# THE REMARKABLE (CO)

Working Extraordinary Miracles E-Magazine

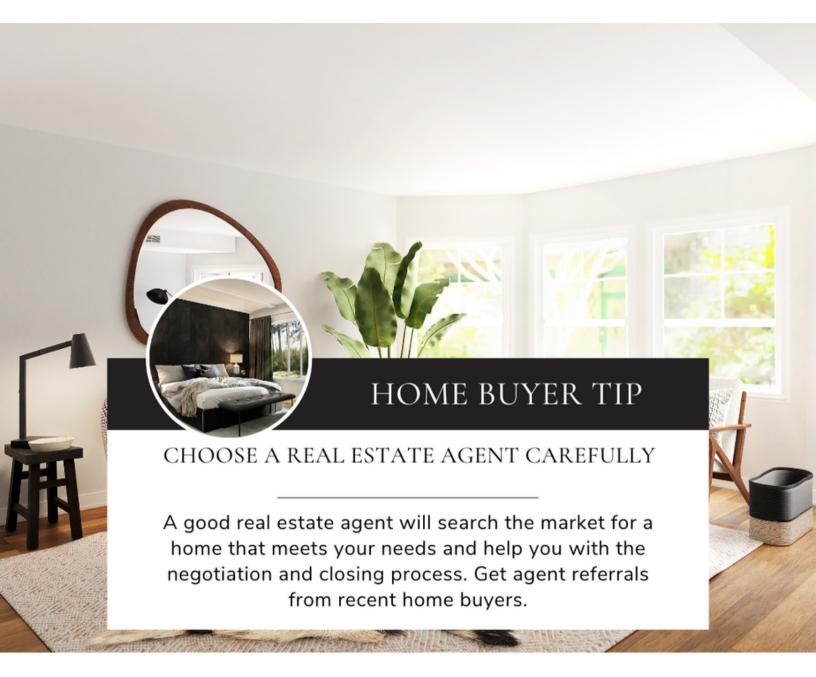
From Loss and Grief To The Sunrise A Series of Incredible, Miraculous, and Divine Encounters

Welcome Message

The Remarkable God Founder, Pastor Mi'guel Adams God Doesn't Need My Help

> How is Your Love Life?

Spring/Summer 2024





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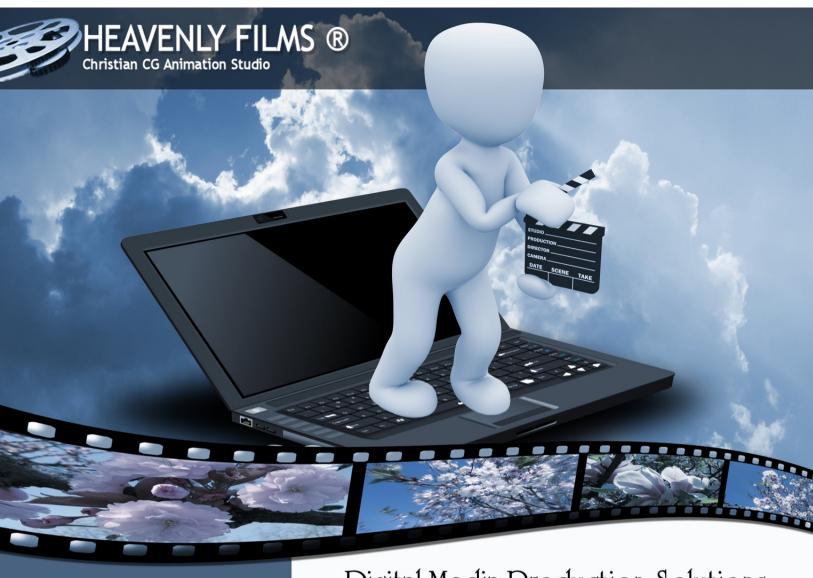
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### WELCOME

Greetings and Salutations in the wonderful name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We welcome you to our spring and 6th edition of The Remarkable God e-magazine. To our faithful readers, we welcome you back and to our new readers, we welcome you to become a part of reading about the greatness of God. We hope that you will be greatly inspired, motivated, enlightened, and strengthened by the articles and the stories of ordinary people who have experienced this awesome God. The magazine is growing into a readership of thousands of people all across the nation and in the Caribbean Islands. We are trusting that The Holy Spirit of God will guide this magazine to be read all around the world for His Glory!

People are sharing and discussing the articles and the testimonies that have been presented in this magazine. God's people have experienced life-changing, soul-saving, healings, deliverances, and divine encounters with the risen Christ. Our past magazines include stories of Pastor Moussa Toure being taken up to Heaven, my own mother's testimony of amazing grace after seeing the Lord Jesus Christ in a church service, a young man being transported to Heaven, a child being visited by the Lord Jesus in the hospital and was healed from pneumonia.

The stories that we present are soul-searching, spirit-wrenching, and mind-boggling. If a person is not a believer in God's divine power these stories may be unbelievable, but to the believer in Christ, they are shared for His Glory. In this edition, we are presenting the testimony of Bishop Marcus Johnson, who died and was transported to Heaven, and the touching story of John and Barbara Barry who lost their son at the young age of 26, and how God gave them grace to press forward through their grief. The gripping story of Rosalind Lewis Esq, and the death of her minister husband at the age of 47. This 6th. Edition will touch your heart, soul, and spirit and you will give God the praise. The other articles are very informative concerning mental health, Marriage, Money management, and the Amour of God. Again, we present to you the true stories of The Remarkable God!



Pastor Mi'guel Adams, M.A. Publisher, The Remarkable God

CONTACT
www.inhispresencemedia.com
adamsmiguel98@gmail.com
P.O.Box 6938
Largo, MD 20792

Blessings and Shalom! Mi'guel Adams M.A.

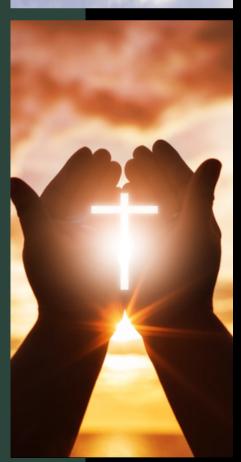
**Publisher**Pastor Mi'guel Adams, M.A.

**Chief Editor**Carolyn Scott-Dixon

**Designer/Webmaster** Leonard Young

### Contributors

Dr. Ramani Nokku M.D.
Dr. Lisa Padgett-Hughes
Rosalind Lewis, Esq.
Bishop Marcus A Johnson Sr.
Barbara R. Galloway M.Div., M.B.A.
Rev. Carolyn Tatem M.S.
John and Barbara Barry



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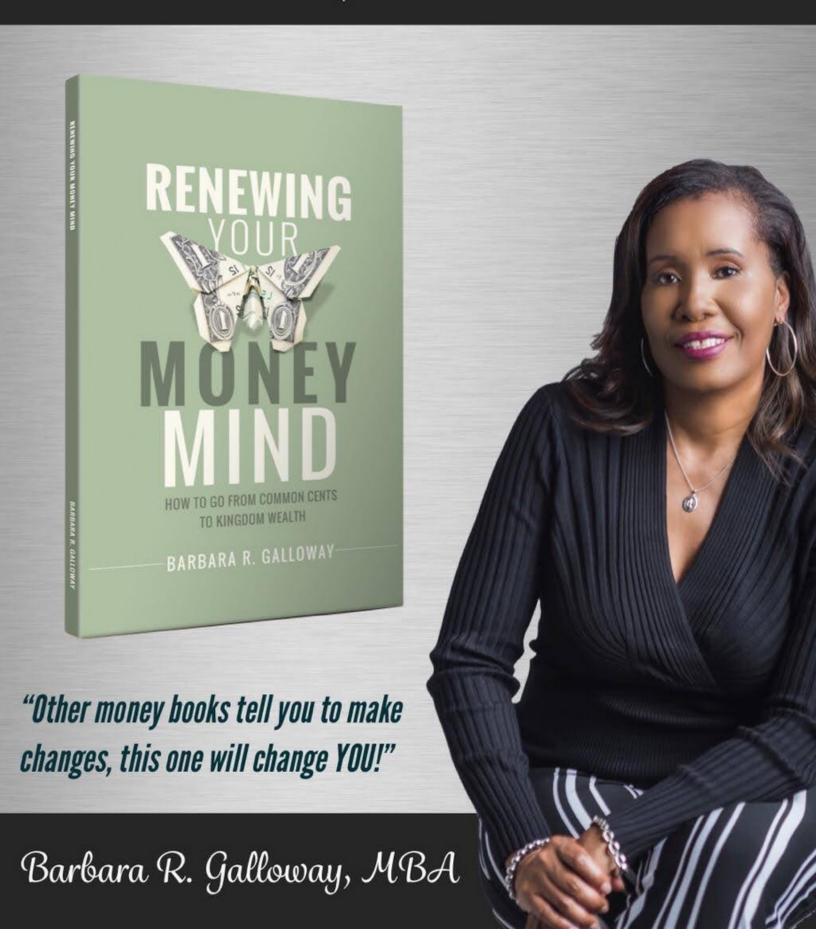
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# Render Unto Caesar "Busting a Common Tax Myth"



By Barbara R. Galloway, M.DIV, MBA

Author of the Amazon Bestseller: Renewing Your Money Mind

We've made it through the first quarter of the new year. Are you still adhering to your financial resolutions in tack? If not, don't fret because tax season is upon us and it provides yet another opportunity to do better. Tax season? Blah. Blah. BORING! I know, but don't turn the page just yet. I promise to make this as painless as possible. And you just might learn something, if not for you, then for somebody you care about. If that's not enough to convince you to keep reading, Jesus Himself talked about taxes, and if it was important enough for Him, well...

### What DOES the Bible say about taxes?

As much as most of us disdain the subject of taxes, and paying them even more, it is a biblical principle.

"Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed." – Romans 13:7

And when Jesus was asked directly by some of the Pharisees if it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not, He answered:

"Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

The verdict has been clear for over 2,000 years, we all must pay taxes; which begs the question...

### WHY do we have to pay taxes?

Founding Forefather Benjamin Franklin put it this way:

"...but, in this world, nothing is certain except death and taxes."

Giving a piece of our hard-earned money to governments is a certainty and a necessity. Because taxes provide our governments with revenue to fund:

- road maintenance and improvements,
- · schools,
- · emergency services,
- · welfare programs, and
- the overall financial well-being of our country

### Continued - Render Unto Caesar - "Busting a Common Tax Myth"

### **Busting a Tax Myth**

Most people get a large tax refund every year. Just weeks into the 2024 tax season, nearly 75 million taxpayers had already received a tax refund, according to the IRS. But is this a good thing? Should you celebrate when you get a large tax refund? The answer is a resounding "no."

HERE YE HERE YE: If you get a large tax refund, it means you overpaid your taxes throughout the year and you're just getting your own money back! A large tax refund is NOT a free gift from the IRS and you shouldn't jump for joy.

Now, maybe you're perfectly aware that you overpaid taxes all year long, and you're ok with it because you need the forced savings. Perhaps you've gotten used to using that lump sum of money to travel, pay bills, or make some large purchase. How often have you heard, or even said yourself, "When I get my tax refund, I'm gonna..."

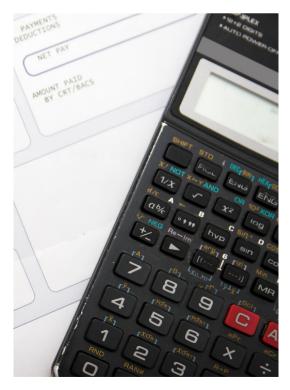
But consider this: when you have too much tax taken out of your paycheck throughout the year, you are loaning the IRS or your State/Local Treasurer your money free of interest. When they pay you back, they do not pay interest. Financial wisdom says you should have had fewer taxes taken out throughout the year, and with the larger paychecks save, invest, pay down debt, or make needed purchases in real-time. Don't beat yourself up if you've been getting large tax refunds for years; but now that you know better, it's time to do better. Allowing the government to overly tap your paychecks may not be the best use of your money, and God calls us to be good stewards and to use wisdom in all things.

### Here are 3 things I suggest:

- 1) Use the tax withholding estimator on IRS.gov to help determine the right amount of taxes to have withheld.
- 2) Ask a tax professional how you can lessen your taxes such.
- 3) ALWAYS pay your taxes honestly, legally and on time.
  - a. Tax avoidance (figuring out how to pay less) is legal.
- b. Tax evasion (not paying or underpaying by falsifying tax forms) is illegal and will land you in prison!

Remember, render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, but be wise as a serpent in doing so. Happy filing!

\*Please note this article is an opinion piece only. Please seek a tax professional for advice.







# Charlie Burguieres Financial Planner | Prudential Advisors

Email: charlie.burguieres@prudential.com

Phone: 301-310-5721

Office: 909 Rose Ave. Suite 650 N. Bethesda, MD 20852

Life is constantly in motion. Because of the constant movement, financial decisions can sometime be overwhelming and worse, placed on the back burner. To help accomplish your financial goals, you need not only a clear vision of what you want to achieve but also the proper toolkit and an experienced guide. I can be of value in this regard.

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# A SERIES OF INCREDIBLE, MIRACULOUS, AND DIVINE ENCOUNTERS

By Barbara R. Galloway M.Div., M.B.A.

Bishop Marcus A. Johnson, Sr has had four out-of-body experiences and numerous miraculous divine encounters throughout his life, strengthening his faith and his determination to tell everyone about the reality of God and heaven. His miraculous story is both moving and inspiring and will awaken the supernatural in the church. Exactly 41 years ago from the date of this interview, at 7:15 PM, when he was 26, Marcus had his first close encounter with death, which would forever change his life.

Marcus was born in Baltimore, MD, 67 years ago and raised in a Christian home. Through his early church experiences, he was exposed to the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit. At age 13, after seeing the church's emphatic response to a church member's near-death testimony, he was overcome by a deep sadness. He confided in Elder Pace, who saw him weeping in the church hall, that he didn't have a testimony that would bring glory to God's name. After assuring Elder Pace that he wanted a testimony more than anything, Marcus was prayed over and fell out in the spirit. As he lay on the floor, believing God for a testimony, the first of many miracles in his life occurred. The red and black tile that he was laying on was in the form of a cross. Elder Pace pointed it out and stated, "Son, your life is going to be a sacrifice."



### Heaven is a Real Place (Divine Encounter #1)

Thirteen years after this incident, Marcus worked at Kinney's Shoe Store one evening, and he had about two more hours before his wife would pick him up. She would always bring their two-year-old daughter with her, and they would play a game where little Monae would run and hide in the back stock room. Marcus would chase her and give her a big hug. At around 7:14 PM, Marcus went to the back stock room to retrieve a box of shoes while singing, "Blessed assurance Jesus is mine, Oh what a foretaste of glory divine...." And just when he got to the line "this is my story, this is my song," he saw a bunch of sheetrock stacked on a 3 ft high pallet, tilted against the wall. He tried gingerly reaching over it to a box of shoes while still singing but grazed the top of the stack, which started to fall towards him. He tried to push it back but couldn't get traction because he had on dress shoes, and the tile floor was waxed. Marcus felt the sheetrock coming loose, and as it began to fall on him, he fell backward and hit his head on a steel cart. At that moment, he believed that God suspended him between time and eternity because everything was moving so slowly that he could count the twenty-four sheets as they fell on top of him, each weighing about one hundred pounds. The noise was deafening as he found himself buried under the sheetrock, unsure what to do.

The wall at the back of the stockroom opened like a curtain, and a bright light flooded through. Marcus felt his spirit leave his body and enter the light, which led to a tunnel. In the blink of an eye, he took off like lightning through the tunnel, feeling a force pushing him at neck-breaking speed, and he knew it was death itself trying to take him to the other side. He felt the presence of Jesus in the tunnel with him, and he recalled the Scripture: "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord."

As Marcus reached the end of the tunnel, he saw a clear river with rubies, diamonds, and other jewels glittering at the bottom. Across the river, at a distance, was a field of grass, which reminded him of Psalm 23. Each blade of grass was the same height in this perfectly manicured, attractive field that was the greenest green he'd ever seen. Across the pasture was a huge, regal, glistening mountain; through the mountain, he could see wrought iron gates, and he knew it was the city called heaven! Beyond that gate were his grandfather, great uncle, and a recently deceased deacon from his church looking at him. Behind them were scores of people, a parade, and the most angelic music he had ever heard. His spirit recognized the songs. Marcus quickly realized that to get into the city, he would have to cross the river and go through the large mountain. He knew beyond any doubt that he could walk across the river. As he began to take the first step, he heard God say: "MARCUS AARON JOHNSON, YOU ARE GOING TO LIVE, AND WHEN YOU GET BACK, TELL EVERYONE HEAVEN IS A REAL PLACE AND WHEN YOU GET IN TROUBLE, CALL FOR HELP!"



Marcus knew that meant "whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be delivered," but he didn't want to return. He remembered the accident, his wife, daughter, church, and family. But he wanted to get into that city; he was so close and knew he was home. He thought God would change his mind if he walked on the water. So, he proceeded to step on the river, and a mighty force thrust him backward into the tunnel. He went deeper and deeper into the tunnel, further and further away from heaven, and as he traveled, the light grew dimmer, and then, with a jolt, he was back in his body, under the sheetrock.

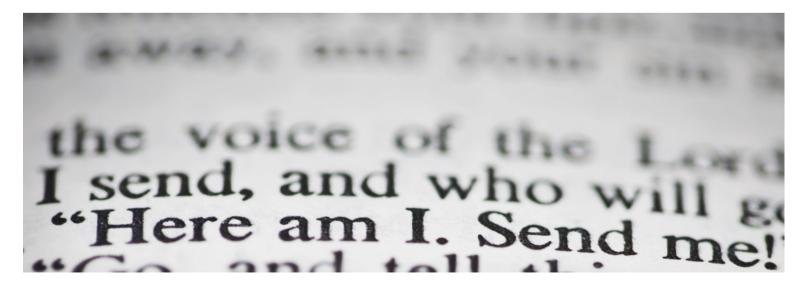
Up to this point, Marcus had felt no pain. But now, back in his body, as soon as he heard someone say, "I got a pulse!" Marcus felt excruciating pain! Then another man said, "Let's get him from under this sheetrock," and they began lifting each sheet of drywall off him. Marcus's leg, upper thigh, lower thigh, and heel were each going in a different direction. His leg started blowing up like a balloon, and the paramedics had to cut off his pants. Marcus saw a picture of his daughter, which had fallen from his shirt pocket as he lay there. The Lord reminded him of the game they would play where she would run in the stockroom. The spot where she would run, and hide is the exact spot where the sheetrock fell. He told Marcus, "I spared your daughter." Marcus began praising and thanking God because he knew that at only two years old, the sheetrock would have crushed her. But God let it happen before she got there!

The paramedics arrived and told Marcus, "We are going to have to set your leg before we put you on the stretcher, and it's going to be extremely painful. We can't give you a painkiller because we don't know what's going on in your body. So, curse, swear, or whatever you need to do to get through this."

"Wait a minute! Let me pray first," Marcus pleaded. After asking God for grace in Jesus' name, he told the paramedics to proceed. As they reset his femur bone (the most prominent and most vital bone in the body), all Marcus could do was cry out, "JESUS! JESUS!" At the top of his lungs, he kept calling on the name above all names. When it was done, the paramedic was shaking as he proclaimed, "I've been doing this for years, and I've heard people swear and curse while having their leg reset, but I've never heard anyone call that name like that." God had allowed Marcus to be a witness of the power of God and to have a testimony amid a torturous test. His prayer from 13 years ago had manifested. But that was only the beginning.

### God Said, "Not So!" (Divine Encounter #2)

The experience didn't get any easier at the hospital. Following an X-ray and CT scan, his doctor came into the room to report that he was bleeding internally and needed to have his right leg amputated, or else he wouldn't make it through the night. He then shoved a consent form in Marcus's face and said, "Sign your name." Marcus heard God say, "NOT SO!" He told the Dr. he was not going to sign the form.



"Do you understand you are hemorrhaging? Why won't you sign for the surgery?" the doctor scowled. Marcus explained he heard God say, "NOT SO!" And in two months, he had to direct his choir in a concert at the Meyerhof, and he would need both legs. The Dr responded, "Sir, without this surgery, you won't be at that concert because you won't make it through the night. Marcus stood his ground and repeated, "God said NOT SO!" The Dr looked at Marcus disappointingly and left the room. When his wife and family came, they prayed and believed in God. The next day, when that Dr came into Marcus's room, Marcus greeted him with a big smile and cheerfully said, "Good morning, Doc; this is the day the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it." Again, the Dr looked frustrated. But it didn't matter because Marcus was still alive, and he still had his right leg. Miraculously, a second CAT scan showed that the internal bleeding had stopped!

### Only Three Days to Live (Divine Encounter #3)

Unfortunately, the Lord allowed Marcus to grow sicker and sicker, and he went from hospital to hospital, ending up in The Johns Hopkins Hospital. While there, his Dr. told him, "Mr. Johnson, you are bad off. Your blood pressure is out of control, and the medicine is killing you, but we cannot take you off of it because the pain will increase, and your heart rate will spike. You're either going to have a heart attack, a stroke, or both. At best, we give you three days to live, so we will do our best to make you comfortable." With his parents standing at his bedside, he felt the Holy Ghost's power rise in his belly, and he told the Dr. he respected his medical opinion but didn't receive it. "Not only am I not going to die," he said, "I'm going to live, and I'm going to walk again." The Dr. shook his head in sympathy and disbelief.

Marcus told God, without delay, that whatever was to be done, He would have to do it because he couldn't fix it himself. Sunday, the third day, came and went, and Marcus was still alive. Then, two more days passed, and he was still alive. God told Marcus he would preach his first sermon at Johns Hopkins Hospital on the morning of the fifth day. Marcus thought to himself, preach? Where? To whom?

How? Later that day, the doctors wanted to see some of the patients in a conference room individually. Marcus was the last to be called. When he rolled himself into the room, twelve doctors donned in lab coats sitting in a semi-circle with writing pads in hand as they prepared to take notes. God told Marcus to open his mouth, giving him the words to say. So, before the doctors could say anything, Marcus said, "Good afternoon, everyone; my name is Marcus A. Johnson. I have a few things I want to say to you, and then I'll be out of your way." They looked at him astonished. Marcus continued, "You thought I was going to die because you see the condition, I'm in. You're here to investigate me, to interview me, but I'm here to tell you, not only am I not going to die, but I'm going to live, and I'm going to walk again." Then one of the doctors asked, "What will you do about all the pain?" Marcus said, "Oh, that, I figured out what that is. See, at my old house, I didn't have a driveway. So, the angels are jackhammering through the concrete at the new house. When I get those spasms, that's in response to putting in my new driveway." Another doctor asked, "What about your high blood pressure?" Marcus responded, "That's just from when I can't handle the pain. The cure for that is to go to a backroom on the second floor where I can fellowship with my Lord and the peace that surpasses all understanding will guard my heart and mind, and my blood pressure will stabilize." After he shared a few more revelatory words with them, he turned his wheelchair around and rolled out of the room to a fervent standing ovation from the doctors.





### From Paralysis to Praise (Divine Encounter #4)

Marcus had to attend group physical therapy with other pain patients. He heard the Lord say, "Marcus you did what I said; now it's time to walk. Have the nurse take you to the parallel bars because that is where you will walk." Even though he couldn't feel his legs or feet, he told the nurse to take him to the parallel bars so he could walk. The nurse said, "No, no, no, Mr. Johnson, if you fall, you'll die."

Marcus looked at her as if she were blocking his miracle, pointed at her, and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, take me to the parallel bars!" She did what he asked, and all the patients had stopped exercising to see what was happening. Marcus said, "I'm getting ready to walk."

Everyone looked at him like he was crazy. Then he bowed his head and said, "God, in the name of Jesus, these people in Johns Hopkins are looking at YOU through me. I need you to let me get up on the count of three, in Jesus' name." Then he opened his eyes and said, "All right, on the count of three, I am going to get up and walk. ONE!" He didn't feel anything stirring in his legs. The other patients and nurses were staring. "TWO!" He still didn't feel anything. THREE! There was a slight pause, and then Marcus felt fire in the heels of his feet, and it rose up his shins, and up his legs, and his thighs, and then up to his hips.

He grabbed those parallel bars when they hit his hips and stood out of the wheelchair. It was a miracle even to be able to stand up! But he stood up, and then he started walking cautiously. With every step he took, he thought, "Great is thy faithfulness.' He was filled with awe at the faithfulness of God, that He had set him up for this miracle to be witnessed. When he reached the end of the parallel bars, he turned around and walked, and when he reached his wheelchair, he fell into it. The nurse was beside herself and screamed, "Let me go get the Dr.!" Marcus said, "I'm going to walk again. I'm going to walk again." He got up again and said it felt like he could dance in the spirit, but he contained himself.

This time, when he returned to his wheelchair, a woman, who could only walk about an inch at a time, started screaming, "It's a miracle! Give me your faith!" She ran (which was medically impossible for her) across the room to Marcus. The Lord told Marcus to tell her to put her head on his shoulder and to pray. The Lord then instructed him to pray and have an altar call in that physical therapy room. As Marcus prayed for salvation, faith, and healing, patients started falling on their knees, crying, and lifting their hands; they were going wild. It was a remarkable sight. After they had all calmed down, a doctor approached Marcus and said, "You just healed my patient." Marcus replied, "No, I didn't." The Dr. said, "Yes, you did; I saw it with my own eyes. She ran across the room and fell on you. We've unsuccessfully tried to get a response from her for months. You healed her." Marcus said, "No, Sir. I didn't heal her; her doctor did." The doctor said, "But I'm her Dr." "No sir," Marcus replied, "Jesus Christ is her physician, and He healed her." The Dr looked at Marcus and walked out of the room. God performed the miracle in such a manner that it was evident that no one else could have done it but God!

### God is in the Details (Encounter #5)

After some time had passed, while admitted to St Agnes hospital, Marcus had to have a second surgery for a pulmonary embolism. Once again, he crossed over to the other side via the brightly lit tunnel. This time, God asked him if he would go back or stay. Marcus saw his wife, his daughter, and earth in God's hand when he looked back at the tunnel entrance. He also saw an incomplete ministry with his name on it. He knew God wanted him to finish the ministry, so he told God he'd go back if that's what He wanted him to do. The Lord sent him back through the tunnel, not into his body this time, but into the ceiling of his operating room at St Agnes, where a medical team was working on him. Marcus saw them pumping his body with injections and beating him on his chest to try and revive him. He then heard the head Dr. say, "he's gone," and he ceased beating on Marcus's chest. Another Dr. continued beating on his chest, and the head Dr stomped his foot and said, "I said he's gone!" Then he turned around, put his hands in his pocket, and looked out the window. The nurse slapped Marcus's hand, saying, "You can't go like that; you're too young!" As they wheeled a machine into the room, it hit a nurse on the shin, and she said, "Ouch!" God had told Marcus to pay attention to every detail in the room.

And then, just like that, the Lord lowered Marcus' spirit from the ceiling back into his body, which fit like a hand in a glove. The one Dr. was still beating on his chest, and Marcus could now hear and feel it, so he said, "Ouch!" But then he remembered and said, "Thank you, Jesus, thank you, Jesus!" Everyone in the room looked astonished like they had seen a ghost.

God allowed Marcus to talk to the three doctors and two nurses two days later. He told them everything he had seen while they were trying to revive him. He told the head doctor, "You were standing at the foot of the bed when you pronounced me dead. When the other doctor continued beating on my chest, you stomped your foot, put your hands in your pockets, and looked out the window." To the other doctor, he said, "You kept beating on my chest even after the pronouncement."

He told the nurse, "You slapped my hand and said, 'You're too young to die, Mr. Johnson, you can't go like this!" He kept rehashing the details, fully understanding why God had told him to pay attention to everything. He pointed to the other nurse and said, "The machine hit you on the shin." The medical team looked at him with their eyes wide and mouths agape. Then one of them said, "But you were gone!" Marcus responded, "I was in the ceiling, the best seat in the room, and saw it all." He told them God wanted them to know that He is real, heaven is a real place, and there's nothing too complicated for Him. Marcus ended by telling them, "Just watch and see."

For more information about Bishop Marcus Johnson's story or to learn the truth about heaven and life after death for the believer, go to thenewharvest.org/store and order Bishop Johnson's book entitled, Watch and See: A Journey into the Revelation of the Miraculous.



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### FROM LOSS AND GRIEF TO THE SUNRISE

By John Barry



He bravely battled depression for a dozen years. He braved on as long as he could – until he could do so no more.

Our son Michael died at age 26. At home. Peacefully.

It is often said that, for those left behind, the world becomes divided – before and after. It is the same with us. We think of our lives as everything that transpired before April 5, 2012 and everything else afterward.

Let's take a look at the latter, and especially the aspects that one might not expect – the blessings in the midst of our jarring new reality.

First, though, I'll acknowledge the jarring part of it all. Yes, it was awful. Yes, the worst of it seemed to go on forever. For us, the worst of the grief journey went on far longer and deeper than we would have imagined. It was a hellish labyrinth.

And yet, we were shocked to discover that we could eventually experience joy again. This, I would say, was one of the miracles we encountered. And I'm not talking about just having a pleasant outlook or some good days.

In the wake of our son's seemingly ceaseless battle with mental illness and depression, as well as the awful era that followed his death – yes, we have rediscovered joy. And the glory of wonder. And the thrill of possibilities. And we never expected to experience those feelings again. Oh, how we thank God for them!

We had grown used to being in the lost world of grief. What is that world like? For me, it was often

like being alone and lost in grey, dark, fog-laden woods. There was no path. The aloneness was absolute. After a long time, I gradually permitted myself to want to feel "better." And yet I discovered that this was not a matter of "mind over matter." I could not just decide to want to feel "better." I found it wasn't that simple.

Despite my finally wanting to feel better – indeed to feel something, anything – I found relief did not come to me. And so, I came to grips with the reality that the rest of my earthly days might well be spent in that grey, lost place. And yet I had become accustomed to that world, as strange and alone as it was.

In time, though – miraculously – I experienced something of my resurrection. And with it, the joy, the wonder, and the possibilities. It was like emerging from being submerged for a long time and then drinking in pure, sweet oxygen again.

I saw colors again. The days weren't long enough for me. Everyone and everything was delightful and fascinating. I was like a slingshot that, at long last, had been released. And I continue to fly.

### FROM LOSS AND GRIEF TO THE SUNRISE

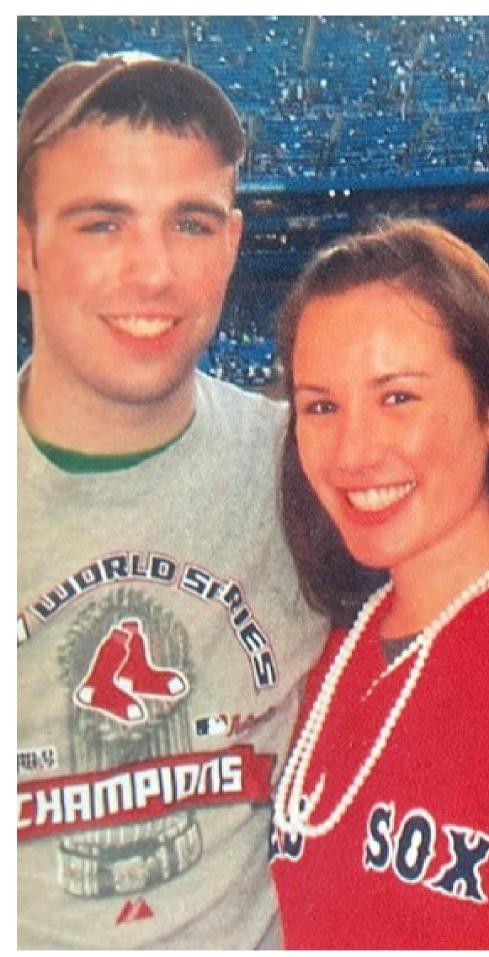
Do I still experience grief? Do I still miss my son? Yes and yes. I experience grief far less deeply and far less frequently. And I continue to wish he were right here so I could hug him – and everything else that goes with glorying in the presence of another.

And yet, I've discovered something else along the way – another miracle, one might say. I now know he is with me, and I am with him. It's not a "mind over matter" thing. I know it. And that knowledge is a game-changer, as it were. I am never away from him, nor he from me. All I need to do is to think about him, and I am aware of his presence.

And it's not just with my son. My experience of love with others is affected in the same way. I don't need to physically be with my loved ones to glory in the joy of them. I think of them, and my love for them fills me. My daughter, my grandchildren, anyone. The miracle that "we are One in the Spirit" is something I now experience, not just better understand.

And it begins during the consecration at any Mass. With it, our Lord is truly present. And because my son is with our Lord, I pray, then when our Lord is present in the Holy Eucharist, I am also with my son, as well as the communion of all saints. How magnificent!

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My being resurrected from the depths of grief and my ability to experience my son's presence with me, I have thus discovered another glorious result – another miracle, one might say: the effect on others regarding whatever is consuming them.

I openly tell others of all this, and yet I do it in such a way that they don't feel unduly uncomfortable. I do it partially to model transparency and vulnerability. (I am careful about when, how, and with whom I do so. I want to be appropriate and respectful.) I am dumbfounded by the frequent results.

It is very common for individuals to approach me later to tell me about a consequential difficulty they are experiencing. And very often, it is other guys who do so. It may be that because I'm a guy also, they feel less uncomfortable telling me about what they are experiencing and how they feel about it. And not just in a superficial way, but deep, open sharing. And not just with people I know well; it is not uncommon with someone I've just met.

Why? God's grace, truly. And possibly they also consider that, with what I have experienced and lived through, I would understand and not be shocked by what they tell me. (And I am not.)

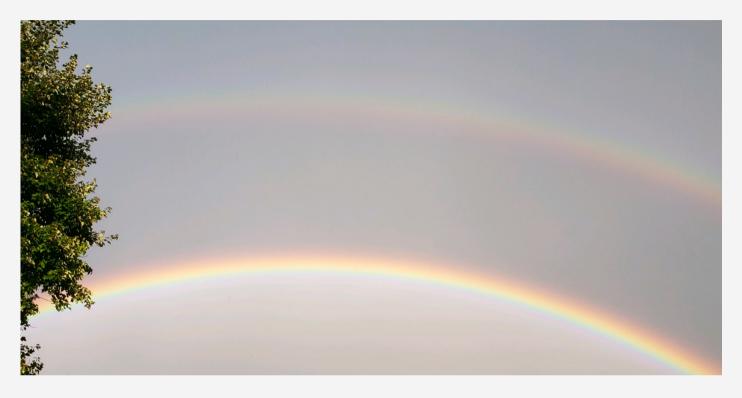
Also, though, I daresay I know that we share with others only when we consider it safe to do so. We need to help create a safe environment for them to share openly, especially that which significantly weighs them down.

How do we help to create such a safe environment? By being a person who is worthy of trust. By being profoundly discreet. By being able to maintain confidentiality. By letting them know you care about how they are doing, and having no ulterior motives other than their well-being. Somehow, people can know these things.

And if we are privileged to have them share with us their hidden secret, it is sacred. It is a gift and a privilege. And it must be treated as such. In such times, our Lord's work is profoundly evident. (Praise Him!) And that individual – because of our Lord's work and their courage and openness – seems to leave the conversation a step closer to emancipation – to their own resurrection, as it were.

Bad things happen, usually for no good reason. For me, at least, the story doesn't end there. For me, after crossing an ocean of torment, I discovered a new continent. It is very different than what I had experienced before. And yet, I can now see sunrises again.

# Miracles in Our Grief



My immediate family members have dreaded Lent since 2012. Our daughter calls it "the season of losing Mike."

Our son died on Holy Thursday, the day that celebrates Jesus' Last Supper. His death overnight was peaceful, painless – and intentional. After a dozen years of battling mental illness and depression, he had suffered more severely of late. He had prepared us somewhat by leaving us a loving note where we would find it before finding him.

As we knelt before our lifeless son, we immediately knew some of the pain Jesus' mother, Mary, felt at the foot of the cross. We were not alone in our agony. Christians around the world would be in a state of mourning for the next few days, remembering Christ's suffering and death – the world would be mourning with us.

My dad's rosary beads were in Mike's hand. I believe he had prayed, "Hail Mary... pray for us now... at the hour of our death."

After Mass on Easter morning, at a church where we were unknown, our former pastor opened his arms and embraced my husband, our daughter, and me in one big hug. With his long, loose, white garments, we felt Christ enfolding us in love.

In the following days, Mike's wake, funeral Mass, and graveside service allowed us to receive and return God's love through the people around us – and to express our love for Mike and God with those people.

Everyone who came to his wake brought what seemed to us like a hug from God. Hearing how Mike had touched so many people gave us great joy and comfort.

Selecting funeral readings and music that reflected our faith and trust in God, we welcomed others to share our gratitude to God for giving us Mike to love. All the staff members and eighty students from the Catholic school where I taught filled one front section of the church. We chose to walk beside the casket on the way up to the altar. Through our tears, we were smiling (!) as we brought Mike back to God.

I believe in a loving and merciful God who gave me this young man to love and cherish for 26 years on earth. I believe that Mike is with God and still with us but in a different way, and someday our family will be reunited in God's presence.

A soul-saving miracle: For years, Mike had been angry at God for giving him this illness. During the last seven months of his life, as he returned to an active faith life, I believe he forgave God. In those months, Mike and Laura had joined a Catholic young adult ministry, sharing faith, food, football, and friendship. This is how he came to be holding his grandfather's rosary beads during his final hours. Throughout his life, my daily prayer included, "Lord, hold Mike close to you and help him become all that you will him to be. Thank you for the wonderful gift of Mike." I think God welcomed him home, pleased with Mike's efforts to be what God wanted him to be.

In our grieving, many miracles have been granted to us. Some are small, some large. Gifts of food, service, and outreach tell us that others know of our suffering and remember Mike:







- Some friends and family members continue sending us cards, emails, or texts on Mike's anniversary and birthday.
- Family members and friends fed us in those first days when we couldn't remember to eat. His cousins composed photo posters for his wake and helped us move his furniture.
- Every year on his anniversary, a group of Mike and Laura's friends from their young adult ministry have hosted us for dinner, both to remember and celebrate Mike and to share about their own lives.
- Other grieving parents whom we knew reached out to us, and we have participated in – and even led – numerous day retreats through the Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents.
- We experienced soul-deep healing during our annual visits to the Angel of Hope Garden in Sturbridge, MA. The angel statue there is a replica of one based on Richard Paul Evans' bestselling book, The Christmas Box. Many Angel of Hope Gardens exist across the US.
- In 2015 we traveled to Philadelphia to see Pope Francis, with Laura and one of my sisters. Everyone that day was especially kind, including metro workers and security officers. Groups of people waiting in line sang hymns. Along the pope's route, John offered to assist a petite young mother by lifting her six-year-old son to his shoulders, so that the boy could see the pope above the crowd. It was a blessed experience to see him and to feel the excited but reverent mood of all those present. When the pope had passed by, John at last lowered the boy to the ground and asked his name. Michael. God made sure that we knew our Mike was with us too.

Six years after losing Mike, Laura was engaged to marry Joe, the love of her life. He is a man of deep faith, whom she had met at his church. John and I loved him immediately and dearly, as we knew Mike would.

Pre-wedding miracle: Mike's favorite song was "The Luckiest" by Ben Folds. "I love you more than I have ever found a way to say to you." We refer to it as Mike's anthem, and we never hear it except when we play it on our phones. Shortly after her engagement, Laura invited John and me to help her shop for her wedding gown. In a small bridal shop she found it, and moments later, an instrumental version of "The Luckiest" played on the store's playlist. We knew immediately that Mike was with us, and that he was delighted for his sister. We all wept – with sorrow and with joy.

On a spring Saturday in 2019, Laura and Joe married in a beautiful Mass at their church in Washington, DC. At the reception under a tent, they had thoughtfully prepared a table displaying photos of deceased loved ones: all their grandparents, Joe's uncle, and Mike. Many guests remarked about feeling the poignant, palpable aura of love. Even an expected thunderstorm detoured around the area to avoid interrupting the reception. It was a magical and miraculous celebration of love and of hope.







In July 2020, on the feast of Jesus' grandparents, our pastor preached about the profound effect that growing up next to his grandparents had had on him, especially his faith. At that moment, John was inspired to suggest that we move from Rhode Island to Maryland, hopefully, to have that influence on any grandchildren we might be blessed with. Two weeks after making our decision, Joe and Laura were finally able to visit us. During that stay, they learned that they were expecting their first child. Four months after our decision, we enjoyed Thanksgiving dinner in our new home, just fifteen minutes from our kids and our future grandson. With God's perfect timing, Jack was born on April 5, 2021, Mike's ninth anniversary.

Miracles continue to happen. Laura and Joe welcomed their daughter Ellie two years after Jack's arrival, and those children love each other dearly. John and I are privileged to see this beautiful young family frequently, experiencing the everyday miracles of their family's love and the children's development. What blessed joy!

John and I have found several volunteer activities that allow us to share our hearts and faith with more of God's people. During my first visit to my hospice friend, she began to hum the melody of "The Old Rugged Cross," which was one of my mom's favorite songs to play on the piano. We joyfully sang along together. God was letting us know that Mom was present with us in praising Him.

Sitting in a car dealership lounge recently, I decided to read my daily prayers for Lent. The day's meditation song led to another music video, Schubert's "Ave Maria." That song has been especially meaningful to me since a grieving parents' retreat about five years ago. I had been asked to stand in the back of the chapel at the end of the Mass. While that song was playing, I felt myself rocking slightly from side to side, imagining myself dancing with my son – so heavenly! The music video I watched at the car dealership brought me to tears. The lyrics were shown in Italian and English. All the years of my life, I had never known that the Ave Maria was the prayer of The Hail Mary, the prayer that Mike had been praying when he died.

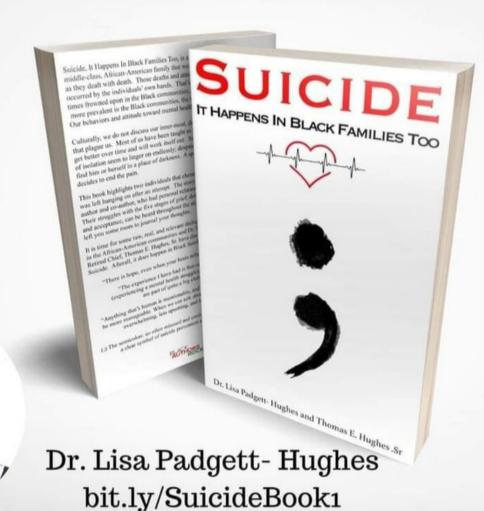
When His friend Lazarus died, Jesus wept. When our loved ones die, Jesus weeps with us. Though our loved ones will not be resurrected until the last day, God gives us glimpses of heaven. Through His miracles, He gives us hope.

Every evening, I snuggle on the couch with a throw blanket that we received after Mike's death. It bears a beautiful passage from the prophet Jeremiah 29:11:

"For I know the plans I have for you... declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you... Plans to give you hope and a future."

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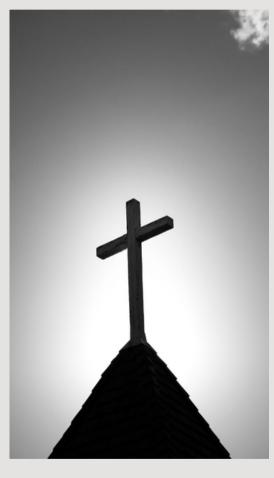


# MENTAL HEALTH TALK: MATTERS OF THE MIND

### MENTAL HEALTH AND THE BLACK CHURCH

### PART 1: THE CHURCH HAS A ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

In this article, we will look at mental health and the church, specifically the Black church. As the author, I aim to bring awareness of the necessity for the churches in those communities to offer access to mental health services. It is imperative for the overall health of those they shepherd. As a Mental Health Wellness Coach, I've witnessed and been told by Christians of their suffering in silence from those hidden secrets. Those same secrets that they cannot and have not told the pastor or anyone else in their lives. They have been instructed and it's been embedded in their soul to take everything to the Lord in prayer; to "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (The Bible, Philippians 4:6-7). Yet, we're forgetting that "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:17). Also, III John 1:2, states, "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in good health, just as your soul prospers." So, there you have it, the Creator wants us to be well in all things, including health. Mental health is part of your overall health. It is okay to do something in conjunction with prayer. He has enlisted the aid of therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, and/or Mental Health Coaches to assist Him with such a daunting task, making sure that individuals are mentally well.



To give the readers an in-depth look into mental health and the church's role, intense research was done. Often, leaving the writer in dismay due to the responses from those she thought would be more compassionate, and understanding of the issue. However, the responses that were being given were solely based on their lack of knowledge and/or fear. Therefore, to shed light on such a sensitive topic in the Black Church, research, using questionnaires and interviews, was conducted with pastors, elders, ministry leaders, and parishioners. This will be a four-part series; including the role of the church, discussions with three individuals who have tried both, pastoral counseling and mainstream counseling, ways to assist with mental health in the church, and concluding with a call to action.



Many know that the church is a sanctuary, a place of solace. Although the church is looked at in such a manner, have you ever walked into your pastor's office and confessed to him or her more than your sin/s? Are you confessing to your pastor that you don't sleep at night because you are up thinking about your death, reliving it repeatedly until morning? Have you discussed your abusive spouse that the pastor calls deacon or prophetess? Do your leaders know that since your spouse died, you get drunk daily and that is the real reason that you lost your job, or that you have suicidal ideations with a carefully thought-out plan? These are just a few of the real-life issues that mental health professionals face daily. Is your pastor equipped to deal with such situations? Probably not, because the training is vastly different.

According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "it has been reported that about a quarter of all American adults have a mental disorder, and almost half will develop at least one during their lifetime. Although some churches have managed to bring the needs of people living with mental illness to light, a great deal of stigma continues to be associated with mental health issues, especially among the religious community" (Brown, n.d., p.1). Due to the mental health crisis, at least one person sitting on your pew each Sunday is going through a type of mental health issue. When looking back historically, the church participated in serving the emotionally challenged. For example, in 13th-century Belgium, the church cared for people who prayed for healing from mental illness (Stanford, n.d., p. 7). "Bethesda communities out of the Lutheran church taught the gospel to the intellectually disabled in the late 1800s" (p. 7). For many years, the churches have been involved and/or connected to the mentally challenged population through prison ministry, feeding and clothing the homeless, facilitating addiction and recovery groups, and providing disaster aid.

Churches have direct contact with those individuals who are suffering mentally, especially now. Post COVID-19 many are still dealing with the emotional trauma caused by the pandemic and loss of loved ones, jobs, or homes. Families are struggling to put their lives back together. With the knowledge of prayer and the ability to gather resources, often within their own four walls, this is the time for the church to step up and be a clear point of entry for those who are suffering mentally. Individuals should have easy access to mental health services through the church's connections in the community: health departments, mental health clinics, psychiatrists, therapists, and medical doctors. With the right training, the church should be able to provide immediate assistance to those who need mental health services. The church should also have a referral system in place to deal with

those situations that they are not equipped to handle; bipolar I disorder, and schizophrenia. Over the years, there has been an exclusion of God-centered care in terms of mental health illness. However, with the ongoing mental health crisis, it is time for the church to re-establish its roles in the communities when providing adequate care to an underserved population, those who are mentally ill.

Until next time, Nurture Your Mental Health and Free Your Mind!

Dr. Lisa (LisaTonia) Padgett-Hughes (hon.), M.Ed. Counseling/Psychology, MSMFT (pending), CLC, Mental Health Wellness Coach (student), Author, Mental Health Contributing Writer, CEO/Founder of Go Forth and Sustain, Inc.

Founder of Matters of The Mind Life Coaching Services, LLC

If you are feeling vulnerable or suicidal or are worried about someone, call 988 or your local police department-988 is the national number for all mental health, substance use, and suicide crises!

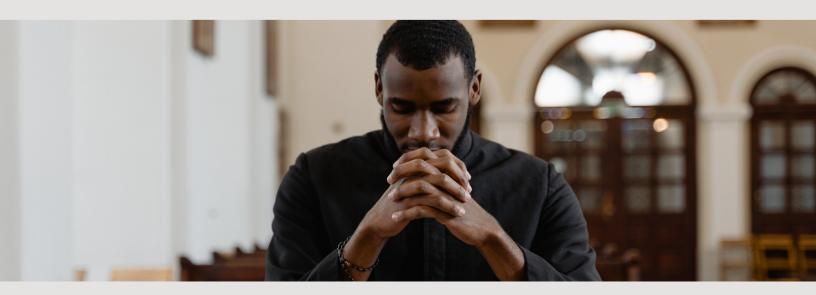
Disclaimer: I am not a medical professional, psychiatrist, or psychologist. This piece of work and all others for this magazine are for informational purposes only. If you feel any of the symptoms of the above-mentioned disorder, please seek your primary care physician for further evaluation

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# Heaven's Healing Hospital CG Animated Short Film

Story Written By Miguel Adams

IN HIS PRESENCE Media adamsmiguel98@gmail.com 410-241-3906

... Coming Soon ...

### MY TESTIMONY - GOD DOESN'T NEED MY HELP

### BY ROSALIND LEWIS ESO



I was at work and my husband called to say he was not feeling well and was heading to the emergency room. I asked him to wait, and I would pick him up. He said he did not want to leave his car at work and to meet him at the emergency room.

When I arrived at the emergency room the doctors had already run tests on my husband, and we were waiting for the results. As time passed, we prayed together and I prayed separately, knowing that my God would make everything alright. The doctor came to provide us with

the results. To my shock and surprise, we were advised that my husband, at age 46, was in liver failure and needed a liver transplant. The doctor began to question him asking if he was a heavy drinker. My husband responded that he never drank and was a minister. The doctor asked him about his medical history. He began to explain that he was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis as a teenager. In the early 70's, the prescription for pain was non-steroidal inflammatory drugs such as Tylenol and Advil. At that time, the researchers did not have warning labels on Tylenol or Advil that said taking this medication can cause liver damage. My husband has been taking these drugs for pain for over 30 years.

My husband was placed on the transplant list for a liver in August 2005. I began to take him to many doctor's appointments to prepare him for a liver transplant. For him to live, someone had to die and be an organ donor. This may sound like my husband's testimony, but I made it my mission to make him better. At one of his many appointments, I was so exhausted taking care of him, while continuing to work, God spoke to me and said, "THAT IS NOT YOUR JOB. MY JOB IS TO MAKE HIM BETTER, YOUR JOB IS TO MAKE HIM COMFORTABLE". When I heard His voice, a weight lifted off me. I was trying to do God's job and He didn't need my help. I believe God looked at my heart and saw my love for Him and my love for my husband and knew I was so focused on making him better that I forgot to ask God to do it for me.

On December 30, 2005, we received a call that a liver was available, and my husband was going to be prepared for surgery within the next 2 hours. The surgery went well. The road to recovery was long but with God's help, family support, and church family support I could see the light as my husband, and I traveled the road to recovery as one. After about six months, my husband's body began to reject the transplanted liver. The doctors advised me that he would have to go back on the transplant list. He was admitted to the hospital and suffered cardiac arrest, two weeks later, just 26 days before his 47th birthday, he passed away. In my mind, dying was not an option, but God's thoughts are not our thoughts, and His ways are not our ways. At age 43, I became a widow.



As I planned my husband's homegoing service, I was still in disbelief that he was gone. My family support was amazing, but when the services were over, everyone went back to their normal lives, and I had to figure out my new normal. When you are married as the word of God says, you become one, my husband and I were one. I did not know how much of my existence was a part of his until he was gone. There is not a day that goes by that I don't think about my deceased husband.



Finally, when I went to the courthouse to settle his estate, being an attorney I thought I could handle his affairs, although we did not have a will. The clerk of the court advised me that the paperwork was incomplete. I immediately burst into tears because my husband was gone, and being a lawyer did not mean anything. I could not negotiate a deal with God to bring my husband back. I was at the mercy of God. I was so overcome with grief that the clerk of the court helped me to complete the documents.

I asked God to show me every lesson that I needed to learn from this experience. There are many lessons, but the 2 most powerful lessons are don't try to do God's work and don't let God catch you with your work undone.

We must prepare for death both naturally and spiritually. Prepare a will that express your wishes upon death. Get right with God now so that when He comes for us, we will be ready to see the Lord on that great day.

# CHRISTIAN AUTHOR MI'GUEL ADAMS



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# HIS GLORY

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as he sends His Holy Spirit with love and grace.

Each angel stands before His glorious light

to receive their earthly assignment for that day

and night.

He speaks to each planet and star in space as they shine by the brightness and the glory of His face.

The seraphim's blow the trumpets with their wings completely raised
In honor of El Shaddai who is worthy to be praised.

-Pastor Miguel Adams

# MARRIAGE FROM A TO Z

### How is Your Love Life?

By Carolyn Tatem



Since Valentine's Day is celebrated and people do special things to express their love, many refer to February as the "Love Month." Although I love doing special things and attending special events with my husband during February, God wants us to have love for a lifetime. God is Love and it is so important that every husband and wife operate in love as they participate in the institution of marriage. As you read this article, I want you to evaluate your love life based on God's definition of love and answer the question, How is your love life?

In Corinthians Chapter 13:1-8, we find God's definition of love. "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails, . . ."

This passage is often read so beautifully at weddings however, God wants us to live it. His love should never be limited to one day or one month. With God, we can experience a lifetime of love. A real love life must start with an individual relationship with God. I John 4:8 says, "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love." As we experience love from God and grow in our relationship with Him, He teaches us how to love our spouse. When we know God, we can operate in His love daily. Yes, we must cultivate our relationship with Him through worship, prayer, and reading His Word. However, God is for your marriage and will freely give you everything you need to have a wonderful love life.

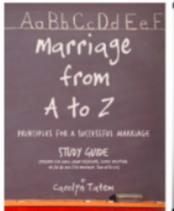
It is only with God's power that we can live the love life described in I Corinthians 13. With God's power, we can have a love that suffers long and is still kind. We also will have the strength to bear all things, believe all things, and hope all things.

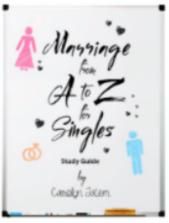
If you want to maintain a good and consistent love life, you must learn to go to Love (God) to get love and give it to your spouse! When things get tough, don't give up, go to Love and ask Him to give you everything you need. Remember, Love never fails. May God bless your love life!

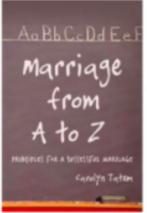
### Rev. Carolyn Tatem

Rev. Carolyn Tatem is a native of Washington, D. C. She has been a member of First Baptist Church of Glenarden for 29 years. She serves as an Associate Pastor to Pastor John K. Jenkins and as the Director of the Queen Esther Ministry, a Discipleship program for women (2) years in QE and 16 years as the director). She is married to Deacon William Tatem, Jr. and in August they will celebrate 25 years of marriage. Together they have 3 children. Rev. Tatem is the author of five books three of which are on one of her passions, marriage, and preparation for marriage. She is part of the Lifeway (A Christian Resource Company in Nashville Tennessee) Women's Ministry Trainer Team. In addition, Rev. Carolyn is a Middle School Teacher in Alexandria, Virginia and a student at Denver Seminary pursuing her second Master's Degree in Divinity with a focus on Pastoral Cares and Counseling.















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### ARMOUR OF GOD IN THE SPIRIT REALM

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- 2. Breastplate of righteousness, protect our hearts from temptations and evil.
- 3. Gospel of Peace gives us the spirit of freedom to overcome fear and anxious thoughts in our minds.
- 4. Shield of Faith helps us not to doubt, but to trust in God's goodness and faithfulness.
- 5. Helmet of salvation covers our minds and thoughts from the arrows of the devil and reminds us of God's forgiveness, and saving us by the Grace of Jesus Christ.
- 6. Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, the only offensive weapon that has the power to demolish the strongholds, which is alive and active and is sharper than any two-edged sword in the spirit realm.

In Christ, we are equipped, empowered, and have positional authority to wear spiritual armour daily. We thank God and praise His holy name day and night in victory, because we know the battle is not ours it's the Lord's and He constantly fights those battles on our behalf. He shields, protects, and strengthens, exposing the deeds of darkness and bring to light in the powerful name of Jesus Christ. To God be the glory!!!



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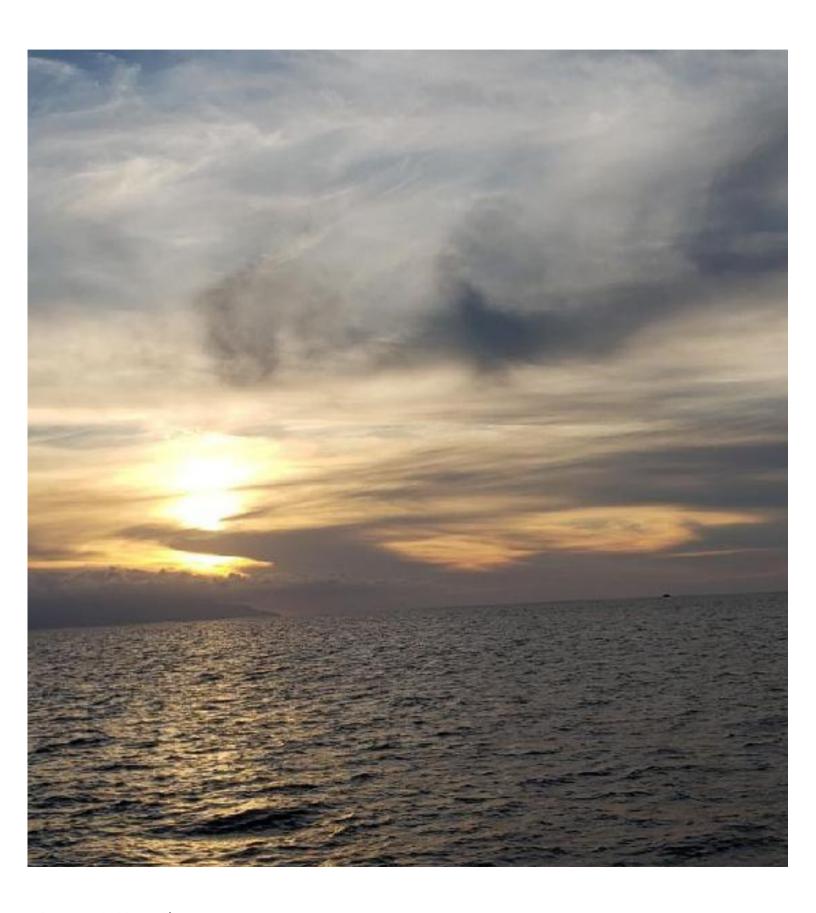
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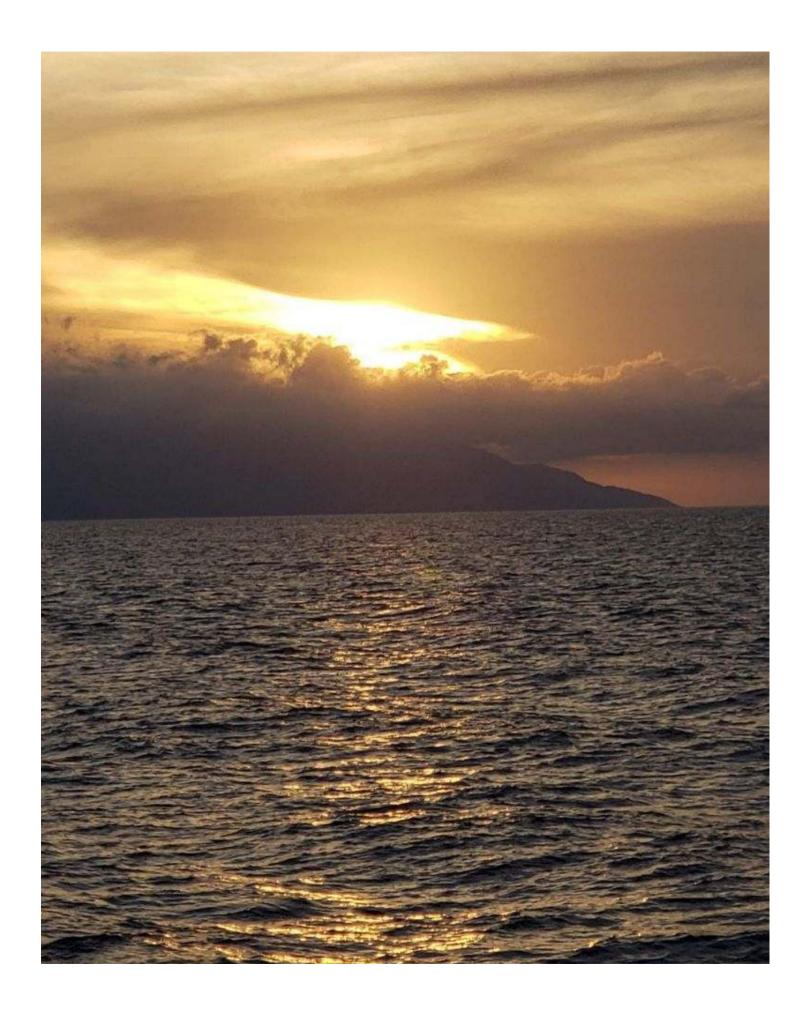
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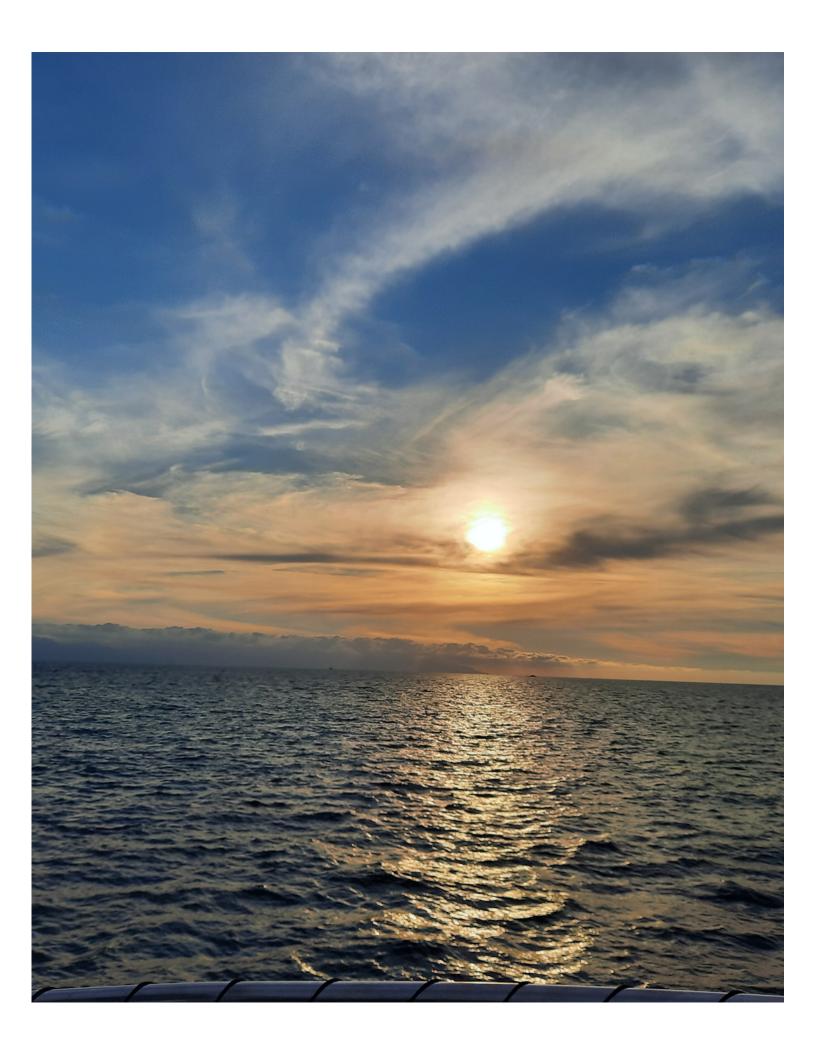
Not everything that steps out of line, and thus "abnormal", must necessarily be "inferior".

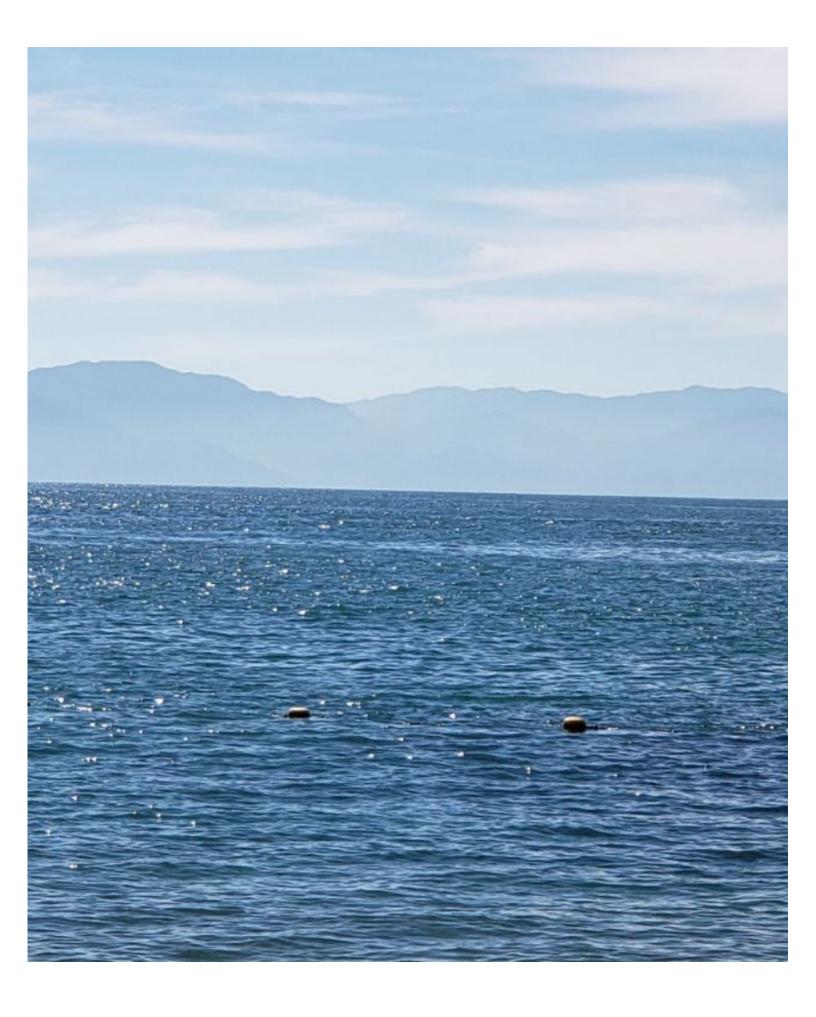
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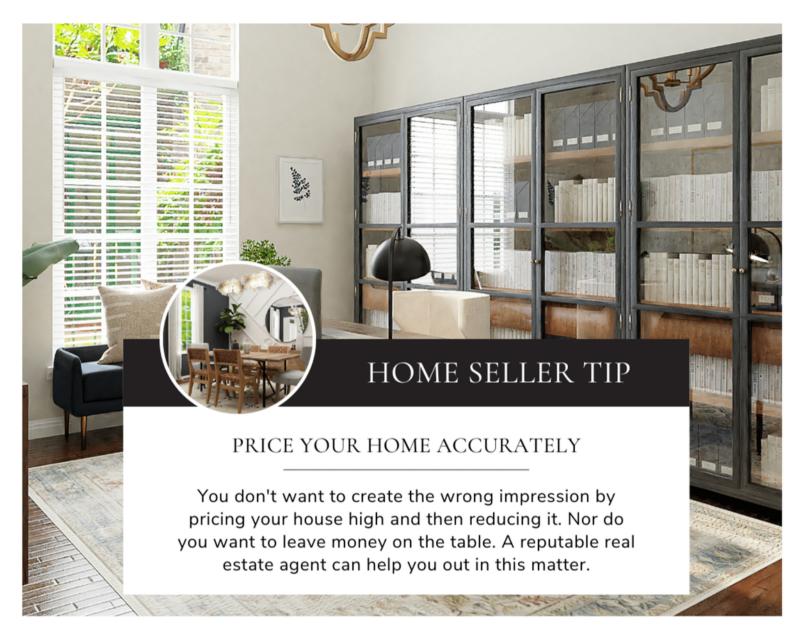
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