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SUMMER 2016

A NEW &
HEALTHY YOU!
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SUMMER SPLASH!
Kid Tips from Summer '16

EYES ON
ENTERTAINMENT
*Fresh Millennial
Musicians*

HEATHER LINDSEY

PROMISE
PURSUIT
PURPOSE



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MAGAZINE

goodpeoplegreatthings.co

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Hello to our Faithful Readers! Hopefully you have missed us as much as we have missed you! It is with great pleasure that we present to you our fourth issue of GPGT, Summer 2016! Yippee! We make efforts to stay true to our brand with being your millennial publication that is aware of what is going on, but GPGT still understands it is Almighty God who provides all that we have.

We have enclosed within this issue our most spiritually-focused articles yet, so we pray that you take your time to read it from cover to cover and enjoy the beautiful photos in between, as you allow the Holy Spirit to speak clearly and freely to you. We also invite you to celebrate with our family as I will be a day from walking into delivering my new beautiful baby girl by the time this

issue releases.

It is my prayer that you acknowledge the energy, time, and sacrifice it takes to produce this publication and that you will support us with your readership and through the purchasing of future advertisements.

GPGT's core belief is that, "God uses good (regular, ordinary) people to do great things" and it is our goal to feature them in this publication. Please send your letters to the editor at info@valencyathompson.com with GPGT in the subject line and your feedback or inquiries to info@goodpeoplegreatthings.co.

Would you like to view our media kit or recommend a feature? Please visit goodpeoplegreatthings.co!

God's Blessings to You! May You Be on **Path** to **Purpose**!

~Valencya Thompson



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Purpose Pusher!

Pushing You on Path to Purpose: Giving Birth & Spiritual Warfare

Faith:

You heard God correctly, the first time. Now is not the time to second-guess. It is time however, to study spiritual warfare and put the tools that you learn to use.

#1

Consistency:

Do the work and keep moving no matter what. If you're tired, take a break. Refresh, renew, and then keep going. The Kingdom of God is what's at stake here.

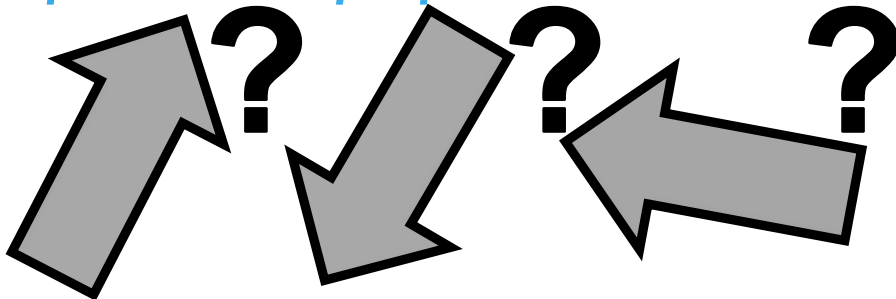
#2

Block Out Naysayers:

Seriously, why are you still listening to or even hanging around these people? Change your circle already. There is much work for you to do!

#3

So many are perplexed about their purpose or God's calling for their lives. Well, it is my belief that in identifying our spirit (God)- led passions, we might be propelled into purpose.



Giving birth to anything comes with an expected dynamic. There

is an expected time period for pregnancy, an expected level of adjustment and fatigue, mental, spiritual, and physical preparation. There is also pain that is normal for such preparation, and there is also expected attack from the adversary against the very nature that you are striving to bring to life.

If we could only keep this in mind, throughout the duration of any force that we are working to create, we might gain the necessary endurance needed to push through. This is true when the odds do not seem to go in our favor - even when (especially

when) we are in pursuit of completing a God-given assignment directly attached to our purpose.

Just as when a woman and a man happily conceive a child together, protect their new seed; we all are typically excited to protect the new seed God places within us for each new assignment. Just as a mother who desires children experiences nausea and those extremely drowsy days will not abort the life inside her, neither should you when you experience morning sickness from your new assignment. Or let's say, you possess the wherewithal to endure the normal pregnancy nuances, but during this particular pregnancy you find yourself facing

additional barriers, known to only a few. Should you consider aborting then? No. In the spiritual realm when bringing any God-led project to fruition you better believe demons in hell have been assigned to attempt to get you to quit. What every believer must know is the power of God that lies within you is far greater than any demonic force that is assigned to attack you (Luke 10:19; Rom 8:31; Psalm 44:5). Become spiritually-minded, utilize the tools God provides and keep going. ■



Valencya Thompson

Passion for Purpose:

Tips for Engaging in Spiritual Warfare:

- 1) **Pray without ceasing.**
(1 Thess 5:17)
- 2) **Set the atmosphere - playing worship music while working can assist with this.**
(1 Sam 16:23)
- 3) **Utilize corporate prayer & have prayer warriors praying for you as you continue to work.**
(Matt 18: 18-19)

#PUSH

A woman with her hair in a high ponytail is shown in profile, looking back over her shoulder. She is wearing a strapless, floor-length dress with a bold, abstract pattern in yellow, blue, and pink. The background is a softly lit room with warm tones, featuring decorative elements like gold garlands and a glowing light fixture. In the lower-left corner, the website address is printed in white.

D'Varia

www.accentovadao.com



Real happiness can't be bought, borrowed, earned, degreed, or married. It comes from within.

Growing up, I wanted to be everything from a farmer to a hospital administrator. It was around 3rd grade, however, that I realized I was an entrepreneur at heart. That year, I started making bracelets for my classmates, selling pizza after school, and collecting *Beanie Babies* in hopes of making a profit. I'm not sure who was buying what I was selling, but I even managed to peddle my *McDonald's* toys. I loved all of the problem solving, marketing, and creativity involved in running a business. But at some point between 3rd grade and adulthood, I stopped thinking outside of the box, and started playing it safe. After graduating college, I got married, chose a traditional

Dr. Kristian H.
 Teaches us to
Be Happy, Be
Healthy, Be
Free.

career, earned my Ph.D. in public health, and followed what I thought was a well-trodden path to success. By most metrics, I was doing everything right. But I wasn't happy. I didn't feel driven. Something was missing.

For a long time I couldn't figure out why I wasn't happy. But after some intense self-reflection, and the help of a divorce, I realized that real happiness can't be bought, borrowed, degreed, or married. It comes from within.

With that in mind, I started focusing on me. I realized that I couldn't be happy or truly successful if I was not taking care of my emotions and my spirit. So I started eating healthier and working out more. I stopped living for others, and started living for myself. And the more effort I put into taking care of myself, the more driven I felt. I started talking to other women and encouraging them to do the same. I started instructing others on how to achieve emotional, physical, and spiritual wellbeing. Before I knew it, I had turned my ad hoc advice into a business. Once again, I was walking in purpose.

When we focus on our inner-wellbeing, instead of on superficial markers of success, we find our true selves. Yet, too often we forget that health, fitness, positivity, and self-love are all things we need to be successful. By striving for self-acceptance, inner peace, and healthy, balanced lifestyles, however, we can achieve so much more than we ever imagined.

I want to help other women find the happiness that I found. If I can do it, I know that everyone can. When I realigned my priorities, I unleashed my inner entrepreneur and launched a successful career. Imagine what is hiding inside of you. Imagine what possibilities exist.

My advice to others in pursuit of their purpose is to start by recognizing what is getting in your way. Acknowledge the barriers that you and others have erected in your life. Maybe it's a fear of failure, of looking stupid, or of being judged by others. Perhaps you use food as an emotional crutch. (I know I do.) Whatever it is that is holding you back, figure it out, and identify new habits. Whether you gained 100 pounds, found yourself in a career that you couldn't stand, or realized that you simply aren't as happy as you ought to be, you didn't get there in one day. You can't expect to turn your situation around until you understand the origin of your problem. But rest assured, once you identify the problem and put in the hard work physically, spiritually, and emotionally, you'll then see everything else get in line.

As you go on this journey, try not to be too tough on yourself. That is more damaging than helpful. Take small steps, one day at a time. Don't try to change everything overnight and set unrealistic goals. Start with one habit that you want to create. For example, instead of going on a 30 - day juice cleanse, learn to replace sodas with water and then pick another healthy habit to attack. Be easy on yourself. Don't take away the hardest things first, start with the low-hanging fruit, the bad habits that are not that big of a deal and then focus on the bigger habits after you have developed this fortitude.



Whatever you do, remember that you aren't on this journey alone. There are emerging communities of millennial, black women like me, who are committed to encouraging and empowering each other as we commit to being our best selves. We are living authentically, and we aren't driven by what media tells us we have to be! We embody #girlboss. I am happy to be a part of this movement, and I think we have a lot to learn from each other. Together, we can take the paradigm of how we are *supposed* to live and turn it upside down.

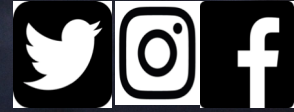
Be happy, be healthy, be free. That's what I tell myself everyday. It's a radical idea, because historically, black girls and black women haven't been allowed to be any of those things. But I want to create space for us to be all three. We have the power to do whatever it is that we want, to be whoever we want to be, to break away from the mold and live authentically happy lives. Let's resolve to take this journey together. I'm here to help you along the way.

Photos Submitted by Dr. Kristian Henderson.





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www.drkristianh.com

**See Dr. Kristian H.
in motion by
clicking here!** ↓

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGDo0i8PEHU>

*Be happy, be healthy, be free.
That's what I tell myself
everyday. It's a radical idea.*

*Video also visible on GPGT Homepage!

GOD



MONEY ??

Do you have Godmoney? Not sure? Let me help you out. Godmoney is a term I created that refers to individuals (like many of us) who trust God completely with their money. Not only do they trust God with their money, they understand their purpose in God clearly and allow that to keep them in a place of peace and balance financially. So, now that we actually know what Godmoney is let's ask again, do you have Godmoney? If so, GREAT, if not here are a few simple steps you can take to position yourself along the Godmoney road to peace and balance financially.

Step 1: Recognize It All Belongs to God!

Everything is His! All of our wealth, honor, strength, and power come from Him (1 Chronicles 29:11-14).

Step 2: Understanding financial prosperity without soul prosperity is dangerous.

The phrase "Prosper as your soul prospers," (3 John 1:2) is very interesting. Our soul consists of our emotions, our will, and desires. So imagine with me, having unlimited financial resources or prosperity, with a dark and weak soul, longing for the sinful pleasures of this world. Imagine I'm addicted to alcohol, drugs, porn, cutting, etc., and my soul (will, emotions, desires) doesn't prosper. I could very

well crush myself with this financial prosperity that my soul is not ready to properly maintain.

Step 3: Give. I know, it sounds too simple, but if we desire Godmoney, we must give. Giving, in my opinion is the best way to keep us focused and to prevent us from being inward-focused and only concerned about self. The Bible is full of examples of the wealthy and those in power giving (1 Corinthians 9:5-8, Exodus 35 & 36) and also examples of the poor giving (Luke 21:1-4, 1 Kings 17:8-16, 17-24). So we all must give.

Step 4: Be Faithful. Many of us are hoping for a raise, a better job, or even for our businesses to take off, but we *half-do* our current jobs now. We arrive late, leave early and waste all of our resources, yet believe God is going to bless us with more. In order to have Godmoney we must be faithful, disciplined and consistent so that we can be like the servant in Matthew 25:23, and hear Him say Well done... You have been faithful over a few things, but I'll make you ruler over many.

Step 5: Be Content and Patient. While building wealth, be content. How many of us can say what the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:10-11, " I have learned in

whatever state I am to be content"? It takes us 20 years to build up debt and we want it paid off in 20 days. Patience and contentment go hand in hand. Our usual discontentment is caused by a lack of patience. James 1 declares the testing of our faith produces patience, so we must embrace the test, if we desire to have Godmoney.

Having Godmoney isn't just about having a lot of money; it is about having the right posture with God in regards to our money. Some of my best times financially were during my lowest income producing times, but I had Godmoney. I knew my purpose and allowed that purpose to bring me peace and balance financially and having Godmoney can do the same for you.

Let your purpose bring you peace and balance!

~J.B.

Jevertus Burnett is the co-founder of the BOLD Institute, Registered Financial Advisor, and Licensed Agent ■

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By: Brandon D. Garrett, MBA

HOW REALISTIC GOALS ARE MADE



OK, let's get REAL.

Yes anything is possible.

Yes, your life has purpose.

Yes, God placed you on this earth for a specific reason.

...and Yes, there is Greatness within You.

But... (*you knew it was coming*)

Is anything possible? The politically correct success guru's answer would be "Of course, anything is possible." That sounds awesome. It may even make you feel all warm and fuzzy inside to hear it, but in terms of application and achievability, how does that actually help you? YOU, the person reading this article.

Anything is possible, but is it possible for you?

Your goals may be attainable and possible for someone...but you're not dreaming for someone else to accomplish your goals, you want them for yourself. We want to accomplish our own goals. We all want to see our dreams come true, so that we can live the life we wish to live, better support our families and maybe even positively impact the world in which we live.

Realistic Goals and M.A.D.E by the action we take in these four areas.

Mindset. Ability. Dedication. and Education.

In order for your goal to be realistic for you, you must have a right mindset, you must have the real world abilities required to accomplish this goal, you must have the dedication required to overcome the adversities you will face, and lastly you must have the education and know-how to complete the task.

When you think about your personal goals, answer these next questions to determine if your goal is realistic for you. The great thing about it is that if you are lacking in any of these areas, there are things that you can do to fill in the gaps, fine tune your goal or with better clarity you may determine that this goal definitively is or isn't realistic for you.

Realistic Goal Checklist

Mindset- How do you need to think?

- What was the mindset of people who have accomplished this goal before me?
- What are some of the common characteristics of people who have accomplished this goal?
- What mental characteristics do I have in common with these people?

- What experiences helped them develop this necessary mindset and how can I learn from those experiences to help develop my own mindset?

Ability – Do you have the real world abilities required?

- What are the skills real world skills or talents required to accomplish this goal?
- How close am I to having these skills? Where can I learn them?
- Is there a new way of doing what has been done or a creative approach I can take to doing it differently?
- Can I benefit from using the skills and abilities of others to help me accomplish my goal?

Dedication – How loyal are you to this goal in good, and bad, times?

- How important is this goal to you, and how far are you willing to go to make it happen?
- How passionate are you about the accomplishment of this goal?
- Are you committed to overcoming the obstacles, which you may have to face to accomplish this goal?
- Does your current environment support and encourage this dedication? If not, how will you prevent this from distracting you from completion?

Education – What do you need to know to accomplish this goal?

- What can I learn from people who have completed this goal that will help me?
- What lessons can I take away from the successes or failures of others who have accomplished this goal?
- What are the educational resources available for me to learn more about the subject matter of my goal?

From now on, when you set your goals ask yourself, “Do I have the right mindset, abilities, dedication and education required to accomplish this goal?” If you find you are weak in any of these areas, set a shorter-term goal to fill in the gaps you need to fill along the way.

Once you are confident in these areas you are well on your way to accomplishing your Realistic Goal!

By: Brandon D. Garrett, MBA is the founder of My Vision Tools LLC.
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Being Christ-Centered
Meet The Spears!



Genesis 1:26-28 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

If I could define Shawn and Jennifer Spears in three words I would define them as Christ-centered, loving, and loyal. Now I know that people often use those words loosely, but I have seen them personally live out a Christ-centered life in front of the world and behind the scenes with those who know them best.

I had the pleasure of meeting Jennifer Spears in 2003 at Francis Marion University where she and I attended college. Back then, I knew that there was something special about her. Jennifer is one of those people who is accepting of everyone. She literally has friends from all different walks of life. We met through *Sister 2 Sister*, a Christian women's

organization that she co-founded to connect young college women who shared a similar love and passion for Christ.

In 2013 I briefly met Shawn at a birthday party. My husband and I both commented that he was very nice and seemed to be very comfortable with meeting Jennifer's friends. Shortly after, Jennifer shared with me how she met Shawn while we were traveling alone together. She mentioned that not too long before meeting him she made a list and asked God to allow her husband to have specific qualities. She also described Shawn to me, and not just the surface level description (you know the things people usually say like he has a good job and a nice car... LOL), instead she told me that he loved the Lord, he was hard-working, and he desired to abstain from sex until marriage. I told Jennifer I think he is the one; we both smiled because I think she already knew.

On July 20, 2014 Jennifer and Shawn united as one. In a very beautiful and intimate ceremony they stood before their closest family and friends and professed their love for Christ and for each other. In 2015 The Spears welcomed their first child together, Cree Victoria. Their baby, Cree, is a beautiful addition to their blended family.

What I admire most about Shawn and Jennifer is that while they are both entrepreneurs with successful businesses, loving parents, and husband and wife; none of those things are more important than their passion and love for Christ. The Spears have shared their very transparent testimonies on their blog. To learn more about The Spears family please visit them at www.shawnandjenniferspears.com

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a vibrant red wide-brimmed hat and a long-sleeved, floor-length dress with a dense floral pattern in shades of pink, red, and white. She is smiling and posing in a wooded area with large trees and a grassy slope in the background. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

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FUN & LEARNING!

Grow with Your Children This Summer & Every Summer

By: Shanelle Ebanks

It's summer!! I get so excited thinking about longer days, hearing neighborhood kids play, free summer concert series, trips to farmer's markets, exploring surrounding cities, more time with family and friends, and maybe even a trip or two. The summer holds so many unique opportunities, but this isn't limited to summer fun.

Summer has great academic, physical, and social development potential for youth. But we have to be aware of the opportunities and challenges of summer. According to the National Summer Learning Association, *"every summer, low-income youth lose two to three months in reading while their higher-income peers make slight gains. Most youth lose about two months of math skills in the summer."*

Looking long term at the academic landscape, the National Summer Learning Association projects that *by 5th grade, multiple summers of reading and math loss can add up to as much as 2 ½ to 3 years of academic loss for low-income students compared to more affluent peers.*

Where to start?

Summer Reading:

- The goal: 20-30 minutes of grade appropriate reading a day!
- Ask questions or do activities that demonstrate reading comprehension. (It's not all about fluency.)
- Make it fun: look up summer reading challenges in your community. Start with local libraries. Then scour the internet, there are tons of online challenges, and your kids could win books, food, money, and more! (Barnes & Nobles, Books-A-Million, PBS, Pizza Hut, Pottery Barn, Scholastic, Chuck E. Cheese, and more.)

Many states place great emphasis on math and reading abilities. But, there's much more to education than just those subjects. Take a comprehensive look at your child(ren)'s academic experience. Look at test scores, report cards, and any notes from teachers. Are there any

areas for review or improvement? Compare this information to state learning standards for each subject by grade level. Can your child(ren) complete each task on the list? This is a great place to start summer learning and review.

According to Health.gov, *youth should have 60 minutes of physical activity a day, this should be a combination of aerobic, muscle and strength building activities.* I thought this should be easy to accomplish over the summer with all of the free time. But when I really thought about it, I could also see a number of barriers to 60 minutes of daily physical activity, like needing adult supervision, greater interest in indoor activities (e.g. video games) dangerously intense heat and other environmental challenges. Regardless, our youth need to be physically active. According to the President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition, *only 1/3 of children are physically active every day and less than 5% of parents are active for 30 minutes a day* and Kids Health notes that *teens tend to be less physically active than children.* Summer Fitness Activities finds that *daily fitness and play can improve memory and learning*, and being outside also provide your very necessary daily dose of vitamin D! Free vitamins!!

Get Active:

- Do it together, physical activity can be a family affair! Kick around a soccer ball, play tag or kickball, go for a walk/run, jump rope, hula hoop, play in the sprinkler, or have a water balloon relay race/fight
- Find a local park or garden to explore! Check your parks and recreation department for a complete list of parks and what each has to offer. Explore local gardens too! (check out FindaGarden.com)
- Get creative! Play evening tag with glow in the dark sticks (local dollar store,) outdoor obstacle course or even a scavenger hunt



The President's Council of Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition report that *children spend over 7.5 hours a day in front of a screen* (e.g. TV, videogames, phone, computer) and on average, almost 1/3 of high school students play 3+ hours of video or computer games each school day. Also, research from Sherry Turkle suggests that *youth are increasingly developing anxiety from the spontaneity of having face to face conversations*. Interaction both between peers and family members makes for healthier relationships among peers and stronger family bonds. **There are endless options for activities, including low-cost or free summer fun.**

Summer Activities:

- Try the library, which often has free shows and activities (e.g. puppet, magic, & science shows), movie theaters with reduced price kid-friendly movies, family/kid nights at restaurants, free museum days, free concert series, and local festivals
- Look through local independent newspapers, news outlets' apps, follow parenting blogs and educational outlets on social media for upcoming events
- Check out free activities at: Home Depot, Lowe's, Michaels, Toys R Us, & bowling alleys. FREE!

Another challenge of summer is food insecurity. School provides many low-income students two meals a day. Over summers, these students can be food vulnerable. The National Summer Learning Association states that *"low-income youth lose access to healthy meals over the summer. Six out of every seven students who receive free and reduced-price lunches lose access to them when school lets out."* One great way to explore a new activity and help to address food security challenges is by volunteering in your community.

Get Involved:

- Explore VolunTEEN Nation – the organization matches middle through college students with local volunteer opportunities
- Volunteer with local food pantries/banks and community gardens
- Choose a hunger fighting organization and help to raise awareness

Obviously, the summer holds lots of potential. These are just a few suggestions on how to make the summer and other breaks more engaging and educational while

challenging your children to get creative. As a family, what can you do together to make breaks from school more fun and interesting? Learning opportunities can be incorporated into everything you do. Have meaningful discussions.

It's important to expose youth to new opportunities to develop a healthier self-image and understanding of the world. Trying new things together is a great teaching moment.

As you try new things, you can show them how to explore curiosities and potentially overcome fears. Every break I get, I look forward to reading new books, exploring the arboretum, building dining room forts, living room camping, watching the *Finding Dory* movie, and all the other things I can get into with my little people. I'm also looking forward to hearing all of the fun summer stories from the young people I get to work with throughout the year! ■

Shanelle Ebanks is a Youth, Family and Community Sciences Professional who works with Youth Development Leadership & Volunteer Management & Administration based in Raleigh, North Carolina.

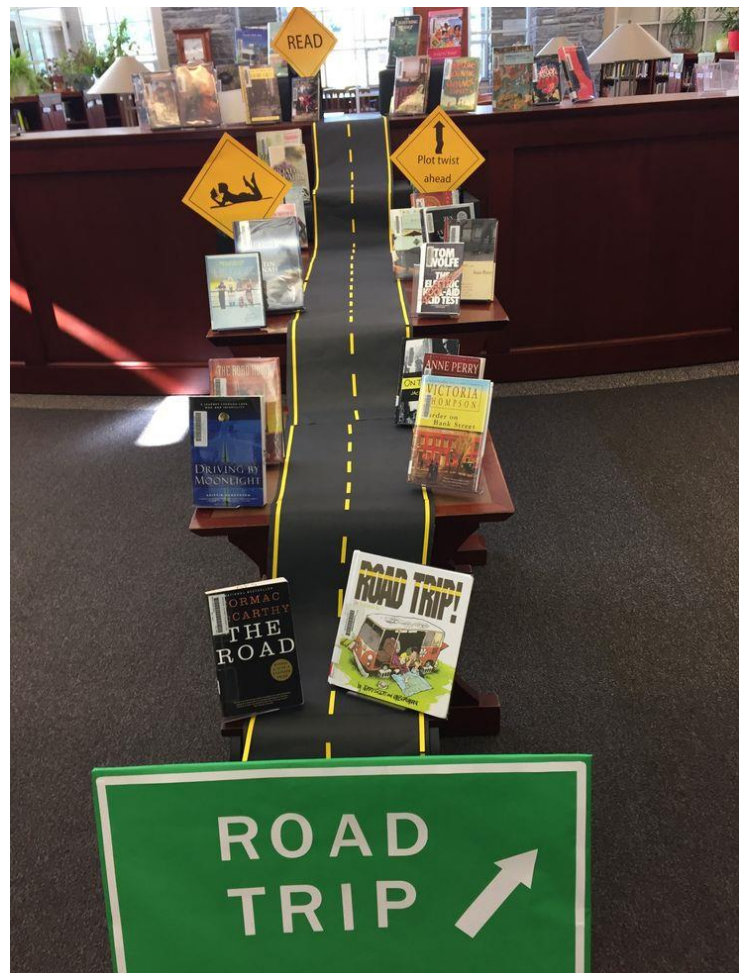


Image via Pinterest | tvahlsing

Pinksta & The Polka Dotted Pinstriped Pants Wearing Princess

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God Please Clean My Room

Children's Book



God Please Clean My Room: Second Edition is a fun and innovative piece written by Valencya Thompson & illustrated by Chasity Broughton. This richly-conceived story is based upon a real childhood memory, and was crafted to teach a life-lesson for today's children. However, after first glance, readers will soon realize that there is a moral for everyone to absorb in this book. As the readers journey along with the narrator through Christian's day, they will grow to love Christian and join her on a voyage to clean her room. Make room for this splendidly-spun book on your shelf today!

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2nd Edition
Valencya Thompson

ISBN 13 : 978-1-4691-2542-8
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Promise Pursuit Purpose *by Jennifer Spears*

Heather Lindsey

How old were you when you received salvation? Tell me about that time in your life.

When I was 18, I was first introduced to Christ. I was excited because I thought, "oh I'm not going to hell anymore" LOL. However, I continued to make bad decisions because I didn't know any better. I thought it was just some lip service that I would give the Lord. I didn't realize that there was an action that should take place. My life should be changed, but it looked exactly the same. It was pretty bad for like another year until I was 19 going on 20. At that time I was in a verbally abusive relationship.

He would cheat on me and I would lash out at him by denting his car with my heels or doing something destructive to him. I was crazy and he was crazy....we were both crazy together! So I finally broke up the relationship and basically hit rock bottom. That's when I gave my life to Christ for real this time. I went to a conference and gave my life to Christ there. At that moment I knew it was going to be real.



Pinky Promise[★]

I knew that I needed to fight to hold on to my walk with the Lord because I knew the enemy and the world was going to try to make me stray. So I went and got a Bible that I could read and understand. It was a Student's Life Application Bible and I also got a journal. I started having prayer time and spending time with the Lord. It was amazing!

Pinky Promise has grown to over 44,000 members with groups all over the United States and other countries. How was Pinky Promise started and how did it grow so fast?

I had a market of people who followed me because I started blogging. About 4 years ago I started posting these notes on Facebook and no one would like it or even comment on it but I didn't care because God wanted me to do it. Then he told me to write a blog and I had no idea how to do that because this was at a time when blogging wasn't as popular as it is today. So I figured it out and started posting my blog and sharing it on Facebook and no one would read it, but I kept blogging and posting it and all of sudden I looked up one day and I had a million hits and I'm like "where did all of these people come from?" Then I remember going before the Lord saying, "God I want to go into ministry full time and I don't desire to work a 9-5, but I need to figure out a way to bring in income and I don't know what to do so Lord you have to show me what to do." So at first I thought, I'm going to sell bedazzled journals and then it came to me, I'm going to sell *What Would Jesus Do?* bracelets except I'm going to design them for women to encourage them to honor God with their lives and bodies. So my husband and I went to a bead shop and spent hours learning how to make bracelets. Then I went to Michaels and bought all my supplies and went home and started making bracelets. I took a couple of photos of them and posted them online thinking that about 5 of my friends would feel sorry for me and buy them. Well after I posted them online, I ended up going on back order for like 6 months. God literally blew my mind.

Then I realized it's not enough to just give a girl a bracelet and say "girl submit to your husband" or "girl keep your legs closed until you're married." We needed to do accountability groups. So I started small groups and now 4 years later here we are. Every month I do monthly studies for women who join our groups, and they hang out, and encourage each other. I believe Pinky Promise has grown because in the book of Acts it says, "God added to their number." I know a lot of people who started ministries and they don't have almost 50,000 women but the Lord knows that my heart has always been to help people and not take from them. Our focus is to get people to know that they have worth and value in Jesus Christ.

You are a wife, mother, preacher, a pastor's wife, an entrepreneur, and an author; how do you balance it all?

I literally just wake up and I put one foot in front of the other and say, "Lead me Holy Spirit," because I don't know what to do every single day. I have so much on my plate and it's hard to balance it all. Even this morning I had prayer and quiet time, spent time with the kids and filmed two new YouTube videos. I have a nanny who is with me as I stay at home with the kids, so you would think, "oh Heather you're free," but no, the kids still want me...they are screaming for Mommy throughout the day. I'm thankful for our nanny who is able to assist me when I have to say, "Mommy has to go upstairs and study," or "Mommy has to go write." So saying no even to my babies sometimes is hard and even saying no to people in general is hard but I can't say yes to everything. I can't travel the whole world because I believe that home is my first ministry. Even after we get done with this interview, I'm going to go downstairs and meal prep for my husband. Now I could just order take out but, I believe that I have a responsibility as a wife to be a keeper of the home which means I'm responsible for the food that my babies eat. I'm so convicted by what the Word says I should be that it's important to me that I have all these things in line. I also learned that it's okay to need help.

So I'll get the nanny or I'll find an affordable housekeeper to help me clean up around the house so I can make sure that I'm taking care of the things that I'm responsible for. I don't say yes to everything because that will stress me out. So instead, I understand what I can do and I do my best at doing it.

In this day and age, with so many social media platforms, people find themselves comparing their lives to others and looking for likes and followers to measure their self-esteem. What do you say to people who feel this way and how do you handle some of your followers coveting your life?

Well, self-esteem is pretty much your confidence in yourself and I don't have that. I don't have confidence in myself. I have confidence in the Lord

and what He's done for me. If I put pride and confidence in who I am, I'm going to think that they came for me. I'm going to think that they like me and love me and maybe they do love me and that's great, but at the end of the day, my confidence is in the Lord. It's not in whether you like me or don't like me.

Because one day you'll love me, and the next day you'll hate me. So if I'm constantly bound to your opinion of me, then I'm going to be controlled by you and that would place me in *people bondage*. God cannot use anybody who's stuck in *people bondage*. I want the Lord to use me. I want to be so free to do whatever He wants me to do. I never want to be bound and wondering whether people are going to be offended by what the Lord uses me to say. I believe that God uses social media to lead people to Him. If you'll let Him, and not be so busy coveting everybody's life, then He'll use it to bring glory to Him. There's also a flip side...I believe the enemy uses social media to get people to covet your life. If people covet my life, that's between them and the Lord. They have to give that to Jesus. You could be trying to get pregnant and then see me post my kids but if you really follow my story, you'll find out that I had a miscarriage. The grass isn't always as green as it seems to be. I go through stuff and I share my struggles with people and they forget.



For many years we ate rice and eggs for dinner and I had my car taken away by the police because the dealership sold me a stolen license and I was paying for the car for 2 years.

We have had so many things that have happened in our lives, but I'm not focusing on those things. I'm focusing and pressing toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:14) and we all should be doing the same thing. Now if you're coveting and you feel like you're behind based on social media then you probably need to fast from social media and pull away from it. You're not behind, you're where you are supposed to be, but you're not going to get where you're supposed to be if you are focused on everybody else's life.

How do you remain so humble?

I never think of myself more highly than I ought to because I ain't nobody. It's God who made me. I'm nothing...I'm nobody without God. When women come up to me crying and saying that I saved their life, as a mature believer, I recognize that the Lord uses me to help people in their walk and I know that it's not me. It's the power from the Holy

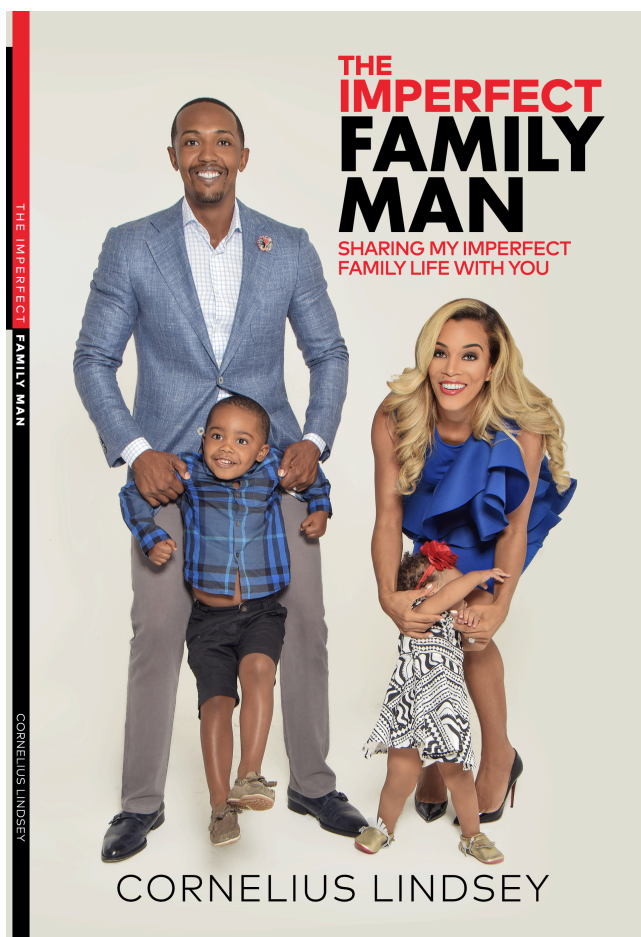
Spirit inside of me that encouraged them and brought them out of a bad situation. The Lord uses me to help bring people out of bad situations. Hopefully, they grow and mature and start making good and godly decisions, and then reach back and help somebody else. It's not even about me. So when I see other people thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to, I pray for them because it's dangerous...you can get it all taken away. God can remind you very quickly that these are His gifts and talents. I fear the Lord. I don't want Him to take away my gift because that would mean I wouldn't be able to talk. I believe it's a gift from the Lord and it's my job to manage it and to be wise with it.

You have a new book entitled, *The Purpose Room*. Tell me about it and how did you come up with the title and concept?

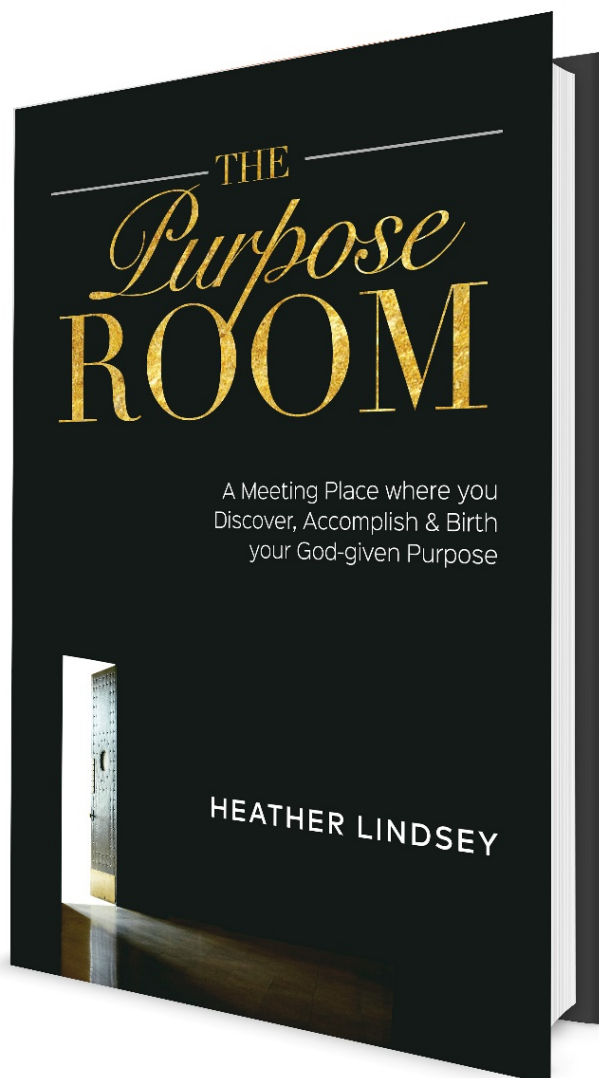
The Purpose Room is much like the room we are in (Heather's prayer room). I like to sit down with women in my books and say, "let's talk about your life."

I love my sisters in Christ so much to the point that I want to see them doing what God has called them to do. My idea for the book was almost like imagining a woman stepping into my prayer room with me. We would then, go over her life and I would ask, "Why aren't you doing what God has called you to do." "Is it fear or is it because you don't have the money?" "Is God truly your provider and do you truly trust in Him?" I even included examples of people who stepped out on faith or people who are in the midst of stepping out on faith, but are afraid to. I included these stories to show people that you don't need to have it all together. Instead, you get to surrender it all to the Lord and say, "God here's my life." I like to look at myself in the book as a purpose midwife where I help you birth what God has called you to do.


I believe that by the end of the book, people will have a better understanding of what God is calling them to do, even if that means not knowing. I think sometimes as believers we feel like if we don't know our purpose then, we are not successful. No, there's something about that season of being still knowing that God is God and that if He hasn't revealed it to you, it's not the right time. God is going to show you in the right time, but are you being obedient to step one, two, three, and four? The Lord didn't show me what He called me to do until I took the first step of obedience, which was break up with the ungodly boy who I was in a relationship with. So after I did that, he gave me another set of instructions. He told me to move to Washington, DC and take an internship. It was during that time in my wilderness season where He revealed to me my purpose. I wonder if God would have shown me my purpose during that time if I were out of position? No! I would have been cluttered in my spirit. So the focus of *The Purpose Room* is to let go of all the distractions and everything that's going on outside the room and start examining your life.



Available for purchase at lionheartcollections.com, corneliuslindsey.com, & Amazon/Kindle!



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We have to ask ourselves, "Did the Lord lead us to start this business or did we lead ourselves?" I think many people are pursuing a lot of things and their ladders are up against the wrong buildings. God never told you to do that and you are doing it because you are "about that paper, you are about that money." When you are in your purpose, money naturally flows. You don't have to chase it down and you don't have to persuade people to support it. You have your own specific lane of what God has called you to do and you don't have to beg, borrow, or steal or try to get anybody to approve of you. Instead, be secure with who you are in Christ. I wrote *The Purpose Room* because I want to see every woman walking in what God has called her to do. I want women in their lanes not worrying about what everybody else is doing, not being jealous or coveting anybody else's lives...just focused on what God has called them to do.

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Jennifer Spears is a wife, mother, entrepreneur and woman of God living in the metroAtlanta community. For more about Jennifer and her endeavors, please follow her on IG: @the_recessionista

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Queenship Restored

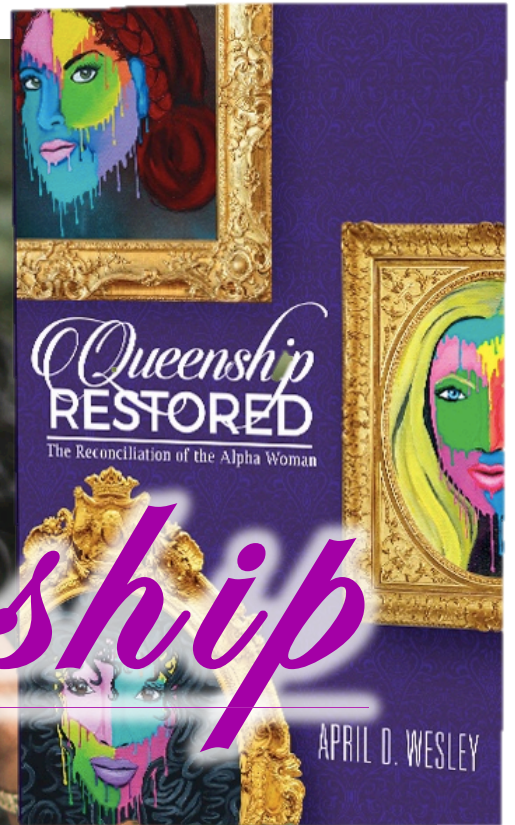
The Reconciliation of the Alpha Woman

By: April D. Wesley

Available at www.queenhiprestored.com

Amazon & Amazon Europe (amazon.com)

Barnes & Noble (barnesandnoble.com)



"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light."

- 1 Peter 2:9 NIV

QUEENSHIP RESTORED: THE RECONCILIATION OF THE ALPHA WOMAN challenges the label and lifestyle of society's "alpha woman." It calls for women to realize their true worth as an heir of God through Christ by no longer submitting to selfish desires and the all too familiar mindsets of acquiring power, titles, and material possessions. A true queen, one driven by righteousness, recognizes that boldly seeking and fulfilling the Will of God for her life is the only action that can satisfy and attribute to her wholeness.

Just as Christ is King and heir of God, we have been charged with the same responsibility of living a life purposed as a queen for the Kingdom of God. Our lives are purposed for the reconciliation of the family structure, community, and generations to come. It is time to turn away from our worldly motives and turn toward the One who is able to restore order. God is calling for queenhip to be restored.



APRIL D. WESLEY is a warrior for Christ passionate about transforming the worldly mindset of our generation. She boldly shares her own testimony of renewal as a speaker and founder of Queenship Restored, LLC, a lifestyle company that explores worth, purpose, excellence, and creativity through artistic mediums. April is a Dallas, Texas native currently living in Atlanta, Georgia, where she serves in several ministries, and has a career as a neurologic physical therapist.


 Demetrius McIntosh is captured in a dynamic handstand pose. He is wearing a red baseball cap, a pink checkered long-sleeved shirt, and dark blue jeans. He is holding a pair of sneakers in his hands above his head. The background shows a dry, open landscape with some trees under a clear blue sky.

Demetrius

McIntosh

Is

Dzyne By God



Talent Discovery:

I discovered my gifts for music and dance at different times. At 9 for dance, I had a strong interest with little rhythm and I was all over the place. I saw breakdancing and was drawn to it because while there is technique, you can use your own creativity. It was fun! My Mom saw my developmental process with dance and disregarded the ugly. I was 13 when I discovered my musical gifts. Singing was natural; my entire family sings or plays an instrument. Despite this, it was more of a get in where you fit in with my family versus direct mentorship. My father's mentality was that this is great to watch and fun to do, but it doesn't pay the bills, so when you get older you will have to get a 9-5. My mother has always been my source of encouragement. Yet, both my parents pushed me in different ways. Eventually as I stuck to it, I got better at it.

Balance & Family Life:

I am a follower of Christ, a husband, father, and family man. So, I balance in the following order: provider 1st, music and dance next, and self-employment is my eventual goal. My wife is my life and business partner. She has my back and attends my events. The kids join us everywhere we go and we play together. I get my boys up every morning and spend time with them every night before bed. I want my kids to always know that I love them so they come before my business and career because the decisions I make affect them short-term and long-term.

Flirting with Dance: Once, when I was younger Michael Hailey and I danced to Dorinda Clark Cole's song, *You Need Him*. The church liked it, but one person I admired knocked it; and it made me question if this was honorable to God or not, I kept moving.

Going Steady – Separation - Rescue:

I graduated from High School, started going to clubs, but I wasn't high or drunk, I only wanted to dance. I grew more in love with dance, started doing battles, and got cocky. I was invited to be a part of a singing group called *Threat Boyz*. I moved to Atlanta, my wife, who was my then girlfriend, was pregnant with our first son. I began to drink a lot and would come home at 4 and 5 am. The music career with the group eventually stopped. I wasn't going to church, I wasn't talking to God, and I wasn't reading the Word. I was broke and my manager who I was living with at the time said maybe you should go back to South Carolina, but I didn't listen. Instead, I moved in with someone else and it was bad.

I sought God and He literally said, "Get in your car and go home." My car had less than a half tank of gas, but I drove from Atlanta to Columbia, SC and I ran out of gas as soon as I made it to my parent's yard. The person I was living with in Atlanta was robbed that very night and their home was raided for drugs the next night. At that point, I continued following Christ and I stopped music for 2.5 years because I had to purge my system of things that were embedded in me. I had to break myself of my issues.

Discipleship:

I was blessed to have someone disciple me and hold me accountable. My mentor said, "I need to know where you are at all times, if you are willing to change." He eventually became my manager for my Christian Music career. He walked with me – even through my relationship with my wife and my son. I stopped drinking completely for a certain period, especially when I served as a youth leader at my church because it was against our code. Now if I do drink, it is only with my wife and it is responsibly.

Take on Purpose:

I believe that our purpose is something you're ultimately called to do and then it manifests into specific assignments. For example, I have passion for dancing and I find myself meeting people who want to know who Christ is through dance.

I also share the Gospel through music. After I connected with my purpose at age 19, I was provided an opportunity to mentor some young men who were able to walk away from gang affiliations once they found dancing and built hope. All of them are successful now.

Origin of Name:

Dzyne By God means created with purpose by the Creator. Its origin is from the word design – to create or to form. God created me and I have created my own style. Different seasons have different effects to create hope and inspire and this is what I hope to accomplish with my music.

***I'd never
seen anyone
breakdance,
pop-lock, or
spin on their
head for
Jesus, but I'm
gonna try.***



Creative Process:

I find the beat first, it speaks to me...is it happy, sad, dramatic, etc.? With dance, I get the feel of the beat, try to match the emotion of the beat, and correlate that to the lyrics of the song.

Advice to Artists:

My advice to artists who are tempted to quit when the road gets hard is the race is never given to the swift but to the one that endures to the end (Eccles 9:11, Matt 24:13). Nothing in life is going to be easy, if it doesn't kill you it makes you stronger. When you walk in the wilderness you don't know what to expect, but you don't want to be there too long. I've come out of a wilderness season. We have faith in God and know He will take us in the direction He wants us to go. He will lead you according to His divine will and purpose. He will not leave you or forsake you (Deut. 31:6, 8). Never be afraid to be who God has called you to be. Never be afraid to stand up.

By: Valencya Thompson

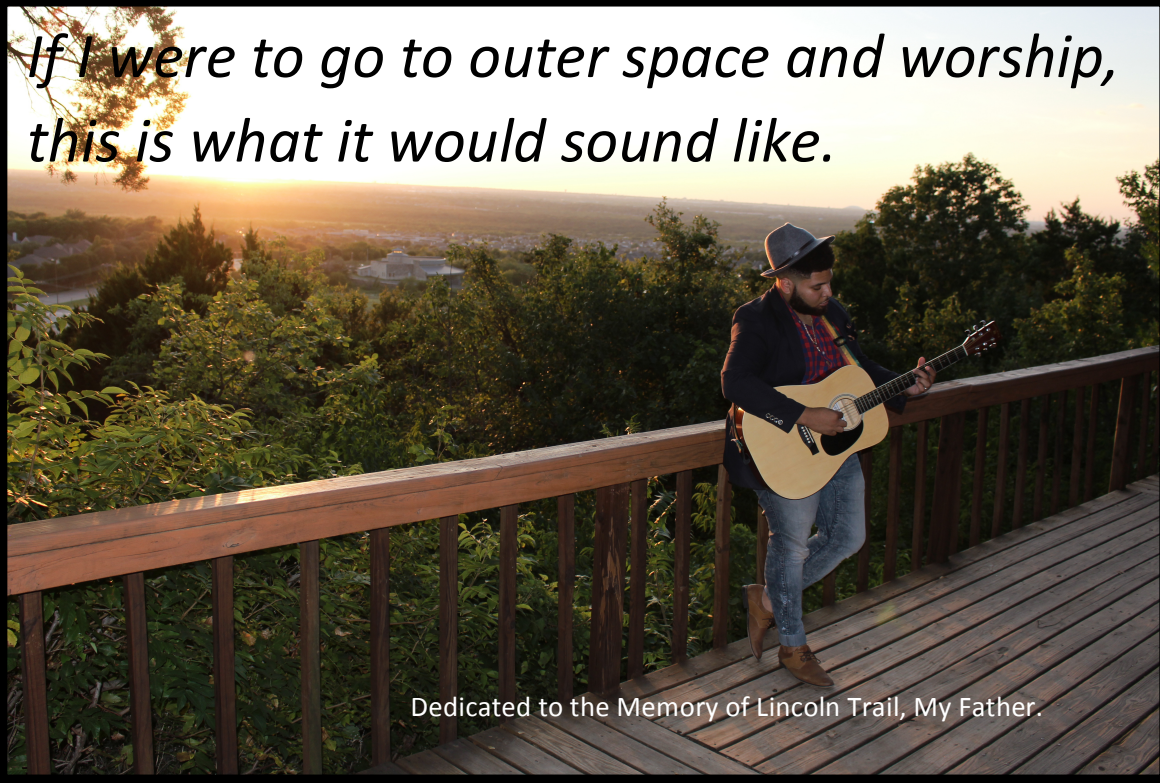
Photo Credit: Cory Smith, Idol Image Media Group LLC – IG: @idolimage & Demetrius McIntosh – IG@dzynebygod

JOSHUA G. STEWART —

COSMIC WORSHIP

By Valencya Thompson

*If I were to go to outer space and worship,
this is what it would sound like.*



Dedicated to the Memory of Lincoln Trail, My Father.

I first discovered my gift for music at 7 years old. I was watching an Usher music video and my aunt said, "Oh, you can sing." I thought, "I guess I can." My relationship with God started about 5 years ago. I have identified my life's purpose and it took me about 2.5 long years to discover. I was an R&B artist for 10 years. God said, "I have something better." My brother in ministry, Jonathan Traylor and I are in a group, *One 1 Way*. After I heard him sing, I thought, "I wanna figure out who this dude is." He became a mentor to me and molded me.

My creative process shifted as my relationship with God grew. I wanted to make love songs for God. I didn't know the Bible like everyone else did. Jonathan said, "you're alive aren't you - you can write music." In my Christian artistry, my style changes daily.

*We would draw more
people to God if we
would just be ourselves.*

www.cosmicworship.com

IG: cosmicworship

Cosmic Worship to me is an experience.

My ministry is transparent. I love science! We divide science and God. My music draws the two together. God created that science you believe in. If I were to go to outer space and worship, this is what it would sound like. I want people to see that it's okay to be transparent and to be yourself. You fit in where you're at. He made us in His likeness, but not all the same. We would draw more people to God if we would just be ourselves.

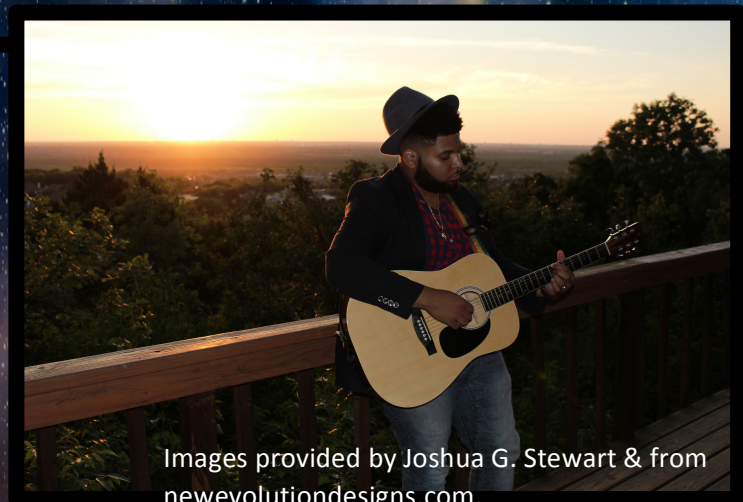
The first Pinky Promise Conference I attended with *One 1 Way* was in 2014. There were 1300 to 1500 people. It is much larger now. While worshipping there, I heard God say, "Be quiet." I scream and belt out a lot. A few seconds later, he told me to speak and I began to speak in tongues. I never asked for it. I tried to go to Jonathan Traylor and say, "Hey Man, I'm speaking in tongues," but it wouldn't convert back to English, so I began to speak in tongues to him, cried, and we hugged.

My words to aspiring artists are, No matter what, if this is what God gave you...if you were created to minister, minister. My father had a heart attack in November, I did CPR, and he wasn't responding at all. My father was lifeless. I tried to breathe life into him before the paramedics arrived and I could not. He was my biggest supporter, so I thought I couldn't continue to do this (music). I promised that I'd never stop worshipping, ministering, praising God and I stopped for four or five months. I had to switch to a new church because it was hard for me to be at my old church without my father who was very active there.

One day I practiced my guitar with the fireplace lit. Then the fire went back out and remained that way while I was looking. My fiancée came into the room and said, "Babe, before we leave put that fire out." I said, I already did, but what I didn't know yet was every time I played the fire re-lit. Four or five months afterwards I received the message. God is like that sometimes. If I were to stop singing and ministering, when I go to Heaven God would say, "10,000". "The amount of souls that didn't make it here because they weren't blessed by your music." At that point, I decided I'm still gonna love God, still gonna praise God no matter what. I just worship and people tell me how they are blessed. The testimonies are bigger than the music is.

Every time I go to lead worship with our group at the Pinky Promise Conference I lose my job. Once I confronted God about it and God said, "so you gonna let this \$10/hr job keep you from doing what I need you to do?" So I now have a new job that I start in a few days with more money and benefits after losing my previous job when I attended Pinky Promise at the end of last month.

I would like to acknowledge my fiancée who is my muse, Kourtnei Smith; my father, Lincoln Trail; my mother, Stacy Trail; my mother-in-law to be, Christy Wiggins; my Aunt, Michelle Guidry; my birth brothers, Lincoln Stewart and Terrence Withers; and my brother, Jonathan Traylor for imparting into my life.



Images provided by Joshua G. Stewart & from newevolutiondesigns.com, wonderfulengineering.com

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hello BEAUTIFUL!

By: Charlemagne Stallings

Photo provided by: Charlemagne Stallings



Time...it's a funny thing you know. I find myself trying to protect it, cherish it, make the most of it, wasting it, slow it down and speed it up and then wondering where it went. Ha! Please tell me I'm not alone! I struggle many times with whether I am really fruitful or just busy. In today's culture being super busy is a badge of honor. Terms like *goal digger* and *hustle* are trendy. If I allow myself to get caught up in the hype, I start to rely on my own strength and forget that grace will get me to more places than hustle ever will. When you are busy you are aimlessly chasing the wind and there is nothing to show for all of the time you have spent.

However, when you are fruitful you intentionally spend your time on things that matter in eternity and will be worthwhile to show how you invested your time. When the Lord asks for an account of how you spent your time you can proudly say here is my life. I was obedient to you when you told me to prioritize my prayer life, join a small group, and invest my time in someone else consistently. I was obedient when you told me to rest or when you told me to stop hosting my bible studies and invest more time in my marriage, or stop volunteering for everything at work. I was obedient when you told me to show up for someone else or show up for myself and carve out some time to work out, or take a dance class or go out with my girls for once.

I feel a very real pressure to be there for everyone and show up to every invitation, but at the end of the day (my last day on earth), will it have mattered? All of this striving to make people happy, trying to uphold a certain lifestyle, or image of the ideal millennial woman will be pointless if the Lord told you to go left and you went right. When we say yes when we should say no because we don't want to disappoint anyone; that yes to one person or event is inherently a no to someone or something else anyway. So we may as well choose wisely. There is beauty in that tension between yes and no because you have the opportunity to choose to be used by people or used by God.

I had to reevaluate how I was spending my time after my dear mother unexpectedly went home

to be with the Lord this summer. Talking about time...I sure wasn't ready. But based on the way she spent her life she sure was. She wasn't perfect but after retracing the full account of her life she didn't need more time to get it right. She didn't waste any moments. I always felt she should have kept her house a little more organized, but when I consider the alternative to how she was spending her time - I guess she had it right all along. She was zealously making the most of her time here on earth and investing in people and communities. She served others with her time, money, material possessions, her resourcefulness, made time to do things she loved, and was an exemplary mother and MiMi (grandmother).

Her example taught me that whether I have little or if I have plenty, all of it is a tool to extend God's grace to others and shine the light of Jesus on someone's dark moment or to leverage my abundance to create opportunities for others to rise above their situation. When people are telling your story after you are long gone, trust me, it WILL have mattered. You never know what hangs in the balance for your life and others around you based on how you spend your time.

Consider Proverbs 19:21, "Many are the plans in a man's heart but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."

Prayer: *Lord, I am humbled that you would choose to use me to carry out your greater plan on the earth. Help me discern whether I am busy or fruitful and give me the courage to let my yes be yes and my no be no so that the way I spend my time can be an act of obedience and worship to you.*

Charlemagne is a resident of the metro-Atlanta area, a school counselor, wife, and mother. To keep up with Charlemagne, follow her on IG @hellobeautifulpgt

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