

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17

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Women Empowering Women

"This goes out to all the Ladies in TCF"

Get Back Up Again

Sometimes you have to get knocked down lower than you've ever been, To stand up taller than you ever were before.

Yes, you may fall down or get knocked down,
But the goal is to get back up again...wiser, stronger and more determined than ever. And by the Grace of God...YOU CAN DO IT!!!
The struggle is real, but God's Grace is life changing. 2 Corinthians 12:9

Ladies...what are you waiting for? Get back up again and turn your wounds into wisdom!

Did Ya Know?

Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Below are some interesting tidbits of information about this awesome day.

- Easter is the oldest Christian holiday.
- Easter Sunday is the most attended church service
- Eggs were a symbol of life to Ancient Egyptians, Persians, Romans and Greeks. The custom of giving eggs at Easter originated with them.
- Some scholars believe the first Easter was on April 5 (in A.D. 33)
- Approximately 90 million chocolate bunnies are sold at Easter.
- Over 16 million jellybeans are eaten on Easter in the United States. This is enough jellybeans to circle the earth three times.
- The resurrection of Jesus is the only plausible explanation for the rapid growth of Christianity in the first three centuries AD.



Daniel BY PASTOR MIKE HERNANDEZ, CHURCH OF THE HARVEST

This month we will be learning from one of my heroes of faith, Daniel. Daniel was a teenage boy who was taken captive when Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon) besieged Jerusalem. The custom in that time was that when a king captured a capital of a foreign land, they would take the best and brightest of the young men back to their city and train them in their ways. Thus, Daniel was taken back to Babylon so he could learn the law and language of the Babylonians.

Upon arriving in Babylon, Daniel was placed with other captured prisoners. They were all being instructed in the way of the Babylonians and being prepared for service. This training was a three year process. The prisoners were given food and drink from the king's table (Daniel 1:5).

But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief of staff for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods. – Daniel 1:8

Daniel, a prisoner, was in no position to ask for an exception, but he did anyway. This is an amazing step of faith as the last thing any prisoner would want to do was rock the boat. This also meant that Daniel understood the Hebrew laws and that eating the food off the king's table would defile him. He knew that the king's food was probably sacrificed to idols and eating food sacrificed to idols would defile him.

Daniel had favor with the chief eunuch and the chief eunuch listened to Daniel's request but did not want to allow it as he was concerned for his own job. Daniel showed wisdom as he asked the chief eunuch to put him and his three friends (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) to a test. He asked the chief eunuch to give him and his friends vegetables and water for ten days and then make a judgment call based on what he sees. After ten days, the four Hebrews looked better and the chief eunuch continued to give them vegetables and water (Daniel 1:9-16)

When we make a decision to not defile ourselves, we honor God. Daniel knew that eating food sacrificed to idols was breaking the Hebrew law. Daniel was unwilling to do that, even to the point of risking his opportunity for serving in the king's palace or even worse, forfeiting his life. But this was a risk Daniel was willing to make.

We have the same decision to make. How are we going to live our lives? Are we going to defile ourselves by allowing the culture to determine what is right or wrong, or are we going to obey the Bible? We face these decisions every day. Are we going to tell the truth? Are we going to honor authority? Are we going to love our neighbor? The culture tells us to "protect self" while the Bible tells us to "love one another".

Whenever the king consulted them in any matter requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, he found them ten times more capable than any of the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom. – Daniel 1:20.

Daniel Con't.

The result of Daniel and his three friends putting God first was that they were favored by their authority. They honored God by choosing not to defile themselves and then God honored them. I have noticed in my life that when I honor God by choosing not to defile myself, He takes care of me.

What is also amazing about this story is that Daniel was only a teenager. How does someone so young have the determination to not defile himself? I believe it was because Daniel had amazing parents! Daniel's parents taught him God's law and prepared him for his future. As a parent, this challenges me. According to Deuteronomy 6:6-9, it is the responsibility of the parents to teach their children about the law of God. I wonder how good of a job I am doing. Am I taking every opportunity to teach my children about God's law? As a pastor, one would think it would be easy. However, raising kids is not easy, especially in today's culture. We need to pray for our children and not only model for them the ways of God, but also teach them. I believe that is exactly what Daniel's parents did.

If you have children, I want to encourage you. Don't underestimate your role as a father or mother. Think about your relationship with your parents. Is that relationship what you would like? Or would you like a better relationship with them? What is your relationship like with your children? Would you like it to be better? All you can do is your part, but I encourage you to do your part. If you can't be with your children, please communicate with them as often as you can. They need to hear from you, they need to be encouraged by you. Your children need to know that you love them and care for them. The only way they know that is if you communicate those things to them. What things do you wish your dad told you? Tell them those things! What did you need to hear when you were a child or a teenager? Your children need to hear those things!

As a pastor, I meet with people every week and I can't tell you the number of people who struggle as adults because they were either ignored, abused (physically, verbally and even sexually) or abandoned by their parents. You may be where you are because of this very thing. Can I tell you, it wasn't your fault! If you need help in this area, please reach out to GROW Ministries and let them know so they can help you.

And if you are the parent, please don't ignore, abuse or abandon your children. You are the only dad or mom they have. No one can ever take your place. The void is too big and no one person can fill your shoes! Pray for your children! Communicate with your children! Love your children! I pray that it is not too late to establish the relationship you want with them. They deserve your best effort!

Daniel was a product of great parenting. I hope your children will be a product of great parenting as well!

Next month we will continue to look at Daniel, including examining the story that he is most famous for, the Lion's Den.

Hearing from God (Pt. 4) BY BEVERLY BROWN, GMI VOLUNTEER WRITER

In previous articles we discussed the different ways God speaks to us. These include the Bible, Him speaking to our spirit and speaking to us through people.

This month I will address two of the less common ways He speaks to us.

One is through dreams. I've known and served the Lord for decades, and He has only spoken to me through my dreams a few times. And all of these times have been when I have been earnestly seeking Him about something.

In dreams, the Lord usually gives us representations of things and not necessarily exact answers. Although He can give us direct answers if He chooses.

Now before we get too far talking about dreams, let me say that most dreams are not from the Lord. They are just a natural part of sleep. They could be a product of something you've had on your mind. Or they could be a result of a deep-seated fear.

For example, when I did not get the dental care I needed, I would dream of my teeth falling out. I knew it was because I was concerned about losing my teeth. After I was able to go to the dentist on a regular basis, these dreams stopped.

The following is an example of when He spoke to me through a dream.

My son dated a young lady who came from a bad home life. When they started dating, she was already pregnant. When she had the baby, my son accepted her as did I.

At one point, the young lady's mother kicked her out in the dead of winter with her six-month-old baby. She had no place to go so she and the baby came to live with us for a couple of weeks until the issue with her mother was resolved and she moved back home.

After she and my son broke up, I continued to have a relationship with her and the baby for several years. I loved them very much.

After several years, she found someone to marry. I prayed about our relationship continuing after that.

One night I dreamed that she died. I knew in my spirit that she was not going to actually die, but this meant the relationship that we had known was not going to be the same or would "die." And, sure enough, it did. It was too hard for her to continue being close to me since she now had a husband and mother-in-law.

The last way I'm going to talk about is the Lord giving you a vision. Again, this is a very uncommon way that the Lord speaks to you. It has happened to me very few times in all the years I have been serving Him.

Sometimes you will have to seek Him as to the meaning but other times the vision will be short, to the point, and a direct answer.

The only kind I have had were the latter—short and to the point and a direct answer.

When I was taking a college class, I misplaced one of my textbooks. I really needed that book and looked high and low for it. Several times!

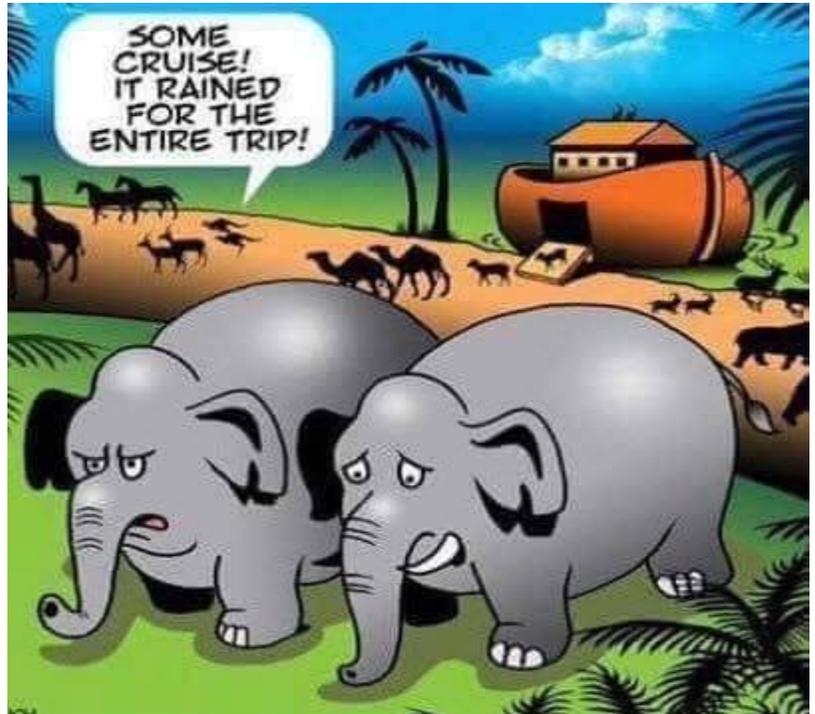
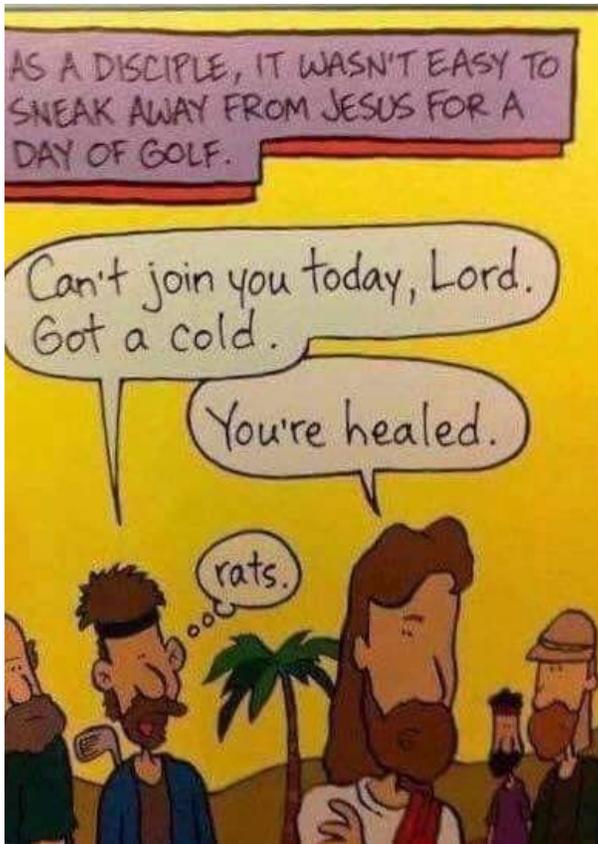
I prayed and prayed that the Lord would lead me to it or show me where it was. Still I could not find it.

One day I lay down on my bed to still my mind and anxieties. I closed my eyes wanting to shut out everything but the Lord and praying for the book.

As I did this, I saw a vision. My eyes were closed but I saw exactly where the book was. I was thrilled.

Remember, not every dream or vision is from the Lord. They will usually be things you have been seeking the Lord about. If you think it is but are not sure what it means, pray about it. Make sure it aligns with the Word of God.

Things that make you go Hmmmmmm and Giggle...



Who Makes the Coffee??

A married couple was arguing about who is making the coffee, the wife said that in the Bible it says that men should make the coffee and the husband asked her where it said that. The wife opened the Bible and said: "Right here in HEBREWS!"

A Child's Point of View!

The story of Adam and Eve was being carefully explained in the children's Sunday School class. Following the story, the children were asked to draw some picture that would illustrate the story. Little Bobby drew a picture of a car with three people in it. In the front seat was a man and in the back seat, a man and a woman. The teacher was at a loss to understand how this illustrated the lesson of Adam and Eve. Little Bobby was prompt with his explanation. "Why, this is God driving Adam and Eve out of the garden!"

Little Angel!

Little Johnny's new baby brother was screaming up a storm.

Johnny asked his mom, "Where'd he come from?"

"He came from heaven, Johnny."

Johnny responded: "Wow! I can see why they threw him out!"

A Real Life Testimony BY SHAWNA LIVINGSTON, ONE OF GROWTH MINISTRIES' VOLUNTEERS

I was about 7 years old, I'm a military brat, and we were stationed in Fort Bragg North Carolina. I'm originally from Louisiana and my sister and I would spend a few summers there with my grandmother and other relatives, so this is where we got our Baptist background from. You didn't stay in my Big Mommas house (yes, I had a Big Momma) and not attend church at least 4 times a week! It was MANDATORY. Now In the military world we were Catholic, so Catholicism was mandatory in our household and Sunday Mass.

My mother and birth father were divorced, and my mother remarried. She and my stepfather had somewhat of a toxic relationship I would say at times especially if they were drinking. My sister and I a lot of the time basically had to take care of ourselves because they were either wrapped up in their careers or fighting, it was really hard. My step father was a chief warrant officer in the Army and held at very high standards and very well known, so that meant no matter what was going on at home, we had to go with the flow and put on that facade like all was great....If they only knew I often thought.

Well I made a few friends, one of which her family had a beautiful dog that had puppies and offered to give me one if I wanted it. I had always prayed for a puppy, but was always told no. Now this wasn't just an old ordinary dog, this was a pure bred \$900-\$1000 dog that they would breed and then sell the puppies for extra income! Blessing!!!!...I accepted the puppy and was very afraid to take him home only to be told to take him back. Well, they agreed to let me keep him. He was 9 weeks old.

That night my parents got into a huge argument, my mom left and didn't come home that night. I was afraid to go to school the next morning out of fear that my step father would hurt my mother so I pretended to be sick so I could stay home, thinking that if my mom came home and my step dad was there, he wouldn't harm her. Well in the midst of me waiting in my room I turned on the TV and I remember seeing Billy Graham and It caught my attention and for some reason I began to listen to him. Now I had never seen and didn't know who this man was, but something drew me to continue to listen to him. He started talking about the power of prayer and how easy it was to do, and how God hears us and answers us when we pray, but we must first believe in Him. Then he went on to explain how to do that by simply repeating after him as he recited a scripture; John 3:16. I said hmmm... I wonder if that works; I'm going to do it! He for some reason repeated it again...why? I now know why; it was just for me! I did it! Then he said if you believe what you just said, shout thank you JESUS! I did it! I grabbed my puppy and held him as tight as I could and just cried. I knew of Jesus, but I didn't know Jesus until that moment!

My mom came home later that evening. My sister, who is older, and I were in her room listening to them argue... afraid. She left and went to one of her friend's house and I was left with them; they were drinking. They called for me to come go with them to their friend's house. I was afraid but I grabbed my puppy and we left. They continued to argue and as they argued, my stepfather started to drive faster and faster. My mom was yelling, telling him to slow down. I began to cry and was very afraid. I held on tightly to my puppy and suddenly I thought about what I'd confessed earlier on TV and at that instant, everything went silent and all I felt was the car tumbling, nonstop, and dust everywhere, then silence. We had been in an accident! Long story short, my stepfather hit a Stop sign and the car flipped and rolled over several times, down an embankment, before stopping. Car absolutely totaled; front seat and driver's seat were bent forward, almost to the dashboard; backdoors caved in but we all walked away with minor scratches! Praise GOD!! He not only covered me, but all that were connected to me! He even kept my puppy out of harm's way! That's the kind of God we serve! WON'T HE DO IT!! Yes, He did it! And He hasn't stopped! They said there's no way we should have survived! BUT GOD!! He heard my cry and I trusted Him!

His promises for our life are all in His Word; Deuteronomy 31:6, Isaiah 41:10-13 and the list goes on. My God continues to show Himself approved through His Word and His works. All we have to do is first believe and then trust Him. Watch Him Work! Catch up to your blessings; they are waiting on you!

BIBLE EASTER WORD SEARCH



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

ROMANS
 RISEN
 SACRIFICE
 THREE DAYS
 ANGELS
 SAVIOR

GOLGOTHA
 BLOOD
 SIMON OF CYRENE
 JESUS
 ROBE
 LAMB

SON OF GOD
 TOMB
 APOSTLES
 CALVARY
 CROSS
 NAILS

MARY
 CRUCIFIXION
 PILATE
 HIGH PRIEST
 PASSOVER
 SUNDAY

THE GOATS...GO AT IT... GOAT IT!

From the Book, "Who Cancelled Common Sense?" © 2020

By Anthony J. Butler

www.violenceiprevent.com

THE GOATS...GO AT IT... GOAT IT! I'm the GOAT...I am the greatest of all time!

Before you shout me down, consider this...I'm...

The only one created like me, I'm all mine.

Delicately and intricately formed, knit together...one of a kind! Psalms 139

I'm not a mistake...made intentionally by design at the appointed time.

I'll say it again. "I'm the GOAT!"

I didn't misspeak, I haven't misspoke. I said I am the GOAT!

Greatest of all time

Turn the hate on...I will still shine.

I'm being crystal clear, let me say it again...I'll clear my throat

Go ahead and quote me...

I said, "I am the GOAT!"

See...I have a coat of favor that was made just for me

I'm the greatest because I am the only one created...like me!

GOD MADE ME...HE MADE THIS wonderful person who will never be duplicated.

It's not that complicated...When I was conceived, when I was born...

I became the original unicorn!

I'm Blessed!

I have embraced it and my future is bursting with powerful possibilities!

You see...There is no stopping me! The GOAT...Greatest Of All Time!

And guess what? SO ARE YOU!

I am the GOAT...You are the GOAT!!!

God uniquely created us both!

Now let's find and walk in our God given purpose and get to work!

THE GOATS...GO AT IT... GOAT IT!

“Words to Grow By”

LINDA LEWIS, GMI DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

God Is!

With everything that is currently going on in our world, we would like to remind you of WHO is Large and In Charge...GOD IS!

No matter what it looks like, no matter what it sounds like, no matter what it feels like, GOD IS!

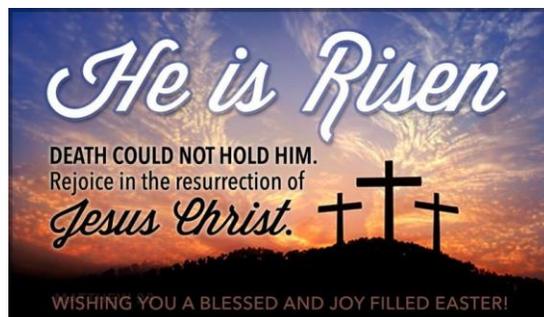
God says in Isaiah 41:10, “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

He tells us again in Philippians 4:6-7, “Do not be anxious about anything but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

And He doesn't stop there. We are reminded at least 80 times in the Bible to “fear not”, most likely because He knows that the enemy uses fear to decrease our hopes and to limit our victories.

So, as we embark upon what has now become a new way of life, we challenge and encourage you to take the time to find the other 78 verses that confirm His promises to you because of His love for you.

It is our continued prayer that; The Lord bless you and keep you, The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift His countenance upon you and give you peace.” Amen



If She Did It, So Can You!

PORNOGRAPHY FILM STAR FOUND JESUS



You may not think “sexual purity” and “adult film star” would ever fit into the same sentence. But our God can do amazing things. Take Brittni De La Mora as an example. She was living a reckless life as an actress in the adult film industry. But once the former porn star found Jesus, everything changed.

How the Former Adult Film Star Found Jesus

Brittni De La Mora starred in hundreds of adult films under the name Jenna Presley. She was making lots of money and was considered a star in her field. But she was anything but happy.

“I knew that my way in life was not working,” Brittni recalled.

That’s when she met a member of XXXChurch, an anti-porn organization run by Pastor Craig Gross. Intrigued by the group’s presence at an adult-industry convention, Brittni accepted the Jesus Loves Porn Stars literature and Bibles they were handing out.

“My first thought was: Are these people legitimate Christians, because how can Jesus love a porn star?” she said. “They were so loving and friendly and welcoming. They actually just handed out the Book of John, but they put their own cool cover on it to make it relatable.”

It was Brittni’s first step towards redemption.

Being Made New

Once the former porn star found Jesus, she said goodbye to her old life.

Leaving the industry wasn’t easy. But it was worth it. Brittni found a new home at a church in San Diego.

“I went into Church so broken and had come to the end of myself. I was so far down in life I had nowhere to look but up,” she said.

But as we know, Jesus is the Savior of the broken. He began to show Brittni a new way of living. He began filling the emptiness no amount of money, fame or prestige could ever fill.

“As I began reading the Bible, I learned a new way of living,” Brittni explained. “I knew God had given me a second chance at life and I wanted to do whatever I could to do it right this time.”

Closing Words LONNIE JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GROWTH MINISTRIES INC

Speak It!

The bible tells us that life and death are in the power of our tongue (Proverbs 18:21). I feel like a lot of people just brush that off as a nice verse. God is literally telling us that we have the power to speak life (health, prosperity, success, etc.) or death (sickness, poverty, failure, etc.) into our own lives. God spoke the entire universe into existence. We are made in His image and have His Holy Spirit inside of us so we can do the same!

You are what you speak. If all you say are things like "I am not good enough...I will never be healed...I will always be poor...", guess what? You are correct. Because you have declared that thing over your life. Instead we need to speak positive things over our life. We don't even need to be joking and say negative things about us because it is still a command that goes out to create a reality for you.

The power of our words started way back when God gave Adam the job of naming each animal. Whatever he named them is what they became.(Genesis 2:18-20)

Speaking positively about your situations, your family and your circumstances is one of the greatest acts of faith we can demonstrate. The Hebrew boys in the furnace declared that God **would** deliver them from the fire (Daniel 3:17). The woman with the issue of blood declared if I can just touch the hem of His garment, I **will** be healed (Mark 5:28).

God has also literally said that if you ask He will answer, if you knock He will open the door, if you seek you will find (Matthew 7:7-8), and He said that if you ask anything in His Name, He will do it (John 14:14).

End your pity party, pull yourself up, plant your feet, square your shoulders and speak. Speak with confidence because you are the child of a God that owns EVERYTHING. There is nothing He would not do for his kids just like you would do for yours (Matthew 7:11). **Speak it!**

There is an awesome book called "Speaking Things into Existence" by Francis Jonah. If you want to press deeper in to using the power of your words, then write me and we will send you that book free of charge.



Write Us

We would love to hear from you. If you have a testimony, a prayer request or a question about your walk with the Lord, send us a letter. We would love to pray or rejoice with you. Maybe you are a writer and you have a spiritual word of encouragement for the readers of our newsletter. We would love to review your article to see if we can use it in our newsletter. We also like to share poems from you more artistic sisters and brothers.

What must I do to be saved?

If you have never accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, or if you have turned away from Him living a life of unrighteousness and wish to be connected to Him, then take a moment and say this prayer:

“Lord, I confess that I am a sinner and ask for your forgiveness. I believe that your son Jesus died on the cross for my sins and was resurrected with all power. I invite Jesus to be the Lord of my life and your Holy Spirit to come into my heart to guide me for the rest of my days. Amen.”



Romans 10:9 says that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

If this is you, please write Growth Ministries and we will gladly help you start your new life in Christ.

Growth Ministries, Inc., Attn: Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 4375, Olathe, KS 66063