

Poetry Series

Curtisj Johnson
- poems -

Publication Date:
2019

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Curtisj Johnson()

100 Years From Now

Wide-eyed and more focused than an eagle today, I can see tomorrow because I'm looking at yesterday. If nothing else, yesterday has taught me that tomorrow will be a little like today because today has many features of both yesterday and tomorrow. On the other hand, multiply a year's worth of tomorrows by 100 years, and you are sure to get barely a recognizable brave new world. Yesterday has a mind of its own; yet I sometimes plead for it to let go of me, to stop binding me, to stop blinding me, so that I can find me and leave yesterday far behind me.

Looking forward 100 years through the corridors of time, I clearly see matters of Artificial Intelligence, Food supplies, and Guns. I'm observing the problems of Health and Population Control. And lastly, I'm questioning the issues of Robots and Transportation. Oh indeed, I see an endless array of struggles for survival, far more than 7, but I must limit the scope of this piece lest I upset this my present peace.

100 years ago there were 20,000 cars in the world and the city speed limit was 10mph. 108 years ago the population in America was 92 million and the world had 1.7 billion people. Today, there are 7 billion of us, and 100 years from now, there will be those who will read about you and me and start to long for the good old days of fewer crowds and less pollution. There are about 1 billion cars and light trucks on the road today, almost half of them in the United States. The maximum speed limit in most cities is 35 mph, yet the traffic is so congested that the average speed is just over 10 mph.

In a hundred years, there will be 2 billion cars, many of which will be flying overhead as well as gliding across the water. 100 years ago, The Eiffel Tower in Paris was the tallest structure in the world at 1063 ft. Pneumonia and influenza were the leading causes of death. Today, the tallest building is the Burj Dubai, at 2,640 ft. Today, the population of the United States numbers more 300 million and more than 7 billion people roam the earth. And the leading causes of death are heart attacks, cancers, strokes, and motorcar accidents.

In a hundred years, the population will have exploded passed 11 billion in spite of the innumerable wars, euthanasia, and forced abortions. Human cloning will be standard-fare, and the human brain will compete with robots battling for a position like centers 'posting up' on the basketball court. Mankind's hunger for power, his prideful quest to be number one, and his obsession for possessions will drive nations farther apart, making peace impossible. They will have grown

restless and weary with building skyscrapers and excel in their pursuit of designing structures inside of the highest mountains. Like our ancient parents in Mesopotamia, they will build higher 'because they can', and will make every attempt to conquer God Himself only to fail in their futile attempt. Indeed, all forms of 'absolutes' will be discarded, and any form of constitutional governance will be as fluid as a free-flowing river, taking the path of least resistance. Laws will be designed, implemented, and adjusted to whatever 'tickles the fancy' of those in power.

100 years from now, People will eat less because there will be less healthy foods to eat. They will be restless with little sleep, working harder and longer hours to keep pace with the robots infused with artificial intelligence created by humans. People will be armed with chips beneath their skin and no longer will they be controlled by phones and computers, but also by some form of mind-control; and the masses will be totally disarmed of their guns in spite of what The Second Amendment says.

05232018cjPSFBPHHOP

Curtisj Johnson

24 Hours

24 Hours of Power

By Curtis Johnson

He was strong, loving, merciful, and he was God
He made a beautiful world when everything was void

It was He who sat on a throne, and gave valuable gifts to all
The red, yellow, brown, black, and white; the short and the tall

He gave allotments of shares, in packages of twenty-four
Lose not, waste not, as so many others have done before

Take your God given shares and respect them highly
Invest your divine allotment, and use it wisely

24 hours per day; to live, to laugh, to care, to share, to learn, to love
Treasure your unmerited package of twenty-four as long as you live
Your priceless measure is fixed and final; no more can He give

Sail the oceans wide, or climb the highest mountain; the choice is ours
We may descend the deepest sea; or build the highest tower.
In the time allotted, we excel or fail; we have the power cj8/9/15

Curtisj Johnson

36 Years

36 Years

By Curtis Johnson

When the facts and figures did not add up
When the bank account was empty, and also the cup
When I was tired, weary, and worn, feeling all washed up
From Illinois to Wisconsin, from Mississippi to California

You have been there for me for 36 long years
You have stood by me through all the pain and the tears
You were always praying and helping me to draw near
You helped to carry our heavy loads in the midst of fear

In sickness; in health; for better; for worse; you're still here
In dedication and devotion, you remain with an open ear
In confusion and frustration, you help me see more clearly
In times when doors were shut in my face, you remained so dear

So here we are, ready and willing, to face another day
Here we stand together, to walk with God the usual way
Here and now, again I say, I love you still, and I pray
By your side and in your heart, is where I want to stay

Cj06172008 P.S. (08032015. Still together, now 43 years)

Curtisj Johnson

A Helping Hand

A HELPING HAND

By Curtis Johnson

As I came out of the men's room I spotted her walking down the hallway. I knew her by sight but had not become well acquainted. As I entered the hall way, she was turning toward the front with what I recall to be some kind of chair. I had always seen her up front near the entry of the church, and she seemed always pleasant and readily made eye contact whenever I saw her. She was an elderly lady, and my first impulse was to render some assistance. I sensed that she would tire more easily than me by the time she reached the front. When I offered to carry the chair, she immediately obliged and was relieved of an unnecessary weight or burden. I cannot think of any moment with her that was as meaningful as the one just described.

I learned some time later that she was Tammie's mother, and of course I and everyone else knows Tammie. Tammie has been a pillar of hospitality at our church for as long as I can remember. Now having met her mother, I could understand Tammie's gift of what I would call 'people connection' in her ability to point people in the right direction as they enter the church. Most teachers in our church are called facilitators and are assigned to a particular class of study. Tammie is not a class facilitator, but she is indeed a people facilitator. Enough about Tammie. I'm really talking about Tammie's mother, whom I have come to know as a 'people person'.

Without any reference to the assistance in the hallway, each time I see her, there is no doubt that the one single act of kindness toward her sealed a bond that to me is so priceless. It is a moment that I have always treasured. Perhaps she feels that same 'God moment'.

Lately she has been very ill, and I have missed her. I saw her last week on Wednesday night and found her sitting in the foyer with an oxygen tank attached. Our eyes met, and I took a seat beside her and held her hand. With very few words, I knew that God's love was flowing between us.

Several years ago, I gave her a helping hand in the hallway, and it was a special moment. On that Wednesday night, I held her hand; another special moment. I am certain that with our hands knitted together, we were giving each other a helping hand from God. I am continually praying for her good health.

Cj09122014 P.S. One week after this writing, my special friend, Christine,
passed away on 9/19/14

Curtisj Johnson

A Letter To Rose

A Letter To Rose
By Curtis Johnson

Hello Rose,

I know that you have questions and have missed me as much as I am missing you.

I do not like excuses, but there really is a good reason for my infrequent visits. Of course there are others like Tulip and Lillie to whom I also give my attention. You know that I treasure and favor you above all other flowers in my garden.

I know that this summer has been very hard on you, but there's nothing I can do.

As you know, we have been in a drought for the past three years and counting. My once green lawn who must now tolerate brown, is also longing for more water;

But the authorities require that we water lawns and gardens only twice a week.

I know how you must feel, and I am so sorry to have to treat you this way. It hurts me that I can't smell your sweet fragrance, nor feast on your loveliness. Your beautiful colors no longer embrace my front yard, and grace my living room.

But the weather people are predicting a wet winter that could improve things. I hope so, because I will cut back your branches, allowing you to grow new ones. And come late Winter and early Spring, you will burst force in splendor and elegance.

Cj11072015

Curtisj Johnson

A Little Boy's World

A Little Boy's World

By Curtis Johnson

When I was a little boy, I was always well behaved. Well, most of the time. Being honest and respectful is the way I was raised; not to be mean, but nice and kind. I don't know why, but I was withdrawn a lot, very quiet, emotions in a cave; but mostly, I stayed in line. I had lots of family and friends that God freely gave, and all kinds of food on which to dine.

In my home town, some roads and streets were paved, but most were dusty and gravel ones, with no street sign.

There were lots of little things so treasured and divine; like loving to watch my father when he shaved. Perhaps I was looking forward to the day when the boy would become a man, and daddy's shaver would become my own.

Whether I was right or wrong, grandma always came to my aid. There have always been wonderful grandmas, but I think none as great as mine. The love I experienced, I could never trade; But there was another world beyond my family and friends; A dark world with enough hate to blow your mind. But that's a story of a different kind.

But God and my folks put love in us; and out of hate, we were never made. My two-faced world was still among the best worlds one could ever find. There were things of which to be afraid, and I was not that brave. But it always paid to be aware of what was out there, and fear was not a crime.

There was never much money to spend and none to save, but we didn't whine, and somehow we managed just fine. cj08252015

Curtisj Johnson

A New Species

A New Species

By Curtis Johnson

In an Asian city, a new and infamous name began.
'They were called Christians first at Antioch'.*
Defined by the heart and mind of their founder,
They were to be unlike anything that ever existed.

This species was built upon relationship with its
disconnection from him.
She fulfilled and bridged the past
eternity.

Same creator, same designer,
species.
For six days He created everything;

Later, there was a world wide deluge;
altered; most destroyed.
Generations would transpire before God
breed of creatures*.

This new species called Christian,
nothing.
she would become the new model for all.
a remarkable and revolutionary concept!
human before! !

This human species did not find God;
were lost;

This species is essentially about loving,
unconditionally.
She's about giving and not taking;
love; and not for personal gain.
She finds life through death; she has no room for hate.

No, this new species cannot procreate;
reproduction by proclamation.

maker; and not
with the present and all

and same planer of all
and then He rested.

and things were
created a totally new

was not made from
But being made a new type of human,
What
How different from every

they, like all others,
He found and recreated them!

not 50/50, but 100%
about giving out of

but there's

She propagates loving God with all the heart;
neighbor as one's self.

Yes, she's a new kind of species!

03312016 cj Acts 11: 26,2Cor.5: 17

and loving the

Curtisj Johnson

A Stranger And The Sky

A Stranger And The Sky

Curtis Johnson

All was quiet as I enjoyed a calm western sky.

As I was sitting in my back yard one
carefree night;

The stars were shining and sparkling brighter than lights on cars.

Above me was The Milky

Way with more than 100 Billion stars.

Across my fence, I heard a voice saying, 'Could you give me some water? '

I said of course and went inside to obtain
water for him to drink.

In a comfortable chair and reading a book;

I sat in my back yard, feasting on the
moon light.

I've heard that Pluto is no longer considered a planet.

I've also heard that women are from Venus
and men are from Mars.

While inside, I decided to also fetch him some fried chicken.

I thought, 'He's probably both hungry and
homeless too'. I had
enough to spare, and it was the least that I could do.

Some may call it multi-tasking, as I was also anticipating a great sky watch.

I was really chilling and
expanding my brain from above and below.

From across the fence I handed him the water and the chicken.

I was very delighted to share with him,
and he was more than grateful. I was
blessed to be a giver that sky gazing night, and he received more than
he asked for. We both became richer by far, as if we both were touched by an
angel.

Just imagine, seeing the moon 240,000 miles away from planet earth.

But I cannot imagine that Jupiter is more than 390
million miles away.

05132017cjPS

Curtisj Johnson

A Tale Of Two Cousins

A Tale of Two Cousins

by Curtis Johnson

Luke* and Frank* were my cousins from two of my father's sisters. Luke and Frank lived in the same city, and I joined them for an important family event. I had not seen nor spoken to either of them for more than 40 years. When I arrived, I telephoned Luke.

Luke was a year older than me. Having grown up together, we were well acquainted with each other. Luke and his family moved away when I was 13. On the other hand, Frank and I knew each other as young kids, but were not well acquainted. When I saw them again after 40 years, their response to me was a vast story in contrast. I have shared this story with other members of the family. Where appropriate, I have not revealed their identity, desiring not to be offensive in any way.

Upon arriving in their city, I spoke with Luke over the phone. I was excited in my voice tone and very delighted to finally renew our acquaintances. However, I was stunningly surprised by the response from Luke on the other end. I was mistaken to think that I would at least be warmly welcomed with a sense of anticipation of him seeing me again. Instead, Luke was rather indifferent, tamed, and subdued; and I was forced to calm my emotions toward him. It felt so very awkward to me.

On the occasion of the event with everyone gathered, Frank was among the crowd and not at all recognizable by me. As kids we saw each other only occasionally when my father took us to visit them several miles away. Nevertheless, Frank walked straight up to me, and in spite of the years, my full beard, and eye glasses, he said, 'Hi Curtis! ' I was 55 years of age, and could not have been more that 10 or 12 when we last saw each other.

Although a little disappointed, I was really okay.
I would never tell Luke how he made me feel that day.
But 'Not all cousins are created equal', is what I wanted to say.

02182016cj *Names are changed

Curtisj Johnson

A Treasured Collection

A Treasured Collection

By Curtis Johnson

I look for you all the time, and find you in my thoughts.
I think of our years together, and find you in my memories.

I often discover you close-up, on the outskirts of my mind.
But revelations of you in such domains are limited at best.

Not quite satisfied, I continue my search for the deeper you.
At last, a beautiful portrait appears in a most treasured book.

There were numerous poses of you, all so breathtakingly beautiful.
So beautiful, that it was very challenging to produce a
complete set.

The words accompanying the poses were so distinctive and impeccable.
I could not choose them all; so I selected the number of completion.

Yes, I chose seven poses of you from those treasured pages.
The first was a standing pose of one filled with capability.

I beheld a stunning portrait of a very prudent investor.
I was struck by the sight of one so strikingly confident.

There was a sitting pose of an intelligent business woman.
There was the dignified lady glowing in energy and strength.

Like magnet, I was drawn toward the pose of a God fearing woman. Lastly, I
beheld one so indelibly deserving of appreciation and respect.

Cj12052015 Bible: Proverbs 31

Curtisj Johnson

A Window Person

A Window Person
By Curtis Johnson

She offers far greater potential than the frame upon which she attaches
She is flexible, agreeable, and delights to be covered, opened, or closed
She provides a reality far and above her surrounding strong walls

If you should decide to uncover her, she will light up your world
If you desire to open her, she will comfort you with cool breezes
She's transparent, willing and able to serve your needs.
She's a window and wishes to make you smile, but don't break her.
And even if you wish to close her, she will agree to give you privacy

Mirrors will aid and assist, but mirrors will never sustain or satisfy you.
But if it is privacy alone that you seek, you need walls and not windows

If it is your world alone you desire, you need mirrors, and not windows
If "your point of view" is all that matters, you have no need of windows.
But if you care about what's out there, and how others see and feel
If you long to share, to touch the souls of others, to give, to help, to heal;
If the tool of your trade is transparency, and you have no need for a shield,
You are a window person, and your heart has been touched by the almighty
You've heard sounds, seen visions, and you cannot be retained behind walls
You have uncovered and opened the window; you felt the breeze of the almighty
You are free from mirrors and walls, and like God, through windows, you seek to
love.

Curtisj Johnson

Above And Beyond

Above And Beyond

By Curtis Johnson

Above us, lightning was dazzling, blinking, and picturesque.
Blacken sky, moonless and star free; a massive light show!
Like a human anatomy of nerves, spread in every direction.
I wonder the bounty of harnessing such explosive power.

A Storm is brewing, introduced by such thunderous sounds.
Can one even imagine the extent of such awesome treasure?
Below us? A roll, a shake, a quake, and shock waves of terror!
Beyond? Wind, clouds, falling stars; it seems everything moves.

cj07222015

Curtisj Johnson

Age 239

Age 239

By Curtis Johnson

Please allow me to introduce myself. Though I am well known around the world, there may be a side of me that many have not seen or known. Many know me presently as well as in years gone by as one who is both kind and strong. Some of course even dislike me, and view me as an overbearing authoritarian wishing to impose my will upon the world. Some deem me a hypocrite, because I have demonstrated some inconsistencies through my tenure in this world. Anyway, there are times when everyone needs to express themselves and share their own take of themselves. Beyond that, I guess historians will just have to do the rest.

I was born on July 4, 1776, and I am 239 years of age. I am very young in comparison to many of my kind who are much older than me. However, few have been blessed to achieve and accomplish as much as I have in these years of growth and triumph. Through time and the good providence of Almighty God, I have grown much larger and there have been major changes for the better. Over time, there have been parts of me that did not want to change. This created such discord within me that nearly tore me apart. Through it all, I have not only survived but have strived to become the strongest of them all. I have no need to boast, because I realize that I have come this far by the grace of God to whom I am grateful.

I and others of goodwill tried to build a world of peace and tranquility after the walls fell in Berlin, Germany. For a while it appeared that we were creating a brave new world, until the twin towers fell in New York City. It seems that we do have a new world that's vastly different from the other world prior to 2001: The prior world was Pre-911, and the present new world is Post 911.

I am still fighting terrorists and perhaps will be forevermore at war with them. There is no other in the world built like me. I am more than 300 million strong and still have a small but formidable military. In spite of the power I possess, it feels like I'm getting weaker. Moreover, I'm deeply concerned with my own war at home. I'm fighting bravely to hold on to my convictions and to live up to my responsibilities.

I am presently experiencing deep and penetrating changes. In fact I am changing so rapidly that I could be overwhelmed if I did not have a strong and lasting belief system. It seems there have always been times and seasons when

I was pressed upon to make major changes. In most cases I believe that the changes made me better and wiser, but on the other hand I am allowing myself to change to the point where I am becoming
Unlike the true me. There is change that is virtuous and everyone wins, and yet there is also change that is destructive and everyone loses.

A generation ago, I became better as a result of being pressed upon to live out the true meaning of my existence. I was pressed to reexamine the core of my being and live up to the constitutional principles upon which I was born. Also, the biblical world view that I proclaimed was sorely tested and analyzed, resulting in my becoming even stronger.

In the last few decades it appears that I am being called upon again to change course and go the way of other nations, to become one with the world. These changes are not only political and social, but spread a huge tent that radically alters and revolutionizes both culture and religion. Therein lies a problem, because I was born to be different, and I am different.

I was born different with a completely different purpose. My purpose cannot be fully implemented and realized apart from my continued reliance upon the constitution of the United States and adherence to my biblical world view, which gave birth to me. Please don't write me off as a 'has been', because God isn't finished with me yet. I know that I am not perfect, and I also know that I am a miracle in progress. My name is the United States of America, and may God always bless and shed His grace upon me.

Curtisj Johnson

All Of You

ALL OF YOU

By Curtis Johnson

It is not simply what you do that makes me feel loved by you
Nor is it merely what you say that leads to a better way
No, I do not even think that it is the things you share
That proves to me that you care

But I dare to say that it is all the ingredients that make up
The perfection of God's Love, that take away the fear, and
Create one such as you, so precious and so dear

And no doubt it is the composition of the do's, the sayings, and the sharing,
that make for a grandiose orchestration of a divine presentation.

It is the way that you take all of you and give it all you've got

Yes, my dear wife, it is the way that you pour in all of you, leaving nothing
out in all you do.

Curtisj Johnson

America 101

America 101

By Curtis Johnson

When I was born in 1949, Harry Truman was the President of The United States. Of course I do not personally remember him. Mr. Truman was followed by Mr. Dwight Eisenhower, but I don't remember him either. However, the first President that I recall was Mr. John Kennedy who was elected in 1960. Therefore, in my lifetime I have experienced 12 U. S. Presidents, 10 of which I remember from my childhood of about 10 years of age until the present. I am now 65 years of age.

I am by no means a historian, but I have been consciously engaged as an American for more than 50 years. If I were asked to summarize America in relation to the life, times, and events of the last 10 Presidents, I would entitle my summary, "America 101". This narrative would cover the period from 1960 to the present 2015.

If I were an artist, the portrait would be filled with blood, weapons of war, some symbol of measured peace, government spent dollar bills, aborted babies, new cars, fine homes, and other symbols of prosperity, the homeless and unemployed people, stock markets of bulls and bears, airplanes flying into twin towers. The list could be endless. But I am neither historian nor artist, but please allow me to demonstrate in 'a first person format' as best I can. The portrait in words would be as follows:

My name is John F. Kennedy, and as president of the United States, I challenged my fellow Americans with just a few and simple words. I said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country". I faced a huge crisis with the Soviet Union over missiles being shipped and set up in Cuba. I stood up to the threat and potential war was averted.

As President, I was commander-in-chief and fought two wars. I fought the war in Vietnam and the war on poverty. I'm sorry to say that I lost them both. I pushed for and signed into law civil rights bills, and I implemented several antipoverty programs. I declined to run a second term. My name is Lyndon B. Johnson

As President I took foreign policy seriously and opened up China. On the home front, I sought to establish law and order. I know that I caused a lot of

problems, but I told the American people, "I'm no crook". I was elected two terms, but I resigned midway through my second term. My name is Richard Nixon.

I became your President, but I was never elected by you. I served for a short period, and I did my best by seeking to unite the American people. I pardoned President Nixon to bring stability to my country.

For many years I served as Senator from the State of Michigan. My name is Gerald Ford.

I was born again, and campaigned for the Presidency on a promise to America that I would not lie. I worked hard for peace in the Middle East. However, I failed in my attempt to free the hostages in Iran. I was also a peanut farmer and a Governor of the State of Georgia. My name is Jimmy Carter.

By the time I became your president I was close to 70 years of age, but I did free the hostages. I taught that in foreign policy, we needed to 'trust but verify'. I said to the President of Russia, "Tear down these walls".

By the time I left office, those walls came tumbling down. My name is Ronald Reagan.

I was President when Iraq attacked Kuwait in August of 1990, and I united a lot of countries to stop his advance. I insisted on establishing world order and forced Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait. The American people loved me for that. Nevertheless, when the American economy started to deteriorate, my popularity began to unravel. I said for the people to "read my lips; no new taxes".

Unfortunately, there were new taxes. The voters read my lips and denied me a second term as President. My name is George Bush.

In my administration, the U.S. economic was turned around. My Democratic Party and the Republican Party found a way to work together. Things got so much better that we began to pay down the national debt. I did not always tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help me God, but I was right about "The Economy Stupid". My name is Bill Clinton.

Within eight months of my taking office, terrorists took over four planes and used them as weapons of destruction. We were forced to go to war in Afghanistan and Iraq. When asked what I wanted to do in Iraq, I repeatedly said time and time again, "Regime change". After fighting in Afghanistan, I finally went to war against Iraq and Saddam Hussein. I drove him out of office and forced him to be brought to justice. On the home front, the American became weary of war, and the economy grew sour. The war was frustrating and longer than I had hoped,

but I held to my convictions and was elected to a second term. My name is George W. Bush.

By the time I was elected to office, the American economy was in shambles, and it would get far worse before it got better. I came to the oval office with the idea of bringing hope to the American people. We found and killed Osama Bin laden and brought most of our soldiers home from Iraq. I have been spending more money that anyone in the history of the world. We presented stimulus packages; we did bail outs, loans, takeovers, grants, and we even helped to stabilize the stock market. We were forced to continue extending unemployment benefits due to the sagging economy. My administration brought healthcare to the forefront, and a national program is underway. It is very costly, and there is much controversy over my healthcare program. My administration is still in progress, and I guess only history will reveal the success or failure of all we are doing. We are still hoping. My name is Barack Obama. cj06152015

Curtisj Johnson

America's Bird

America's Bird

By Curtis Johnson

In all honesty, the extent of my turkey knowledge is their unique sound and their great taste.

Come Thanksgiving and Christmas, turkey fragrance fills the house and nothing goes to waste.

I know that the dove has symbolic meaning, one being that of the Holy Spirit. I also understand that the dove must be a gentle one, spoken of as being harmless.

No one takes kindness to be called a turkey, and a dove-like defense is rather limited.

But the eagle is really my kind of bird, and he would certainly be my first choice. The eagle has the eye to target and lay hold of his prey, and quickly return to the heights.

The eagle knows how to repair and rebuild himself, renewing his strength for longevity.

He knows the ways of the wind and becomes its partner, as he mounts up his wings to soar.

No, I think that turkeys are birds of choice for smokers, ovens, and tables of holiday feasts.

I wish our world could be as harmless as doves, and fly about feeding its hungry and its young.

But our world chooses not to be at peace, and we sometime fail at feeding, loving, and caring for the needy.

Yes, give me the eagle who reaches for the high places;

Who observes and listens, communicating with the winds.

He's aware of the winds of change and utilizes divine resources.

I choose the eagle for America, and may we forever mount up higher.

May we keep flying high, soaring above and beyond, until our days are done

Cj10102015

Curtisj Johnson

An Introduction

By Curtis Johnson

Who am I really? Who does everyone think I am, and what do they think I'm really like? Do I even know? Stay tunnnnnned.

I was a newborn in '49 in a home within a mile off Highway 49. There was no doctor; but a midwife arrived on time, nice and kind. My weight was 10 lbs.; and I have reached 165 in 66 years of time.

I didn't go astray; and I've done my best to walk the narrow line. Old people said, 'Be good so you don't go where the sun don't shine'. Anyway, I respect everyone, and I serve notice on any who disrespects me.

O I have over time, exceeded the speed limits, and ran a few stop signs. My folks attended a Church in the neighborhood known as True Vine. I'm not perfect, but I've never been accused of being a liar or hypocrite.

People called me 'a good boy' when I was a kid growing up. But there was always something inside the me that they could never see. They never knew the deprived, the denied, and the underprivileged me.

My grandma was my best friend who taught me love; and man she was tough. My next best friend came along when daddy gave me Jack, my first little pup. He was the best, the boldest, the fastest, and loved to ride in daddy's pickup truck.

By grace I've done good like we all should, and have never committed a crime. I don't smoke, drink, or dope; but I'm a sinner saved by God's grace alone. I believe in forgiveness and not 'an eye for an eye'; but please don't ignore me, like I don't exist.

Decry me, deny me, or drive by me and make a fuss. Demote me if you must. Decrease my 'in God we trust'. But I will keep on loving everyone, until I kick the dust.
04012016 cj

Curtisj Johnson

Angelic Christmas Dreams

Just Do It!

There are two notable Josephs in the Bible, and they both were dreamers. One Joseph was young and immature, but his dreams resulted in saving the lives of many people. The other Joseph was a very wise and mature adult, whose dreams resulted in a Savior for all the world's people. God saw the puzzling thoughts of the second mentioned Joseph. God also saw a wise and loving heart who wanted the best for Mary. An angel spoke to Joseph in a dream, and he obeyed.

Don't Do It!

They came from the east and entered Jerusalem looking for a king. Wise men had traveled far by following a star that had led them there. Now they were inquiring of the whereabouts of the newborn king. When the existing king got word of such, he was more than a little concerned. In the mind of the king, there wasn't room for another king. So he quickly sought the wise men's help in devising a plan of evil intent. However, the king failed to realize that he was not the only one with a plan. The wise men departed, no doubt with the intention of keeping the king informed of their findings. Nevertheless, there was a dream during the night that led the wise men to leave town another way without the king's knowledge.

Get Out of Town!

As the evil king Herod plotted, God's angel kept working with Joseph. Joseph had another dream in which the angel informed him that the life of the Christ child was in danger, and he was to flee to Egypt for safety. So Joseph, Mary, and Jesus 'got out of town' as the angel told him.

Go Back!

The years passed as the little boy Jesus began to grow up in Egypt. In the meanwhile, King Herod had committed unthinkable atrocities in his failed attempt to destroy the Christ child. When King Herod died, Joseph dreamed yet again, and the angel told him to 'go back' to Israel.

Go North!

Not once had Joseph's prior dreams led him astray. However, there was a pause when he heard that a certain king was in power. Joseph continued to trust God and was not disappointed, because he dreamed yet again and was informed by the angel to continue 'going north' to Nazareth.

Whether by dreams, visions, the Bible, sermons, a friend, or a still small voice, God still speaks to us today. May we 'just do' the thing we know we have been told to do. May we listen like the wise men and 'don't do' the wrong thing that we will live to regret. Let's not hesitate to 'get out' of a relationship or situation that is harmful and displeasing to God. May we hear God's voice when he tells us that it is 'time to go back' to fix it, restart it, or to complete His purpose in our lives. God sees our every move, and His Holy Spirit is within us to command, guide, direct, and redirect us to 'go North' if need be.12022016 cj Matthew: chapters 1 & 2

Curtisj Johnson

Barbara

Barbara

By Curtis Johnson

Between children and church, work and play, we've had a good life
At this season in our lives, our work is measured; not a push and rush
Relationship with God and between the two of us, are by far our greatest quest.
Before "you", there was barely a "me"; with you I am fulfilled, as we climb our
hills.

At the beginning, we thought that we were destined to travel together around
the world,

Rescuing and feeding the hungry; helping to save the lost; and praying for the
sick to be healed.

At some point, however, we had children of our own, and stuck to our mission
closer to home

cj10242015

Curtisj Johnson

Beaches And Volcanoes

BEAUTIFUL BEACHES, A Letter to Daniel

By Curtis Johnson

Hi Daniel,

There once was a man living high on a mountain whose name was Harry Mt. St. Helen was threatening to blow its top, and everyone started to worry Harry had been there 60 years and thought he would live on to tell his story So after being warned to evacuate, Harry refused and decided to tarry Sadly, when the volcano blew, Harry was later found in 40 feet of ashes

It's interesting at times, that life can be so tame, so sweet, and so calming. Because of our positive experiences, we relax and enjoy seasons so charming. Like Harry, we are unconvinced of danger, and need not fear rumors and warnings.

Sandy beaches on the oceanfront are beautiful and lots of fun, when all is sunny and bright. For eight years my family and I lived in San Francisco within four blocks of the Pacific. Believe me when I say that the Oceanside is a calming and charming place. We spent lots of time in the Golden Gate Park and on the beach.

One Sunday afternoon, my two small kids and I took a walk across the rocks above the ocean beach. I noticed that the waves were coming in pretty far, but I thought that we were high enough. Well, I thought wrong. We had not been on the rocks more than 5 minutes before the waters came splashing high against the rocks that we were walking on. I held tightly onto the kids and protected them from the big splash. I got pretty wet, but no real harm was done, and the lesson was well received. Sometimes, we must go higher.

The sandy beaches of life will often suddenly turn into rushing waves of sea salty waters.

My friend, there are times when the volcanoes of life will heat up and blow their top. When they do, we best be aware, heed the warnings, and seek higher ground.

Dan, I do not know what you may be going through presently, but I am praying for you.

If for any reason you taste those salty waters of what was once a calm and sandy beach, I have every reason to believe that God is going to change things

for you.

If the volcanoes of your life have blown its top, I have every reason to believe that the ashes will not bury you.

When the troublesome adversities of life blow against all of us, God is always both warning and leading us out to safety.

So Daniel, my friend, may we together seek higher ground. Love you.

Curtis09262013

Curtisj Johnson

Beyond The Grave

Beyond The Grave

By Curtis Johnson

The Arms of Justice, so extensive, having no limits
Reaching the lowest depths, and the highest points
Searching out both the perpetrators and the victims
Rendering to perpetrators their reckoning
Granting to victims their rewards

Yes, death will often precede reckoning and reward
Preventing 'due process' for victims and perpetrators
But let victims never fret; let perpetrators be well advised
Even beyond the grave, the Hall of Justice awaits
And on a throne, the Eternal Judge there sits

To execute justice to both,
Granting reckoning and reward

Cj01302016 Job 5: 16

Curtisj Johnson

Black History Month (2016)

Black History Month(2016)

By Curtis Johnson

The study of history is one of the greatest resources for models and lessons of life. History records a runaway slave from Virginia who went on to finished college in Ohio. He relocated to Mississippi and became a wealthy planter. He later became a U. S. Senator from Mississippi. Finally, he became Register of the U.S. Treasury.*

I once toiled in delta fields of cotton, always knowing that such toil would not always be my lot
The cotton sacks were large, and after we filled and dragged them to the scales, I wanted to drop
The cotton roes were long, the grass and weeds were sometime tall, and even the dust was hot
In the ovens of the sun, from sun rise to setting sun, I wanted to, but knew I could not stop
I often wanted to rebel and call it quits before quitting time; but I thought it best that I not

The work was hard with so little to be gained, and I was God forbidden childhood labor
I never ceased to believe that, 'this too would pass', and soon God would grant us favor
In the midst of poverty, there was always trust in our God, and help from a neighbor
One needed to decide early in life that he would learn to do more than drive a tractor
One had to dream and believe, always realizing his best move was 'The Education Factor'

This and every Black History Month remind me of those 'not so Good Old Days'
I am reminded to keep praying and never forget, 'Lest we be condemned to repeat them'
Man's inhumane treatment to one another eventually crosses every barrier, color, or culture
There's a deep rooted hurt and wounds inside of mankind that seem to force us to inflict hurts
The noblest of laws and the highest of courts, though helpful, can never cure our

deepest ails

I was inspired by Black History Month to write these few lines as my personal contribution

The longings and aspirations of any people or nation demand the primary focus be one of prayer

I have lived 66 years, and the older I get, the more I realize that only a love from our God keeps us

This prayer is just as real and relevant for not only Black America, but for all America and the world

Dear God:

May this present young generation of Black Americans never lose the knowledge of their father's God

May they ever believe, retain, and refer to the two great documents of the Bible and the U.S. Constitution

May they determine to keep focus on their sacred teachings about God, family, church, and country

May they never submit nor succumb to a mentality of dependency upon their government

May they ever thrive to contribute their talents and challenge their country to Excellency

O God:

Let them never lose sight of the dreams and aspirations of their fore fathers

Let them never forget the price paid for their present freedom and prosperity

Let them remember that their deceased loved ones are like a cloud of witnesses

Let them always believe that, like prior generations, they too can overcome anything

Let them, like prior generations, pick their peak and climb, ever ascending, never quitting

In The Name of Our Lord. Amen.

Cj02012016 *Blanche K. Bruce

Curtisj Johnson

Bottled Tears

Bottled Tears

By Curtis Johnson

If hope were mystical and only available for this present and earthly life,
I would think my future to be cloudy and dark, not sunny and bright
If hope were in a constant state of deferral
I think my heart would faint and not endure

A heart filled with questions and grief?
Easy cries with responses of silence?
A life of bewilderment and wonder?
A rather miserable state, is it not?

May light break forth in your darkened tunnel
May your grief be lifted, letting you smile again
May your pain depart, and your questions be answered

May your cries of desperation be heard
May your tears be captured in a bottle
May they be preserved and never dry

May you be touched by an angel
And embraced by the Love of God

cj06222015

Curtisj Johnson

Buggy And The Spider

God gave Adam the right to name all the creatures of the world.
On yesterday,12/02/2016, a little bug appeared on our lamp table.
I did not know his name, so I gave him one and called him Buggy.

When I saw Buggy, my first thought was that he did not belong in my house, and instinctively I swatted him softly. He was slightly wounded, but I decided to let him live. I also decided to continue my reading and forgot about him.

About 10 to 15 minutes later, I looked in the direction I last saw him, and he was gone. I then inspected the environs of the lamp table and spotted him in the web of a spider, being prepared and processed for the spider's own purpose. That scene was getting p-r-e-t-t-y interesting to me, though not so much for Buggy. Therefore, I reached for my magnifying glass for a closer view.

After a period of probing that 'wild kingdom scene', I think that 'spider man' spotted me. I cannot think of another reason for him to up and leave his prey. I then freed Buggy from the web and returned him to the lamp table. After several hours, I thought about him and checked on his whereabouts; but Buggy was nowhere to be found.

I thought that was my last encounter with Buggy, but it was not. The next morning, my wife informed me that she encountered a bug crawling on her as she sat in the chair next to the lamp table. Yes, it was Buggy; but by that point, his longevity had run its course.

I had rescued Buggy once from my wrath and again from the dinner table of the spider. Unfortunately, I was not available to intercede for Buggy when he encountered my wife. All I could say was, 'Good bye Buggy'.

12022016 cj PS PH

Curtisj Johnson

Candy Covered Peanuts

Candy Covered Peanuts

By Curtis Johnson

She was laid to rest a few days ago after a bout with cancer.
Her body grew quickly weaker and soon succumbed. But she stood without fear,
and her spirit ascended. But before her spirit ascended, the timid cancer ran and
raced rapidly throughout her body, invading and destroying everything in its
path.

She feared neither cancer nor the sting of death.
Joellen was the winner, and cowardly cancer, the loser.

I do not know how she discovered that I was a nut about nuts
But in her dying days, she gave to me a can of candy covered peanuts.
I shall forever treasure the peanut gift from such a divinely treasured one.

She believed in me and always gave to me far more than I deserved.
She was caring, loving, and sincere, never ceasing to build and lift.
Unpretentious, vulnerable, transparent, an opened book, freely given.

Known by us for a few short years, but she gave so much, so often.
I speak not of things material, but matters of far superior substance.
An older friend of my wife and me, clearly Joellen loved us so dearly.
Surely a gift from heaven, and she shall be forever in our memories.
cj09062015

Curtisj Johnson

Cash Only Society

A CASH ONLY SOCIETY

By Curtis Johnson

I was making a deposit at the teller window of my local bank. As the teller proceeded to finish the transaction, she asked if I would like to apply for their credit card. This question has been posed to me at least two or three times at my bank. Everyone knows that it is their job to not only complete a transaction at the teller window, but they also have to attempt to make a sale of another service provided by the bank. I knew something about myself and my credit status that they did not know. Not only was I certain that I no longer qualified for a credit card, but I also would not have wanted one if I was qualified. Anyway, my reply to the tellers at the bank was that my wife and I no longer uses credit cards. I tell you, it feels so good.

□

I wish that we could have reached this point sooner, but for more than three years now, we have neither sought for more credit nor wished for it. We have discovered that even in 2011 America, one can survive without credit cards and lines of credit. It has not been easy, But things in life that are worthwhile are usually more difficult. We are not yet debt free, but we are credit card free and moving toward financial freedom.

I can remember that it was in or about the year 1980 when we began to use credit cards. We have always lived a simple lifestyle, but before credit cards came into our lives we lived with the lack of many things and during certain dire situations, we had no one to bail us out. Our family life was governed by cash for the first seven or eight years of our marriage, and if God did not provide for us in means other than the cash we earned, we simply went without.

□

It's hard to imagine the young age at which young people begin to use credit cards now a days, but Barb and I were around 30 years of age when we were first given a credit card by Bank of America. The card was sent without our ever having to apply for it, but as I recall, we felt honored to be qualified for a credit card. We used it and started using credit as a tool for survival on many occasions. Little did we realize at the time that we would be using cards for nearly 30 years. When you add it all up, we have lived a cash only life for around 11 years. There were about 8 years at the beginning of our marriage that we did not use credit cards, and we discontinued using them more than three years ago.

Without doubt, the most telling of those years has been the last three. It is much easier to live without something you never had or got use to using, but it is another matter to break away from something that you have grown use to and in some cases, absolutely depended upon.

I do not deny that it is a rather difficult task to live a respectable and modern life without the use of credit. One can sometime feel deprived, and occasionally face the reality of simply being denied in a credit driven world. However, I wish that I could share with you the absolute pleasure and thrill that I felt the first time I responded to the bank teller by saying, "Thank you, but my wife and I are a cash only society".

cj12022011

Curtisj Johnson

Cat And Squirrel

CAT AND SQUIRREL

By Curtis Johnson

The squirrel was in the tree, and the cat on the ground. There was nothing special about that scene except that on this particular spring morning in 2014, there was something different about the encounter that I was observing. The squirrel wanted down, the cat wanted up, and the cat seemed to be saying, "Only if you can get past me with the fight of your life". And the squirrel? Why, I suspect that he was saying, "I'm in no hurry". So, as far as I could tell, there was no dummy in the tree nor on the ground. Though it appeared that each wanted to determine the outcome of this standoff, I witnessed a lot of patience above and below.

The cat seemed relaxed, which seems to be the stance of most cats that I have ever observed. On the other hand, I have never witnessed a squirrel that I would say was relaxed, and that is quite a contrast from the cat. It seems that squirrels are constantly in the 'run for your life mode". Their eyes are constantly on the lookout for what might be lurking to do them harm; and their little tails seem to always be in "a state of wiggle".

I observed, watched, and waited patiently just like the cat and squirrel. I don't know how long the two of them had been in this stance before I appeared, but I watched from the front roe seat of my living room window for at least 10 minutes, hoping to see at least a good chase. The cat jumped up the tree trunk a few times and fell back down. I suspect he was either too old to climb the tree, or maybe he figured the squirrel was not worth the effort. Every time that the cat made a motion in his direction, the squirrel would simply go higher or jump to another limb. The squirrel did not seem worried in the least, as long as he stayed focused upon the cat.

My wait to see some kind of wild kingdom action was in vain, because the cat decided that his patience had run its course. So he slowly walked away. And of course the squirrel was now free and clear to go on its merry way

cj08252014

Curtisj Johnson

Change Directions

Change Directions

By Curtis Johnson

We think that it's a weeping pity and a crying shame for things to be this or that way.

We blame teachers, parents, preachers, politicians, and presidents for things going astray.

We claim we knew it could happen, but not in our neighborhood; not this type of crime.

We say, "I suspect that I always thought that it would happen, but not in my life time".

Do we never learn the times and the seasons, or do we forget about the rhymes and the reasons?

Never suppose that 'we are gods', nor think that 'appeals to heaven' is an act of human treason.

Things and people and places always change; some for the better; others for the worse.

We learn to speak our minds, and sometimes, until we blow our tops like balloons that burst.

We sleep through wind storms and heavy rains, but sooner or later we all must awake.

In hot weather we bake; strong dams sometime break; and strange places sometime quake.

Sometimes, whatever it is that we so deeply disdain, is something for which we are to blame.

Could it be both we and they who need to change, if this world's to cease from raising Cain?

May we be bold enough to raise the question, even if we've been trained to never question.

If we truly dislike our present location, let us care and dare enough to change directions.

cj10082015

Come Find Me In My Solitude

Come And Find Me In My Solitude
Curtis Johnson

None knew who or what, how or why, nor how long;
But something or someone must have taken him there.
From an environ of community, gaiety, and hilarity,
Jack found himself alone and locked up in a cell of solitude.

Some attempted to aid in his escape, but even he refused the bate.
"It's been weeks since he bothered to shave", said his brother Jimmy.
"This kind of isolation can lead to an early grave", said his sister Jill.
"There has to be a reason for the way he behaves", concerned ones
said.

Both family and friends dared repeatedly to draw near; but it appeared that he
grew accustom to and became evermore comfortable with the cave.

Jack was not the defensive type and rarely spoke.
But suddenly, it was as if from a deep sleep he awoke.
That was the unforgettable day that they all heard him say,

"I know that you love me, but please, just go away.
I must have quiet, an escape from the noise.
I delight in being just a tree in the forest.
Do you not agree that it's my choice?
You need not worry about my attitude;
just look to always find me in my solitude".

12052016 PS Contest, Come And Find Me In My Solitude, Mystic Rose

Curtisj Johnson

Country Sweet Soul

Country Sweet Soul

By Curtis Lee Johnson

Began in a country town right next to a corn mill
Raised in the Mississippi delta near the cotton field

Born in a four room house made of concrete blocks
Grew up on a large plantation next door to a tractor shop
Worked hard in the fields all day, tending the cotton crops Dirt cheap labor,
five and a half days a week, unless the rains said stop

Always clothed with plenty to eat, but no AC or central heat
My home town had cars, tractors, and trucks, but no stop lights
A place where everybody knew what was wrong and what was right;
But not perfect, because occasionally, some got drunk and wanted to fight

It was hot under the southern sun, but we had some fun
Dixie summer days felt like ovens, and nights were toasty too
In Winter seasons, mama always gave us medicine to fight off the flu

We always had heat from gas, wood, and coal
Winters were cold, especially as the nights grew old
Daddy worked hard, and mama had the sweetest of souls

When cotton fields turned white, everything was right
We were certainly poor, but nothing we couldn't endure
Mama made all the difference when the days were doubtful.
And we forgot about yesterday, because tomorrow was assured

cj08062015

Curtisj Johnson

Dad, Why Is He Crying

Dad, Why Is He Crying

By Curtis Johnson

Very sincerely, my son once asked me, "Dad. Why is he crying"? My son had seen an African American man, crying at a 711 Store. This happened on the night of a historical election in America.

An African American had just become the new President of the United States, and my son, who was 31 years of age, saw this senior citizen crying. He wanted to know from me the reason why. I said to my son that I understood the reason for the tears.

I said to my son that the man has lived through a lot of American history, and experienced much discrimination, injustice, and in some places in America, racial hatred. Perhaps he was overwhelmed with the reality of an African American President in his life time. He knew that it would happen 'someday', but not this day on the second Tuesday of November, 2008.

As if I had not answered his question, my son asked me a second time, "But dad, why is he crying? Will he be invited to the White House for dinner? " I told my son that it wasn't likely that he would be invited for dinner at the White House.

Although our views were vastly different, I understood, because I walked in similar shoes as did that gentleman. I felt that no manner of explanation would make my son understand the crying, because the two of them walked in different shoes at a different time, and the times had now changed. At least for my son, this time, the tears were not easy to understand.

Cj10142015PS

Curtisj Johnson

Dark Side Of Light

Dark Side of Light

By Curtis Lee Johnson

It is so cloudy, blue, and black.
If we could only see the end of the track.

Heaven knows what we are likely to see.
For what we really are is all we can be.

It's so sad that we are afraid.
We think the need is too great for any to aid.

We want to rise above the power and the pain.
But we are locked into the cave of shame.

We do good and shine on the happy surface.
Below and out of sight, we fight in the dark place.

'Someway! someday! ', we say. 'I am going to tell.'
"I will reveal to all before the ringing of the bell".

But then, the bell tolls on me!

 The light shines on me! It's too late! Look carefully. I am light. I am dark

 At last, you see ME

Curtis Johnson

Dear Barbara

Dear Barbara

By Curtis Johnson

When a man loves a woman:

He smiles and laughs with her.

He respects her and doesn't try to direct her.

In years gone by, I am certain that there was an 'air of control' about me that was uncomfortable to the object of my affection. I'm sure that my father's DNA kept rushing to the shores of our relationship until you began to 'push back' as you identified the problem. I am still not perfect, but I do suspect that my love for you is expressing itself with a greater respect for and far less intentions on directing you.

He remembers birthdays, anniversaries, and flowers

He compliments, embraces, and test tastes

He does not criticize, but seeks to edify her.

I am not by definition a perfectionist, but most of my life I lived under a self imposed pressure system far too burdensome. It certainly spilled out on you from time to time, reaching intolerable boiling points. Loving you opened my eyes to the flaw, and is now enabling me to build you up, and not critique you.

He talks to her, but listens more.

He listens, not with ears only, but also with heart.

He hears not only verbalized, but also spirit words

He learns to welcome her challenges.

Realizing that both of us are made stronger thereby, I have no need for a yes person catering to my every dream and goal. I'm proud to have someone who questions, quizzes, and challenges me.

He believes in her, upholds and trusts in her

He values her friendship above all others.

He waits for her.

I have been one ever prone to be a slave to the clock. I have tended to pressure myself and everyone in my family to bow to "time". Though the wheels of

inflexibility turn slowly, love for my spouse is forcing me to chill, be patient and relax. I am very aware that time neither pauses, delays, nor stops for anyone, but I'm learning to serve and wait patiently for you.

He is not the answer man, but the 'stand by your woman man'.

He stands with her against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

To him, she is above all, and second only to their God.

Cj09082015

Curtisj Johnson

Declaration Prayer

PRAYER

By Curtis Johnson

Whatever it is that I may see
Whatever it may be that I shall hear
Whatever enters my heart and makes me fear
I shall but be silent and place covers over my ears
I shall but look faithfully to the heavens and draw near

I shall then find at His altar a love so strong and so dear
I shall there look confidently ahead and not in the rear
I shall there be calm, and my heart, He shall steer
I shall then be still, as He wipes away every tear
I shall then receive His peace, year after year

Cj10132013

Curtisj Johnson

Delta Dixie

Dixie Born

Curtis Johnson

Black History Month 2017

Dear Delta Dixie:

I am not aware of anyone who goes by the name Delta Dixie. I felt it appropriate and proper to address you with such name because I was born in Coahoma County, Mississippi. Anyway, I hope that you like the name.

In the late summer of 1949, I was born just off highway 49, not far from your mighty waters. I moved away in 1967, and was ashamed and embarrassed to be native born within your borders.

In my early years, I learned to read, write, and do arithmetic in your segregated schools. In my father's garden, at a very young age, I learned how to plow with a mule. In the nearest city, I also learned how to sell a new pair of shoes.

For 17 years, your unjust laws oppressed me.

For 17 years, your non-golden rules depressed me.

For 17 years, your social orders stuck to me like glue.

It does not surprise me that you also gave birth to the blues.

In the mid 70's I was invited by a friend to visit a segregated church he attends.

I was Black and he was White, with no intentions to offend. The

next day my friend's pastor called to tell me the news.

The reason was not that I had not paid any church dues. But never

was I to return again to sit in his church pews.

I was a Christian just like him, but I was not welcome to sit in his pews.

Christ had paid for all my sins; but in his church, perhaps that payment was not enough to cover my sins.

Oh Delta Dixie, I have come to terms with you, deep within.

I have heard it said that home is where your story begins.

And many are my treasured stories, born in Delta Dixie.

It was long ago that I overcame the embarrassment.

God, time, and good people have caused you to change.

I have heard it said for the longest time, that time heals all wounds.

For me, it also took a few doses of love and
patience from God's spoon.

The Grace of God ushered me through my pain and shame.

And I have long since forgiven you, just as

Christ has forgiven me.

02152017 cj

Curtisj Johnson

Demented Intent

From a front row seat, there was not the least of an eye strain.

In a familiar place, I observed what
appeared to be bullet trains.

In plain view, seated in a church pew among the wise and the few.

They were racing through and around what 'once
upon a time'.

throughout the land were 'Holy places and sanctuaries most divine'.

Their headlights were bright but also both
deceptive and delusional.

Their railways were dark, and only the 'elect' could clearly see

and detect the reality of an orchestrated and
demented intent.

Only the elect was able to discern the subtle 'bait and switch'.

The trains were controlled and masterminded
by forces unseen.

The forces ascended, descended, and flowed through atmospheric

highways of destruction. But across the scene I

saw a Holy man,

not a force, but a Loving Master of men and minds.

He once healed a crippled man
sitting helplessly at a pool.

He also walked on water, but I presently saw Him walking

on clouds and descending to implement

His kingdom rule.

07192017PS

Fictional/Visionary

Curtisj Johnson

Dixie Born

Dixie Born

Curtis Johnson

Black History Month 2017

Dear Delta Dixie:

In the late summer of 1949, I was born just off highway 49, not far from your mighty waters. I moved away in 1967, and was ashamed and embarrassed to be native born within your borders.

In my early years, I learned to read, write, and do arithmetic in your segregated schools. In my father's garden, at a very young age, I learned how to plow with a mule. In the nearest city, I also learned how to sell a new pair of shoes. For 17 years, your unjust laws oppressed me. For 17 years, your non-golden rules depressed me. For 17 years, your social orders stuck to me like glue. It does not surprise me that you also gave birth to the blues.

In the mid 70's I was invited by a friend to visit a segregated church he attends. I was Black and he was White, with no intentions to next day my friend's pastor called to tell me the news. The reason was not that I had not paid any church dues. But never was I to return again to sit in his church pews.

I was a Christian just like him, but I was not welcome to sit in his pews. Christ had paid for all my sins; but in his church, perhaps that payment was not enough to cover my sins.

Oh Delta Dixie, I have come to terms with you, deep within.

I have heard it said that home is where your story begins.

And many are my treasured stories, born in Delta Dixie.

It was long ago that I overcame the embarrassment.

God, time, and good people have caused you to change.

The Grace of God ushered me through my pain and shame.

And I have long since forgiven you, just as Christ has forgiven me.

02152017 cj

Curtisj Johnson

Doc

Doc

By Curtis Johnson

God made the mold, locked it up, and threw away the key. Genuine article,
the real McCoy; one of a kind was she.

She passed away; it's been so long.
She was small, but ever so strong.

At my best she gave me love.
At my worst she loved no less.

There was dad and mom, me, and eleven siblings
more.
She loved all of them and me.
Her love was special, like no other.
Love like I had never known before, or since

Her love taught me a valuable lesson:
Everyone needs someone through whose eyes you can do
no wrong. It's another way of saying,
"Needed; Unconditional Love".

My grandmother. She called me Doc.
O, what a rock! 09112015cj

Curtisj Johnson

Don't Blame The Flag

Don't Blame The Flag Curtis Johnson

When the police came with clubs, dogs, and fire hoses, they did not blame the American flag. When protesters were beaten, jailed, and some killed, they did not blame the American many were sent off to fight for the rights of but not their own, they did not blame the American in uniform they were treated as second-class citizens far from home, they did not blame the American flag. When their own country discriminated and demeaned them on foreign soil, they did not blame the American flag

When on bended knees and believing in country, church, and God, against seemingly impossible odds, they fought for justice through the courts and the halls of Congress and won many incredible battles.

From the segregated schools and the cotton fields of the deep south, I saw the freedom riders. Yes, this baby boomer observed it all, but I do not recall that they blamed the American flag.

01132018 PS PH

Curtisj Johnson

Don't Stop, A Letter To My Wife

Don't Stop, A Letter To My Wife

By Curtis Johnson

Dear Barbara

I have attempted to shield you from uncaring and mean spirited people, thinking that I was helping you.

I have tried to coral and box you in, caution and counsel you, thinking that I was helping you.

I have often sought to change you, delay you, detour you, thinking that I was helping you.

I have since discovered that when I step aside, just letting you be you, I am helping you.

You give so unselfishly to me, our children, and their children. You must not stop.

You continue to prepare those festive meals, unmatched and memorable. Don't stop.

I frequently protest saying, "Cook less"; but you never cease to give your best. You make great sacrifices for your family, often going without. Don't stop.

The way you reach out to people, giving them all you've got. Don't stop

The confidence you build, the love you give, and the prayers you pray. Don't stop

The dear ones you befriend, when their welcome elsewhere has worn thin. Don't stop.

That same smile that captured me 45 years ago, that you continue to give to others; Don't stop.

No doubt, from time to time,

I'll continually do things,

thinking

I'm helping you.

But please pay me no mind,

and simply continue to be

all

God intended for you to be.

Cj11122015

Dream Again

Dream Again

By Curtis Johnson

Pardon my intrusion, but it looks like you steaming
Are you upset due to the results of your dreaming?
It also appears to me that you are hiding
From where I sit, to me it seems
You are pouting, and whining

Have yours dreams turned into your worst nightmares?
Are you afraid and about to throw in the towel?
If you are my friend, I bide you do it not

I bide that you awake from your slump and sleep
Stand up, brave up, and fight off your nightmares
Awake! Awake! ! Awake! ! ! Dream! Dream! ! Dream again! ! !
Cj07192015

Curtisj Johnson

Dreaming

Dreaming

By Curtis Johnson

A king of Egypt once dreamed about cows, of which some were fat and others lean.

If you are like me, you often forget your dreams; but I suspect that we all at some point have dreams.

Some dreams are less controlled by us, and unfold while we are at ease and sleeping.

Other dreams are aspirations and longings of the heart. They are deep desires to be accomplished and achieved.

This dream of mine, recorded nearly nine years ago, is unremembered by me which type it was.

My best quest would be that it was not a sleeping dream, but who besides God knows for sure?

Anyway, I shall invite you into my world of a dream, and whether sleep or awake, it's most dear to me.

00
000000

In my dream, there were no more fearful screams, and parents did not hide their kids from murder scenes.

The codes to nuclear bombs somehow vanished, and Asia ceased to be famish, and all crises, crimes, and wars were banished. People in Africa

The United Nations suddenly had no need for existence, and all nations of the world experienced peaceful coexistence.

The stock markets were no longer breeding grounds for greed. Wall Street and stock markets the world over operated under new creeds.

People no longer practiced 'all for self, and God for us all'. It was all for all and all for God; and we all stood free and tall. That's when the whole world began to recover from the fall.

cj08132015

Curtisj Johnson

Entertainment

ENTERTAINMENT

BY Curtis Johnson

In a community deep in the Southern land of feed corn and cotton
The more basic things of life are best treasured and unforgotten

Newspapers and Radios, Jack Rocks and Jump Ropes, Pop Whips, Hide and Seek
In child's play, we sang our lines; we closed our eyes and did not peep

Checkers and Old Maid, Red Wagons and Hula Hoops; Boys with pockets of
marbles

All these and more, when kids never had to be afraid of armed bandits and
robbers

Rubber Balls and Home Made Bats; having fun running and rolling rubber tires
All these treats and more, when kids watched birds land on electric wires

Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic; The Lord's Prayer, The 23rd Psalms, and Ten
Commandments

A simpler place and time, walking shoeless in the dust, and avoiding hot
pavements

All these and more, after the chores, were better known as "Entertainment".

All these and more were ways that we spent our time, long before we owned TV's
or Telephones

I've seen the Atlantic in New York, and walked the sandy beaches of the Pacific in
San Francisco

But Southern memories are fresh of the unforgettable treasures, where I once
called home

cj05232007

Curtisj Johnson

Falling In Love

Falling In Love

By Curtis Johnson

One day many years ago, I found myself in a church pew
I never had a clue that in just a few, I would meet someone
new

Just the day before, I never knew that she even existed
But on that Sacred Sunday, I saw someone I could not resist

We were born and raised less than 100 miles apart.
But many miles from there, I discovered her a few apart

I was midway through college in the summer of seventy
I wasn't looking seriously, but praying for someone heavenly

In the college town of Evanston, Illinois, we met and fell in love
Before I knew it, I was holding the beautiful hands of a gentle dove

I came to realize that 'she was the one', and said, 'I love you';
Two years after we met, we got married in June of 'seventy two'

We never knew what our tomorrows would bring;
or whether they would make us laugh and sing;

or if they would pour upon us showers of pain;
or shine upon us years of blessings and gains.

The years have flashed before our eyes at a rapid pace And we are
growing old together, as we dash from place to place
Forty three years, together still; stick and thin, by God's good grace
07022008(Condensed 01282016)

Curtisj Johnson

Family Encounters

Family Encounters

By Curtis Johnson

Father passed on nearly ten years before I got married
He was not there when I finished high school;
Nor was he around when I finished college
My youngest sibling was nine months old
There was a period of grief at his passing;
But then survival demands appeared and said,
"Let there be life", and I moved on

At the time, his absence never bothered me
I learned to live without him; to leap from boy to man
I never accused or charged him for dying too soon; or did I?
I never blamed him for the pains and the wounds; or did I?
There were signs that he was becoming a better person to live with;
But I don't really know how I would have differed had he lived longer

I learned many years later that I subconsciously shut him out;

I shouldn't have. I charged him for things he did,
and accursed him for things he shouldn't have done.

Without mercy, I sentenced and banished him and all that he represented; But I shouldn't have.

Subconsciously, I reacted to his negative ways, but it was too late
There were things I did not know, and other things I never considered.
I silently, without fuss or fight, without sufficient evidence, shut him out

Yes, I rendered him unimportant and irrelevant;

Anything positive was blocked out,
Never rising to an appreciative level.
It would take years to even realize this.

Yes, father was dead physically, but he deserved a kind memory.

However, for years, I was as if frozen, silent, and unable to
remember anything of value

But then it happened! ! Twelve years ago at a family reunion, a younger
sister spoke well of our father and sat me straight.

She spoke of things I never knew of the man whose memory I

had crushed, and whose influence I thought that I could live without. It was like a reunion with my long deceased father; and as if I was given a second encounter with him. I tell you, I forgave him and consciously let his influence and memory back into my life; and I am the better for it.

Cj07112015

Curtisj Johnson

Feel In The Blanks

Feel In The Blanks

By Curtis Johnson

Mr. Cee lived in Northern California, and was checking on the latest weather conditions building up on the East Coast where a strong hurricane was already in route. More than two thousand miles away, young Mr. Dee, who lived in Eastern Pennsylvania, was also concerned about the East Coast storm; but he was also checking on the latest standings and scores of The World Series game in Kansas City between the Mets and the Royals.

Mr. Cee had relatives on the East Coast. So after watching the weather reports, he decided to call his sister in Brooklyn. He misdialed by a couple of numbers and reached young Mr. Dee by mistake. In spite of being strangers and their age difference, their conversation quickly turned toward the weather, sports, and the Republican Presidential Debates already being televised as they were speaking. Of course the three issues in play happened to be the favorite topics of men in general.

The two men soon moved on to more serious matters, and the young Mr. Dee began opening up to a stranger at the other end of a telephone line. The more the young man expressed his feelings and told his story, Mr. Cee saw himself in the young man. As the young Mr. Dee continued speaking, Mr. Cee saw some empty spaces like blanks being skipped, but he refused to interrupt and kept listening very intently.

The older gentleman sensed the need for the young man to talk and have someone to listen to him until he was ready for input. At the same time, Mr. Cee wondered how different his life might have been if someone had listened to his heart with love, compassion, and understanding.

Young Mr. Dee then paused and invited Mr. Cee to speak into his life. This was an easy task, because he had already walked that bumpy road, flew those unfriendly skies, and swam that muddy river. The blanks that he had noticed in the dialogue was part of the life that he had lived. It was as if the older man was watching a movie episode of his own life. He was pleasantly able to help the young gentleman chart a course that he had already sailed. He not only saw the blanks that the young man either ignored or denied, but he experienced and felt them as a young man.

Therefore, Mr. Cee was able to aptly fill in the blanks, because he could feel in the blanks. When the young man shared about the pain and deep struggles of his marriage and wanted 'out', Mr. Cee, who was in reality an older Mr. Dee, was able to feel the same pain and stir him in a different direction. He taught him that marriage not only needed love between two people in order to survive and thrive, but that the two of them also needed a three-fold covenant that included God.

Before they finished, Mr. Cee showed him several values necessary for success in life. Three of those values were: The value of being in control of his emotions. The value of a personal relationship with God. And the value of being bound and dedicated to the service of others. Mr. Cee was able to help Mr. Dee, because he was able 'to f e e l' in the blanks of the young man's life. And also because as an older man, those blanks had "already been filled" in his own life.

Cj10292015

Curtisj Johnson

Final Answer

Final Answer

By Curtis Johnson

Must we always expect a "Yes" for our every endeavor?

It is as though we are constantly saying,

"Motivate me. Adjust me. Amend me.

But please don't say "No" to me! "

Just what is it about "No" that we do not understand?

Not looking for a new motto, I was cleaning an office building.

Like typical businesses do, this company was seeking to increase sales.

My business was office cleaning, and I was toiling to finish and go home.

That is, until I was arrested and captured by nine words on a marker board.

For several weeks, I observed these words that were worthy of note. The nine word sentence was very useful as motivational tools to enhance sales and the bottom line. Every week I stared at these words thinking, "I can most certainly utilize this motto at some point in my life and profession".

It was some time prior to November 18,2009 that I first noticed the Sales motto that said, "Never take 'no' until you have heard it twice". On the above date, I was even more drawn by three similar though different magical words on the board.

It appeared that something interesting had happened between the first time I noticed the nine words and the day I saw the three words. Perhaps sales had dropped, requiring new motivational adjustments. An amendment to the motto read, "Never Take No".

08182015 (recorded 11182009)

Curtisj Johnson

Finding Your Way, A Letter To Ed

Finding Your Way Back

A Letter To ED

By Curtis Johnson

Hi ED,

Your parents gave you a very special name when you were born.
Your name is a place in a Middle Eastern Desert meaning "Oak".
Yes, it's a strong tree, which is how they envisioned you to be

But when many of us are born, we live and die, never knowing who
we are, why we are here, where we came from, or where we are
going

Perhaps we were void of patience, and never found our purpose
Perhaps we forgot, or never knew the meaning of persistence.
We are pleased to be taken away to places far in the distance.
So we board bandwagons and take paths of least resistance.
Before long, we lose our way; and day by day, we go astray

Years ago on a sunny afternoon, I got lost several miles from home.
I was in a different county, without a map, GPS, or even a cell phone

My mind went blank, and all my senses of direction quickly vanished.
I felt all alone and at the mercy of me to find my
way back.

That is, until God directed me to look toward the sun

I was reminded that the sun always sets in the West
That's when I leaned upon the anchor of the sun.
And quickly gathering my mental bearings,
just like that, I found my way back

ED my friend, your way alone has been long
You don't deny that you have been wrong.
But like an oak tree, you are strong.
So look toward the Son and come
On back where you belong.

cj082215

Curtisj Johnson

Finishers

Finishers

By Curtis Johnson

The burial ground should not be a place of buried treasures.
The bodies of the deceased are all that should be found there.
We brought nothing into this world, and nothing should go out.
Blessed are we who die in the Lord whose works shall follow.
Our deeds and alms have spoken, and the living have benefited.

□

When it's my time to go, will I have run the patient race and fought the good fight?

When my time is up, will I have discovered the 'why' of me, and lived out my purpose?

When I cease to exist on God's green earth, will I have spoken in truth and lived in purity?

May the treasures I leave behind be the sort that, unlike me, shall never die.
May I tell what I have seen, teach what I have known, and share what I have understood.

May love inhabit me; May hope strive through me; and may God's wisdom flow from me.

□

May I lay a foundation upon which others may build and live happily.

May I model a life of respect and honesty worthy of others to emulate.

May I live out my life's calling and find no rest until all is said, and all is done.

Through trials and sore distress, may I not quit until like my Lord I say, 'IT IS FINISHED'.

□

1/23/2014cj

Curtisj Johnson

Flight 1122

FLIGHT 1122

by Curtis Johnson

Departing Sacramento, Ca. just past 7: 00 AMPT on a nice Saturday morning, we headed for Chicago.

All is going well as we take off, as the pilot soon announces that we will ascend up to 39,000 feet.

I am now watching the clouds roll back as they seem to hover and move slowly across the hills, valleys, mountains, lakes, and prairies. We continue to climb so very high above the clouds, and above us is only sky.

A bit later now, I am beginning to see mountain tops capped with snow in early July, and I also see patches of green for just a little while. I feel just a slight bit of turbulence, and again I see nothing more purer white or nothing more prettier blue.

It has just now occurred to me that when I touch ground, I shall be more mindful of the clouds and sky of white and blue. I shall remember that we are but tiny creatures carrying on our earthly lives that are sometimes filled with colors of many sorts. The colors of our lives like storms often turn gray, dim, and dark. Furthermore, I am reminded to let peace fill my heart, and speak to me in colors of blue and white, whenever I am troubled and tossed by some earthly concern.

As flight 1122 starts to make its approach towards Chicago, I am seeing white clouds as if they have been purposely distributed in a line of patterned patches. They seem to be just hovering there and waiting for further orders from their maker. A few minutes later now, and I see man made patterns on the grounds below.

As we move closer to Chicago, the pilot is announcing his further descent to 22000 feet and continues to descend. As seat belts are now being buckled, I see landscaped patterns of farm crops appearing as we descend and move closer to the city of Chicago.

Now, just 90 miles from Chicago at 12: 36 PMCT, I see the beauty below displaying life's pictures of greenery, highways, roadways, and waterways. I also see large patches of clouds floating swiftly, and in just a few minutes we will be touching down.

As we get closer to Chicago in our final approach, I notice that the beautiful white clouds are giving way to the toasty haze through which I can dimly see the Chicago skyline. Just moments ago, I took one last look at the Sears Towers as we slowly descended and touched down at 12: 55 PMCT.

Let it be known, and let it be written, that on July 5,2008, on Southwestern Flight 1122, I saw peaceful clouds of white held sweetly in the clear skies of blue.

Curtisj Johnson

Flight Training

Flight Training

Curtis Johnson

Like most of God's human creatures,

I too came with special features.

As if my tongue was tied with cords,

I did not come with a library of words.

In some respects, this has been a handicap.

But I started to write; and it helps to fill the gaps.

And in 'many a way', I learned how to fly.

I was always the 'Give it a try' kind of guy.

O, indeed, I was rather quiet and shy,

but had strong enough wings

to fly.

Certainly, I'll never get a plane off the ground;

But maybe I can write a poem that

astounds.

Maybe I was never the aggressive or assertive type;

and perhaps I could not reach the mountain

heights.

I neither dreamed nor desired to make a jet take flight.

I find pleasure in helping the burdens
of others become light.

I could always hold my own, standing for the right;

but never was I the life of the party, or a
socialite.

It matters little if I'm challenged or wounded along the way;

But I'm pleased to have lifted others who
had gone astray.

Learning to 'take off' and fly is only part of the equation.

Perhaps learning to 'land safely' requires more education.

What If I incurred heavy scares and barely landed on a wing and a prayer?

Yet, I shall be rewarded for trying and finishing well; not sitting with a stare.

04102017 cj PS Contest

*According to Boeing statistical studies,16% of fatal accidents occur during takeoff and initial climb, while 29% occur during the approach and landing. (USA TODAY, August 26,2013)

Curtisj Johnson

For What, And Why?

So many people,
searching for the elusive.

So many worries,
And loss of sleep.
about the future world.
So many fears about things we don't control.

So many doubts

We take meds that will never heal.
We shut our ears to words of steel;
Words that have stood the test of time.
Ways tried and true are in deep decline.

From a world of eye to eye contact,
Via social media, we evacuate.
Why not 'face to face', to communicate?
Why not "toe to toe", simply to evaluate?
We give little time to think and meditate.
For every ache and pain, we medicate.

So little quality, and so much waste.
So little love, and so little time to wait.
So little hunger for being the very best.
We rather cheat than pass an honest test.

So much thirst for things material.
So much consumption of so much stuff.
Such things will someday consume all of us.

So little time to fix what's wrong.
We are too timid to stand alone;
strong.

Too tired and weak to be

We fill our hands with papers of sand,
Whose value will never meet demand.

We hate to be told, that we are not bold;
stone and freezing cold.

That our hearts are

Our days are hard, and our nights are long.
We race and rush to places we don't belong.
We long for a love that we have never known.
We reach our end, seeking warmth like newborns.
And God? He's always there, waiting on His throne.
cj08272015

Curtisj Johnson

Fornication*

Flee this sinful snare like the plague
Overcoming it easily is not an option
Respect it for its persuasive power and pull
Never give it's magic a chance to entice you
It will give a thrill, but it is destined to kill
Christ is always with us providing an escape
And we best take the escape before we yield
Time for talk does not work in this domain
I and you are too weak to fight in this ring
Opportunities to fail always knock; so we must flee
Nothing in the realm of morality destroys quicker

Curtisj Johnson

Forward In The 60's

Forward In The 60's

By Curtis Lee Johnson

In the rural South, sometimes life was cruel
Robbery from the poor was legal, via dirt cheap labor
In all practicality, one could say that we were going backwards”

In the North, city life was fearful and dangerous
I was robbed at gunpoint on one dark and scary night
No, not even one, could convince me that I was moving forward.
was shaken in the South, and shocked in the North
Whether South or North, we were moved, but never immobilized
We survived the hot and impoverished conditions of Mississippi,
And we braved the cold and the danger zones of Chicago

Clearly, I

Tempted, but never succumbed, to weakness and cowardice
We kept moving ahead, always thriving to push forward

There are memories of riot fires, gun shots, and sirens in the night;
But like all the trail blazers and warriors, who came before us,
We stood boldly, strong, and tall, by sheer determination

Curtisj Johnson

Fourth & Issaquena

Fourth & Issaquena
by Curtis Johnson

The county seat, a place of humidity and musical beats.
After many years, I decided to revisit my hometown,
Hoping to walk down memory lanes of warm treats

Known by many as the birthplace of the

blues

It's where my folks purchased my first pair of shoes
Where I first experienced talking from a phone booth
Where I experienced my first barbershop
Where I received my first real job
Where I ate at my first restaurant
Where I saw my first movie

A street corner, fourth & Issaquena
Northern Mississippi, The City of Clarksdale

Cotton gins and cotton bails

Yes, cotton was crowned king

And everyone bowed, even queens

To my amazement and disappointment, I never dreamed that Issaquena would be found in such poor condition. So when I arrived, I beheld what looked to me like a ghost town. I knew that it was clearly Issaquena, not just because her name was on the street sign, but so much of my young life was spent going and coming across Issaquena where it ends at Fourth Street. I could never forget her, but I must regretfully say that the spirit and soul of the Issaquena I once knew were long gone.

Issaquena seemed as if she was on life support at best, and at her worst it appeared she had been frozen in another time period for many years. My heart was filled with sadness for what once had been a haven for people full of color and energy. I could not simply look the other way, so I spoke to Issaquena the best way I knew how. With words I had never planned, I was compelled to say:

Hello Issaquena:

I have not seen you in such a long time

We arrived last night after running just a little behind

By the time we checked into the motel, it was way past nine

I came today to share a memorable experience just one more time

I came to look around, to visit, to stare, or even an old friend to find

Many years ago there was so much about you that became a friend of mine

I remember when people came to your intersection standing under your street sign.

People from miles around came to talk, share, and care, to shop, sit awhile and dine.

Some people after a long and laborious week simply came to drink whisky and wine.

And I also remember a bench on which sat a Christian lady so divine.

She would come to your corner every Saturday, so loving and kind.

She spent the day sharing Christ with all who would listen.

I am sure the dear Christian Lady is now in heaven.

O Issaquena. Your shelters are beaten down and everything around you causes me to frown.

I am so sorry. But I know that the thought of you will always be around.

O Issaquena. Can you please tell me how they managed to disenfranchise your claim to fame?

And how did you become bound in those chains with the looks of a portrait in pain?

O Issaquena. What happened to the barber shop where I use to come for hair cuts?

Where is the Phone Booth on the corner where I use to make land line phone calls?

Where is the grocery store down the street where my dear mother use to shop for food?

The Picture Show where my dad use to take us every Monday night is gone.

The best hamburger shop where my dad took us to eat after a movie is also gone.

I shall miss it dearly, because the taste of her burgers was the best that I have ever known.

And whatever became of the Abe May Shoe Store where I got my first job when I was a teen?

It too is gone. O Issaquena. Where did they all go? I really would like to know.

Curtisj Johnson

Free Flight

Free Flight

By Curtis Johnson

I am convinced that the "Maker of me" has set me on a charted course
For the most part, I have always been okay with the "Who" of me
But honestly, it was God and my development into maturity that enabled my
thrust over the threshold of the "discomforted" me.

In other words, I have grown to appreciate me more than I did in earlier years
You see, I have had to constantly resist others who sought to "change me".
I don't mean, to change my character or morality, but to change my personality.

It's understandable to be molded, bent, and shaped, but God forbids a "remake"
of me

Their persistence was to the point that I grew weary and doubted the "Who" of
me.

But their determination never outweighed my resistance; so I continued "being
me".

I must say that the years and God's own peculiar design and plan for me have
allowed me to slowly descend from the cocoon, to break forth through the
shadows, to live out God's designed purpose, and ascend like a butterfly

cj070615

Curtisj Johnson

Fresh Studies

Fresh Studies

By Curtis Johnson

Sometimes, what you find in a study can only be expressed in the way
that you walk it out
Occasionally, one can attempt to explain in words what his recent
studies have reveal
Many things that we have already learned
are no longer fresh, and provides little life
This then is my feeble attempt at communicating the freshness
that I am finding about Jesus Christ

He is more gracious than I ever realized
More forgiving than I ever understood
More merciful than anyone can imagine

He doesn't mind washing the feet of his followers
He delights in serving his disciples; even fixing their breakfast
Sometimes he answers before we even ask the question

He weeps with the weepers, and reveals himself to the seekers
He gets amazed with our faith, and races to our rescue
He sleeps in storms, and awakes when we call him
He loves to bring peace and security to me

He quiets the storm at sea, and commands everything
to be still in me
He calls men and women to forsake all and follow him
Who does this! ! ! ?
Cj07102009

Curtisj Johnson

Get On With It, A Letter To My Brother

7/5/14□

GET ON WITH IT

By Curtis Johnson

Hi Michael:

You might have been too young to remember, but there is a certain line that Grandma use to say to any of us who was sent to the store to purchase something. At the time, I never bothered to determine the complete meaning of what she said.

I just assumed and felt that I knew enough about what she meant, and went about completing the mission given to me. As I thought about it more recently, I tried to explore the depth of what she was saying. Perhaps I did ask her as a child and simply forgot her reply. Anyway, I have wondered if she was being half poetic and half realistic. Poetic because of the rhythm of her words, and realistic because of the true meaning of her words.

Grandma would often say, "Go in a haste and come in a pace." I readily understood the 'haste' part, but I never quite understood the 'pace' part. It seems a bit contradictory that one would hurry to fetch a purchase, but return at a pace with the item. I'm sure that Grandma knew very well what she was saying, and she must have been rather confident that we also understood her. We assumed that she meant for us to complete the assignment as quickly as possible, and we always did our best to follow her every command. I'm also sure that Grandma was not asking us to hurry without thought, or to the point where 'haste' makes 'waste'. She was simply saying for us to get on with it and stay focused until we finish.

As I recall, Grandma could not read or write, but the lessons she taught have lasted for a lifetime. Michael, I have tried to get on with it, to Pursue the Course that God laid out for me, and to Stay Focused to the end. Like everyone else, I have had set backs and 'knock me down blows', but by the grace God I kept getting up. Without even realizing it, Grandma was teaching us a very vital lesson of life.

So Michael, whatever mission that God has assigned to us, may we 'get on with it'.

From time to time as we endeavor to get on with it, it will be necessary to set a certain pace, realizing that the finish lines are often far away. Learning to listen to God and his wisdom will greatly assist us at certain junctures. How wise of grandma, who taught us at a very young age the need for such understanding.

Though we did not realize it at the time, the words of our dear grand mother were very strong and powerful. Those nine little words from grand ma, uttered from the lips of one who could not read or write, speak volumes to me now.

No, it doesn't matter so much that we fall down or get knocked down sometimes; but it does matter that we 'get up and get on with it' to fight another round, and another and another, until the fight is over. I once heard over the radio that there was a heavy weight fighting champion who was knocked down more than any other boxer. If he got knocked down so many times, how on earth did he become a Champion? He did it one way: He kept 'getting up'.

Cj07052014

Curtisj Johnson

Give A Lift

Give A Lift

By Curtis Johnson

So you are aware of a need
Are you prepared for the deed?

So you want to reach out and help
Are you prepared to go the depth

So you want to do all you can
But do you have any kind of plan?

To help someone in need is more than a notion
And it requires more than a tear drop of emotion
It helps to say a little prayer, and have lots of devotion

There's a hungry person simply trying to live
But your pockets reveal you have nothing to give

He stands there, hot and tired, cold and hungry
He has a cardboard sign, constantly looking out
It's not our job to decide if he's looking for handouts
He needs a little help, a little hope, a little hand up

All she wanted was just a little change,
Just a little love to relieve her pain
cj070115

Curtisj Johnson

Good Night

Good Night

by Curtis Lee Johnson

Bright lights of love racing through my brain
Sweet drops of peace I see falling like rain

With my family, in my home, I, for now remain
From the North and the South, you all came

My siblings and friends, sharing in my pain
You heard the dark steps of death and sang

I feel the warm blood flowing in my veins
After tonight things will never be the same

Your dear time and prayers are not in vain
Thanks to all of you who have loved me so much
You prayed and sang; and you gave me one last touch

To my husband, my son, and my daughter
I want to say, I am sorry, I cannot stay

Like gently dripping sand in the hour glass
So will your deep agony of loss slowly pass

In time an end will come to your bitter pain
Then you will remember what we have gained

And now the time has come for me to go
I see heaven's angels gathering at my door
It's not goodbye, but goodnight. I love you. (written cj2006

Curtisj Johnson

Got Any Change

Got Any Change?

By Curtis Johnson

There seems to be no lack of opportunities, but an inadequate supply of 'readiness'. In spite of our awareness and desire to help, when the opportunity comes knocking, we must be ready, or we will find ourselves caught off guard and unprepared.

My most recent opportunity came knocking on yesterday morning, Monday, July 7, 2014, at around 8: 55. I was getting gas, and just before I finished fueling my vehicle to depart, a young lady appeared and said to me, "Got any change? ". She appeared to be in her mid to late 30's. I did not see nor notice her prior to her request, but she was retrieving bottles and cans from the trash container when she spoke to me. I'm sure that she heard my reply, but probably did not understand when I, being filled with sadness, said, "O my Lord". I uttered such words because I was so very displeased with myself for not being ready or prepared for such an encounter. I seldom have cash, and today was no exception.

I reached into my pockets only to find it empty of any cash, even change. No surprise. I then looked into my vehicle and found a quarter to give to her. She said, "Thank you". As I drove away, I continued to stare in the direction of the gas station, unable to get the lady off my mind.

My thoughts and prayers have continued to follow that lady whose face I cannot erase from my mind. Her face was visually dirty and with soap and water, it can easily be made clean again. But I tell you, there is no washing of her face from my memory.

I wanted to do so much more for the young lady, but only had a quarter to give to her. Nevertheless, on that July Monday morning, I determined that with God's help, I would not be caught off guard with such a person again.

The brief encounter with the lady at Am Pm motivated me to activate a small mission that I had already begun. A few days ago in my garage, I started preparing what could be described as "Mercy Packs" to be given to people such as the lady.

I do not want to be unprepared like that again. I do not want to experience that " O my Lord" feeling again. That is why I went home on yesterday and implemented my plan and placed the packages in my vehicle. These packs contain various kinds of non perishable snacks, Gospel material, and a one dollar bill.

I don't know the name of the lady, and I may never see her again. I have assigned to her a name that I shall remember as Angelica. She also has my prayers and the prayers of my friends when I tell them of her. May the face of God shine upon Angelica, and favor her whose name is known by Him.

Cj07082014

Curtisj Johnson

Grace Will Be Dancing

Grace Will Be Dancing

By Curtis Johnson

2 Corinthians 9: 12 NIV

Far from the peaceful and prosperous shores of America.
A blessed e-mail came one day from a lady in Africa.
I always rejoice in my spirit and cry in my heart.
When Grace is so thankful for our little part.

Because of a gift, she has been greatly relieved.
She's happy now that she can pay some school fees.
She will buy sugar for grandma and something for herself.

She said that a friend name Gerald went to a village to start a church
She will share the gift with him, because she fills bless with much.
She said that she has a favorite song to which she will be dancing.
Grace said that because she cannot sing, she will dance.

Her friends also know her song, but perhaps they do not
Know the total reason that she is dancing.
No doubt they will here the same outward music;
But I am certain, Grace hears a difference beat, deep
Within her heart, and that's the sound to which she is dancing.
At her friend's wedding, Grace will be dancing.
At her church, while others are singing her favorite song,
So happy, so grateful, Grace will, so gracefully, be dancing.

Cj032007

Curtisj Johnson

Happy Birthday America

Hello, my greatly beloved for whom I yet have high and lofty hopes and dreams.
Your ideals and costly fought for principles of life,
liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, though threatened,
are still highly favored and deeply intact. The vision of the founders,
though seemingly under siege, remains so vividly in place, and
perhaps even more real than the signers of
'the compact' on the Mayflower ever dreamed possible.

Speaking of that famous ship, you, my greatly beloved, like the Mayflower, must
keep your sails set and never give way to high winds and storms at sea. O
melting pot of dreams and storm-beaten flag of stars and stripes, push forward
with all your might and of your destiny never losing sight. Our founders were not
so naive as to think there would not be many fights. They forged ahead through
their multiplied fears in the darkness of seemingly innuberable nights.

Their loses were great both at sea and at shore, but they fought through the fog
of a million tear drops to be remembered among those considered neither fearful
nor fearless ones, but as brave ones who rose above their fears and continued to
roar as lions and soar the heights like eagles.

Through the evils and greed of Native American slaughters and African American
slavery. Through more than 40 years of the silent cries of 60 million unborn
babies. O great and beloved one, in spite of atosities gone unheard and the
pleas of rationality and reason unheeded, your entrenched goodness retains
your greatness. O great and beloved one, your greatness often comes under
attack but always bounces back. Your greatness sometimes seems under attack
but remains on track. It's because your greatness lies not in your perfection, but
in your noble pursuits in spite of your imperfections.

Two hundred and fourty one years; through battle scares and tempest tossed;
through bloody wars and constitutional crises, you live on to wave 'Old Glory'.
May your future be ever bright, shinning forth the light. Happy birthdayAmerica.
July 4,1776-
06282017cjPSPH

Curtisj Johnson

Hello Daniel

Hello Daniel

By Curtis Johnson

I have driven on snowy and icy roads in Wisconsin and Illinois. In the summer's heat of the Sacramento Region, I have driven in cars, vans, and bobtails without air conditioning. I have driven the curving two lane road of highway 49 through Jackson and all the way to Twain Hart past Sonora. I have driven through floods and forced to spend a night and a day at a Red Cross facility in Marin County, Ca. In the early winter season of Sacramento, I have driven through the foggy nights, wondering if I would really reach my destination. Though I gained some skill at driving on snow and ice, I don't want to spend any winters in those states again. The Sacramento heat wearied me; the curves cautioned me; the floods made me patient; the Red Cross made me grateful; and as other vehicles passed me on cool foggy nights, I always wondered what they saw that I could not. Many sped ahead as I slowed to a crawl.

The driving situations mentioned above caused me pause, but none frighten more than driving through fog.

I have always been highly challenged by driving through the fog, but there are life lessons to be learned from such an endeavor. Sometimes in life we really cannot see where we are going, and we do not have the luxury of stopping, or so we think. If we do not slow down or stop, surely danger or tragedy awaits us just ahead, more sooner than later.

In the fog is where we must pray, "Lord, I cannot see my way".

In the fog is where we must listen to his voice telling us to stop or slow the pace.

In the fog is where we decide who and what is most important on the roadways of our lives.

In the fog is where we must conclude, that all else must wait until the Lord directs my path and clears away the fog in my life.

Daniel, my brother, my friend, God has not released you from the intercessory pulse beats of my heart. I only know that I love you, I am praying for you, and I want you to know this: I have experienced spiritually foggy nights in my life, and for a season, I sped straight forward not knowing or caring what was ahead. All that I can say to you my friend is that it did not bode well for me until I stopped and allowed Christ to take the wheel and drive me through the fog.

I love you my friend.

Cj10082013

Curtisj Johnson

Hello Life

Hello Life

By Curtis Johnson

O death, I understand you, and I know your purpose all too well.
I know the source of your beginning; and I also know where you dwell.
O death, it's not your plan, and certainly not your pleasure to make things swell.

I am aware, and exceptions are few; all of us have appointments with you.
Some die young and others die old, but many shall revive and become new.

Even your ruler ship shall someday end, and a new day for everyone will begin.
All of creation feels and anticipate a new reign, but no one knows exactly when.

But O death, do not be proud that you bring so many to your place of darkness.
You also have a day of reckoning, and you too will be doomed into utter
darkness.

But until then, May we take the life we've been given and remember, we are
forgiven.

There's never the need to get busy dying, but there is always time to get busy
living.

So let the light of life given to you shine bright and bold!
Let the truth break forth, and forget the lies you've been told! !
Let the poor declare himself to be rich! ! !
Let the weak declare himself to be strong! ! ! !
Let the timid and fearful be afraid no more! ! ! !

Dare to say, "I shall live and not die! "
"I shall be filled with laughter and not cry".

Let us shout from the debts of our souls and say,
"Hello life, here we are from the lowly dust! "
"But we were made for living; not for rot and rust! "
Christ died for all of us, and in Him we put our trust! "

cj09052015

Hello Spring

HELLO SPRING!

By Curtis Johnson

Helloooooo Spring! The time clock has sprang forward, and there is a sense of new life and resurrection everywhere

Welcome back Spring! I see your beautiful new flower blossoms waving at me

I feel your kind and warm days convincing winter chills to disappear

I smell your fresh aroma permeating the atmosphere

Come on in Spring! Come right in to my humble abode

I've been cold and tired of Old Man Winter anyway

Refresh me with your treats for more than a day

Let's celebrate and pretend that summer's far away,

Because I'm really no friend to the summer's heat

So relax, slow the pace, and stay with me

I love you Spring! You are no stranger to me,

So there's no need for you to wait in line

Let's plan and plant our garden together,

Because you are indeed a friend of mine

Let do our very best to enjoy each other

Just as in the olden times

cj03212008

Curtisj Johnson

Here We Stand

Here We Stand

By Curtis Johnson

On earth we continue our stand and together we sing,
Never fearing the bite of demons, nor the devil's sting.
We fight the good fight of faith, until the final bells ring.

We are like a fruitful tree, planted by the rivers of waters.
We labor hard, never quitting till the end of all four quarters.
We are fine and faithful finishers, and not fiery flashing starters.

God's enemies and ours have been disarmed.
It means not that we are living a life of charm.
We need never fear when leaning on His arm.
And no believer has any need to be alarmed.

He's our Shepherd according to the 23rd Psalm.
We are covered by His blood; enemies cannot harm.
By the Strength of God, we are flourishing like a palm.
cj10232015

Curtisj Johnson

Hot Southern Nights

Hot Southern Nights

By Curtis Johnson

During the time before television came to our home
My dad sat there in his car on a dark Southern night
And I was somewhere close by, enjoying a wonderful
Game of Major League Baseball on the radio

O, there were other teams in the majors like The Pirates,
The White Socks, and The Red Socks that were popular
Teams. But in my town in Northern Mississippi, it was all
About the Cardinals, Dodgers, and Yankees.

My dad had lots of friends, but two were rivals of the game
There was his friend, the Yankee man name Mr. Baines
And then, Mr. Mon, his other friend, was a Dodger fan
But my dad's heart was in St. Louis with Stan The Man

In my mind I can hear those games now on radio, and in
My memory, later on when we obtained a TV, I can see The Baseball
Game Of The Week

I mean no disrespect to other sportscasters, but Harry Carry and Peewee
Reese made us feel like we were there in the stands

They say that baseball is America's great past time experience,
But for me, baseball was all about 'now and then', 'today, and
'tomorrow' too. It was about a little country boy fantasizing
And dreaming today about what could be tomorrow

cj042010

Curtisj Johnson

Human Treasures

Treasure This
by Curtis Johnson

It is recorded in the Bible that the memory
of the righteous will be a blessing
And it further states that the name
of the wicked shall rot. Proverbs 10: 7

Such truths were never more refreshing
when I recalled pleasures of my childhood

Just around the bend from where I lived
Was a home with a television set
For me and my friends, this meant the
Three Stooges, Tarzan, Mickey Mouse,
Roy Rodgers, Dale Evans, and The Lone Ranger

I and other kids all around the neighborhood gathered,
And watched make believe, never fearing any danger

This first television set in my poor community
grew kids aplenty. As we were being entertained,
we fell in love with a gracious lady.
Some people give nothing to others,
and are soon forgotten
Many like our lovely neighbor,
are best unforgotten

A dear friend of my mother,
was strong, gentle, and kind
Her husband called me Gaby,
and her name was Mary
Cj05232007

she

Curtisj Johnson

Humpty Dumpty

Humpty Dumpty
By Curtis Johnson

We all get knocked about or slip and fall down; but we don't have to sit around and mope.

All of us were born for a purpose; so let's get busy finding it, because life is not a joke.

We are neither the first nor last to make mistakes; none are perfect; not even the pope.

Sometimes, we are blown by the wind and lose our sails; but never let go of hope.

We can go anywhere we want to, and there's still plenty of time to get on the boat.

Stay connected to the ones you love; work and study hard, learn all you can; take notes.

Get quality and timely rest; do your best to stress less; and by all means, stay away from dope.

Neither God nor any human said life would be easy; but there are good and decent ways to cope.

Let's not spin our wheels, whining about the milk that spilled, and complaining about other folks.

You may be out of cash and have neither property nor equity; but that does not mean you are broke.

You may have fallen to the bottom of a pit, but there 's someone at the top, extending to you a rope.

No, we need not experience Humpty Dumpty's great fall, nor collapse like the walls of Jericho.

cj10182015

Curtisj Johnson

I Am Love

I Am Love

By Curtis Johnson

There are some who proclaim themselves to be deists
And claim I do exist, but assume no involvement
There are those who say they are atheists
And claim that I do not exist
There are others who are agnostics
And claim there's no way they can know

But to those who believe in me, but stand afar
As you ponder what I think, ask me if you dare
Pause and come to me, and see that I really do care
Many think that I am a mystery; others stand and stare

Those who heartily believe, and love up close, are rare
Of your love and your desire for me, I am aware
I am always watching you, just waiting to share

Your fears and your pain, I do want to bare
Do not think that I am far, and somewhere way up there
You need not think that I am just floating out there in the air
O my child, I even know the color and the texture of your hair

I am hope; I am peace; I am love; and I am joy
O come to me; trust in me; and say a simple prayer
O dear one, I am here; I am there; I am listening; I am God

Curtisj Johnson

I Believe In You-A Letter To America

I Believe In You- A short letter to America
By Curtis Johnson

Dear America,

At times, I have doubted myself and questioned you
I have cried bitter tears over you, but never doubted you
The real you is not all that we see, or even all that we feel
My core beliefs sum up the real me, as is the case with you
Out of the core, true life flows, and your core has drawn masses from afar

When many of your people were denied their rights and forsaken,
I believed in you. When your sacred laws were
broken, I still believed in you.
When people were sold as property and terror tolerated, though I was
not here, I believe in you. I still believe in you.
When a right is exercised and I disagree, but yet, I believe in
you. When an intolerance is expressed, I am sad,
When your flag is burned or a church is bombed, I ache for you,
and I continue to believe in you. and I believe in
you. When I see you in the Preamble, I see 'me' in 'we the people',
When I read and pledge allegiance to your flag, I see 'under God',
and I believe in you. When I read the address at Gettysburg about your government, it's my
government too.
"...This government of the people, for the people, and by the people shall not
perish..."
This government is yours; it is theirs; it is ours, and I believe in you.

O America, there are endless reasons for believing in you, but I shall close with
the last sentence from The Declaration of Independence. For therein lies a
summary of how much our founding fathers believed in you. "And for the support
of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we
mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

O America, you are not a 'has been', and your purpose is not far spent.
Therefore, I will not write you off nor give up on you. I shall always believe in

you, and may God continue to richly bless you. May I and millions of others who have benefited from your blessings, be ever reliant upon Divine Provident(GOD) . And may we too pledge all.

cj08112015

Curtisj Johnson

I Remember When

REMEMBER WHEN?

By Curtis Johnson

At first I suppose there was the thought of how things use to be; and over time, how things are now.

Like the time I thought about a childhood friend name Dennis, and how I would have loved to see him again.

With a guy like Dennis there would have been so many "remember when's", and "what? I never knew that".

But you see, a short while after I wrote about Dennis, I discovered that he had died in a fire many years before.

And just like that, all my dreams of ever seeing Dennis again faded away

So I thought to myself, "How sad, I never knew".

Not even an opportunity to pay respects for a beloved childhood friend.

Why did we never bother to connect or even inquire about one another? Even now, when I think about it, my eyes gets watery, but a fresh bash of determination ignites inside of me. The fire inside of me burns to the point whereby I want to hasten the chase. I want to find another old friend before someone else bites the dust. I just want to say, Hi", or "What's happening? ", or "What's been going on for the past 30 or 40 years"?

What is so wrong with that?

We have

gone hi tech, but we have also gone far too long detached.

Why must we disconnect, disassociate, disregard, and let old times and memories die?

Why can't we find or take the time?

Why can't we just reconnect if but for a day

or an hour to just

laugh or cry?

There is too much pain to allow life to go on this way, we have so much to gain before we all die?

when otherwise

I say no! My quest has already begun. I'm on a mission, stop, because I got light to shine and love to share.

and I cannot

Cj032808 5: 15 PM PST

Curtisj Johnson

I Still Do

When God saw a universe filled with darkness and void, He said, "Let there be light". In essence, when we first met, I saw the light in you and said, "Let there be a conversation". Two years later, the two of us stood at the altar of our church and said, "I do". We may not have known the deep meaning of, "Let the two become one", but we knew that we were forsaking all others for the sake of each other. We vowed to be together for better or for worse, hoping the worse would not be so. Before we said "I do", we had a long engagement with plenty of time to say, "I don't". I meant it back in '72 when I said, "I do". When I come to the end of my life, I want to be able to say, "I did".

06092011; Posted 02112018;

Curtisj Johnson

I Thank You

I Thank You

By Curtis Johnson

To the God of all creation, who out of love and simple kindness, has given us all things that we see and other things not within our sight; To the God who from the dust of the earth created a man, and out of whose flesh he also made a woman suitable for him; To the God who created vegetation and animal life, and put within them the life regenerative ability of procreation; To the God of the Bible who gave his son to die that I might believe in him and receive everlasting life; To this God of life who freely gives life to all; It is this God to whom I pray in the name of Christ and say, "Thank You".

To my father who asked my mother for her hand in marriage; To my mother who responded with a "Yes" answer to my father; To my dear parents who gave birth to me and my twelve siblings; To my parents who through much toil and suffering, never gave up, put travailed to show and teach us the good and right ways of life; To my grandmother who lived with us and assisted in teaching and loving us; Yes, to these heroes of my early years who also cast shadows and memories until now in my latter years. From the depths of my heart, to them I say, "Thank You".

Moreover, to these heads of my life who modeled as best they knew the meaning of family; To these forward looking visionaries who chose to be a functional family in a dysfunctional world; To these, who in the face of adverse circumstances and enumerable road blocks, fed, housed, clothed, and provided for us the opportunities for an education unavailable to them; To these over comers and trailblazers who are shining stars in my darkest nights; To these whose memories compel me to look up and around, but not down; Yes, to these who introduced me to the God of the Bible, I say "Thank You".

To the Church, both local and worldwide, which has been to me both an institution and a living organism. To the Church, an ever present source of spiritual and social sustenance, and is indeed at the top of my deepest affections. Such affections follow only my God and my family. To the Church with which from a child, I have been deeply associated for more than fifty years. To the Church with which I have gladly given my life, my means, and my time for most of my life. To this Church which have been my pillar and ground of the truth, seated on the strongest of foundations; To this Church which have given to me far more that I could ever give back; Yes, to the Church which comprises

every believer in Christ the world over, I say "Thank You".

And lastly, to this great land and country known as The United States of America; This land of laws and liberties; this land of many colors and creeds, courts and constitutions;

This land longed for by those who crossed the troubled seas and planted their feet like trees by the waters; This land beneath which lies those who fought and died for the right to be free and to be governed as they determine to be; To these United States of America which God has bless and shined his Grace upon; To this one nation "Under God" with "Liberty and Justice" for all; To this nation of "blood washed stars" and "pursuit of purity stripes", I say, I am proud of you; I am praying for you; and I say, "Thank You".

Cj09222015

Curtisj Johnson

I Wanted To Get Away

I Wanted To Get Away

By Curtis Johnson

Without naming the company, one of my favorite commercials use to be the one featuring 'embarrassing moments' and closing with the question, "Want to get away"? Many years before those commercials were conceived and popularized, I had such a moment in one of my college classes. It would have been a great time to get away, or disappear, or for a fire drill moments before, or for "The Rapture".

The class size was no more than 15 plus the teacher, who was a rather friendly and smooth character. I think that it was my second year at Bible college where I was studying for the Gospel ministry. This was most definitely a required class for anyone seeking to be a public speaker. So I was well suited to excel in my Homiletic class, or so I thought. I did fine later on during the year and more that just passed the course.

But for some reason on that particular morning, when it came my turn to stand before the class and preach my sermon, I bummed out. My subject matter was fine, and my three points were well defined and organized, but just passed the introduction of my message, I froze and forgot everything. The teacher and the class were great and very supportive. I do not remember if I managed to pull through it or whether I was forced to sit down. What I do remember is that, in spite of the kind spirit in the room, I was very embarrassed.

Yes, I became a pastor and preached hundreds of sermons and spoke in public on many other non church functions. No, the 'freeze' never happened again, and I suspect that I was to ever remain humble and never think myself to be a great speaker. And also, one embarrassing moment was more than enough for me, and I think that I learned my lesson well. 09282015

Curtisj Johnson

Images Of You And Me

Images of Me and Thee

By Curtis Lee Johnson

I love you who are here and near
And I love you who are there so far

Our dear Father has planned it this way
And now, happily, His we are, and always will be

The mere thought of you, my brother, my sister,
causes me to weep
Throughout history, our promises and treaties
have been hard to keep
We are still separated by valleys and pits so deep
But we must stay in the race as we walk, run, and leap
And we must continue to climb the hills and mountains so steep

Though sometimes we are lost, tired, and weak
There is still time to find the peace we seek

One God, one face, is all that I see
Divided and disconnected is no way to be
Let's find a way to reconnect and live free
There's a mirror revealing love to be the key
In his image are you and me

Curtisj Johnson

Independence

INDEPENDENCE

By Curtis Johnson

I have observed that America is a Democratic Republic with high values on the INDIVIDUAL

We are 50 States, some of whose economies rival other countries; yet we are one NATION.

Yes, we have fought each other in a bloody war; yet we are one and shall not be DIVIDED.

As a nation, we set our goals and aim for the heights, flying and soaring like the EAGLE.

We are not about "He, the President or the Potentate", but all about "We The PEOPLE.

Our nation is not perfect, but at its core, "We Believe That All Men Are Created EQUAL'.

We are blessed and prosperous; and as a people, we pause to give thanks every NOVEMBER.

So often, similarities make great people; but the strength of America is its DIFFERENCES.

Some of our rights are granted through government; there are others that are God ENDOWED.

We have One President,100 Senators,435 Representatives, and Supreme Court Justices are NINE.

Our country is a Republic and not a Theocracy; but most of our founding fathers believed in a CREATOR.

It has been said that America is great because we are good; may our goodness long ENDURE.

Cj07/19/2015

Curtisj Johnson

It's Time To Shift

Time To Shift

By Curtis Lee Johnson

Behold our world so tired, torn, and insecure
Filled with high tech answers, but yet unsure

Nation after nation, fighting terror and crime
Does mankind's DNA force us to be so unkind?
Many are seeking solutions, while others whine

When you feel a sudden shifting of the gears,
Release your fears, and renewed faith appears
When you've experienced hate, pain, and tears,
Its hard to imagine that change will come near

Have the dark clouds of war caused you to fear?
Have you endured the loss of loved ones so dear?
Are you uncertain about what you see and hear?

When the world looks hopeless, mean, and cold
When it's hard to find something strong to hold
When crises worsen and cloud your noble goal
It's not a sign that you must quit, run, or fold
It only means it's time to be brave and bold

Curtisj Johnson

In time an end will come to your bitter pain
Then you will remember what we have gained

And now the time has come for me to go
I see heaven's angels gathering at my door
It's not goodbye, but goodnight. I love you.

Curtisj Johnson

Just A Mite

Gold, silver, and other precious metals are seldom to be found on the surface of the earth. They are more likely to be found at the bottom of the sea or under rocks and deep in dirt.

It might be that the great find is not so much, like a small and measly little mite. It pays to remember that even small things are most precious in His sight.

Sometimes, the greatest darkness is our lot before we can see the light. Sometimes, there is no 'pay dirt' after I have labored with all my might.

Sometimes, it's enough when little is much, up is down, and down is up. Sometimes, we dare to think that the sweetest drink is from a bitter cup.

Sometimes, far is incredibly near, and near is unbelievably far. Sometimes, we miss our chosen target only to land upon a celestial star.

Sometimes, there needs to be an allowance for an doing might very well avert disaster and avoid destruction

01312018 PS PH

Curtisj Johnson

Just Look At Me

□

THE BEAUTY OF GOD'S FALL SEASON

By Curtis Johnson

My wife and I have lived in our present home for more than 14 years, and I think that the loveliest time of the year in our community is the fall season. One look at a tall leafy tree can take your breath away. One such tree is just across the street from our house. When I saw it, one word sufficed. Wow! Although I am certain that this tree has grown taller and broader over the course of fourteen years, there were years that transpired before I even noticed it's beauty. Beauty was staring down on me, and I never noticed. It was only about four to five years ago that I was walking down the hall on the second floor of our home. When I looked up, I was deeply moved by the site of the tree. It seems that all things simply came together at that particular moment. Both the door and the window blinds in that North facing room were open, and I was treated to the awesome sight of that tall fall tree. It was as if a voice yelled out and said, 'Just look at me!'. The power of orange captivated me, and I was arrested by a live portrait painted by the hand of God. I have looked forward to the sight every year. The tree did not have a face lift or makeover, and it had not moved closer nor farther away from my view. But at that moment, I saw it for all its beauty. On that occasion, I did not glance or pause for a quick look, because this time I was not hurried or too busy to look as I must have been for so many years prior. I was stopped completely in my tracks and drawn toward the tree for a closer view. □

Perhaps this fall tree encounter speaks so much about my life and thinking that has slowed and changed over the last few years. Perhaps I can see and feel more of what really matters, because the pace of my life has been slowed. I have a much clearer view because the fog has departed. I am no longer blinded by the forest, because a single, exquisite, and distinguished tree has yelled out to me.

The tree of picture perfect orange has ordered me to stop and stare.

□

□11212011

Keep Moving On

Keep Moving On

Curtis Johnson

Very committed; yet excommunicated.

Highly dedicated; yet not facilitated.

Denied,

despised, and dismissed.

Though devoted; yet demoted.

Disappointed and

disrespected.

Devalued and disapproved.

Are you feeling the stormy winds

gusting across the coastal waters

of your gentle spirit?

Are those tornado winds rushing

down into the deepest portals

of your

bewildered soul?

Are you listening to those drum beats

of darkness and death, resounding ever

so loudly to grind you into the ground?

Even though you may be wearing thin,

just take courage my friend and

continue on until the end.

Don't give in, out, or up;

It's hard to drink that bitter cup;

but just carry on; you

are not alone;

Just keep connected to the God we trust.

And remember well, that sometimes,

troubling

times is a must for all of us.

05112017cjFBPS

Curtisj Johnson

Let Your Light Shine

Let Your Light Shine

By Curtis Johnson

It's true that we are different, but life can be tough for all of us
No matter who we are, we all shall one day bite the dust

So take your liberty to debate and disagree, to fuss and discuss
Let's exercise our freedom of speech and argue if we must

There are some things we must stand up against and fight
It's not just a fight to prove who's wrong
and who's right
It's one way to supply the world with salt and light

It's also another way to separate the night from the day
It's another way to keep the darkness in its place
It's another way to give hope to the human race

I tell you, we must be brave, bold, and not run away and hide
Never giving chance and opportunity for an evil and rising tide

May our voices be heard, never giving sway to the absurd
May we step forward and cast our vote while there is still hope
Cj06182015

Curtisj Johnson

Letter To Missionay Friends

Letter To Missionary Friends
Curtis Johnson

My dear brother. Of late, God has placed you on my heart
We have sat and prayed together in years gone by
I know many of your trials and disappointments
I have known your and wife's missionary hearts
Sometimes my eyes grow watery over you, when
I remember that you were in Africa and Trinidad for Christ

May You know that I, and some others, have not forgotten
May you realize that our God is even more careful not to forget
It is He more than I or any other, who remembers your labors of love
May you just now, behold His smiling face, and feel His warm embrace
May you continue to grow and be strong, realizing that you are not alone
May He bless the lands where you have gone, and always bless your dear home

10082013cj

Curtisj Johnson

Lord, It's So Hard

□

LORD, IT'S SO HARD

By Curtis Johnson

Is there a dear loved one whose life is rapidly fading?

Soon, she will be saying goodbye, and leaving

Now, you are crying, and your heart is aching

It's okay my friend, that you are weeping

You are losing someone so very caring

But precious memories will be forever staying

They will shower you tenderly as if it's raining

Aiding you with all that you are facing

Do welcome them by embracing

□

Before long your weeping eyes will be drying

will begin its calming

You will slowly move on while smiling

It's hard, but there's a new beginning

Your broken heart

01232004

Curtisj Johnson

Love And Security

Love And Security

By Curtis Johnson

If I should succeed in crossing all my T's
and become a person of renown and nobility
If I should place all my 'commas' in all the right places, pausing where I
should
If I should stop at all the signs requiring me to,
and place all my 'periods' where they belong

If I should dot all my i's and little j 's too,
and live a good and decent life all my days
If I should find happiness and fulfillment
through my church, my country, and my career
If the outside world should view me as warm and wise,
and approach me ever so respectfully

I must say that all such accomplishments
would render me grateful and most appreciative
Nevertheless, if I should fail in making my wife feel secure
and knowing by me she is loved
Then I shall ever be, and rightfully so,
a man both unfinished and unfulfilled

Curtisj Johnson

Lovers On The Coast

Lovers On The Coast

By Curtis Lee Johnson

My beloved and I escaped to the north shore of the California coast.
With smiles, we drove through the gates and said hello to the host.

We slept close by the sea and reclined in it's embrace.
Overwhelmed by enchanting breezes,
 we hid away in our secret place.

Two lovers viewed the ocean's expanse and heard the mighty roar.
O how sweet it is to behold the vast waves come ashore!
How marvelous to watch the tides splashing the rocks!

We heard flowing peaceful sounds as the ocean spoke!
The darkness came; nature's music continued to play;
The moon appeared; stars sneaked from their hiding.

Engulfed by the sounds as we inhaled the chilly breezes,
My sweet darling and I sat by the fire.

Curtisj Johnson

Loving Life

Loving Life

By Curtis Johnson

If we are willing to learn, life is willing to teach
If we are willing to listen, the sounds of life will reach
If you are willing to receive, life has much to give
Take what life gives, make the best of it, and live
Sometimes, bad things will happen good people and all of us
When trials come, be still and please do not rush
We do not always know what life will bring or share
We do know that others care, and will help us bare
There are peaks and valleys; there are some tricks; but there are more treats
Life is sometimes cold and bitter; but more often, it is warm and sweet
There is a little of the bad, sad, and ugly; but life is really mostly good
Life can't be all good, because we don't always do the things we should
Ignore the promises of the "quick fix"; it takes time for the wounds to heal
Don't seek the "get rich quickies"; such likes are usually schemes and tricky
So slow it down a notch or two, and get to know the good life
It's staring you in the face, offering opportunities and grace
Take some time off; take a break; get away; and take a walk along the beach
Take a trip, but not on a plane; relax and take it easy on a slow moving train
Turn off the alarm clock; don't answer the phone too quickly; smell the colorful
roses
Live and love the good life; pick a rose, or maybe two; share them with
someone you love
cj100507

Curtisj Johnson

Loving People

Loving People

By Curtis Johnson

It must have been at least five years ago that I saw him for the first time
I must admit, his looks and the way he dressed, were not the inviting kind
He was quiet, presented no threat to anyone; and he never got out of line
I observed him and looked around to see if anyone else would pay any mind
So often, when a stranger or someone looks distant, we hesitate from being kind
We stand back and keep our distance, and start hearing things through the
grapevines

Were there dress codes, or requirements to be clean bearded and freshly
trimmed?

Why do we render judgments without knowledge, and verdicts without
evidence?

Why do we conclude that he doesn't belong? We leave him alone; and we get
tense

Why do we assume the worst? Of his guilt, we are rather certain, and quite
convinced

Of course he was different, and some may have even said, "He looks homeless
and out of place; he's not well dressed, and smells just like the rest of them".
Well, I must tell you my friend, that I refused to develop the mental pictures I
took of him

I quickly erased those snapshots from the edges of my brain, and decided to get
to know him. I could clearly see that he needed us; and we needed to look
beyond his appearance. He had not only stepped into a structural sanctuary, but
also a sanctuary of people.

He needed to be assured that this indeed was a place where living waters flowed;
We needed to live up to our call to serve God, through serving and loving people

The once distant looking gentleman, now radiates a sense of security and
belonging. Eyes, once dimmed and barely readable, are now sparkling with life
and joy. Getting to know him has been a pleasure, and like all of us, he has a
story to tell. I and others in the sanctuary are the better, because we are
learning to love people.

Making A Difference

MAKING A DIFFERENCE
Johnson

By Curtis

Making stops at this office to pick up bank deposits was a daily routine for me. These pickups were time sensitive, and timely deliveries to their bank were imperative. But on that particular day, as I proceeded to park, there was a pickup I did not plan; And there was nothing routine about a baby sparrow sitting helpless in a parking lane.

Perhaps a rushing and less observing person would have run over the little lonely bird; But I will always believe that I was on assignment from God to save the life of a sparrow. Jesus once said that God knows about every sparrow that falls to the ground. The little birdie was in a very dangerous spot, and I immediately proceeded to rescue him.

After I picked him up, I wondered to myself regarding the whereabouts of his mother and/or other loved ones. Moreover, at this point I did not have a clue about what I would do with or for him. I then looked upwards, lifted my arms, and released the sparrow to the opened sky. The birdie flapped his little wings and away he went.

The sight of those flapping wings is forever fixated in my mind, and that moment is among the proudest of my life. No, I had not made a major contribution to heal the ills of the world, or found a cure for cancer, nor brokered a path to peace in the Middle East; But I had made all the difference in the life of a sparrow.

From an encounter with a sparrow on a sunny afternoon, I learned a most valuable lesson.

The differences that we make are not measured by us, but rather by the receiver.

□

In a very real way, the sparrow was abandoned and left alone in a very dangerous place to fend for himself. If he needed food, I had none. If he needed water to cool his thirst, again, I had none. I soon realized that I had nothing of value to offer the little sparrow. That is, until I discovered that what the little birdie really needed was something I did have, and could give him. He never needed me to teach him to fly, because he was born to fly. I simply gave

him a "lift", and that was what he needed more than anything else. May we dare to give some kind of "Lift" to our world.

Curtisj Johnson

Mama Was 35

Mama Was 35

Curtis Johnson

Yes, she was widowed at a very young age.

Mother was only 35 when daddy passed
away. Not
only was she a widow, but a mother of 12;
and 11 of those were still minors at home with
her.

She didn't sit and cry, but dug deeper and tried harder.

Mother was neither a worrier nor a pessimist.
I tell you,
mother was both a realist and an optimist.
She was not a religious fanatic; but she believed
in God.

I will always remember that mother taught us The Lord's Prayer.

After our father passed, there were relatives who offered

to take some of her kids to their home and
help mother to raise us. Knowing that
raising us alone would be tough, she appreciated the help.

But declining their offer, mother said no, insisting on keeping all
of us together. Remembering some horror stories
about siblings being torn apart, I'm grateful.

Mother made lots of bold decisions after daddy died. This Mother's Day,

I'm missing Mama, and remembering just
one of her many bold moves.

05132017cjPS

Curtisj Johnson

Man, Mule, And Mouse

Man, Mule and Mouse

By Curtis Johnson

When I was growing up on a plantation in the Northern Mississippi Delta in the late fifties and early sixties, all across those white fields of cotton in early fall, one cotton-filled sack at a time was lifted from the hands of human cotton pickers and into the hands of the man on the mule. The sacks were often heavy and stacked high, but not once did I hear complaints from the mule. With cotton sacks firmly secured between man and mule, off they went to the weighing scales. Two young men, Bubba and Louis, balanced the load of cotton sacks on the mule by sitting or by standing. They were very skilled at their low-paying task, and they looked proud of their abilities. I tell you, it was a beautiful sight to behold. Sometimes, with ropes and a single plow, the mule would be used to cultivate the gardens.

This sturdy animal would stop and stand upon the command of his most skillful master. (This was at a time when I never heard anybody talking about obedience training of mules, dogs, or any other animals. In my neck of the woods, it seemed that everybody and everything quickly learned their roles and played them well, even mules. In my home and my home town, it seemed that stepping out of line brought consequences that most were not willing to face, even mules.)

Presently, the mule is no longer needed to carry heavy loads and plow the gardens. But what about the mule's skillful master who once stood tall and balanced on the mule's strong back? Man still stands tall and balances with talent and much training. Man has essentially retired that great beast of burden called the mule. Man now sits at computers, moving and mastering a little plastic mouse in the palm of his hand.

I have no doubt that were Bubba and Louis looking for work in this high tech job market today, they would be fierce competitors. There is no reason to think that having mastered a mule, they could not also master a little plastic mouse. If they could command the living brains of an animal, I have no doubt that they could also conquer and excel in operating an inanimate machine with "Intel" inside.

In this our brave new land of digitals and the new economy, we have points and clicks, man and mouse. Many years ago in the land of cotton, where sweat was plentiful and acquisitions of equity were hard to obtain, and before high tech and the internet, there were the man and the mule. Back then, if they had kept

productivity ratings on Bubba, Louis, and their mule, I suspect the ratings would have been off the scales. There is no denying the fact that man and mouse working in harmony with the internet is one remarkable achievement. However, such an achievement will never erase my memory of a most beautiful sight in those long-ago cotton fields of the Mississippi Delta. It was there that I beheld the orchestrated ensemble of man and mule operating at their finest. cj2008

Curtisj Johnson

Master Designer

Master Designer

By Curtis Johnson

An accountant, businessman, psychologist, or teacher?
Great challenging and responsible endeavors, but for who?
What was God thinking when he made you?

A doctor, lawyer. Janitor, engineer, or carpenter?
All good and noble professions, but for who?
What was God thinking when he made you?

Politician, policeman, or judge?
All needful careers, but for who?
What was God thinking when he made you?

Preacher, priest, prophet, or missionary?
Imagine a world without them; but for who?
What was God thinking when he made you?

An actor/actress, writer, musician, or singers not a few
All decent and respectable professions, but for who?
And what was God thinking when he made you?

At our beginning, God painted the picture, leaving us a clue
He uses many people and things to present the finished you
He beckons us to join him, helping him to produce

God, with purpose, designed you to be you, and me to be me.
When we seek him, the portrait he painted of us comes into view
When we pursue that portrait, we are happy, and our lives become clear
Cj11112010

Curtisj Johnson

Missing Dennis

MISSING DENNIS

By Curtis Johnson

Back then, life for kids was harder that it should have been
They say that kids had rights too, but I don't remember when

Back then, If their were child labor laws, they never told us
If labor laws for kids were broken, none made a fuss

Back then, I remember chopping weeds in the oven of the sun
Kids had to work long hours, but we also played and had lots of fun

Back then, kids played cowboys and Indians in the light of day,
And chased lightning bugs in the black of night

Back then, I had a friend name Dennis, and he was not a menace
We played baseball, basketball, football, but not golf or tennis
Dennis and I lived on opposite sides of the busy railroad track;
And he had a big brother who road a mule loaded with cotton sacks
Yes, Dennis and I were very best buddies in our early days
But the years went by as we grew older, and went our separate ways

When I think of Dennis, I happily remember the good times of our childhood
We kept busy shooting marbles and rolling rubber tires throughout the
neighborhood. I haven't heard from Dennis, but I
would love to see him if I could

I once heard it said in a Christian song that friends are friends forever
I sure hope to see my friend Dennis on this side of never
Perhaps we could laugh and talk about farm life and the fun times
Perhaps we could remind each other when we bought ice cream for a dime
Perhaps we could chat about when kids were free and fearless of crime
Perhaps we could laugh about the gray hairs on our heads and under our chins
Perhaps we could talk about the distant days and ask, "Remember when? "
Perhaps we could share our stories of how we changed from boys to men

On this side of never, we would write a letter, email, or visit every now and then
On this side of never, we would both recall when our money was very thin
On this side of never, we would reminisce about house roofs made of tin

Yes, I well recall "The Perhaps", "The Back Then's", and "The Remember
When's"

And I do miss Dennis, and I hope to see him before this life is finished

cj01262007

Curtisj Johnson

Missing Mississippi

Missing Mississippi

Things unforgotten

by Curtis Johnson

Sunny sweaty days you gave to me.
Hot and humid nights you fed to me.
Your dark and scary clouds frighten me.
Your thunder rolls and flashing lightning startled me.

□

With heavy rains you flooded the land.
Your tornadoes blew like a mighty fan.

□

Your long twisting river could not be tamed.
Only the strong ever survived your awful pain.

You gave to me the bitter and the sweet.
Your long hard days caused me to weep.

□

In your cotton fields you made me work.

Only heaven knows how you made me hurt.

□

In spite of you, my faith and hope grew deep.

Most of the lessons I learned never came cheap.

Education was the key, and ignorance was hard to beat.

□

Although I dislike the awful way you treated me,

□ miss the presence of your quietness, that I seldom see

Curtis Johnson

More Than Race

More Than Race

By Curtis L. Johnson, Sr.

In spite of the day by day signs of man's bitter degradation, there were many in the South who somehow still failed to see the endless pain of segregation. From the viewpoint of those who never lived there as well as from those who did reside there, for a long period the South was a very inhumane place for African Americans to live.

With that being the case, one would think that the mind set of blacks were consumed by matters of race, and any notions of happiness and success were best put to rest. One would think that surely many blacks were frozen stiff by the monstrous southern social order, with family life rendered hopeless. One would think that the weak, the weary, and the worn would be stalled by their frustrations.

In many respects, they would not be completely wrong in their assumptions and observations. For far too many, raising an African American family and keeping life and limb intact were not a cake walk or just another day in the park. The southern social order was challenging to say the least.

I do not imply nor suggest any notion that the reality of segregation's stench should be dismissed.

If I even alluded or hinted that all were blessed and bliss, I would certainly be remiss. Nevertheless, if one failed to realize that there was indeed a life well worth the living, something would be greatly missed.

As a native Mississippian, I survived the stormy sixties in America's windy wilderness. The times were hard, and liberties were limited. But in spite of all the blatant racism, black families grew and strived. As God opened their way, their kids played, had fun, worked hard, went to school, and prepared themselves for a brighter day.

No amount of terror and injustice could immobilize democracy's demand for decency, the heart's search for sanity and civility, or the human spirit's march for meaning. Those who desired and studied hard finished high school and went on to college. They dared the demons of ignorance and beat back the odds against

success. For many years, they faithfully fought off their fears and wiped away their tears. Every conceivable effort was constantly made to strip away their self esteem. But, duty bound, they charged forward, full of faith, and never ceased to hope and dream.

I remember a father who took me and my brothers to the New Roxy movie house in Clarksdale, Mississippi, on many a Monday night.

I remember the hamburger café across the street where we went after the movie for a bite.

I remember the many rides my father took us along the country sides.

I remember after church on many a Sunday afternoon, my father took us all to visit our relatives.

I remember going to community baseball games, jumping ropes, swinging high in the air, and playing on merry-go-rounds at forbidden playgrounds.

I remember Mama's patience, Mama's sweetness, and Mama's sweet blackberry, peach, and apple pies.

I remember Grandma's courage, Grandma's commitment, and Grandma's unmatched love.

I remember Daddy's business ability, Daddy's boldness, and Daddy's barbecue

Being southern born and raised, I well remember the southern system of apartheid. Given such a segregated way of life, one could easily feel victimized and become preoccupied. On the subject of the racism I experienced growing up, I suppose I could easily get preoccupied and forget about some of the beauty of my childhood that I have learned to treasure. On the subject of victimization, I suppose I could build a very strong case.

In my view, being preoccupied with all the nation's negativity would be the perfect portrait of a massive ride along a dead end street. In my humble opinion, victimization is pure personalized pain and powerless passion on display. Given such choices, I choose neither.

I do solemnly choose to never forget the pains of my past, lest I be condemned to repeat them. But also, I do happily choose to remember my most sacred heritage and pass along its joys and beauty.

As I pause to recall my family life, my relatives, my friends, my teachers, and my pastors; as I reflect on the joys of picking up pecans after a long and windy fall's night; as I reminisce a skillful walk on the railroad tracks, picking blackberries along its banks; and as I so pleasantly remember so much more that filled the hearts and minds of even poor black kids like me, I rediscover that my life and the lives of my peers even back then and there, were about far more than race.

Curtisj Johnson

Mother's Favorite Drink

Mother's favorite Drink

By Curtis Johnson

She had many good days and bad ones
There were sad moments and happy ones

There was a period in which she was a daily soft drink consumer
But I must say that there was nothing soft about the drink she craved
She was captivated by a certain strong drink more than any other
As for me, if it wasn't for the salt and the sugar it contained,
I too would be drinking with a frowning face, just like her

Doing the laundry, cleaning the house, and cooking,
Or simply taking her infrequent leisure

Beautifying someone's hair,
Or just chatting with a friend

There was often a small green glass bottle of soda near by.
This lady never poured from the bottle to a drinking glass.
Such a classy ritual was never required nor desired by her. The most
favored and refreshing moment for her was a bag of salted peanuts
slowly poured into the strong drink

Watching as his mother intakes her favorite snack,
A little boy looks on and captures a magical moment
The drink was ice cold and very strong to the taste;
And the peanuts were saturated with salt;
But mother liked it that way

Many years have come and gone, but the memories will not soon pass
Those precious magical moments will forever last

Mama, happily drinking her cold and soothing coca cola
The tasty bottle of coke, filled with the salted peanuts
Mama's frowns from the very strong taste,
but enjoying every drop

Time has made the little boy a man;

but the memory of that magical moment

shall forever stand

Cj06282007

Curtisj Johnson

My Blood

MY BLOOD

By Curtis Johnson

A motorized blood bank came to our church today, and I decided to donate blood.

I don't know if her needle was too soft or whether my skin was too tough, but the first lady that attended to me in the mobilized blood bank initially had difficulty in pricking my fingers for blood, and apologized for having to poke me more than once. As she continued, she said to me that my gift of blood would be saving two lives, and I was happy about that. She finally was able to get the tiny amount of blood for her preliminary test. She then took my blood pressure and said that I had a good reading, and I was happy about that too. The first phase was over, and off to the next step I went.

I was led to a reclining seat and asked about my food intake for the day. It was then about 12: 45PM, and I indicated to her that I had only consumed coffee up to that point. That fact appeared to not be good, and I was not happy about that. She then gave me a bottle of water to drink. After the water intake, apparently she was ready to draw a pint of blood from my body.

She then gave me an object to squeeze to put pressure on my blood vessels. There-after, she fitted the needle on my arm and put into my vessel to draw blood. The blood drawing for 1 pint had begun which took 6 minutes. As she performed these tasks, I became inquisitive and had two questions for her.

My first question pertained to the quantity of blood in my body. She informed me that there is 1 pint of blood for every 10 lbs. which means I should have about 17 pints of blood in my body. As the blood was being drawn from my body, I then suggested that I might be a slow bleeder, not having a clue about what rate the blood should exit the body. She then said to me, 'No, actually you are a fast bleeder'. Her tone indicated that such rate was also good, and I was happy about that. There were no more questions from me, except that I needed clarification on something she said as she was giving me some final instructions before leaving.

She repeated to me the instruction that, in order for my 1 pint of blood to be built back up in my body, I should not miss any meals. I understood her, and 8 days later as I write this story, I am doing just fine.

I am a regular donor of money to my church, but I do not remember the pastor's sermon, nor do I have any notes of the service. But I did learn a few things today about me and my blood, as a result of my blood donation.

It's uplifting to know that 1 pint of my blood saves 2 lives

Man should have more than coffee on any given Sunday morning

Feel free to ask questions, because you might learn a thing or two,

like how much blood resides in my body

4. Clarification is a must

When something life giving is lost or given away, you must replace it

to keep on living healthy cj11212011

Curtisj Johnson

My Chicago Bike

My Chicago Bike
By Curtis Johnson

There was once a Christmas past, that never seemed to last;
Just like everything else, that slowly came, and quickly passed.

I prayed and prayed, that I would be granted wheels that ran fast. I desired a bicycle, for fun and play, not to improve my work or daily task. But a bike for my great desire, never came to pass, not even for Christmas.

I grew up and moved on away from home, forgetting the wheels I
wanted to own.

A licensed driver now, living in a much bigger town, of loud and
massive sounds. It was there I bought a bike with money of my
own;
Not for fun and play, but to go to work,
and to get around

cj10292015

Curtisj Johnson

My Father's Oldsmobile, Ode To America

My Father's Oldsmobile, Ode To America

Curtis Johnson

There once was a popular car commercial that boldly stated, 'This is not your father's Oldsmobile'. The manufacturer was apparently proud that they had built a better car. Well, I don't know if it was made better, but I do know that after more than 100 years, it was discontinued in 2004. The ad has often spoken to me about the potential of America's future, a future I'm praying will be far better than that of the Oldsmobile.

I ask: What have you done with my father's Oldsmobile? It's like I was awakened from a dream and found you to be a bit too extreme. What's not to like about the cutlass supreme? Have you laid all the oldsmobiles on a heap to rest? Why, it outperformed lots of others in many a test. Did you forget that it competed with the very best? Is it a prophetic symbol of America's future? Were you forced to put it out to pasture? You continued to mystify it until you finally put it out of its misery. Yes, you demoralized it until you completely demolished it. Me thinks that you over commercialized it. You also tried to culturize and globalize it.

It was my father's Oldsmobile, and I even bought one for my son. It was like a highlighted city on 4 wheels situated on the top of a hill. It brought lots of thrills, but you kept giving it the wrong pills. Yes, in your attempt to make it better, it became like a bird without a feather. My father's Oldsmobile reminds me of a country I once knew. I say 'once knew' because it appears to be changing as rapidly as the morning dew. It seems to have forgotten its own unique design, splendid quality, and its great reliability. Me thinks it became intimidated by the jealousy and envy of others. It is quickly becoming like one of them and all the rest. O sweet America, please do not fall asleep and forget who you were purposed to be. O America, you still mean so much to the world and to me. God still sheds His Grace ob thee. Never, never relinquish your sweet liberty.

Nay, Nay, and forever Nay; the dismantling of our father's oldsmobile shall not be a prophetic symbol of the demise of America. I believe that America's survival and its ability to complete its God-given purpose can best be expressed in the words of the signers of The Declaration of Independence.

Their last sentence in that great document: 'And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.'

07032017cjPS

Curtisj Johnson

My Humble Abode

My Humble Abode

I awake to the sounds of roosters informing everyone that it's time to rise and shine. The roosters have just clocked in to start their morning shift. If it's winter, getting up is very painful. There is no central heating system to maintain the comfort. Daddy had started the fire, but the bedrooms were not yet warm. If it's summer in Dixie, we went to bed hot. The humidity lingered, and the sweat kept pouring. I, a child, knew that something was gravely missing. There was such dire need to rise from the sting of poverty and taste the pleasure of a merry-go-round, or a swimming pool. Anyway, we were somewhat relieved through the night, because the crickets and the lightning bugs always worked throughout the night. The ever present sound of crickets soothed us through the quiet and dark country nights. The window fans ran all night as our every breath became one with the sound of the fan blades.

My place of birth was a concrete block house of four original large rooms. Envied by none that I am aware of, but greatly loved by me and my siblings. A strong little house, providing warmth and shelter for mom, dad, grandmother, all 12 of us kids, and a dog name jack.

Little complaining; lots of dreaming.

My abode was common and simple, but there was absolutely nothing simple about my dreams. I dreamed of a bigger and better house, warmer and cooler; one of my very own. I, a little boy, imagined more doors, more windows, carpeted floors, and a non leaky roof.

My house had a chimney and a big heater which provided the primary heat in winter. Wood and coal was never lacking, and daddy supplemented two other rooms with small gas heaters. There was no inside bathroom, no hot water heater, and we had one indoor water faucet in the back room next to the kitchen. We had a refrigerator and electricity throughout the house, but no form of air conditioning except window fans. A two room wooded addition was later built, and the six window dwelling then became an eight window house. But windows had their own sense of necessity with nothing to do with scenic views, because there were none to behold. The mid 70's was the last that I saw my humble abode. I have been informed that it is now long gone, but it shall forever be a fixture in both my heart and mind. My mother needed not to be rushed to the hospital for a doctor to deliver me, because the midwife met us there in the little block house.09022015 Ct, Child's first home

Curtisj Johnson

My Name Is December

My Name Is December

By Curtis Johnson

Hello dear one,

I have been a long time coming, but believe me when I tell you, "It's worth the wait". I mean that I am worth waiting for. More about that later, but my arrival is out of my control; as I have to wait my turn.

I am one of twelve, each of which has a different life span with a certain amount of days. I know. You think that our time is so short compared to your own span of uncertainty. But we are okay with the way we are, and we never debate our destiny with our maker.

We take each day as they come, and make the best of each one whether it's bright or not.

By the way, you look familiar and remind me of someone else I've seen before. Have we met? O, pardon me please. My name is December, and I must say that I'm not late, but I am the last.

My name comes from the Latin word Decem which means 'ten'. I know that you are wondering why my name means 'ten' when I am presently the 12th month of the year. You must understand that I was the 10th month until my number was changed to the Gregorian Calendar from the Roman Calendar. Don't you wish sometime that people would leave things the way they were? Anyway, I still think that I am the most popular month of the year. More about that later.

I and all my siblings never cease to arrive each year at different times with various tasks. Some of us, 7 to be exact, live to be 31; 4 of us make it to 30; and for some reason, one of our brothers, February by name, lives to be 28; but occasionally, he gets stretched to 29. Please don't ask me why, because I'm not that smart.

Did you know that I am the first month of winter in the Northern Hemisphere where I also have the shortest daylight hours of the year? And did you know that I am the first month of summer in the Southern Hemisphere where I also have the longest daylight hours of the year? I sure hope I got that right.

I don't claim to be the most famous, though I really am. Please? Do not repeat that to my 11 siblings. I must say that perhaps more money is spent in my 31

day life span than any other month; more gifts are exchanged; lights are their brightest; more decorations are put up; and many people feel that a big fat guy name Santa Clause comes from the North Pole on Reindeer, bringing lots of toys to kids the world over. O, by the way, did I say that Christmas came in the month of December? And did I not tell you that I was worth the wait?

Cj10232015

Curtisj Johnson

My Other Teacher

My Other Teacher

By Curtis Johnson

Nature ever thrives to reach.□

Sometimes the lessons flow□

She sings, she prays, and often screams
ever so loudly from the deep.□

rock

the very foundation of my feet.□

and makes us weep.

.

But without her, who bares the rod of shepherds,

astray like sheep

cj07252015

Curtisj Johnson

She never fails to teach.

to the shores from the beach.

She will shake, shock, and

She often wrecks havoc

we would go

My State Of Birth

My State Of Birth

By Curtis L. Johnson, Sr.

M portrays my feeling of MISSING something that I never had,
and could never see.

The feeling that people were always MOVING away from me.

The feeling that MONEY would never come my way, but only flee.

I is for the times I experienced ISOLATION from things unknown.

The times of ILLUSIONS of being in another place, at another time,
and on my own.

The times of longing to be INDEPENDENT,

freed from the chains of poverty, and gone.

S is for the quiet zones of SILENCE where wearied souls came to rest,
and to relieve their STRESS.

S also shows the miracle of SANITY that enabled me to survive
this place of lack and loneliness.

And it shows the ability to SING even though filled with sadness
because of man's unkindness.

I is for the INSANITY of mankind's injustice and inability

to share the opportunities and the wealth with one another.

S also reveals how my family was deeply rooted

with the hope of SALVATION.

S denotes the times and SEASONS of life. There is a time
and a season for every purpose under the sun.

Growing up in the pains of poverty,

I knew that

someday "this too would pass."

I further signifies the ability of the INDIVIDUAL,

who with desire and determination, can rise from

the strap heaps of despair and ascend to

distant stars.

P demonstrates that there is no device that can be devised
by man that is able to destroy anyone who dares to seek
refuge through the POWER of Almighty God.

P also enables me to be overwhelmed with a deep sense of PROMISE.

I finally says to me that I am capable and well equipped to bring
INSPIRATION to others.

You see, I was born in 1949, where the hot sun shines,
where the clocks seemed
slowed by the sands of time,
where the humidity and the sweat combined,
and flowed down my spine,
where on a September
day
near a railroad line,
Mississippi became the state of mine.

Curtisj Johnson

Next Page

Next Page

Curtis Johnson

Undoubtedly, the earth is round,

and massive amounts of waters abound.

Me thinks it's true that one day time shall be no more.

And me think that 'mere olivion' may

be the dying wish

of thosing claiming to be the 'master of their own ship'.

But in eternity's world, there can be only 'One

Master'.

And me think it's not true that 'all the world's a stage.

Notwithstanding, there are scenes enough to amaze,

and no shortest of interesting parts and people to engage.

Indeed, there is a broad stage where all may and ought
have their say.

Yet, there are also narrow stages that invite trouble, darkening our day.

There is a world of 'make-believe feelings of reality' that
we wish were true.

There are platforms and plots enough for all, including me and you;

plenty of room for the many and the few; and gifted
works, old and new.

Human drama is broad and twisting; as faithful as the early morning dew.

May all captives of ignorance and fear be released
from their cage.

May all find a way of escape from both man-made and self inflicted caves.

Let us set at east troubled souls once enraged. May
none feel alone or

degraded, nor let those on the edge be overlooked or evaded.

None's perfect and may not lay claim to have never
misbehaved.

The last scene of the last act; and for the last time, the curtain is raised.

The story line and the character performance left the
audience ablaze.

Such a world is indeed a stage, so predictable, pristine, and finite.

In eternity's world, like a never ending story, there
is always another page.

03242017 cj;

Night Of The Supermoon

Night Of The Supermoon

By Curtis Johnson

At around 9 PM Pacific, no view could be seen from our property.
So we drove a couple of miles and watched the eclipse from the roadside.
We departed again, and from the freeway, we spotted heaven's beauty.
We returned home within the hour, and at our home the moon ceased to hide.
10042015

Curtisj Johnson

Nightmares

Nightmares

By Curtis Johnson

Our souls felt cold, and our hearts were dry
That was the day my family began to die

Though by God's grace, we did survive,
We could not resist asking him why

Our lovely daughter met an older guy
cry
The plans we made, the dreams we had,
and pass us by

We loved her dearly and believed in her,
started to lie
He could have hidden the troubles of his life,
to try
She saw the fatal signs and should have said no,
the guy
The dreams disappeared, and the nightmares began,
asking why

We could not rest; we did our best;
bitter test
Our gentle home was invaded by an angry pest,
shattered our nest

She loved him still against our will;
slowly took their toll
He went to jail again, but she loved him with the pain;
grew cold

She bore him a son and waited for his return;
clearly torn
Their marriage didn't last; the worst has past;
longer mourn

May 27,1993 was the fateful day when

who always made her
began to quickly fade

but she suddenly
but he never sought

but yet she fell for
and we kept

we struggled with this
who swiftly

the blows he gave her
and our hearts

our lives were
for them, we no

our daughter met a

man with a troubled past

Though our dreams were altered, our lives have recovered; and our
nightmares didn't last

Curtisj Johnson

Nine Eleven (911)

Nine Eleven

By Curtis Johnson

I did not have any exposure to news on the morning of 911 until I entered my truck to go to work.

The Radio 1530 am news station in Sacramento was my primary news source, and when I turned it on, at least one plane had already crashed the tower. I was a bit dazed by it all, not clear about what was really happening. A few minutes later I was driving past the air field of the McClellan Air Force Base. One look in that direction verified the new orders about no plane was to take to the air.

I arrived at work to learn that "Yes", we would work that day, but our normal end of the day runs to the airport would be curtailed. All the routes would have to come straight to the yard, because all the planes across the nation were being grounded. The day before, I had just turned 52, and 911 had to be the most terrorizing day in America during my life time. I was not afraid personally, because I was not affected directly in a violent way. But to realize the pain of all the families of the people that were killed was heart breaking. So I wept and prayed for those who wept.

I have never written about that day until now, and I don't really know where to start or how to finish. I will simply relate two observations relative to what I experienced on September 11,2001. I am grateful for the fact that our pastor and church immediately called for a prayer meeting the night of 911. I remember getting off work and going to that prayer meeting after dinner with my family. It was not difficult at a time like that to convince people that we needed God, not only for future protection of the unknown, but we needed him "now" to get through such a major tragedy.

A nation shaking calamity had drawn America to its knees, and we all pulled together and toward God. Personally, my day and the day of millions of Americans had begun with our eyes and ears glued to radios and television sets. That same day was ending with our eyes and ears tuned toward God on bended knees.

The military wall of the strongest nation on earth had been breached, and an enemy had done the unthinkable. Two of the tallest buildings in America had been brought down without a single missile. A large section of the Pentagon, the hub of the Defense Department, had been destroyed without a single act of defense. Were it not for the bravery and quick thinking maneuvers by passengers

in a fourth terrorist occupied plane, the White House of The United States of America would have been toppled.

My second observation is one that can not be quantified or measured in the usual sense, because it relates to the mood of the people that I encountered throughout that day. With or without words, there was something I felt whether it was the person I passed on the street or the motorist I saw on the freeway. There was a somber spirit and a sense of unity that said, "We are in this together". Would to God that we didn't have to have a catastrophic event to make us kneel before God and feel brotherly love toward one another.

Thirteen 911's have come and gone since the twin towers fell, and the fourteenth 911 is approaching midnight as I write this piece at 10: 57 pm Pacific Time. It appears that our nation has drifted away from God over the last 14 years since devastating terror struck our country. Nevertheless, God has not given up on America, and neither shall I. As are many others, my knees remain bowed to God for America. May He forever cause His grace to be shed on us.

Cj09112015 11: 04 PM Sac., Ca.

Curtisj Johnson

No Place Like Home

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

By Curtis Johnson

If one could tour my place of birth
They would notice a place where time stood still
Then they would see a place of humble simplicity

If one could spend one night in the house where I was born
No hot water or bathroom, but cold night visits to the outhouse
Then they would be more grateful, and acquire a taste for more humility

If one could roam the village where I grew up
A place where lightning bugs enjoyed the nights
Then they would walk on dusty grounds of stability

If one could only observe where I had to play
They would see no parks or play grounds for the poor
Then they would pause and share in their kids' activity

If one could hear the soothing sounds that I heard by day and
by night
The melody of crickets late at night,
and the harmony of roosters crowing
early mornings
Then they would experience far less stress, and have a chance
with longevity

If one could get to know the neighbors I knew
The dear people I honored, trusted, and respected
Then they would understand the true meaning of civility

If one could care nearly as much as they
People who took the time to love and share
Then they too would love with all their ability

cj04232007

Curtisj Johnson

Not Forsaken And Unforgotten

Not forsaken And Unforgotten

By Curtis L. Johnson, Sr.

There is a little town not very far off the beaten path. Neither gold nor silver has ever been mined in or near this town of fertile delta soil. No sweet crude runs beneath its ground, but a quiet and gentle place awaits those who toil

If you should determine to visit this town and someone meets you at the door with a frown,
the chances are great that you took a wrong turn and entered the wrong town.
If you are greeted at the door with a smile and someone says to you,
"Come on in for a while, and make yourself right at
home, ' the chances are
great that you are in the place where I used to roam.

If late at night you hear the sounds of crickets, do not be alarmed,
for they bring peace and sweet sleep, and mean
you no harm; or if on early
mornings you hear roosters crowing,
they are welcoming the dawn of a new day
and offering you a
wake up call;
or if you see pig pens and chicken coops,
I suspect that you have
found the right place.

If in early fall you see white fields of cotton, waiting and pleading to be
harvested;
if you see cotton gins, combines, tractors, and cotton pickers;
if by chance you see chinaberry trees near by
and pecan trees in the distance;
if you observe a cotton or corn field
where tin roof homes and out
houses use to be;
chances are great that you have arrived at the place
where kids used to run, playing hide and seek,
jump rope, shooting
marbles and popping sling shots,
and never bothering about worries or fears.

It's a place where time has left a trace.

It's a trace of how the privileged with plenty

contrasted with the under privileged in poverty.

It's a trace of how people barely existed with help from God,

and help from neighborhood friends who cared and shared. It's a trace of how a lot

of times, people survived day by day,

simply because they wanted to.

So, if you should ever decide to visit my little hometown,

unknown by millions from afar;

If you should ever wish to tour a place unforgotten

by me and others from Mattson, Mississippi;

Be focused to see a place of simplicity

Be ready to acquire a taste for humility

Be honored to walk on grounds of stability

Be prepared to pause and embrace less activity

Be wise enough to understand the meaning of civility

Be more determined to love others with all of your ability

Be sure to listen for the sweet sounds of quietness and peaceful tranquility

Curtisj Johnson

Now I Know

Some things in life are hard to swallow, I guess.
And there are others that seem impossible to digest

I just called to let you know,
I should have never let you go

If I could just hold you in my arms today,
I would never let you slip away

I know that my time for you may have passed
I also know that it's my fault that we didn't last

I know now that you are the one that God did send
I'm just so awfully sorry that I never knew it then
02/2007cj(A possible song for whomever appropriate)

Curtisj Johnson

O God

Come, O Come, Dear God
By Curtis

I still believe and always will.

I must say that many have been given a bitter pill.
never leave us, nor desert.

They hurt; both he and she also hurt.
you, because we all hurt.

I believe that you are there, and everywhere;
worry when things get worse.

I believe you'll

Dear God, we need

but sometimes, I

I know that you feel and see and hear the prayerful rings; and God, you
keep your promises, and never lie. I often talk to you about these things. And you
know that I'm not shy.

I feel you God; I hear you speaking in my heart; but still I ask, "Where on
earth are you God?" It's not a question of your existence God, but rather,
how soon will you impact or change my current situation. So many have gotten a
raw deal; O Dear God, they long to be healed; and I have no doubt that you are
real.

Cancer, that most dreadful disease, seems to never end, and keeps showing up
everywhere. My younger sister Nita fought gallantly, but died of cancer nearly
three years ago. My friend's wife Mary suffered for some time, and finally died of
cancer last year. Another dear friend of mine name Joan died of cancer a few
short weeks ago. God, we are consoled by your grace, just to know that these
are all with you.

We are all praying for yet another friend, who is receiving chemo treatments.
Unless there is a miracle God, another friend, fighting hard, will soon die. Yes
God. From cancer too, and many are asking, "Where are you?" God,
I know that you well understand, that this is not a location question. Someone
closer to you than me, once asked the agonizing question, "Why?"

I know that you care; but please God, tell me, "Where are you?"
I am your child God; so I know you are not bothered when I ask, "Where
are you?" Many have asked this question many times before God. You
know it's nothing new. I know that you have not changed; so please dear God,
do the things you use to do. O God, could you please dispatch angels to come

here? ; Just give the word God, and they will come rushing through. Please, take away this fear God, and cause us to draw near. Because of us, I'm sure you also are hurting. But O God, still I ask, 'Where are you? '

There's war in the Middle East. So many filled with hate and cannot see. For many, there's little hope; there's no place to flee; so we come to is so much pain that never changes. O where, where are you God? There seems to be no refrain of evil falling like rain. Where are you God? So come now God; shower upon our thirsty land; rain upon our dry 10142015

Curtisj Johnson

rivalries in the white house and the halls of congress

And I fear for our pulpiteers who also relax in the kettle with

the frog.

07312017cjFB

Part fiction

Curtisj Johnson

One Night In Chicago

One Night In Chicago

By Curtis Johnson

In the black of night, it was an uninviting neighborhood; but there I was, all alone. During the day, all seemed trouble free, but the darkness creates a whole new world. Even though new to the community, Why did I not know to be vigilant at nightfall? At nineteen, whether naïve or unthinking, I paid the painful price via a strong armed robbery.

About midway down the block I saw two bodies turn the corner, heading in my direction. Although I had never been robbed, I felt an uneasiness and the sense that this will not be good. When we met, there was no verbal exchange between us. They reached into my jacket and took the money where they apparently had observed me putting it. There was a gun, and certainly I was afraid. I didn't know what to do, but I was calm. No words; no resistance.

I was simply one among thousands who are victims of crime in the big cities. I was also among the many who refuse to be immobilized by the fear of criminals. What was it within me that compelled me to carry on with my plans for the night? Why did I not rush home in panic mode, and lock myself inside until the break of day?

There is a "God planted" device in the human spirit that overflows with sheer determination. There lies within the human psychic a mentality that will not be bullied into a lock down zone.

Conscious or not, there is a voice within us saying, "I've got people to see and things to do". 'There are people who need me; I've got places to go". "Fear can't bind me; so stop me if you can".

That is why I was able to go home, freshen up, and walk right out the door to catch another bus on those same dark and dangerous streets. Recovering drug addicts on the North side of town were waiting to go to church that night; and as a volunteer driver, it was my job to take them. They enjoyed their night, never realizing the terror of mine. On that one dark Chicago night in the early 70's, I lost the \$90; but I gained a sense of focus and sheer determination that have served me well for a lifetime.

No, there was nothing different or special about me; Yes, like me, thousands on a daily basis refuse to be held captive. And yes, my small framed and bold

hearted grandmother would have said to me, "Get on it, and get it done".

Cj07242015

Curtisj Johnson

One Summer Night

One Summer Night

Can you believe it my dear?

The passage of time is enough to draw tears.
have been married 44 years

This June, we will

Do you remember when and where we were
to you one summer night?

when I proposed

I do, and never will forget it

It was on that embarrassing night in Chicago
neck and tasted

when I kissed your
the bitterness of your perfume

Yes, it was bitter; but your spirit and
Personality were sweeter than honey.
You are still sweet; and I hope that I
never cause you any taste of bitter

I know there are times that I get busy, become engaged
something and take you for granted.
For such times, I am truly sorry

with

But do not worry my beloved, not even for a moment;
Because I know what I have, and will always love you.
Happy Valentine my dear
02122016cj

Curtisj Johnson

One Unforgettable Cry

One Unforgettable Cry

By Curtis Johnson

It was a late January day in 1999 when I received a call from Chicago.
A younger sister called that day and said, "Please listen,
Because our older sister Ella is now missing".

She said that she was looking everywhere.
Worried, shocked, and sad, I needed more air.
There was a rush of thoughts that I could not bare.
So many miles away, I felt helpless and began to pray

The hours slowly passed as we waited to hear,
Hoping so desperately that Ella would soon be near.
Hours turned to days, and I began to feel the pain of fear.

It seems two days passed, and we got word that Ella was found.
So happy at first, but as my sister spoke, my head began to pound.

She said, "Ella is in the hospital from a terrible accident'.
From the sound of her voice, I could tell what she meant
Ella had no I D, which was the reason for so much suspense

The night was long; something went wrong; soon, Ella would be gone
The next day was long; I went to the phone; Ella was barely hanging on

The doctor told my younger sister that Ella was too weak to survive.
My emotions went wild, when I realized that Ella would not be alive.
Yes, Ella had passed, and deep within me was that unforgettable cry

Curtisj Johnson

Our Friend Bobo

Our Friend Bobo

By Curtis Johnson

More than fifty years ago, there was a drowning in my little home town.
Back then, we chopped cotton by the day, and picked cotton by the pound.

There was no sliding boards or public play grounds.
There was no hanging bars, see-saw sets, or merry go rounds.

There was no swing sets to zip us back and forth through the wind.
But there was deep poverty, and pleasantries were few back then.

There was no swimming pools for us on hot, humid, and toasty days.
There was no nice and safe places to cool off, but we had our ways.

There was water in the creek, and we saw no signs saying, "Do No Jump In".
There was the mud, the pollution, and the stench, but we still jumped in.

We swung from tree limbs, flashed and dashed in the muddy waters.
We knew we would stink, but we were hot, and nothing else mattered.

What did matter was that one day our friend Bobo died in the muddy creek.
Bobo went under, and we soon realized that he was not playing hide and seek.

We soon ran for help, and all the people and authorities were gathered.
They pulled Bobo's body from the bottom, and our souls were sad and tattered.
cj071407PS

Curtisj Johnson

Outside My Window

Outside My Window

By Curtis Johnson

Staring at me up a slight hill, from my front window, there is a cul-de-sac. Outside my back window, over the road and embankment, is a railroad track. I am most proud of my little bird feeder that helps humming birds stay on tract. The road is a rather busy one between my fence and the railroad embankment. And there are a few trees lining the roadside, but making a quiet statement. It's the statement that simply says, "We are here, helping to fight the erosion. There are five trees consisting of a fruitless mulberry which provides lots of shade but hinders my views of the sun sets. There is a young Rose of Sharon which I am certain will draw me closer to God. In addition, there are three fruit bearing trees; One's an orange; there's a lemon, and the other a plum. From another side of my home, there is absolutely nothing to see except my interior wall. My home of few windows affords me but one other view of a neighbor's property, and that is all. O pardon me, I overlooked the view from a bedroom window. It's my garden of vegetable treats. And in addition, there are two tall palm trees and several other trees from which I can pull a peach. Lastly, from my back window I am treated with the goings and comings of squirrels which seems to never get enough of the nuts and seeds.

cj09232015

Curtisj Johnson

Points And Poles

Points And Poles

By Curtis Johnson

Sometimes it's like pulling teeth in pain, even with Novocain
Or climbing a San Francisco hill in a Chevy Chevette
Or trying to fly a kite on a none windy day

Words I say, from my heart to yours, seldom come easy
I'm certain that my brain is not on 'lock down' or it would
have told me so. Or maybe it did, and I simply wasn't listening
It appears that I was born in the quiet zone, but I'm trying to get out

I wish that I was more vocal, because you are a lover of words
It bothers me greatly that my words don't flow as freely as a river
Is there a dame holding back words I want to deliver?
Is there a blockage? Am I from Mars like some say?
Although I know the beauty and the power of the spoken word, still I
struggle. But today, I clearly sense a few fitting words, coming from my heart
to yours

Please forgive me when I seem cold and distant, like the North Pole
Please do not hold it against me, when I'm like the birds of Fall,
anticipating wintry weather. May it never be said of me,
that I have flown South on you

Surely, it is not the fault of one such as you, who are as reliable as
the sun rising out of the Eastern sky.
Never should one be blamed who is strong and sure, fearless and
faithful, so kind and true, like you

O dear one, may you never cease to be this way
May it be said by me today without further delay,
'You and I, forever together, we shall stay'.

O my dear beloved wife, the point is this:
I am sorry for the times I seem far, foreign, and dry
There is no excuse for one like me, who's such a lucky guy
For I am blessed with one as lovely as the setting sun in the Western sky

cj04252015

Curtisj Johnson

Poor Sweet Kids

POOR SWEET KIDS

By Curtis Johnson

We sure did love the lollipops, the cracker jacks, the Holloway candy sticks, the chocolate coated ice cream bars, and those tootsie rolls.

We simply could not get enough of the pop sickles, the cool aids, and the soda pops. We sang a love song saying, "Ice cream, soda water, cream on top, tell me the name of your sweet heart".

We had the best tasting cookies and cigarette candies that eyes had ever seen. We were just poor kids in America's poorest state; but no kids were sweeter than us. We were hot as fire; we were hassled and harassed by humidity and drops of sweat: but we were sweet. Life was hard in this little Mississippi delta town. But somewhere between hard work and chores

Somewhere between feeding the chickens and the cows Somewhere
between feeding the goats and the hogs Somewhere between watching
TV and doing home work

Somewhere between the sun up and the sun down Somewhere
between the dawn and the dust. Yes, in between, we found
time to play.

Most times we were okay, didn't go astray, and had lots of fun in
the barns, playing in the hay.

We rolled the rubber tires like driving fast cars; we laughed out loud
as we sucked our whining balls.

Money was always lacking, but I tell you, we did our share of licking, of
chewing, and of sucking the sweet stuff

We sure did manage to get a lot for the few pennies and nickels and
dimes that we had.

We could buy our treats cheap back then; so we did our very
best to stay sweet, chewing bubble gum filled with sugar

We didn't have a care; we learned how to share; and the sweet
stuff was always 013008

Curtisj Johnson

Remember This

REMEMBER THIS

By Curtis Johnson

There are some things I have come to believe.
Believe me when I say, I am not deceived.
Sometimes the good die young, and never receive.
Unfairness exists, and persists, though ill conceived.

Sometimes everybody gets pushed around, or cheated.
Never sink in the sand, or give up when you're mistreated.
There is never a reason to remain forever defeated.
Be strong and fight against evils, before they are repeated.
It's okay to be highly noticed, but better to be needed.

If you decide to reach for the brightest and highest star;
Remember to love and support those not very far.

A good education might bring you the best credit card.
But the best education will always be it's own reward.

Some are fortunate with opportunities they simply refuse.
Too many of us are unfortunately denied and abused.

You do not have to feel like a sadly stricken victim.
Just have faith, look up, and stand up like a victor!

121306cj

Curtisj Johnson

Remember When?

REMEMBER WHEN?

By Curtis Johnson

At first I suppose there was the thought of how things use to be; and over time, how things are now.

Like the time I thought about a childhood friend name Dennis, and how I would have loved to see him again.

With a guy like Dennis there would have been so many "remember when's", and "what? I never knew that".

But you see, a short while after I wrote about Dennis, I discovered that he had died in a fire many years before.

And just like that, all my dreams of ever seeing Dennis again faded away

So I thought to myself, "How sad, I never knew".

Not even an opportunity to pay respects for a beloved childhood friend.

Why did we never bother to connect or even inquire about one another? Even now, when I think about it, my eyes gets watery, but a fresh bash of determination ignites inside of me. The fire inside of me burns to the point whereby I want to hasten the chase. I want to find another old friend before someone else bites the dust. I just want to say, Hi", or "What's happening? ", or "What's been going on for the past 30 or 40 years"?

What is so wrong with that?

We have gone hi tech,

but we have also gone far too long detached.

Why must we disconnect, disassociate,

disregard,

and let old times

and memories die?

Why can't we find or take the time?

Why can't we just reconnect if but for a day

or an hour to just laugh or cry?

There is too much pain to allow life to go on this way,

when otherwise we have so much to gain before we all die?

I say no! My quest has already begun. I'm on a mission,

and I cannot stop, because I got light to shine and love to share.

Cj032808 5: 15 PM PST

Resolutions

Resolutions

By Curtis Johnson

Repentance of things past and presence, and anticipated misdoings shall be of utmost importance.

I shall be more open and vulnerable, being more willing to "Be Wrong".

Evils that are both subtle and also blatant shall be exposed, fought against, and prayed about.

I shall determine that my voice be heard more by both God in prayer, and to my fellow man.

Salvation of the human race is not a given, but we must seek powers higher than our own.

It shall be my intent to further awareness that "We" are lost when left to our own devices.

Options shall be my pathway to channels unknown before, but presently golden opportunities.

Unacceptable behavior and destructive forces should not be left alone, because they've always been that way, and "because we've always done it that way".

Lucky shall not be any dream of mine, but I with the Almighty shall prosper and assist many. The harder I work, and the more I pray, and the kinder I become, the luckier I get.

Until everyone knows, I shall consider it my duty to tell them that they are loved by God. The knowledge of God and His love for us changes everything.

Teachable is what I have always wanted to be, and the future me shall be no less. The wisdom that comes from God is teachable and affords us the ability to go beyond being understood, and opens our hearts to understand.

Immovable shall be the word for the values that must never perish, and that I forever cherish. Descending from a generation of "Absolutes", and pushed onto a bandwagon of "Situation Ethics", I shall continue with values that do not change like the wind.

Onward and upward I shall go, more bolder, ever hopeful, unselfish, and never looking back. Regardless of the destruction and pain that I see, there is a world of promise just ahead.

Never giving up, in, or out; never doubting truth; never allowing evil to persist without a fight. I will continue utilizing the scales of solid truth that shall outlast the fading vapors of evil.

Solutions to mankind's problems were gifted to every generation, and I too shall assist for the good. You and I are gifts on loan by God Almighty to our generation, and we must use them to make our world a haven of love and peace.

12092015cj

Curtisj Johnson

Restored Dreams

Restored Dreams

May the hands of God break up and smooth out your hard clods of clay.
May your starless mid nights become as bright as the sun at noonday

May our loving God halt your tides of gloom, and whiten your clouds of gray.
May your deferred hopes come rushing to your door, and cease their delay

May your nightmares and sleepless nights, when all is going astray,
Cease and desist to allow your dreams to open up a better way

May God's tender mercies descend upon you to stay.
Dear Lord, for these things and more, I pray

Amen.

cj02132016

Curtisj Johnson

Reuben For Christmas

Reuben For Christmas
By Curtis Johnson

From the streets of San Francisco in 1984
There came a stranger knocking on our door

He was known by all in the nationhood
His name was Reuben and he wanted food
We gave him a meal and it was good

Reuben kept coming by day after day
He was always hungry and not much to say

He was dirty, smelly, and tough to be around
He was tall, thin, and could use a few pounds

The Christmas Season was fast approaching
Everybody got busy shopping and rushing

Reuben spent his Christmas alone and cold
We decided this year to play a special role

On Christmas Day Reuben sat with our family
We all ate and shared our gifts most happily cj112406

Curtisj Johnson

Right Things For Right Reasons

Curtis Johnson

Rejection:

I had a heavy weight fight with rejection and lost by decision.

It wasn't all bad, because me thinks it's not
what you are qualified to be or
to do; It's whether or not you will be given the opportunity.

And let's not worry about opportunities; just keep knocking
on the door.

Dejection:

Mega efforts and meager returns can be more that a little

discouraging, but such trials teen to make a stronger
person. Me thinks

it's not just what's in your heart, nor what you visualize;

It's also whether or not you have enough
resources to long endure.

Objection:

Sometimes, we gallantly shield others against the highest tidal waves,

and help to calm the raging storms inside of
them; not withstanding, Me thinks

it's not whether or not you can are well equipped to do the job;

It's whether you meet their expectations and
are allowed to excel.

Ejection:

Sometimes, the game is already decided, long before it ever begins.

Your noble purpose is not theirs; and no target
you hit is acceptable. Me thinks it's

not whether or not you are moving in the right direction;

It's whether the majority wishes for you to be a success or failure.

Discretion:

The dues have been paid; the i's are dotted; and the t's are crossed.

You have done the right things for the right reasons; the goal is reached. Me thinks

it's not whether you are well positioned to be the best available;

It's whether you will act in your interest, or in the best interest of others. 04242017 cj PS

Curtisj Johnson

Rise To The Occasion

RISE TO THE OCCASION

By Curtis Johnson

When people like troubled flock,
From next door or around the block,
Come crashing on the rocks

When hard times come
Flashing alarms on their clocks,
But their opportunity doesn't knock

Will you be there for them, to confide?
Or will you consider running away and hide?
Will you stand strong for them and abide?
Will you help them to fight against the tide?

When tall ones are bruised and beaten small
When their backs are nailed against the wall
When they strive hard and give their all
When they've done all to stand, but yet they fall

Will you stumble into their situation and stall?
Or will you rise to the occasion and hear their call?
Will you be bold enough to rescue Mary, Peter, and Paul?

Cj051407

Curtisj Johnson

Route 66

Route 66

By Curtis Johnson

When The U.S. A. decided to build a highway system extending all the way to California, there was one highway which came to be known as Route 66. It extended from Chicago, Illinois to Santa Monica, California. Via television in the early 60's, its fame grew far and wide; far above and beyond the reality of a long western ride. As a child, like millions of others, I enjoyed watching Todd and Buz zoom across the country in a Chevy Corvette.

This piece however, is not about that infamous highway, but rather, about a book called The Bible.

In the early 60's, I also began a journey that has lasted far longer than the three and a half years and 116 episodes as did The Route 66 television series. It was more than 50 years ago that I began in earnest to read the Bible. Since the age of 14, I have not ceased to drive and to be driven through the highways of the Bible.

As I was reading a Biblical story today, the thought of the television series and the reality of the Bible's 66 books converged in my heart. A theme about traveling through the pages of the 66 books was born, and I began to write. I'm looking back over all the places I've been on the biblical books of highway Route 66.

Please allow me to reduce this travel journey and display just a snapshot, because it would take volumes of books and a life time to really describe the places I've been, things I've seen, people I've met, not to mention the trials I've had along the way. So often we endeavor on a journey like the one I'm describing and set our sights on heaven, but we must not cheat ourselves on the highway to heaven that's littered with so much love, joy, and peace. Clouds of glory and showers of blessings pave the roadway of Route 66.

Sometimes we do not realize that part of heaven is really about the journey. If our beginning were Genesis, and we never experienced the joy until we reached Revelation, we would have lost so much of heaven when we passed through Judges. If we only set our sights on the destination, we would never have experienced the beauty music of David in Samuel or his confessions in the Psalms.

Of course I was overjoyed and inspired beyond reason in the great Exodus and the Red Sea crossing, but there were also times that I was bored with the details of Leviticus. In my youth I must confess that I was both sad and moved to silence when I could not explain all the blood shed and warfare in Joshua. In time, I came to realize that if ever I were to reach my heavenly destination, I had no right to skip the Book of Job or leap over the evil plot of Haman in the Book of Esther.

I tell you, I had to learn to enjoy the journey in spite of the evil Kings of Israel portrayed in the Book of Kings or the slaughter of newborns by King Herod in the Gospels. I tell you, King Solomon was like so many of us when he speaks of vanities in The Book of Ecclesiastes, and shares the beauty of romance in The Song of Solomon. It was a most breath taking portrait of the wisdom of God when I turned North toward The Book of Proverbs. I tell you, there is nothing like pausing at a rest stop and drinking the fresh waters from the Book of Ruth.

O please pardon me, but the journey is so overwhelmingly wholesome, therapeutic, and healing that there simply is no end to the joys I could share with you about the path I took. When I exited the dirty and dusty roads that I had trodden before, Route 66 opened up a whole new world to me. There is so much more that I could say, but I would rather invite you to come along with me on Route 66, because there is plenty of room, and there is no end to this grandiose excursion.

O, there are so many more wonderful people, places, and things that I could share with you, but I must not forget to tell you that there was a Very Special Person that I continued to meet through out all my travels on Route 66. There was a Special Person and a Presence; This person expressed himself in many different forms, but there was little doubt about who he was. I tell you, he was and still is so very personable and the dearest of a friend to me. He is called and known by many names; some of which is Christ, Jesus, Savior, Master, and Teacher. He's all those names to me, but I also call him Lord; and I met him when I got on Holy Highway and began my journey on Route 66.

cj070615

Curtisj Johnson

S Un Kissed

Sun Kissed

By Curtis Johnson

I once dreamed of a land and a time that were entrenched
by the beauty and the beast.
The beast did not attempt to cause me nor anyone to fear, nor did the
beauty charm anyone to bow to its demands.
Both the beauty and the beast joined hand in hand, to acquaint
themselves, and enjoy the feast.

The land itself was a special place, most divine and serene, so preserved,
secured, and protected like no other
There were traces of human failures and misfortunes; There were tear
filled bottles, indicative of prior pains; but peace was clearly present, and
hope was detected.

Faith was genuine; love was pure and painless; and the entire
atmosphere was heavenly directed.

The beast was not in that land to do harm to any, but to remind
everyone how life once was for many.

This land of wonder was never spanked, But always
awakened by the rising sun

Cool breezes flowed in the afternoon Inhabitants were kissed
by the setting sun,
And they were shined upon by the moon

The beauty was not there to model, but simply to
demonstrate what life was always meant to be for
everyone.

Cj051908

Curtisj Johnson

Sail On My Friend

Sail On My Friend
by Curtis Johnson

Just a few will act divine
Not everyone is nice and kind
But everyone will get hurt sometimes

Occasionally, someone will cross the line
Some will even become insensitive at times
But we all have mountains that we must climb

So often life is like being whipped by a raging storm
Or like being lashed by the winds
Or like an angry and troubled sea

Winds, like unbearable people
Storms, like unrelenting circumstances
Troubled seas, ripping away the peace and control
All are fierce and forceful, hurting badly sometimes

Have you heard the story of the old seaman?
He said, "In fierce storms there's only one thing to do;
There's only one way. You must set the ship in a certain
Position and leave it there".

Though everything around me be altered and troublesome,
May I set my position, stay the course for the duration, and sail on

Some hurts are quick, visible, and anyone can know
Others are subtle, sharp and pointed, so deep and will not easily show
Some hurts are hidden, and tears are held back that otherwise would flow
Others are not so hidden, but let us know when they are feeling really low

Not all hurts and ills are cause for alarm, because some people learn to cope
Some of us will golf, or run marathons, and others will float away on a big sail
boat
They will easily adjust and move on, and never be found hanging on the end of a
rope
This is my plea, my prayer, for you dear one: Sail on! Sail on my friend, and

never lose hope

cj04062011

Curtisj Johnson

Santa Rosa Route

Santa Rosa Route
By Curtis Johnson

The Viet Nam war was over, and Jim Jones was in the news a lot, back in late 1978.

Multiple crises, like the Iran hostage affair, seemed to explode, creating a massive heartache.

The beat goes on; the heat stays on; and America was still getting over the scandal of Watergate.

But everyday life also goes on, and every morning I arose to start my job in the city by the Bay.

Making a few early morning stops in the financial district was okay. But what I really loved was crossing the Golden Gate Bridge each and every day.

Heavily loaded with bags and lots of mail, away I went for long northern drives. Customer service was job one, and they were always happy when I arrived. I was a courier man with essential documents, helping the economy to survive.

Getting away, running free, and making a living was what it was all about. That our customers loved seeing their pictures and getting their payroll, there was no doubt.

Mill Valley, San Rafael, and Novato were the beginning of my delivery route.

Some days got really hot in Sonoma County, but I cooled down when I returned to the Golden Gate. I delivered and picked up photography, bank mail, and deposits; and I was seldom late. For lunch? Yogurt, fresh fruit, and all kinds of nuts were what I always ate.

Owen Spann in the morning and Jim Eason in the afternoon were my favorite talk show hosts.

I drove a lot; I listened a lot; and I learned a lot from Radio 810 KGO. I learned about authors, politics, finance, and even a little trivia from the most powerful station on the West Coast.

I guess that freedom of the road, learning new things, and meeting new people were what I loved the most.

The days went fast as I furthered my route through Petaluma, Sebastopol, Forestville, and Guerneville. I crossed the Russian River in Guerneville, and for

just a while I would sit and chill. The river's crossing was the end of the line for my route in that direction. As I proceeded back toward Santa Rosa, cruising slowly through the wooded two lane winding road was such a thrill.

So on I went to sunny Santa Rosa where the merchants and bankers awaited me. Deliveries in Santa Rosa would be my last for the day, after which I would often locate a shady tree. Under a tree, in the park, or reading books in the library is where for the next hour or more, I would be.

This was a waiting down time for the banks to close; after which I would begin to make my late afternoon pickups. Heading south back down highway 101 from town to town along the way, I picked up overnight mail and bank deposits without delay. I was rushing time line deliveries to air planes and processing centers.

There would be no excuses accepted for traffic jams, accidents, bridge crossings, and toll gates.

We all knew that the planes could not wait, and there was never a need to debate.

It was understood; it was our job; so we did our best to not be late.

Called the Santa Rosa Route, it was just one of the many routes that I drove over a period of nearly twenty five years and approximately one million miles.
cj09172007

Curtisj Johnson

Seasons Of Life

Unpleasant things of life, once completely frozen, are now thawing
and melting away.

Wisdom has taught us that such things,
like ice caps, never came to stay.

To all things, there is an ultimate purpose.
This truth is certain; no need to suppose.

Our lives will always bring "seed time and harvest";
Reaping always follows with rewards for what we invest.

May we release and not retain treasures in our chest.
Once dispatched, may we simply relax and rest.

Be wise, and beware not to rush the Spring Season.
Ample time and testing in the process, is the reason.

Day and night will not cease, nor cold and heat.
And life must yield both the beauty and the beast

May we be patient and still, when happy seasons seem to stall
When due, Summer will surely come, and so will Fall
02192016cj

Curtisj Johnson

Second Fiddle

Second Fiddle

By Curtis Johnson

I once knew a teacher who occasionally used the word 'fiddle'.
If perhaps he deemed something untrue or irrelevant;
Or if annoyed by students or
otherwise disagreeable;
he would simply say, "fiddle sticks".

In the instrumental world of music, a fiddle is a violin.
Have you read that Emperor Nero fiddled while Rome burned?
And I once heard about a musical called, "Fiddler On The Roof".
But this is not the kind of fiddle that presently occupies my brain

In nautical usage, a fiddle is a frame or railing on a ship's
table to keep dishes from falling off in rough weather.
'Fiddle' of the high seas is not what I'm thinking about

There's such broad usage of a most simple word. Very interesting.
Why this most interesting word also addresses, 'waste of time'.
It also refers to being in excellent health, 'fit as a fiddle'.

O forbid that I should fiddle and 'let things burn'
May I always be productive, never given to 'wasting time'.
O to be energetic, useful, caring, and 'fit as a fiddle'.

Lastly, the word 'fiddle' expresses one acting in a subordinate position,
such as, 'play second fiddle'.

Finally! This is the 'fiddle' that I am talking about.
If you have always been on top and driven to be number one or else, then
perhaps the two spot is not for you. If you
said "no" to an offer to be Vice President, or
if you would never show up for the 6th man award, then I doubt that second
fiddle is a good fit for you. Nevertheless, at some
point we all must ask the
Gatorade question, "Is it in you?" It took me a while.

Would you believe me or think less of me if I told you this?
I have no argument with 'second

fiddle', or playing minor parts.

Being a 'back up' doesn't bother me, and I'm okay if I don't start

Surely someone has to be second, and blessed with 'a state of readiness'

A thought entered my mind today on February 12,2014, which is causing me to look back over a period of 50 years. Although I had noticed

prior that my life had fitted into certain patterns, it was never as clear as on

this February day. It's as clear as day. I

don't know if I have ever won first

place in

anything. Should I be concerned about not finishing first? Am I

in some way psychologically challenged because I'm

not disturbed about second place?

Anyway, it doesn't bother me a bit.

Also interesting is that it does appear that I have lived until now in various

capacities, positions, and roles; most of which served in roles of 'second fiddle'.

Surely we should strive to be the best at whatever it is that we do;

But there is absolutely nothing wrong with being the best "You".

There no need to pretend, when I know that I'm not the best shot

Must I thrive to please others by being something I am not?

Or should I struggle unceasingly to discover me by casting lots?

I admit that it was a wide eye opener when I first observed this trend.

And I must say that I started out in life with a broader dream,

a different plan, and more than enough

ambition for one man.

However, I must also say that I am really OK with being

"A Second Fiddle Kind of Guy".

And finally, This much I can also say:

I have learned not to fight the fiddle that best fits me.

Anyway, who can argue with history?

cj02122014

Curtisj Johnson

Seeing God

SEEING GOD

By Curtis Johnson

Some people say that they will not believe unless they see God's face.
Some people say that if God is real, he's not involved in this human race. Some people say that if God exists, why does he allow destruction and waste?

Some day I will see God's face, but for now in this finite shell, I rather not. Some remain unconvinced, but without God, we would have perished by now. Some maintain a lack of faith; I maintain that God's love for them is no less.

Though I have not seen God, yet in another way, I did see him up
close, just the other day.

There is a Christian lady whose home I was in, and I noticed
certain things she had on display.
First, I must add that her house is well organized, well kept, and so
filled with peace, I must say.

There were beautiful and meaningful pictures on her wall.
I noticed three of them staring at me as I walked along the hall.
Their message to me was clear, and if one listens, it'll speak to all.

I saw a picture of water and hills and clouds, so much a part of God's creation. I saw a picture in golden tones with the words, "The Light Of The World". And I saw a picture of creation, The Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo.

No, I did not see God face to face; and what I saw on the
wall will always leave a trace; because in the heart of that Christian lady,
was God's grace.

cj022108

Curtisj Johnson

She Cried

She cried

By Curtis Johnson

In the land where it seems that time stood still.
In the quiet and country land of the rich and the poor.
In the complex land where few were rich, and many were poor.
In the 'dry county' land of illegal corn whiskey and homemade brews.

This was the land of my early childhood,
Where the rich ruled the neighborhood;
And the poor toiled in servant hood.

Perhaps the richest fertile delta soil on the face of the earth;
In the land where cotton was king and in high demand; and everyone, rich and poor, bowed to its every command.

In this humble land where I spent the earliest years of my life;
It was a time before we owned television, telephones, or microwaves.
Mine was a farming community with tin roof and wood framed houses.

People of goodwill resided there with families to love and to provide for. There are many great stories that could be told about many of them. But this story is about a lady I once knew when I was a child.

It amazes me that she came to mind after some 50 years.
She lived far back across the fields, alone with not a care.
She was laughed at and talked about; some were afraid of her.

No one was ever harmed by her, and everyone stayed out of her way.
Even when they avoided her, it was difficult to escape the sound of her voice. Up close or across the fields, we heard her so clearly and sincerely crying, "H o l y! "

She was not sociable, and perhaps even a bit eccentric. Though religious, she was not a Mother Teresa type of lady. I do not remember a smile from her toward anybody for any reason. Was she out of her mind as some suggested? Was she a voice crying in the wilderness? Was she on a divine assignment from God? Was she a saint or holy person? I most assuredly did not know then, and I am presently content to let God be the judge of that. But she had no doubt

about her God being Holy, because with unrelenting commitment, she cried, "H o l y! "

It's clear to me that at some point, God became the center of her every affection. Indeed, she deemed it her mission to proclaim the Holiness of God to a needy people. So without refrain, fear, or hesitation, she simply continued to shout, "H o l y! "

She was unconventional, unsophisticated, unconcerned, and unlike anyone I have ever known. She cared not about what people said, thought, or felt about her. She was fearless, and nothing mattered except her mission. She was called the 'sanctified lady'; but time after time, come rain or come shine, she paid them no mind, and she never ceased or declined. She just cried, "H o l y! "

I never knew her name or whatever became of her, but she was a small framed lady with a strong and deep sounding voice. It's the cry of her voice that brings my eyes to tears. Without apology or regard for public opinion, from her home deep across the corn and cotton fields, we often heard her crying, "H o l y! "

I don't recall anything else she ever said, nor anything else she ever did. But I must say that if she was on a divine assignment, God must have been pleased with her. I suspect that it was a lonely and often cruel assignment causing pain and ridicule. But she bore the pain; she had nothing to gain; her message was clear and plain; she refused to refrain. She certainly was not popular, and I don't remember a friend she ever had. But ever true to her task, from the depths of her soul, she cried, "H o l y! "

09112015

Curtisj Johnson

Sights And Sounds Above

Sights And Sounds Above
By Curtis Johnson

It's late April, and almost May Day
gustily;
And the late Spring rain
Is pouring rather heavily

The wind is blowing

The quietness and the stillness,
Have been disturbed and disrupted.
Some things will go missing;
Yet others will become broken

But before long, the wind flow will lessen,
and the dark

the rain shall dissipate,
dreary rain clouds will disappear

Then, the sun will come with consolation,
And we'll celebrate as it shines upon us gently.
From the watches and warnings of tornadoes,
some prior nights brought us fear and terror

But tonight's sky will be consumed
moon light fair
The darkness shall be forced
compromise;
because the moon will wipe away
rain

with sweet stars and

to bow and

the tears from today's

Yes, the moon will pull back its curtains
On the stage in the sky,
and light up the night

With a sheepish halo, the stars shall join their cosmic team;
And gradually ascending from their recline, the stars shall
radiate with massive sparkles and deep abiding calm.

The breathtaking sights and sounds above have all had their say.
By bedtime, you too are peaceful and poised, as sweet sleep takes you away
cj04302013

Curtisj Johnson

Six Months In 1992

SIX MONTHS IN '92

By Curtis Johnson

I did not know then whether or not it was a very good year, a bad one, or even something in between.

Though the people, place, and time were different, it was rather clear to me, that this picture I had seen.

The year before had ended on a sour note. There were problems both personal and political. There was a clash of wills and the clouding of a vision; but all concerned were given an indication that there was hope. The sun was going to shine again, but not for a while; the moon would brighten and the stars would light up the night again, but it was going to take some time.

There were years of pain when no one gained, as polluted and toxic relations persisted; but now the dogs had begun to bark, and the air grew less divine

There were those who had dreams and visions, and others tossing and turning in nightmares. We smiled through our infrequent dreams; We planned out our visions, and sweated in our nightmares; and when the dogs kept barking, no one slept.

At this juncture of man made messes, it seemed the sun stood still, the moon did not speak, and the stars began to fall.

This internal and civil wound was deep and cancerous, requiring without hesitation or stall, for everyone, to bow on our knees, and upon God to call.

Before we could be kissed by the sun, we had to be spanked by the moon, and the rain of tears had to pour. Too much neglect, too many stones left unturned, too many diseases not treated; we were sick to the very core. The entire body was dramatically and sourly impacted. The head had to be severed, so that the body could survive.

The head was a spiritual leader who was out of control; the body was a church slowly dying deep inside.

In time, the dogs of denials were treated. The sun did shine; the moon lit up

the night, and the bright stars reappeared from their hiding place. In time, we accepted the bitter healing pill that was mixed with unsweetened water. We needed this for our hurting souls, to bring out a smiling face. The pastor moved on; the church is now alive, vibrant, and strong. There are new people, new leaders, new visions, and a fine new pastor. There was a dying of the old in 1992; there was a freshness with the new. Yes, 1992 was a very bad year, and yes, a very good year. cj011208

Curtisj Johnson

Snakes And Mr. Baines

Snakes And Mr. Baines

By Curtis Johnson

"A snake in the grass". Such a powerful and direct metaphor of treachery, is it not?

We strive to avoid such ones believed to be so venomous, like snakes hidden in the grass.

The metaphor is not new, but was used in 37 b.c. by the Roman poet Virgil. It was first recorded in English in 1696 as the title for a book by Charles Leslie.*

Among the first stories ever heard by me involved a snake that was up to no good.

Perhaps from that point, my opinion of snakes was sealed, and I have avoided them if I could.

Growing up in the country, I saw them occasionally, but was not unduly afraid of them.

Because of heavy chemical use on the farm, being bitten by snakes was probably slime.

But neither then nor now, can such chemicals allow for avoidance of "snakes in the grass".

I had lots of friends, lots of freedom, and a good dog name Jack

We hunted for blackberries along the banks of the railroad tracks We roamed the country sides, and played fearlessly in the grassy weeds. We had things to do and places to go, and never any time to worry about snakes.

There's a wild kingdom out there, and may all of god's creatures survive and forever be. But the hissing, crawling, rattling, and the twirling are way out of my comfort zone. Nevertheless, , there's a place for snakes, as long as that place is away from me.

I once saw a snake curled up in a bush.
was startled.

Nearly touching him, I

My boss and I were gardening.
said to me,

With little concern, he
"He's just a chicken snake".

Whether chicken or king, rattles or moccasins;
Whether harmless or causing deadly pain,
distance all the same

I prefer to keep my

My father had a friend who lived just up the road from us in a big old house. He looked mean and sometimes acted the part, but I liked him and thought he was brave. I would say that he was one snake slinging man, and I for sure was his biggest fan.

Back then, if my father's friend Mr. Baines saw a snake, he'd grab it by the tail, sling it around, and pop its head off. But the world has changed; wild life is well protected, and many things have been banned. How sad, is it not, that there is not a ban on "snakes in the grass"? Perhaps the day will come when they can be caught and have, not their heads, but their poisonous venom popped out of them.

Meanwhile, we best keep avoiding such snakes; and I do miss Mr. Baines.
Cj08052015 Note: (*American Heritage Dictionary of idioms by Christine Ammer. Copyright 2003)

Curtisj Johnson

Squirrel Watching

□

Squirrel Watching

By Curtis Johnson

Many are we who live and die, having never taken the time to smell the roses
Or to behold the sometimes breathtaking beauty of a cloud in the sky
Nor even to take a drive to the west side of town, and stare at a sunset

One need not be soft and tender to enjoy the site of a purple rose
Or too busy to stop and gaze at a moving cloud
Nor need you be romantic to enjoy a sunset

One needs to celebrate little creatures of the wild
Before those senior years come creeping upon you

One must dare to decelerate and take note of a squirrel
Or follow the pathway of an ant as he passes your way
Or even find the time to save the life of a yard bug

I am learning what it's like to observe a few note worthy ways,
And sometimes selfish behaviors of squirrels in my back yard.
Like the time that a squirrel took my pecans from my makeshift
Platform after I put them there to dry. You might not call them selfish,
But perhaps you would, if you loved pecans as well as my wife and me

I am not aware of any scientific study on squirrels, but my personal observations
have led me to conclude that they feel entitled to any and every nut their little
hearts desire, without any regards to ownership.

I am forgiving though about the pecans, because I enjoy watching them
Walk and run atop the fence with very little effort; And I am captured As I watch
them chase each other from limb to limb, or race up a palm tree and hide
beneath those protruding stickers

O what large eyes they have, being so uniquely set for exquisite vision! Their
movements are so agile and quick, and they appear shaky and a bit over
sensitive to their surrounding. Perhaps that explains why they seem to be in a

constant state of readiness.

To some extent, I would say that they are also fearless, provided they are able to keep adequate distance from you.

Were I at work 9 to 5 or some other shift, I would not have learned such minor truths about squirrels; And had I not been retired, never would I have seen a squirrel outwit a cat who gave in and walked slowly away

Unlike me, you do not have to wait until retirement. There's a beautiful wild kingdom out there my friend. Let's enjoy it.

Cj04222015

Curtisj Johnson

Step Up And Finish

STEP UP AND FINISH

By Curtis Johnson

Ambitious and dogged determined; a dreamer is he
Never contented to be held in any form of captivity

Never allowing one's self to be treated insignificantly
Like an eagle is he, always longing to be free

Never knowing how far one could go; a visionary is he
The broad and open spaces is where he longs to be

Sometimes going north, looking east, returning south,
But he settles out West, where eagles build their nests

Although strong and steady like an old oak tree,
Yet he roams outside the box; a trail blazer is he

Maybe never gaining the success as he dreamed he would;
But he kept on working, doing the very best he could;
Hoping to finish the race like he knows he should

Zeal and speed are great, as we all agree
But if it's 'a finisher' that you really want to be,
The spirit of dedication, discipline, and endurance is the key

Many there are who may be called to be great starters
Some there is who drop the ball, and are frozen in the middle
Fewer still are those who boldly step up to become great finishers

cj04112014

Curtisj Johnson

Sunday Afternoons

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS

By Curtis Johnson

Mom had a sister not far away, and dad had three sisters, all of which lived within an hour's driving distance. That meant that there were lots of cousins with which to play and grow up. Most of my paternal cousins were older than me, because mom was much younger than daddy. Not a problem, because it meant that we also had second cousins to play with who were more closer to our ages. Being geographically close meant that we could go on nice rides to visit them and enjoy a delicious meal also.

O, I do apologize if you thought this was about 'cupid on a Sunday afternoon'. O, pardon me, but I have had my share of picnics on a Sunday afternoon. My thoughts here are tender ones, about family rides along the country sides; And about getting away for family fellowship and fun, on a Sunday afternoon

Now, back to my story. Where was I? O, speaking of meals. The big food filled table with relatives sitting together enjoying a delicious meal was indeed the highlight of the afternoon. After the meal, the grownups would return to their seats of comfort to sit and talk about this, that, and the other. Occasionally, we kids would stop by to sit and listen for a spell, curious to know what the adults were talking about. And wouldn't you know it? I do not remember a word they said. So off we would go to play outside again.

We did not realize it then, but dad and mom were teaching us a valuable lesson about the vital necessity of family life. They were saying that we should never lose touch with not only our immediate family but also the relatives.

□

Any given Sunday afternoon was the one time that made all this possible. With no work or shopping to be concerned with, and having already been to church, Sunday afternoons were the most blessed times of the week. The memories of love, security, togetherness, and social interaction were born in the quiet country settings of Sunday afternoons.

Cj08282014

Curtisj Johnson

Sweet Inspiration

Sweet Inspiration

Curtis Johnson

As I was taking my daughter home one day, she said to me, 'Until then.'

I was expressing my own frustration by questioning her ability to get along in life without my assistance. I wondered out loud with her about how long it might take for her to be fully emancipated.

Yes, she was on her own with three kids, but it seemed to me that her reliance on my services needed to be curtailed. Her reply indicated to me that she would be utilizing me as long as I was available. I was deeply moved and inspired by those two words. I came to realize in a very personal and close-up way that 'her growth and maturity' was greatly linked to the word 'Then'. Since that moment, I have been more aware that emancipation is a two-way process. I also became more cognicent of allowing the

'Then Time' to come more sooner than later.

Late one night after I had picked him up from work, my oldest son said, 'Dad, I do not need you to be my news reporter'.

Those words were in response to my repeated attempts to 'remind him' of some of his obligations. In a very passionate tone, he was informing me that he was now an adult and no longer required such reminders. On that particular night, I was indeed the one being taught to 'grow up'.

'Dad, you need to losen up a bit and be more flexible'. Such were the reply of my youngest son when I questioned his inability to return straight home after being sent on a mission. He was a new driver, and I was a 'worrier'. Up to that point, I was indeed an A, B, C and 1,2,3 type of person. Since that night, I have learned to 'Chill'; and sometimes I might even skip A and B, or forget about 3 and jump to 7. I thought 'Father knows best'.

03062017

Curtisj Johnson

Sweet Mixture

□

SWEET MIXTURE

By Curtis Johnson

The formula was so simple that even I could follow it and make some little creatures very happy. I read the pamphlet that came in the box with the feeder, and followed directions so as to create the taste that all hummingbirds would love.

□

My wife and I had been gifted with a Humming bird feeder. It sat for several weeks before I decided to give it a shot, and grace my home with the tranquil presence of the red oval feeder. I knew that this back yard addition would be a new source of joy as we relaxed on the enclosed patio.

□

After adding one cup of sugar to four cups of water in a small pot, I sat it on the stove and allowed it to boil. After boiling, I let it cool and put the sugar water in the feeder. I tell you, this senior citizen was filled with excitement, knowing that before long, like the squirrels, birds too would feast in my little back putting it all together and hanging the feeder just outside of our bedroom window, I waited with anticipation for the day that I would personally witness a bird feeding outside our window.

□

I did not count, but it seemed there were many days before I saw my first little hummingbird drinking the sugar water mixture from the feeder. And when I saw my little bird friend drinking, it was absolutely exhilarating and exciting! Who knew that such a small effort could produce such happiness inside of me? Who knew that feeding a bird would open such flood gates of pride within me? Sometimes it's the small things in life that make a man feel like a giant inside. I never knew that such beauty and joy would rain down on a stoic like me, simply from watching a hummingbird drink sweet water. It was pure delight. The pamphlet indicated that each day the hummingbird consumes half its weight in food. What are they doing? Where are they going? One has to assume that they are consuming so much food and expending vast amounts of energy, because they are working so hard at producing things most useful for mankind. Basically that food consists of a diet of nectar from flowers and insects. Oh, and also my sweet mixture.

So much of life is a 'mixture'. There is often a measure of sweet mixtures, but

more often than we like, there are sour, bitter, sad, depressing, and so many other types of mixtures that make up the sum of our lives. These mixtures not only sum up our lives, but they also create a sense of balance. This sense of balance coupled with God's grace enables us to grow and blossom into the best little humming birds that we can be. cj07082013

Curtisj Johnson

Tale Of A Black Widow

A Black Widow's Tale

By Curtis Johnson

It was not quite a 'history repeating itself' event, but it was close. It was the same place and close to the same time but a different day, separated by nearly a year. Like then, I was watering. Like then, there was a spider. Like then, there was a yard bug trapped in a spider's web. However, unlike then, there would be no rescue by me of an entangled bug, but rather a large catch by the spider.

It was Saturday morning at 7: 20. It was the 4th of July, and the fire works would not be blasting away for several hours. However, the yard bug in question would not be around to hear the sounds of patriotic celebrations on this holiday. It appears that this time, I was just a bit late to hear the sounds of "Help me! ".

I walked out my front door to water the flowers. As I bent over to turn on the water faucet, I noticed a most interesting encounter. A Black Widow Spider had begun processing its food supply at the expense of a yard bug. The bug was trapped in the spider's web, and there would be no getting away this time.

After observing this wild life ritual for a minute or two, I went back into the house so that I could record what I saw. When I returned at 7: 30 to continue my observation, I must say that I was surprised that the spider and the bug were no where to be found. Not being educated on the eating ways of spiders, I thought that the spider would consume its prey in the web. Apparently, she had a better location for storage and eating purposes.

As I thought upon this wild life tale, I began to realize that the bug was only slightly smaller than the spider. This meant that there was enough bug food for several days. So the Black Widow was dismantling its prey from the web to tuck it away for future consumption. The bug catch was sufficient enough supply for the whole Black Widow family.

I could not help but recall my similar observation of last August 18th, when I was able to rescue the bug from the trap of the spider. It could have been, but I doubt that it was the same bug. I think perhaps he would have been smarter than to return to the same danger zone. But who knows? However, I have every reason to believe that this was the same Black Widow, who this time, beat me to the bug.

Cj07042015

Curtisj Johnson

That Day Is Gone

From the beginning of my day it appeared that the tasks ahead were not going to be good. It seemed that a day of calm and peace was doomed from the start. The help that was required to do a good job for our customers was in doubt. The helper was due to meet me at an agreed place and time, but did not. I was therefore forced to work fast and furious, and I was rather frustrated.

I finally accepted the fact that this day would not be a piece of cake. In my haste, my mind must have turned to paste, as I chased the clock. Things became a little brighter when my helper showed up later on; and my day did indeed get better.

In the process of the race and the rush, I lost the door key of one of our customers. I had always labored to be the best, and expected the same from our helpers in business. And now, I was embarrassed, and felt lost; I felt like a failure. I had no choice except to call and apologize. I informed my most gracious client, and he said for me not to worry. I worried anyway and wandered back and forth in my mind.

Another day came with the client and his key on my mind. I kept on worrying, because those keys I could not find. I was both worried and embarrassed at the same time.

Our business required being fully trustworthy and reliable. It demanded and required total focus upon the best interest of our customers. We held the keys to their homes; and they needed to feel secure. How could they feel secure if we could not hold on to their door keys? How could my wife and I build a successful business, if I am busy losing keys?

My kind customer called me later that day to inform me that his pool cleaner had found the key. A very heavy load was quickly lifted from my deflated and wearied soul. It was the end of one of the longest 24 hour periods of my life. My spirit was lifted even higher when four little words failed from the lips of our client that will stay with me for a life time.

As I expressed my gratitude of the moment and shared with him the sheer frustration of yesterday, I was wonderfully encouraged and blessed when he said something that I will never forget. In a sincere and calming tone, he said to me, 'That Day is gone'. cj080308 PS; PH

Curtisj Johnson

The Apple Tree

The Apple Tree

By Curtis Johnson

I do not know why, but for the longest time, it has been assumed that I was in the Garden of Eden. I've been seen in gardens, orchards, and the yards of many people, but there is no proof that I was ever in Eden.

But let's just assume that I was indeed the tree realistically known as the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. For heaven's sake, let's just assume that I was an innocent bystander, absorbing nutrients from the garden and producing juicy apples. I was climbed upon by the devil, picked from by Eve, and eaten from by both Adam and Eve.

And can anyone imagine how disrespected I felt and taken for granted?

Remember, neither the devil nor Eve consulted me about apples from me.

I grew and produced the apple that caused God to be displeased, and forced him to drive them from the garden. I'm not proud of this.

Moreover, at least two bites of an apple from my limbs changed the course of history for both nature and all of mankind.

Also remember, there was plenty of blame to go around, but when the punishment was handed down, I was not included.

And remember, I have the knowledge and remember very well, because I was there and witnessed literally everything. I even heard the devil lying to Eve, and if I could talk, I would have rebuked the devil, and advised Eve to slowly walk away.

I didn't know where Adam was, but the least I could have done was to call out saying, "Beware the devil on my limb! ".

I tell you, I was so sad when I heard God's voice telling Adam and Eve about their future lives, their limitations and restrictions.

Adam was to work hard enough to sweat, and Eve would always have pain when she would give birth to their children.

It was painful for me to listen to, and enough to make even a tough apple tree like myself break down and weep. But the best part was when I heard God tell the devil about his punishment. That's when I began to rejoice! Wow! ! I could not shake a leg, but I shook every limb and every bark on my body.

Cj08262015(PS contest;

The Blessing

THE BLESSING

By Curtis Johnson

May the best day of the rest of your life begin today
May all those yesterdays that sought to destroy you be captured
May all your yesterdays that meant you no good be found guilty as charged
May all your sad songs of yesterday that sought to put you down, end today
May any days of terror be arrested and charged for attempting to do you harm
May the eternal judge silence your days of sorrow and sentence them to prison
May they be condemned, locked away and forgotten, never to intimidate you
again
May they be tried and convicted for inflicting pain on a good and decent person
like you
Yes my friend, today is indeed a very good day designed with you in mind for
your rejoicing

Curtisj Johnson

The Christmas Stench

The Christmas Stench

By Curtis Johnson

There was once a minister who moved to San Francisco to pastor a little church. The name of that little church was Emmanuel which means "God with us". There was an atmosphere about that little church that said to strangers or homeless ones, "welcome, come right in." This young pastor had lots of experience with all kinds of people, but on the streets of San Francisco he met someone very special.

One night after the close of the service as the people began to leave for home, a stranger walked up. Tall, thin, hungry, and homeless, the stranger said to the young preacher, "I would like some toast and eggs sunny side up." The pastor was happy to feed the hungry homeless man, but "sunny side up?" The pastor thought that he was asking a bid much. The young minister figured that he should be content with whatever he's given. So the pastor gave the stranger what he had and everybody was happy.

A few days later the man rang the door bell of the parsonage which was on the second floor up from the sanctuary. He said, "this is Reuben." So the pastor and his family got to know Reuben because he came by for food on a regular basis. Sometimes the pastor thought that Reuben came too much and at the wrong time. The minister felt that he was too busy. He had a full-time job, a church to pastor, a wife, and three small kids. Yes, he was a man with a plan. What he didn't have was a 'good attitude about Reuben'. Reuben 101 was not offered at his ministerial school.

The Thanksgiving Holiday came and the family always shared a great feast with their relatives across the bay. After Thanksgiving, the pastor decided that they would invite Reuben for their Christmas Dinner. But wait! The minister thought. "We have small children; Reuben is dirty, smelly, and who knows what might be attached to his body."

So all agreed that Reuben would be given a bath and cleaned up for Christmas Dinner.

We'll find him some cloths and dress him up real good. "But wait! Where will he take this bath?", the young pastor thought. Reuben is dirty, smelly, and who knows what might be attached to his body.

They felt it wouldn't be good for the kids if they bathed him in the parsonage, not to mention the stench.

So they decided to borrow a big tin tub from a church member. So the pastor obtained the tub and helped Reuben take a bath in his office at the church below. Looking back it occurred to that pastor that they never taught him in Bible College how to bath another man in San Francisco.

So in 1984, on Christmas Day, in the city by the Bay, at a church called Emmanuel, upstairs in the parsonage, Reuben had a memorable dinner with the pastor and his family. In the minds of this little family with three children ages 3,7, and 11, they will always remember that Reuben was truly their Emmanuel(God with us) .

Cj121906 P.S. Barb and I recently visited our youngest son Jemuel who was 3 at the time, is now 25. We asked him if he remembered Reuben. He said, "No, but I remember the stench".

Curtisj Johnson

The Church I See

I See A Church

By Curtis Johnson

I lay there, quietly and very much awake, having gotten into bed just a few minutes prior. I looked toward the clock on the dresser, and it was 11: 51 PM. I do not know if it was a vision, but it was clearly not a dream. I was sensitive to my surroundings and did not want to disturb my sleeping wife. So I continued to lie there as words and sentences formed themselves on the pages of my mind. Four leading words, "I See A Church" were the four words and that was the subject of it all. Since I do not know, I will leave its meaning to God; but I was certain that I was to share this with my Pastor first. I believe that it is from God, and now in condensed form, I share it with you. This is what I received:

I see a church whose membership is discovering its gifts and beginning to use them for the glory of God. I see a church with a choir and worship leaders whose primary goal is not to entertain the souls of people, but rather to worship the Almighty God and inspire the spirit of the Body of Christ.

I see a church, not dissected but connected; not scattered but gathered; not divided, devoured, and driven, but devoted and disciplined. I see a church bold and free, gifted and generous, young and old, traditional and contemporary. I see a church busting at its spiritual seams, ready to break forth, ready to reach the stars, and willing to descend to the depths to reach others. I see a church that's not simply hopping along, reaching within, gently nesting and barely hanging on, and waiting for the rapture. No, I see a church powerful, passionate, prosperous, and pure, reaching out to the poor and everyone else, especially to 'the lost' and 'the least of these'.

I see a church infected with an incurable passion for its God, and not for earthly gain.

I see a church infused with an agape love for people, and not with an illusional thirst for power. I see a church ready to be 'caught up' to meet Christ in the air, but is also willing to labor hard, love divinely, live holy, and occupy until "He Comes".

I see a church working and worshiping, running and leaping for joy, preaching and praying and praising God. I see a church singing and shouting, living and loving, caring and crying; caring for those in need and crying with those in pain.

I see a church with pews filled from front to back. I see people filling both services as they flow through the foyer. I see people who talk different, look different, and walk different, being welcomed and embraced by the church. I see 'the new comers' being loved by 'the over comers'. I see the manifestations of the mighty hands of God who has invaded the sanctuary of our hearts. I see the love of God saturating the souls of the saints and breaking down the resisting and defensive walls of sinners. I see a church who has prayed until the revival fires of God have set it ablaze. I see souls being added to its number by the Power of God and not by the polls of people.

I see a church that's bold like a lion, wise like a serpent, frugal like an ant, and harmless like a dove. I see a Church that bows to no one but its God; neither man nor mouse; neither king nor queen; neither president nor potentate, neither judge nor Head of State. She only bows to The King Of Kings And Lord Of Lords. (01132011,11: 51PMPT)

Curtisj Johnson

The Coffee And The Kid

The Kid And The Coffee

By Curtis Johnson

I do not recall which brand of coffee she liked best.
Nor do I remember if she liked it with cream and sugar.
But I am certain that she liked it strong and hot; so hot in fact,
That she could not drink directly from the cup.

A new day had dawned, and it was time for the coffee.
With cup and saucer in hand, her morning moment had arrived.
Not a major historical event, but for me she was making a memory.

After filling the cup, she would slowly pour the steaming hot coffee
Into the saucer. Then, she would gently blow, making it right for sipping.
Perhaps a common practice at the time, and unworthy of anybody's attention.
But with wide-eyed interest in the sipping, a little boy watches and captures a
'magical moment'.

Grandma and the years have passed on, and I suspect that
'Saucer Sipping' no longer exists;
but the captured moment in my memory will never die.
No amount of time, nor changes in the culture of coffee,
Can erase the beautiful snapshot of one treasured moment.

I see a wide-eyed kid who has become a senior citizen.
I see the cup and coffee in my hand, taking sips without a saucer.
And I still see grandma, happy and sipping her soothing hot coffee.
I see the cup, the saucer, the sipping, and the entire magical moment.

Curtisj Johnson

The Dancing Wind

The Dancing wind
by curtisjohnsonsr

I know it's easier to catch a breeze or two, once we have been around the bend
We should take the time to watch the leaves among the trees every now and then
We should take a moment to smell the roses, and observe the motion of the wind

God gave us the beauty of roses, the beast of hurricanes, and the sting of bees
As I was driving along a busy boulevard, I looked up and stared into the trees
I did not see an acorn, a blossom, or a butterfly, nor yet a bird eating seeds

I saw the leaves and the limbs on the trees swaying, and in the wind swinging
I am certain the birds and the bees saw it too, as they were humming and singing
That's when it occurred to me, that it was the wind with whom they were dancing
Although i didn't see the wind itself dancing, i tell you, the wind can dance

When the wind grabs a limb here, blows a flag there,
 or takes charge of a sail boat on a gusty lake; it's dancing
When the wind catches a loaded plane high in the sky,
 forcing man made birds to shake; it's dancing
Though you don't see the wind,
 you ponder the motion of its dancing partners,
And then you can see the perils of its powers,

About the ability of the wind to dance, there is much more to be said of such
There are countless movers and shakers, making mighty tunes with the wind
The waters of the rivers, the lakes, and the high seas, hand in hand,
 making rhythm with the wind

When a dark funnel cloud forms, and starts spinning
 and twisting in the wind, it's dancing,
Sometimes it's a wild dance, but when a beastly hurricane
 stirs violently across the sea, and goes blasting along the
ocean shores,
Creating havoc with the wind, it's dancing
When a gentle breeze, always pleasing, starts turning in the dust,
 making melodies with the wind, it's dancing
When those ocean waters come slowly flowing, and waving

ever so gently to the shores, they are slow dancing with the
wind

When the high seas get wild and windy, the splashing strong waves
get rough and tough, high tides come raging, soaring, and
racing to the shores, it's a wild dance, but they are dancing
with the wind

Listen to the wings flapping and the humming of a bumble bee passing by
The wind doesn't brag; nor does it claim to be the best dancer in the sky
But you might believe it so, if you watch the wings of an eagle flying high
You know that the wind kicks up dust, and sometimes it makes a fuss;
You may be busy, but taking a little time to observe the wind is a must
Believe me it's true; trust me when i say, the wind can dance

Curtisj Johnson

The Garden

The Garden

By Curtis Johnson

Just before I went strolling through Eden in the early morning dew,
The owner of a most beautiful garden gave me a list of things to do

First on the list were all types of animals that I was suppose to name
Little did I know that one of them would change and cause endless pain

Just when I thought that he had given me more than enough to manage
He had more assignments, and my own plans quickly began to vanish

One day he placed me in his quiet and breathtaking garden
So relaxed, I fell asleep and was awakened to a lovely bargain

He had taken a part of me, and made a most exquisite lady
Her presence saturated the garden with unspoken melody

First thing I knew, she caused me to lose what I had gained
She listened to the voice of another, and she was to blame

We were terribly sad, because we were soon evicted from our happy home
We dishonored and displeased the garden's owner, and were afraid, lost, and alone

Though he never ceased to give us compassion, love, and security,
Our lives were altered forever, having lost Eden Garden and our purity
Cj03012007

Curtisj Johnson

The Giant Who Became A Monster

The Giant Who Became A Monster

By Curtis Johnson

So long ago, it had been slowly but surely tucked away.
Though reluctantly at first, it was clearly packed away to stay.
This giant once had a hold on me, but I managed freedom one day.

I was free at last from the power of its sway, as its pain to my soul diminished.
From a young lad through my teens, it flowed and glowed with peace and
promise.

But as I approached my twenties, I found a replacement and that giant at last
was finished.

The years flew rapidly by, and my life took off on a happy path, so meaningful
and so true.

My inner spirit took wings and flew from North to South, to East and lastly,
settled in the West.

Though all in between there were some years embraced by tears, I was never
shackled by fear.

Through it all, it was clear, there was much more in life that gave abundant
reasons to cheer.

God made ways appear where there once was none, and my family so dear was
always near.

The foundation on which I stood was strong; we were not alone; God was there
to help us bare.

But then suddenly from afar, the giant that was tucked away so carefully, and
packed away to stay, reappeared to me. After 35 years, I encountered the giant
that once had a hold on me. She came back from a distance, and I discovered
that she was still a part of me. I had shaken loose from her hold, because it
became clear to me that our future was worlds apart.

But indeed, the giant returned, and I so quickly felt powerless to rebuke the
emotion that would clearly reignite the pain and drive my world insane. Like an
inappropriate magnet, we were being drawn toward each other. Only, not like
before, the giant had no right to me nor I to her. But she kept moving toward
the core of me, and though I recognized and did not fear the giant, still I knew
that she had monstrous qualities detrimental both to me and my family. Many
years ago we both went our separate ways, and we have developed different

minds during the passage of time.

O giant one, may I ask, why did I not hear the sound of your rumbling?

O ancient one, please tell me, why did you depart from your abode?

O mysterious one, may I ask, why did I not see you coming?

O ancient one, for so many years you were out of my life.

O ancient one, I ask, from where did you come?

O ancient one, how did you rise from afar?

To the monster I said, "Prudence demands that we must remain far apart".

To an old friend I said, "No relationship between us must ever be restarted.

So the giant, who became a monster, and I agreed cordially, and I departed.

Only God and time will give me real answers, I suppose.

I do know that one must exercise vigilance and thrive to be
bold. To avoid infiltration, the doors to
my heart must be securely closed.

And all threats to my marriage and family must be swiftly disposed.

cj021608

Curtisj Johnson

The Key

The Key

By Curtis Johnson

Getting late on a wet and cold winter's night, it was a quarter to eleven. We had been enjoying the festive holiday since ten past seven. Deliciously baked cookies were beckoning from the oven, and everyone hoped they would taste like manner from heaven.

All eyes opened wide as someone in the house said, "I would love to rise like fresh homemade bread filled with leaven".

White snow flakes were falling and quickly melting half past eleven. Then someone said, "This old house is quiet".

As we embraced the stillness, the snow turned to rain. Moments later, so unexpectedly, another was smiling and started to explain. All who heard her speak, knew that they nor she would never be the same. "In a little while", she said, "a secret key will appear to unlock my unseen chains, freeing me from anger, fear, hate, hunger, and unbelieving pains". Furthermore, she continued to say, "I was never meant to build my nest and hide in a tall tree. I'll never stop; I'll never look back; I have been ordered to flee".

With gracious eyes, she looked at me, as she tightly held the key. She said, "My wish is granted, and now I'm flying like a bee. Dreams can come true if we keep looking on high. By tomorrow, I'll be soaring like an eagle in the will not be long before I reach my blessed destiny. With this key I did rise, and was set free from my cruel enemy. I have survived! I have arrived! No longer am I in agony! " cj05032015

Curtisj Johnson

The Orchestra And Me

I had a dream last night. It was very concise but interesting. Rather revelatory, but not prophetic in the usual way.

There was a class with a facilitator encouraging input based on a lesson plan provided to the class.

I, a student, was filled with more than a little anxiety as I awaited my turn to weigh in on the class discussion.

Staring at the lesson sheet, I saw pictures only, but no words. The pictures spoke volumes without

uttering a sound, painting and designing picture-perfect cycles of my life. There was a portrait of children playing football that demonstrated my life as one filled with running and stopping, tackling and being tackled, catching but also dropping and fumbling, incomplete passes as well as completed ones. There were touchdowns and more wins than loses. Who could ask for more?

Then there was the picture of a wrestling match, which certainly mirrors the combats, conflicts, and contentions of my life.

Lastly, there was a third portrait that is presently a bit vague to me which signals a life with bits of mystery, and one sometimes touched with a sense of wonder and questions. Even in the vagueness, something tells me that inertia was not an option and survival was mandatory. The three portraits speak to the realization that my life, as might be of yours as well, is an ongoing musical presentation that has never been nor will ever be 'a solo' but rather 'one grand orchestra' designed to serve me until I reach my final purpose. That orchestra is all that connects and combines to make our lives a success. One of the great keys is keeping in step and in tune with God's ordained orchestra. No, it was not prophetic in the forward sense, yet there was an observation that revealed what the present is all about. And there was the reassurance that the future has the potential of being fantastic as I blend in with that grand orchestra provided just for me by God with Christ at the very core of my soul, never leaving or forsaking me. Some dreams are so brief but filled with abiding content.

05102018cj

Curtisj Johnson

The Quest For President

The Quest For President

By Curtis Johnson

O ye of fame, favor, and faith

O ye of power and great intent

O ye of power and endless egos Hear ye what history has spoken

Hear ye well, for we are hoping

Seek not to change our yesterdays

Seek not to sell impossible tomorrows

Sow purity, honesty, wisdom, and truth today Share with us your very best

how and tell your visions of success

Speak of life, liberty, and happiness

Stand boldly, strong, and lead us wisely

If you do these things sincerely

You will become more than just a President

And if your presidential quest should fail

You will have been a patriot, and supremely succeeded

Cj060507

Curtisj Johnson

The Red Jacket

The Red Jacket

By Curtis Johnson

This morning, earlier than normal, you arose for work
This was long before the coffee pot began to perk

I felt you stirring, and after a while, I saw you down the hall
A little later, you quietly informed me of the meaning of it all

I could tell that you needed to run
So I arose to see you off, and to say goodbye
With my eyes, I saw your beauty and brightness
You were shining like today's light in the morning sky

I remember telling before that you look great in bright colors
But today, you looked gorgeous and even a bit exceptional
Had I not paused to observe and pay you a deserving compliment,
I would have been undeserving of you, and worst than a common criminal

I noticed that you were so stunningly dressed in red;
But when I reached for you, I saw more than just red
I embraced you just before you backed out of the garage
Clearly that was when I saw "that something special" about you
Earlier, I had glanced it just before I arose from bed

When I embraced you, I saw close up the style of your hair
I felt your warmth and softness like a breath of fresh air
With a presence so smooth, you looked lovely and sweet to me
And O my, that fitted red jacket you were wearing was a sight to see
cj041510

Curtisj Johnson

The Stealthy Wizard

The Stealthy Wizard
By Curtis Johnson

Who is he who so dastardly continues to displease heaven?
Who is he who failed in his attempt to rule via usurpation?
Who is this timid one who stands in the way of his own
 advancement, but yet unduly influences civilizations?
 Who is he who glides in stealth, who beguiles by fraud,
only to rule on the throne of wickedness?

His earthly reign began through deceit in a garden from a tree.
His operation continues through fear, but resistance compels him to flee.

It's imperative that we give all ears to clearly listen and understand.
He will never disband, and he defies the laws of both God and man.
He is the one of whom we must decide to be either his foe or his fan.
He fell from heaven's heights, and against him we must take our stand.

He is the author of confusion
He is the center of controversy
He is the portrait of contrariness
He is the cowardly and thievish artist of deceit.
He is clever, and the lying master of manipulation.
He never stands toe to toe to fairly fight like a man.

Like swift flying bats from darken caves,
 he descends like scavengers salivating the feast.
He intimidates near and far, and twists the truth.
He rips the innocence to threads like an angry beast.

Fear him not, because he has already been stripped of both his
earthly and heavenly title. In the ultimate struggle for the human soul,
he was defeated and made an open show on top of a hill called Calvary.
He now awaits his ultimate demise, and his final doom is certain.
Cj08132015PS

Curtisj Johnson

The Two Of Us

The Two Of Us

By Curtis Johnson

I can see us now, sitting out back under the fruitless mulberry tree. Whether sitting side by side in lawn or rocking chairs, we are talking, smiling, and occasionally, holding hands.

Our three children are fine and so are the six grand kids. We are grateful to the Lord for their health and general welfare. We did something right, because all three are out and on their own. Hooray! They are emancipated!

Many were the days and years of our lives, with both the joys and the sorrows. But we are here now, both happily retired. Forty years married and together still, no excuses, no regrets.

On the patio or under the canopy, a bird stops by and sings a quick tune and flies away. A squirrel or two climbs from the tree, and hurries across the yard in search of fresh nuts or some other seeds. Peaches and tomatoes, we all get along just fine, not watching the world pass us by, just birds and squirrels instead.

During swell with a minor ache or pain here and there. But not to worry, not much for which to be sorry, and no need to hurry. God has always been good and faithful.

My wife strikes up with an acappella chorus of "He Touched Me", followed by another favorite of "In His Time". Yes, we rejoice, because He is still touching us and making all things beautiful, in His time.

We speak of times, people, places, and events; some recent and others of the distant past. Like when and where we met. Like our beloved pastor who joined us in Holy matrimony. And yes, like the long drive through the night from Chicago to our honeymoon site in North Western Wisconsin.

Moreover, I get romantic and begin to speak of her smile, a head turning and beautiful heart catching smile. The smile that swept me away, compelling a stoic and shy young man of 20 like me to confidently say, "Hello".

We trust that we are wiser now than we were back then and back there. Clearly,

there is no doubt that we are grateful to be growing old together. cj12282012

Curtisj Johnson

The Way

The Way

By Curtis Johnson

One wet and cloudy day I was in the way
Until someone shouted, "get out the way! "

Mr.9 to 5 got real tired just the other day.
He emailed an old friend simply to say;
Someday I am going to find away without delay;
To get away and find a place to hide away.

Mr.9 to 5, who lives up the street not far away,
Said one day, "my house, I would love to give away,
and pack up my things and move far away."
Then Mrs.9 to 5 said, "no way, put him away."

Mr. and Mrs.9 to 5's kids want to all run away.
They want to stay away, because Mr.9 to 5 says,
It's going to be his way or the long highway.
So all the kids got upset one day and ran away.

We all get upset at times and don't know which way.
It helps when someone steps up and points the way.
Jesus said one time, "I'm the way."

I remember

Clj111306

Curtisj Johnson

The Whitworths

THE WHITWORTHS

By Curtis Johnson

It was both a complicated and a simpler place and time
A very noisy and sometimes uncivil place, but very little crime
A place though legally dry, yet filled with moonshine and wine
Where peace and freedom were purchased by everyone staying in line
A place where 'the few' ruled and the masses got further and further behind

Corn, cotton, hay, and soybeans ruled the day from rising to setting sun
People here believed in the Bible, but also cherished their rights of owning a gun
For us kids, the crickets and lightning bugs on dark nights were great sources of fun

Except for a few bad apples, the people I knew were good and decent people
The women were strong, kids well mannered, and the men hard working and worn
The southern social order of the region was well established long before I was born

As I was growing up in the 50's and 60's, my life moved at such slow pace
In this separate and unequal society, I knew several families in the white race
There was one custom required by all those of us who were blessed with a black face
This Jim Crow custom required that we enter by the back door for any care, cause, or case

10As if put in place by God to ease the plight or the pain, there was a most memorable home
to which I must refer. These dear ones were as white as all the rest, but they were different
in both their demeanor and their deeds. When in my middle teens, I was hired to mow their lawn once a week. It's not that they did not have a door in both front and back, but I well remember mostly being encouraged to enter through the front door of their home.

I left home after high school and never saw them again, but till now I have the most pleasant

memory of them. I remember their chickens, hen house, and eggs. I remember their gentleness which even now gives me watery eyes, because they were nice to me in a way that was not popular at the time. I knew them 50 years ago, a man and his wife, both elderly at the time. They were the Whitworths.

Cj10132014

Curtisj Johnson

Total Beauty

Total Beauty

By Curtis Johnson

Like the salt of life, giving flavor and seasoning to souls bland and blind
You are not even aware, but you are like an unhidden city on top of a hill
I see the light of your presence, flashing here and also there, far in the distance

I see you as a star, shining and racing into the blackened night, giving light to many
You have brightened up the pathway in the darkened sky, so that others might clearly see
In the stormy skies of the night, you have created calm and spoken peace into fearful hearts

When daylight darkens and turns gray at noon day, you speak hope into terrorized souls
Then the sun light breaks through the stormy clouds by day, and the moon lights up the night

When voices loud are crying all around, some giving and others searching for direction and guidance,
It is your calming and gentle voice that I hear, pointing the way and leading others out of the shadows

For now we pause; and all is still; all is at peace; nothing missing and nothing broken;

And we with you, calmly take giant leaps across the deep
And now, because of you, we experience total beauty,
in peaceful harmony, and enjoy the sounds of sweet melody

cj03302011

Curtisj Johnson

Train Tracks

The Train Tracks

By Curtis Johnson

I can remember at least four things that we did on train tracks, And one thing that I never did until I was an adult. Firstly, let me tell you what I did not do on a train track, because that is by far the easy part. Seven words will suffice: I never rode a train on one.

We ran up and down the embankment and across the tracks on both sides. We were poor, underprivileged, and deprived of parks and play grounds, but we were blessed with healthy arms and legs. We used them to the fullest.

We jumped off the track onto the side of the embankment just above the creek which was dry most of the time. We were leapers and jumpers and runners; and I tell you, the train tracks contributed much to the fun filled life of this Southern country boy.

Apparently we never feared snakes, because we often hunted for black berries along the railroad tracks. I suppose the taste of mama's pie was far superior to any fear that we had of snakes. Anyway, I suspect the snakes heard us coming, and thought it best that they move on.

We walked the tracks again and again. We competed each other over who could walk the longest without losing their balance and hopping off. This was by far the most fun of all of our "Track endeavors". Of course the trains, seeing us in the distance, would always blow in plenty of time as they approached. We were energetic kids and dare devils on many things, but we never once played games with the trains. We were certain to get out of their way in good order.

One word could describe what walking the tracks taught me, and became most useful in my life. That word is balance.

I have found that the absence of balance in one's life is a major recipe for instability.

I learned "Balance" as a kid walking the rails on a train track. Who Knew?
cj07232015

Curtisj Johnson

True Love

True Love

By Curtis Johnson

The English language does not serve up justice to the word 'Love'.

It allows for an unrestricted usage relative to the object of our affection. "I love my house, and I love my car; I love my dog, and I love my cat".

If the equity in my house rises high enough, I will sell it and buy a better one. If my car no longer performs or I desire to have a new one, I'll sell or trade it. My dog stands by me, and he's my best friend. My cat is quiet and very comforting.

"I love my teachers, and I love my preachers: I love my parents and my siblings too". I love my job, and I love my blue suede shoes; I love my friends and my enemies too". I tell you, there is no end to the things that I love without much distinction.

I love my husband; I love my wife; Now hold on! This is where the red flag must fall. This is where the defining line of true love is drawn in the sand, and here, I take my stand. There are obviously hidden meanings when it comes to "Loving" in the English language.

Why did the English not confer more with the Greeks in matters of the "Love Word"? Would my wife not be much more appreciative of a "Love Word" from me if she knew that my choice of words was different from, let's say those used to describe my affinity for a professional football team? I think yes.

Anyway, I do "LOVE" my wife far more and far longer than I 'love' the raise I received on my job. English is the only language I know. So I am stuck with loving the coffee she made for me, and LOVING her with the same word.

The Greeks seemed to have had a better idea. In the Greek, there are at least three words for "Love". Those words are very relevant at this point. Phileo, Eros, and Agape express three distinct meanings of "Love". Phileo love is a brotherly love from which we get the English word Philadelphia. Eros is a romantic love from which we get the word Erotic. In Christian theology, Agape is the divine love, or God's love for mankind.

And now a final word, especially to all of us who are married. Here is one way to clear everything up and cover all the bases of love. Herein lies a way to not just

hit a home run, but a grand slam.

Say these words to your spouse: "Honey, let me count the ways that I love thee; my dear, believe me when I say, I love thee in the English, and I love thee in the Greek; I Phileo you, because you are my best friend; I Eros you, because you are my only lover; and I Agape you with a love so divine".09292015cj

Curtisj Johnson

True Values

True Values

By Curtis Johnson

I have seen America from sea to shining sea, but have never left its sandy shores. I'm older now, but when younger, I longed to see and light up the world. Now, I do not long to see, but have learned from where I sit, to point, click, and shine the light. If I never behold the seven wonders of the world, I'll not be disappointed.

Wisconsin's rolling hills in America's dairy land; Great people of goodwill are there in a lovely place.

But if I had the choice and the means to buy the largest Dairy farm and produce the finest cheese, would I do it?

Growing up, Chicago was a haven and place of refuge to start afresh and anew; a metropolis of golden opportunity; where many of us Southerners sought financial sanity.

But if I could pay for any high rise along the Magnificent Mile; a beauty which once I could only stare upon; if I could possess such treasure overlooking Lake Michigan, would I?

There's a world class city of hills and pricey real estate; For years, I drove peacefully across that Golden Gate. But there were no roaming fears of shakes and quakes, nor did we complaint of the soothing fog horns. But if I could buy Twin Peaks or purchase Alcatraz Island and build a 'to die for' palace; Would I do it?

If I was the world's richest man, my final answer would be 'no' to all the above and other places of unthinkable beauty. Nay. I would not be excited, impressed, or inspired by any 'eye catchers' of the world.

But I would be most inspired to live as a rich man where I once was born and raised as a poor boy. I would be continually enriched to inspire others who would observe the blessings of one, who once lived simply, labored hard in dusty cotton fields, and lingered long in the oven of the sun. I would be honored to tell the young ones about a senior citizen who once bailed hay, chopped and picked cotton, and pulled corn on hot and humid days that seemed to never end.

Yes. Were I a rich man, I would buy Hugh acres of land, produce marketable

crops, and pay the highest wages. Were I a rich man, I would live and build among the poor and seek to transform a land that was once some of the richest soil on the planet into a community of the greatest value on the planet. It's people would be enriched with a higher standard of living; but also with dignity, integrity, productivity, and goodwill.

Yes. Were I a rich man, I would return to live in the land of rich man, poor man. This land of my birth and early years, was the poorest state in the Union. If there was a middle class in my community, they were few. I think that I would want to live here in memory of my fore parents and all the poor but fine people I knew growing up. I would be honored to help enrich the lives of their descendants.

These would be so lavishly loved, respected, protected, and cared for. These would be freed from the nightmarish stories of their forefathers. These would be compelled to pinch themselves, because for certain, they would think that they were 1021201

Curtisj Johnson

Turn Around

Turn Around

By Curtis Johnson

A few years after you arrived,
like a prodigal, you wouldn't abide
You soon began to run

Now, you must return,
To face the rising sun

It's time to stop and think
about your unruly life
For so long, you have been lonely
You have cried over the pains in your life

Now you think that you cannot rise
above the bad habits, and resist poor advice
There's an extended hand saying, "Yes you can! "

If you could start over, would you make the same choices?
Would you listen to your friends, saying yes to their voices?
Or would you take a stand, just say no, and get up and go?

You are being hounded by the many poor decisions you have made
You have been paying the costly consequences for the last decade

Without delay, the time is now
Only you can make the change
From deep within, your life is pleading to be
rearranged

It matters not how far the past;
A star will shine for you at last
It matters not how deep the pain
You need not worry over who's to blame

Don't continue to the dead end ahead
Use your head; turn around instead

Make the change; you have nothing to lose
and everything to gain, and you'll never be the same

CJ01080

7

Curtisj Johnson

Two Trees In A Forest, A Letter To Friends

Two trees In A Forest

By Curtis Johnson

Hi John and Mary,

A few months ago, I heard that you were contemplating leaving.
And the move was not across town nor another region of the state.
But it was way across country, and at least a thousand miles away

Refusing acceptance, I was at once quickened by an emotion saying, "No! "
Puzzled a bit and in no mood for believing, I simply refused to let you go

In my head I tried to understand, but deep in my heart I was grieving.
Perhaps it's you who do not understand, that it's you we shall be ever needing.
We shall be missing you, and the gifts that you continue to bring into our lives

At first, I must have been looking through dim glasses, or perhaps I simply
refused to open my eyes to see. But things became clearer, as I looked through
the eyes of others. It was then that I realized that some things simply 'must be'.

The rapid pace and the routines of life display the forest to me, and I am
denied the pleasure and the beauty of the tree. But I am truly enriched and
made proud by the sacrifice, that you are making for your family

There are certain things in life that we must come to know.
We observe the lives of others, as well as our own experiences.
If our eyes, ears, and hearts are truly open, we learn how to grow.
When the knowing is deep and solid, we are able to release and let go

We must learn to live with the fact that time indeed changes all things naturally.
And I am coming to understand that the forest will remain and replenish itself.
And I understand that too many of us are busy, with only time to see the forest.
And so we ride and rush on by; we abide and thrive with too little time to see the
tree. But once we have seen the tree, we mark it, and to it our hearts will always
be attached

Although my words fall short of the deeper language of my heart, I will say
this to you: "I see you, and in spite of all the other trees of the forest, You are
the two marked trees, exquisite and distinguished from all the rest".

Farewell my dear friends. You are loved, I shall be missing you.

Cj06022015

Curtisj Johnson

Unforgettable Delta Blue

Unforgettable Delta Blue

Curtis Johnson

Many musical giants sprang from small places in the region of my birth.
I heard some of them live as they played their guitar or harmonica.

Others I heard by way of radio from fancy faraway and distant places.
Their discovered talent had made them famous and taken them away.

They had lived where I live; we walked the same delta dusty roads.
Their stories like mine originated from the cotton fields of Mississippi.

Some of us drank away our misery and pain; others sang and played their pain.
The songs were called 'the blues'; that 's why I call that region Delta Blue.

It is said that fame is fleeting, and I believe it to be true in that sense.
But in another sense, it is also true, because it makes the famous flee.

Away they fled to places North, because they refused captivity by misery.
I knew them from afar, because they became bigger than their place of birth.

Their humble abodes and inhumane experiences often made them sad and blue.
Such experiences were internalized and recycled into great sounds of popular songs.

Yes, from Delta Blue I too did sprang, but I sing neither happy nor sad musical tones.

Moreover, when I hear those home grown sounds from Delta Blue, I understand them.

03112017cj PH; PS

Curtisj Johnson

Unwrap Yourself

UNWRAP YOURSELF

By Curtis Johnson

Have you wandered off the beaten path and blamed someone other than yourself?

Or could it be that you never walked the path of others, because you were alone and left.

Did someone hurt you when you ran from the room in a rush, never telling others how you felt?

Perhaps it's time you take responsibility and say what's on your mind, rather than remain stealth

We were made to be inquisitive and to question, but you never knew, because you never asked

You cry and weep inside while something holds you back, and you surrender, keeping on the mask

Most of us understand being afraid, but it's not good to remain in the closet, not accepting the task

Open your eyes, your ears, and you might just see and hear someone new, and discover it's really you

Even you have yet to know the real you, because like a snapshot unexposed, you are still enclosed in

The shadow of the negatives; You are like a birthday or Christmas present, so beautifully wrapped

Don't hide or be afraid of yourself or your shades of grey, because you reveal your true colors when

You step out into the light of day

You have heard it said of you, "He's quiet and cool", "She's cute and plays by the rules".

But did you hear when they said, "There is a dire need for social tools"?

Perhaps you have allowed others to define the person they think you are

This, you must forbid to be so, and slowly open your closet door

Come on out, show yourself, and have your say

Let's fly a kite where it's windy by the Bay

Come on and unwrap yourself, because you have been put here for a purpose

Unwrap yourself, because no one else can do what you were designed to do
You have been gifted and touched by God's hands of grace
Step out into the world and leave your unique trace
You need not rush, but proceed at your own pace
You are more than a pleasing face in a quiet place
Without you, we will digress as a human race
So unwrap yourself, because you are truly loved

cj04102015

Curtisj Johnson

Valentine Song

Hi Barb:

I was walking to my car across a parking lot
It was early morning, about 6: 45 O Clock

There was no cell phone with ear plugs attached to me,
Nor broadcasting of soothing and melodious sounds
those soft and beautiful tunes in my ears
They brought romantic ideas, but no tinder tears

Yet, I heard

I thought about love, sweet romance, and my wife
About the marital covenant of 43 years of my life

When I returned home, I went straight to the computer
After finding the song on You Tube, I began to listen
It was so refreshing to hear such an ageless love song
It was lovely and calming, as I relaxed with an eternal sound

That song was just what I needed to say to you, my beloved
Though magical, the words are reality based with you in mind

Happy Valentine Barbara
cj2016 (Song, 'It's Impossible')

Curtisj Johnson

We All Know Better

We All know Better

By Curtis Johnson

Your smiling face will often disguise the rapid and tedious race;
But I know better
Your sweet and pleasant demeanor sometimes displays God's grace;
But not always, because at times it leaves a revealing trace.
Others may discern or detect things you cannot hide or erase,
Because they too know better

In the language of baseball, it's good to hit home runs, triples, and doubles.
But we Know better,
Because a good manager will tell you that these endeavors you must not chase
It's simply because, most times, it's better for the team if you just get on first
base

So if you choose, you can say you are swell and all is well

But I know better

You can pretend things are great and wonderful;
better

but you know

I know that you must open up and talk about more
and the weather

than the sports

I know that you must open the windows to your heart
someone you can tell

to at least

Cj01192015

Curtisj Johnson

What I Saw

□

WHAT I SAW

By Curtis Johnson

It was not the first time, nor would it be the last time that I would observe with pleasure that which I am privileged to see only once a year. This time, it was a Sunday morning as I drove to church. There is simply no other day like this one in America and much of the entire world. It was no surprise to me, because it happens every year. It's just that I will never get use to it as long as I live. I'm sure you saw it also in your neighborhood.

The two major grocery stores within a block of each other in my community were closed, one of which is normally opened 24/7. Some service stations and drug stores were opened, and so were the 711 convenient store; but the major shopping centers were all closed. Sundays are generally tamer than other days, but this Sunday morning was more than tame. The massive parking lots were virtually empty, and I do declare here and now that today is truly in a deep state of rest with most of its activities greatly curtailed. I only wish that I had a picture of those empty parking lots.

I must also say that today, the mere absence of commerce, shopping, and the emptiness of the parking lots were in their own way making a declaration of some type. They were speaking with one voice and saying, 'A child was born many years ago, and today we celebrate his birth'!!!

Many people are going to church today who otherwise would not be attending. On today, this group will usually make special efforts to get to church either out of tradition, or because they really do believe that a special child was born, and that he died for a very special purpose. Some of these will renew or change their minds and recommit to going back to church.

Perhaps you were thinking that I saw some miraculous event or sited some angelic occurrence. Maybe you are thinking that I saw some magnanimous random act of kindness. Could it be that you assumed I witnessed a special sun rising or a special cloud formation? No, none of the above was things that caused me to pause, or stare, or become afraid and overwhelmed like the shepherds in the field keeping watch over their sheep by night.

Nevertheless, I must say that I did observe and took note of the miracle that causes commerce to take a break without force. That is scary. I also sited the calming tide of inactivity in my route to church as if the angelic host had spoken pause to the atmosphere. I tell you, the act of kindness that I reflected upon was not in the least at random. No, the entire world had specifically been targeted with an offer to whosoever will. The very solemnity and tranquility of a morning like this has already shown to me that the child has shone brighter than the sun in the hearts of millions, and like a beautiful slow moving cloud, a love haven for him has been formed in the hearts of mankind the world over. The eternal one had demonstrated and provided over two thousand years ago enough love to reach every human being that ever walked on the earth. And today, the world that I witnessed paused and bowed at his feet. Cj12272011

Curtisj Johnson

What If

What If? ?

By Curtis Johnson

An older brother once posed some "What If" questions to me.
My brother is among many who pose all kinds of "What If" questions
such as these:

No God; No devil
No heaven; No hell

We simply bite the dust
No final destiny for any of us

We live; and everyone dies
No hell, so no one fries

We finish the race
There's nothing to face

The world keeps turning
People keep killing and burning

Today, we eat, drink, and be merry
Tomorrow, there's no Mary or Jerry

My brother says to me, "What if you give your whole life to
A God that does not exist? "
I say to my brother, "If it be true that God does not exist,
I would have lost nothing; but if it be true that God does exist,
Then you would have lost everything."

So, my parting questions are: What if he doesn't? What if he does?

cj07172015

Curtisj Johnson

What My Sister Taught Me

What My Sister Taught Me

By Curtis Johnson

A few years ago, one of my younger sisters said to me, "Daddy was a bully";

I never thought of him as such, because I felt he always delivered his threats
I was forced to ponder the possibility as we continued our conversation

We were relating a time involving our older sister who wanted to attend
An innocent Jr. High School Prom event, but daddy said absolutely not
Both mother and my sister pleaded with him, and the discussion became heated

All of us younger kids gathered and looked in upon the show, but daddy said,
"No! "

Then the unthinkable happened. Yes, my sister stood up to dad saying,
"You are wrong! "

We all knew that it would be the end of our sister, and waited for her to be
slapped to the floor.

Had she lost her mind? Did she not know better than to argue with daddy and
risk his wrath?

Had my sister grown tired of our daddy having everything go his way, whether
right or wrong?

I could not imagined what possessed my sister to risk it all; but instantly, she
became my hero

Shocked and awed, we had witnessed the unbelievable when daddy relented and
consented.

The lesson was not one of defiance, but one of courage in the face of fear and
intimidation.

And there was a lesson that our father was also human, and needed to
understand his family

Cj02062015PS; PH

Curtisj Johnson

What My Youngest Son Taught Me

What My Youngest Son Taught Me

My wife worked at a hospital at night, and I did not want her to drive herself. Our youngest son had just gotten his drivers license. So he was very excited about driving her to work. Invariably, after he dropped her off, he would never return straight home.

I could not understand why it took so long for him to return. After he returned one night, I could not resist asking him about his goings and comings. His reply to me was not what I was expecting. He said that he would visit some friends, and then what he said to me went something like this: Dad, you need to be more flexible and do things sometimes that are not a part of the path and plan.

Perhaps I already knew that, but it certainly was not the way I had lived my life. But from that night forward, thanks to my son, I was compelled to reconsider the goings and comings of my life. That night, my youngest son planted the seeds that broke through the hard clods of inflexibility in my life. In so doing, I was freshly renewed and enriched.

cj02142016

Curtisj Johnson

When I Was Young

WHEN I WAS YOUNG

By Curtis Johnson

When I was young, I thought I knew so much about so much, and such and such. When I was young, I knew where I wanted to go, what I wanted to do, why I wanted to do it, and when I wanted to do it; but I didn't know how. When I was young, I saw pain and peril, poverty and ill gotten gain, doom and gloom, greed and bad seed.

When I was young, my mentors were few, my money was short, my mountains were high, my mission was clear, and my mind was made.

When I was young, I looked for more knowledge; I longed for more time, and I hungered for more of I was young, I reached out to build the right relationships with all the right people, in all the right places.

When I was young, I listened a lot, to learn more about things I did not understand; and I laughed far less than I should have.

When I was young, I spoke and taught a lot; I saw and heard a lot; I worked too much, too hard, too long, and rested far less than I should have. When I was young, I wanted to touch all the bases, all the time, here and there and everywhere, with everybody, about I was young, I wanted to run and rush from place to place, to gain an audience and take away other people's pain, and share from face to face, matters of facts and faith and God, with the human race.

When I was young, I prayed and sought, and served and strove, and sat with saints, to listen for wisdom, to learn how to live, as the Master taught. When I was young, my spirit paced back and forth, to find my place, to discover my purpose, to occupy my space, to see a God that's real, to discover where my life was suppose to I was young, I found peace and power, love to care, courage to share, grace to help, hope to cope, faith to go forward, and forgiveness from God.

I'm older now, and know so little; but I laugh more now; I listen more intensely, still learning more eagerly; I'm still looking, and I see so much more; I'm still longing, still reaching, and still touching. Yes, I'm older now, and I know how to be more patient; I pace less, have little stress; I rush no more, for haste is waste; I'm getting closer to the end of my mission, and I'm not worried about what I'm missing. I'm a lot older now, and I still bow before my Lord; I still love the Lord my God, I still say wow of His Vast Domain; and I'm forever needful of God's Mercy and Eternal Grace. cj080107

Curtisj Johnson

Where I Want To Go

Where I Want To Go

□ Curtis Johnson

I have often thought I would like to visit Amish country

I have heard of a unique brand and portrait of
people there In spite

of their simple way of life, no one goes hungry

It would be great to visit before I'm too old and
gray to care

I know that my chosen spot is not a fancy far away place

However, it is not about places or
things, but about people

It's about down shifting my hasty life and slowing the pace

Perhaps I'll observe a tree harvest of slow
dripping maple

May I be taken back to a different time, a different land

Who knows? Perhaps I won't even like it; but I just might

Perhaps I will see things more clearly and better
understand Maybe I will discern

more clearly between what's wrong or right

I want to walk and worship with them; and feel what life is like among the
Amish.

I know it's not much to ask, but that's what I would like to do
before I'm finished.

03092017

Curtisj Johnson

Who Is She

Who Is She?

By Curtis Johnson

No. She's not simply your good and nice neighbor next door.
O, it's true that she's caring and giving, but there's so much more.
And she overflows with peace and security, with a lot more in store.
No. She's not some strange lady that accidentally washed upon the sandy shore.
Yes. She was sent by God to lift up a standard that too few have ever known before.

She's one BRAVE FIGHTING SOLDIER, and is among the tried and true, and faithful few.

She's a MOUNTAIN like Whitney or Everest, rising strong and tall above the carefree landscape, as she watches and warns of dangers to all who will listen.

She's an OCEAN, whose waves keep on coming to shore, to seed the sand,
And recede, only to return again and again.

She's a FAITHFUL RIVER, flowing with force and favor,
Bringing life and energy to everyone.

She's a WELL BUILT DAM, who refuses to be broken or breached,
As she releases faith, hope, and love to those down stream.

She's a WALL OF DEFENSE, protecting and shielding from all enemies.

She's a MIGHTY WARRIOR, pulling down strongholds with the prayer
weapons of her warfare.

She's a LANDMARK, displaying the value of things unchangeable
And unmovable.

Yes. My friend Ellen is a GENTLE STREAM, flowing quietly,
With waters so divinely pure and crystal clear.

Cj09072013 (My wife and I have a terminally ill friend name Ellen.
This is my tribute to a very special person.)

Winter On Display

Winter On Display

By Curtis Johnson

There I stood, quietly and still, with a frozen stare through my patio door.
The awesome portrait of life, so dominating most of the year, has lost its lure.
This time, it's not the forest that I behold, but it's the sleeping trees that I see.
Much of life's greenery will change, rearrange, and suffer pain; none will disagree.

In my back yard, there stands a fence laced and hidden, in a fading sea of green.
Gone is the luster of summer and the colors of fall, but the season is subtle and serene.

Refusing to go unnoticed is a plant, clustered with tiny blossoms of purple flowers.

Bright and beaming yellow blossoms, undefeated and undisturbed, adorn a bush.

The bush, filled with life on this January morn, blends cheerfully with nature's orchestra.

The weather is gloomy and overcast, but no one bothered to tell my colorful back yard friends.

A tree, showing no resemblance to its surroundings, is bare, stripped, and naked.
She pleads for nothing, and does not appear to be wounded, sick, or diseased.
The once green foliage of summer that turn brown last fall, was now gone.
It's umbrella of shade baring leaves is now a haven of rest for the birds.

Come Spring, life will upsurge, and green leaves of shade will emerge.
But for now, the full ensemble of life must await the new season.

cj01302011

Curtisj Johnson

Wisely Waiting

Wisely Waiting

By Curtis Johnson

I love to tell the story about the time I answered the phone several years ago. It was a new experience for me when I said, "Hello", and the caller said, "Please hold".

My immediate reaction was, "Did she really call me and put me on hold? Unbelievable! "

My next step was to gladly hang up, because I wasn't in the market for their product or service.

Like all the racing rats in this fast pace world, you and I are sometimes cast to and fro.

We soon come to realize that there are many and variant wings that flow and blow.

So learning to wait and be wise, we dare not venture recklessly and make haste.

May we dare to be patient and in the "know".

There's that certain wind on which our wings must go.

Like an eagle on a high mountain cliff who wants to fly higher and soar without a care.

Like the master of the sky who has known for so long to be keen and much aware.

His mother eagle taught him long ago that his wings alone cannot take him there.

We will, like our eagle friend, wisely wait and debate;

We will, through the eagle's eye gate, hesitate and negotiate.

Yes, that certain wind under girds his wings and takes him away.

cj08132015

Curtisj Johnson

Within His Eyes

Within His Eyes
Curtis Johnson

I saw nor felt any degree of love;
but rather an arresting darkness and hate.

Captured by the moment, I needed an escape;
but I remained, not knowing which path to take.

More than 40 years ago, I encountered the eyes of deceit
His eyes seemed to cast me into a mild freeze, rendering defeat

Some eyes defy any sense of comfort and promote fear
Such eyes intimidate and seem to wrap themselves around you, and

Like the eyes of a demon, forcing one to stand down and question
I felt a cloud of darkness within his eyes, and slowly backed away

I had little experience with such encounters, as I studied for my degree.
One older and stronger than me, took command, calming that human sea.

Fast forward to an older me when I encountered one with such serenity.
Within his eyes, there were no showers nor thoughts of scary beasts.

His eyes glowed with gentleness and sparkled with light and love.
I shall not forget such eyes of a human, so harmless as a little dove.
10142016 cj PH

Curtisj Johnson

Wonderment (Fiction)

A SHIP NAME WONDERMENT (Fiction)

By Curtis Johnson, Sr.

On the East side of the Bay as I walked along the cargo port area near the San Francisco Bay, I watched the ships coming and going in the Bay and under the Big Bay Bridge. I also observed other ships from the Far East and around the world as they sailed through the Golden Gate under the Golden Gate Bridge.

It was a beautiful day just past noon and the heavy fog had lifted. I came upon the most beautiful and stunning site of a huge ship. It was a masterpiece, a man made marvel in craftsmanship. This ship had given its services with multiple voyages out to sea from port to port around the world. But now this masterful water vessel was no longer needed. It sat there as if it were lonely and abandoned.

When I saw it in its breath taking splendor, I immediately fell in love with it. But I thought that it was such a waste for a ship like that to be sitting when everything about that ship said, "I long to be out to sea". What made it all the more sad was the fact that I already had my own ship, and I also really wanted this one too. It appeared to be a dream ship.

I then felt that if I even considered abandoning my own ship, it would surely be a sin. But to be mesmerized by this docked ship was more than I could take. In the real world, I concluded that there was nothing that I could do. However, in my imagination I could take this ship and sail away to sea.

So in my imagination, I purchased this 'wonder on the waters' and became the pilot of this retired ship. I renamed it "Wonderment".

I boarded "wonderment" and in due time we set sail to sea, not knowing where in this world we would come to rest. I was not forsaking my own ship, but somehow I felt that I could satisfy some of the sea longings of "Wonderment" as well as some of my own desires of fulfilling yet unfinished dreams. It appeared that I still had inside of me a sense of need for renewal and fresh adventure.

So I took my newly purchased ship far out to sea. I thought that perhaps at some point at some port, I would find another ship lover who would love "Wonderment" as much as I did, and give it all the care and attention that it deserved and needed.

Days turned into weeks, and weeks turned into months, but I was determined to find a new home for "Wonderment". Of course "Wonderment" was an inanimate vessel. But during this period of longing and searching, it was as if I and "Wonderment" had become Forever Friends.

And so it was that after eight long months, I found a new owner for my new found friend. I tell you, I was both sad and happy for "Wonderment". I was extremely happy that I had found someone to appreciate this great ship's beauty and under utilized abilities. But I was more than a little sad because I could not make "Wonderment" a ship of my very own. With teary eyes as I watched "Wonderment" sail away into a brave new world of its very own, I waved goodbye to my Forever Friend. I didn't know that I would ever see "Wonderment" again. But without a doubt, I knew that in my heart and in my mind, "Wonderment" would forever be an intricate part of me.

Cj052908 4: 41 PM PT

Curtisj Johnson

Words Of Life

WORDS OF LIFE

By Curtis Johnson, Sr.

These powerful words from heaven above sounding so strong and so bold
These eternal words from God almighty hidden so deep within my soul
These living words of God that prophets long ago recorded on a scroll

These words shall be remembered in the distant future, I have been told
These words energized by God's Spirit will keep you from growing cold
These words shall still be in my heart and on my lips as I grow old

These words shall be ever alive and strong, causing me never to fold
These words will be uppermost in my mind, causing me to reach my goal
These words alone shall enable me to have my name written on heaven's roll

cj051808

Curtisj Johnson

Yes Day

Yes Day

By Curtis Johnson

Our lives are so filled with negatives that we often forget about the positives
We have convinced ourselves that bad news sells, and good news is a side story
at best

As parents, we love our children dearly, but we tend to skill them in the art of
negativity
We think that we are more experienced and know what is in the best interest of
our loved ones
We tend to forget that our children are fearless and innocent; We are scared and
guilty as charged

Returning to our car from shopping with my daughter, unexpectedly she said to
me, "Daddy,
it seems you always say no. Why don't we create a day where you say yes". I
had never heard of such a day, but I told her that I thought it was a good idea to
try. I do not remember my first "Yes" of the "Yes Day", but I doubt that she
was shy about the things that she wanted to happen.

Yes, I do remember experimenting with "Yes Day", but I am rather certain that
the day didn't last for long. She must have thought, "This must be heaven", and
I must have thought, "This must be wrong".

My little girl was 11 or 12 when she made such a challenging suggestion to me,
and I shall never forget that day as we walked down the street from the Sears
store in San Francisco

No. I never succeeded in having a complete "Yes Day", but my little Pam taught
me a valuable lesson. Sometimes when my loved ones are thinking or expecting
a "No", I will surprise them with a "Yes"

No, I do not say "Yes" as often as I would like, but "Yes" is on my tongue a little
bit more
It's simply because, my little girl showed me nearly 30 years ago a little bit more
of what we are living for

cj07192007

Curtisj Johnson