

## **SUPPRESSING BLACK HISTORY: PAST**

Clarksdale, Mississippi. February 1973.



#WOKE

Jonathon Harris, then-student body president at Clarksdale High School, approached his school's administration with a request brought to him by many of his fellow Black students: they wanted a Black history week assembly program at their school.

But Clarksdale's principal refused the request – and then suspended Harris and several other Black students after they held their own Black history celebration in the school's gymnasium anyway.

According to the federal complaint filed in 1973 by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF) on behalf of Harris and other Black Clarksdale students, the principal allegedly said he was withholding permission for the Black history week assembly because he believed the event would be divisive. "In his view, white students at the school would oppose such a program thereby creating 'disruption and dissention' in the student body," the complaint says.

Disruption did unfold – but it was of the kind that is currently erupting in school boards and state legislatures across the United States, in the form of coordinated local conflicts and policy maneuvers to suppress discussion about racism and race.

Clarksdale's principal walked into the gym where Black students had gathered and demanded they end the Black history assembly immediately. His order was soon enforced, as every single police officer in the city of Clarksdale arrived to disperse the student gathering, including those who were off-duty – and even the city's police dog.

The students were cleared out of the gym, and the school slapped them with suspensions. Later, Clarksdale's nearly all-white Board of Trustees would expel Jonathon Harris.

Although the Supreme Court had formally struck school segregation from the law almost two decades before this event, it would take LDF's litigation for Harris to be reinstated in school and for annual Black history commemorations to be allowed at Clarksdale High.

## **SUPPRESSING BLACK HISTORY: PRESENT DAY**

The concerted effort to impede racial justice in America through Orwellian measures banning, censoring, and otherwise suppressing conversations about race we see metastasizing today are the latest examples of a pattern observable throughout American history.

This is the pattern: whenever there is discernable – or even simply perceived – progress towards full citizenship for Black people in the United States, a virulent backlash ensues. This backlash, which inevitably manifests as the threat or reality of violence, has also frequently been enacted through the law.

Following the massive, multiracial protests for racial justice in 2020, during which droves of Americans not only took to the streets, but also eagerly sought literature to better understand the role of systemic racism in the United States, a mass of legislative measures banning books and limiting conversations about race emerged. This swift, politically driven backlash to the public's growing interest in the continuing quest for progress has only increased since the first installment of this series unpacking the phenomenon.

*The History They Don't Want You to Know, continued on page 7*

## HEALTHY IS AS HEALTHY DOES

### Health Tips and Advice by Sara M. Snell

### Self-Care

## What is Self-Care? Why is it Important to Your Health?

Self-Care means that you are aware of your needs. Being mindful of your own needs can also help you to be able to support people that you care about without stress. The National Alliance on Mental Health states, "Taking care of yourself is valid on its own."

We tend to focus on other people's needs and not our own. Self-Care awareness begins with having a well balance daily life. Author Bill Hybels calls it "Getting A Grip". This involves your life, your schedule, your body, your finances, your spiritual life and your relationships. Where are you devoting your time? Is it balanced in the areas mentioned previously? This requires planning how you use your time daily to create a meaningful more abundant life; one that is not out of control. Take an inventory of your daily lifestyle, to see where you are. Self-Care is indeed important to our overall health. Life is often filled with so much that it is out of control.



#### Keeping Your Life in Balance

1. Establish Priorities. Think about your life and set your priorities. Find some quiet time regularly to think deeply about where you are going and what you will need to get there. Jesus withdrew—"withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed." Luke 5:16.
2. Set Attainable Goals. Short-term goals that you can reach. Pray for God's direction. Proverbs 3:5-6.
3. Budget Wisely. Wise budgeting helps you control your needs over your wants. God knows your needs.
4. Build relationships. Build relationships with your family and friends- open and honest communication.

#### Listening is good for communication

1. Study the Scriptures. They offer one of the best sources. We have to keep in touch with the Spirit of the Lord. All scriptures are inspired by God. 2 Timothy 3:16.
2. Take care of yourself. Take time out for sufficient rest, exercise, relaxation, entertainment, and meditation.
3. Pray Often. 1 Thessalonians, 5:16-18 tells to rejoice always also to pray in every situation.

Bottom line: Live a balanced life. This will help to maintain a good quality of life, always putting God first.

#### *Fatherhood and Faith, continued from page 3*

Closing the chapter on this essay is not an easy one for me knowing that the Black family will always be misaligned as long as fathers are missing in action. The context and content of this message indeed, is part of a contingency plan for perseverance and purpose. Hopefully, my dialogue didn't fall on deaf ears as I shared insight accordingly. I was concerned about his self-esteem and whether he was willing to allow counseling to augment change. When it was all said and done I invited him to our church to be a guest in iconic quarterly Black Fathers Weekend sessions dedicated to prayer vigils for Black fathers. This program is committed to helping the whole family be successful, while giving fathers the opportunity for mentoring, encouragement, and spiritual enrichment. Lastly, it ultimately is about being consistent, demonstrating a trust-worthy mannerism and being contrite enough for redemption through faithfulness. It is not an option to be dead-beat and delinquent. Are YOU responsible for being the best father and husband for your family?

#### *Testify, continued from page 2*

I took the number and with dispatch made the call. I spoke with the medical assistant, and she confirmed that the doctor was a participant in our insurance plan. I explained to her my current situation, and she transferred me to the doctor's extension. "Wow, the doctor is going to speak with me and I haven't paid him a penny," I muttered under my breath. When he answered his phone, I explained that I was pregnant with twins, and that I wanted to deliver naturally. He assured me that he delivers breach babies too and that he has never lost one. I scheduled the first doctor's visit and hurried off the phone to call my husband to let him know that God had DELIVERED.

Food for Faith: There is a line from a popular Christian song that perfectly describes how God operated in our situation. It says, "Late in the midnight hour God's going to turn it around, it's going to work in your favor." Don't give up because it ain't over until God says it's over. God is our savior. God, in his majesty, has dominion and all power over our circumstance. So I pray, forgive my wavering faith and create in me a clean heart, Oh God, and renew a right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

To be continued...

## *Senior Pearls*

From the desk of Sister Fannie

### **SEWING UP BROKEN HEARTS**

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."  
Psalms 147:3

Do you remember the first time your heart was broken? Maybe it was a crush who'd let you down or a favorite pet that died too soon. Maybe it was the supposed love of your life who left you for someone else or a family member who betrayed you.

Whatever happened, there's no doubt it hurt and left a mark on your heart. It's a mark of sorrow, but it's also a mark of recognition. It's the first time you realized you couldn't trust in someone or something. That trust could be broken.

Our GOD knows how to heal broken hearts, not just because he shaped ours, but because his has been broken too, by us. Every time we reject GOD and turn to idols, every time we hurt ourselves, or someone else, every time we give into despair, we hurt our Father's heart. A heart that does not feel cannot be broken. But it also cannot love. And a heart that loves deeply can be wounded deeply. But GOD is the great healer, and he knows how to heal deeply.

GOD searches our hearts and finds the holes, then he carefully over time, joins the pieces together with new love, care, and understanding. A broken heart will never be the same as an innocent one. It is forever scarred, but with the scarring comes wisdom, and that window can blossom into compassion for others who have been hurt as well.

#### **PRAYER**

*"Dear Healer, Mend the holes in my heart so I can offer my whole heart to you." AMEN*



*The History They Don't Want You to Know, continued from page 4*

According to an analysis from PEN America, at least 10 states have a truth ban law in effect as of January 2022. Meanwhile, over 100 additional educational gag order bills are, as of this writing, slated for consideration in more than 30 states. Increasingly, the proposed bans seek to impose lawmakers' restrictions on speech not only in K-12 public classrooms, but also on discussion in higher education institutions, state agencies, business entities that receive state funding or contracts, and even organizations that benefit from state-tax exemptions or have nonprofit status.

The penalties proposed by legislators for violating these censorship edicts continue to escalate, too. Along with the threat of rescinding state funds, truth bans like those proposed in Alaska and Florida would mandate the firing of teachers who discuss prohibited concepts and enable private citizens to sue individuals who they suspect of "wokeness."

**WHAT'S PAST IS PRESENT**

As history illustrates time and again, the effort to use the might of the government to silence conversations about the complicated history of the United States is not new. Any high schooler who has learned about McCarthyism and the "red scare" of the 1950s could easily find parallels within their own classrooms today. Indeed, when teachers report feeling "terrified" to teach topics and texts related to race, gender, and systemic racism – when politicians are suggesting that merely discussing these issues is divisive, potentially illegal, and even "unpatriotic" – the echoes of McCarthyism are overwhelming.

In reality, one of the most patriotic acts we can take is to intentionally shape a more perfect union for future generations of Americans. This constant striving to realize our nation's most cherished ideals – freedom, justice, and equality for all – necessitates a truthful assessment of the lessons of the past. It also means listening to the voices and stories of communities that have historically been sidelined and buried. But the individuals pushing to suppress and sanitize America's history appear resistant to the idea that a more perfect union can or even should be shaped, especially when it comes to dismantling the racial injustices that remain.

As these many examples illustrate, throughout American history, the law has been repeatedly leveraged to limit Black people's education and freedom of expression – and it's a pattern that emerges on the heels of every movement towards racial progress. Today is no different.

What is also unchanged, though, is that the people targeted by this frequently wielded weapon of suppression have just as regularly responded to it with resilience. History shows that Black people – and their allies across races, religions, and gender – have never been effectively silenced. We the people will always put up a robust defense of our rights: to express our voices at the ballot box, to freely tell the stories of our lived experiences and of those who came before us, and to protect the right of everyone to learn the full story of Black people's indispensable contribution to the continual making of America.

**Story By: Ishena Robinson – Deputy Editorial Director, Legal Defense Fund**



Truism – an undoubted or self-evident truth

**"TO REMAIN NEUTRAL, IN A SITUATION WHERE THE LAWS OF THE LAND VIRTUALLY CRITICIZED GOD FOR HAVING CREATED MEN OF COLOR, WAS THE SORT OF THING I COULD NOT, AS A CHRISTIAN, TOLERATE."**

~ **ALBERT JOHN LUTHULI**



**THE LIGHT NEWSLETTER  
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## Spiritual Corner Notebook

**By Deaconess Thelma Ferguson**

Today is your present. Tomorrow will become your past.  
You have a choice to make about your future.

Let God change your future. He wants to fulfill His promise of John 3:16 to you and others.

**John 3: 16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."**

**Faith in action is a powerful witness.**  
Believe God's promise and share it with others.

## GET YOUR LAUGH ON - COMEDY FROM DEACON CRAIG SMITH



A bewildered driver was being tailgated by a stressed-out person on a busy boulevard. Suddenly, the light turned yellow just in front of him. He did the right thing, stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgater hit the roof, and slammed on their horn, screaming in frustration as they missed the chance to get through the intersection. As they were still in mid-rant, they heard a tap on the window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered the person to exit the car with their hands up.

The officer took them to the police station where they were searched, finger-printed, photographed, and then placed in a holding cell. After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. The person was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with their personal effects.

The officer said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you, and cursing up a storm at him. I noticed your 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'What Would Jesus Do?' bumper sticker, the Follow Me to Sunday School' logo, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk. Naturally, I assumed you had stolen the car!"

### Matthew 23: 2-4 Contemporary English Version

<sup>2</sup>The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law are experts in the Law of Moses. <sup>3</sup>So obey everything they teach you, but don't do as they do. After all, they say one thing and do something else.

<sup>4</sup>They pile heavy burdens on people's shoulders and won't lift a finger to help.