



Growth Ministries Inc.

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INDEPENDENCE DAY

JACK WILLIAMS, GMI GUEST WRITER

Isaiah 55:6 NIV

*“Seek the Lord while he may be
found;
call on him while he is near.”*

MY Brothers...I say this regardless of knowing whether you are my Brother, in the Temporal form, or Spiritual Brother, in the Eternal Nature of Christ Himself. You see, I have a unique perspective on why I see you as a brother in Christ or not.

Ok, here we go! As the second to the youngest of seven I learned early on that to consider someone family didn't require them to be my blood brother or sister nor did it require them to be of the same ethnicity. As I grew up in the late 60's and early 70's it became apparent to me just how much I was loved at an early age of approximately 4 yrs. old. "Why?" I asked them, "Is my skin color not like yours?" Being too young to understand just how I got here, on planet earth, or why they were white and I was this gorgeous complexion of chocolate. My parents said, "We asked God for you and He sent you to us and that's how special you are to Him and us." I never questioned again why our skin color wasn't the same because they asked God for me and they loved me as their own, as family, as one of their sons.... that was my first Independence Day.

I've had several Independence Days since then, my Baptism at 12 yrs. of age, Graduation from High School at 17, Getting Married at 32, raising our 3 kids with my wife, Seeing each one give their lives to the Lord, Seeing each one stumble, fall and get back up... as I do! I have realized that in between each "Independence Day" I've been more and more Dependent upon God and All the promises He has declared. Trust me in this, that in between anyone of my favorite days there's been tremendous temptations, unfavorable circumstances, 12 round fights with staying true to who HE has declared me to be in Him BUT through it all, His Spirit has never left me and I KNOW that I am rooted in His Sonship! This type of Independence is more a matter of perspective of who you are within his Word (Jesus) rather than a calendar date. Every day can be a day of Freedom even in the state that each reader finds themselves from this point forward.

Viewing yourself and life situations, through the lenses of God's daily revelations, is the perspective that we all hopefully strive to see others by.... that's an Independence Day all its own. The Word of GOD says that we were called to Freedom and to use your Freedom in Him to Serve others, Gal. 5:13. Freedom is being Independent from not only the non-essentials in life...skin color, material possessions, political affiliation, group associations, etc. but primarily the Freedom in God's Family! Brothers, be free in Him...Seek him while He may be found, Isaiah 55:6.

“FROM THE YARD”

CURTIS WOOTEN. – EL DORADO CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

(Each month we will bring you content from one of your brothers inside)

Fellowship is another form of Love

When sharing the message of God with non-believers and those of little faith, we as believers should be welcoming in our approach. There are so many wonders to choose from when relating to God. A few examples of blessings that are evident are; the functioning of the body, the existence of our being, and the people that we come in contact with. There are plenty of different examples that identify that God is always at work in our lives. It is up to us which topic we choose to use to spread the Word with.

Romans 15:1 **We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.**

There were many prayers made, inspiring lectures, encouraging readings and conversations that assisted me into wanting to grow spiritually. I'm not quite sure what it may take for the next person to want to know more about God. Yet, I am a believer that we all possess our own gifts and talents. I'm also a believer that if we choose to use our gifts and talents for God, then we can lead others to the way of righteousness.

Proverbs 15:3 **The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.**



Whether we are on the giving side of sowing a spiritual testimony, or on the receiving end of reaping someone else's sermon or witnessing of the Holy Spirit, we place ourselves in a better position to become closer to God. Actions of love, kindness, charity, and humbleness are some very pleasing attributes when they are being displayed whole-heartedly.

Galatians 5:22-23 ²² **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** ²³ **gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.**

God Bless and Share Your Love!

With Brother Love,
Curtis Wooten II

“WHAT IS IT THAT I CAN DO FOR GOD?”

RANDY SPEARMAN, GMI DIRECTOR OF ACTIVITIES

1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon Him; for He cares for you.

I know that at this time, for a lot of you, things may look very discouraging. But, because God is all Knowing and God knows you, take this time to ask yourself, “What is it that I can do for God?” instead of “What can God do for me?”

I know you are going to automatically think “But what can God possibly need? He's God!” He needs us to show love towards each other. He wants us to turn to Him in times of happiness, sadness and trouble. Understand that when you make the decision to follow God, you become born again. Your past sins and shames can be washed away. Today can be the first day of the rest of your life! During these times, some positive words can help you shift your focus.

When it comes down to it, how you feel, is really just about what you focus on. Who doesn't go through failures, setbacks and challenges? We all do. In fact, after you get through this challenging time, you will likely have more challenges to come in the future. Although that sounds pessimistic, it is also reality. God does not guarantee us easy, challenge-free lives, but He does say, “In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33).

I thank God for the opportunity to serve and I hope you know that you are loved, cared about and prayed for often.

In Christ,

Randy Spearman

John 16:33 NIV

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

“WORDS TO GROW BY”

LINDA LEWIS, GMI DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

In case no one told you today...
You're Significant.
You're loved.
You're needed.
You're alive for a reason.
You're stronger than you think.
You're going to get through this.
So **never** give up.
Numbers 6:24-26



CLOSING WORDS

LONNIE JOHNSON, GMI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1,440. Every day God gives us a fresh 1,440 minutes at midnight. And he gives us the free will to use those 1,440 minutes any way we choose. What are you doing with your 1,440 minutes each day? Sleeping, watching TV, playing video games, up to mischief, arguing with people, plotting and scheming?

For those of us that have given our life to Christ, we should operate in the thought that our time really does not belong to us. It belongs to the Lord. So, if that is the case what should we really be doing with our time. Now there are certain things that we **have** to do to be able to exist in the natural world such as sleep, eat and work.

Here are three things that I suggest you try to do with some of those 1,440 minutes every day. **1) Dedicate some of that time to God. Take time to worship Him, pray to Him and read His Word. You can use the time walking from one place to another and tell Him how much you love Him. 2) Use some of that time to improve upon yourself. Read something, learn something, or exercise. 3) Use a portion of that time to invest in another human being. Pray for others, pray with others, encourage someone, share some of what you have with someone.**

Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is not promised, **today** is all you have. Use today's 1,440 minutes as best you can.

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 you wish to be connected to Him and have ever lasting life, then take a moment and say the prayer below:

“Lord, I confess that I am a sinner and ask that you forgive me. 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 life. 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.

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Growth Ministries Inc. is a nonprofit organization whose belief system is Christian based with a passion and desire to assist individuals improve spiritually and socially through a variety of services, activities, and events.