





### ON THE COVER

Congregant Mark Cummings' facial expression reflects his lighter side after sharing some of his experiences with law enforcement during these challenging times.

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### **GODLY ENDURANCE**

ndurance is not a word that conjures up feelings of joy. Endurance causes us to think of hardship and the struggle that is involved in

overcoming it.

Endurance does not speak of giving up, of losing faith, of throwing in the towel. Endurance speaks of victory ultimately coming. Endurance is a characteristic that is vitally needed in these times of difficulty brought on by COVID-19.

Joseph's life highlights what is means to endure through the tough times until victory comes. Christians often falter because

they think God will shield them from tough times eliminating the need of having to endure. One of the truths that leaps from the pages of Joseph's life is this – through all he endured God was with him. God won't shield you but He will never leave you.

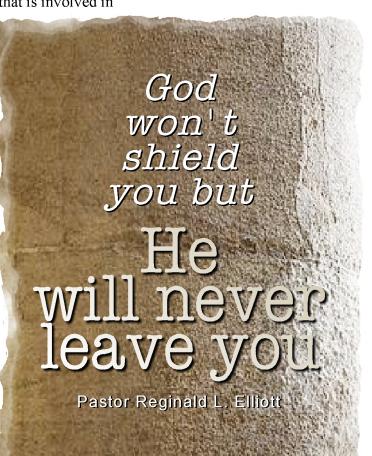
Consider Joseph's life. It was God who was giving

him the dreams and it was also God who allowed him to be sold by his brothers and end up in an

> Egyptian jail. God being with him did not shield him from trouble nor eliminate the need for him to endure, i.e. to go through difficult times. Yet we must remind ourselves that through all his difficult times, God never left him.

These are difficult times and many have been affected adversely in a number of ways – loss of job, loss of health, feeling isolated, and the list goes on. In the midst of your life experience, however you have been affected

by the present situation, as a believer remember this – God is with you even as He was with Joseph. Victory did not come to Joseph quickly, he endured. Imagine what it must have been like for a seventeen-year old boy to be transported to a strange land, knowing no one, not knowing the language...imagine. But God was with him and doubtlessly God helped him to endure.



## AN ENDURING LIFESTYLE CAROLYNFLEMING, RN

f there was a time period in the lives of most of us when endurance and perseverance were paramount to our survival it is now. Endurance requires that we continue onward even in the face of difficulty. Despite what we are currently experiencing, we are assured that the goodness and mercy of God endures forever.

Many of us are spending more time at home to minimize exposure. Staying at home can illicit the

temptation to snack more on junk food. Also, we are more prone to sit in front of computers and watch TV. What can we do to maintain our health during this pandemic?

**Stay Active:** Gyms may not be open, or you may not be comfortable going. Develop a daily exercise regime of 15-30 minutes at home or a brisk walk or jog outside in uncrowded areas.

**Sleep:** Good sleep is essential to overall health. The amount of sleep needed varies by individuals, but the CDC recommends adults between 18-60 years of age get

seven or more hours of sleep per night.

**Diet and Nutrition:** "Emotional eating" due to stress is an issue during this pandemic. Practice some self-discipline and make sure your diet includes dark leafy vegetables, fruit, fiber and other nutritious foods instead of large amounts of processed snacks and fast food.



**Self-Care:** Promotes overall wellness. Prayer and meditation as well as quality time spent with family are important to maintain.

Health Care Maintenance: There has been some reluctance for people to seek medical attention due to the fear of going to a hospital or doctor's office because of COVID-19. There are many telehealth resources to access for medical advice. Do not hesitate to seek help if needed and make sure to keep your prescriptions filled for chronic conditions.

**Stay Connected:** Even though you may not be able to visit loved ones and friends, take advantage of technology through facetime, streaming, zoom, and other sources that will help you cope with the stress and anxiety of social isolation that may have been created due to COVID-19.

The aforementioned are suggestions to help us improve resilience and mental health and, therefore, endure during COVID-19. Continue to follow CDC guidelines: social distancing, wearing masks, frequent handwashing and avoiding group gatherings. And above all, trust God's protection and thank Him daily for His covering over your family and friends.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** It is with great pleasure I share the happy news of the newest addition to the Fleming Family with the arrival of their grandson, Qunicy Peyton Jackson, born on July 9, 2020 to

their daughter, Lauren Jackson and her husband, Garrett. Carolyn and Allen were thankful for FaceTime technology that enabled them to better endure the 6-week wait time brought on by COVID-19 before the emotional first-time meeting with their new little grandson.



LIBRARY HOURS 10:00am - 11:00am

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his season in time has been difficult, to say the least. On a personal level it has hit home and tried my spirit in ways I could not have imagined. Three of my very dear friends died within weeks of each other, completely unexpected and not from the pandemic. This took the wind out of my sail and knocked me to my knees. I have been to more funerals in the past three months than I have ever been to in my entire life.

I found myself going into a dark space -checking on my friends and relatives more than I normally would, and praying that no one else would die. Fear had started to get a grip on me. Many times I felt like putting the covers over my head and not getting out of bed. But responsibility always trumped feeling sorry for one's self in our household, so I got up, put one foot in front of the other and continued the race, we call life.

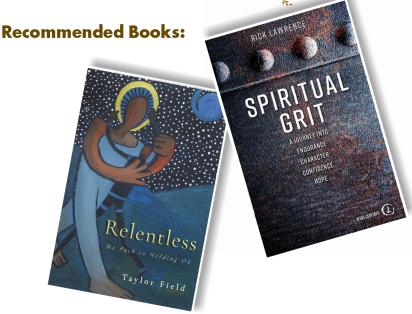
When worry and stress seem to have you in a strangle hold, take those thoughts captive and submit them to Christ. Don't dwell on them. "Take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Through it all, I *never* lost my faith. This I know; it was nothing but God's grace and mercy that lifted me out of my despair. I called on the Holy Spirit and He lifted me. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). Each time I meditate on the Word, study the Word, come out to Bible Study and go to church, I felt my spirit growing stronger in the Lord. That which was planted in me came forth, I reached for it and God gave me "Godly Endurance". God gave me His

endurance...God gave me Godly Spiritual Endurance. "He that endured to the end is the one that will be saved" (Matthew 24:13).

I am reminded of Timothy (2 Timothy 2:8-13). Paul is encouraging Timothy to stay the course in the face of hardships, trials, tribulations, and his timid and non-confrontational personality. Paul is exhorting Timothy to have "Godly Endurance" and not compromise the Gospel, even under severe pressure. "Consider it pure joy; my brother when you face trials of all kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing" (James 1:2-4).

Holy patience is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, helping us to bear what we believe is the unbearable. Jesus patiently bore our sins, even unto death on the cross. He took the sins of the entire world because of His Love for us. Surely we can cultivate "Godly Endurance for His name's sake and glory.



# CHRISTIAN COMEDY CORNER CAROLYNJACKSON COLLINDUNLAP

# REMEMBER "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine"

Proverbs 17:22 (KJV)

**Godly Endurance:** An example of godly endurance is to sit in a *lon-n-n-ng* church service.



A Real Pushover: John, a very wealthy man decided to give a party with a challenge and reward. He had alligators put into the pool and announced that anyone that could swim across the pool unharmed would receive a generous reward. As the party was in full swing, there was much commotion around the pool area. There was Tom swimming, splashing, and kicking, as others cheered him on, he

reached the other side. John said that took godly endurance getting pass those alligators. You have won the reward and I'll throw in anything else you want within reason. Gasping for breath Tom said, "Keep the reward, I want the name of the person who pushed me in!"



This One "Floors Me": You know what the rug

said to the floor?



Blesssings 2U, Sister Carolyn Jackson Brother Collin Dunlap

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# Dent Waste Yeary Whitemess

ne morning, unexpectedly, the Lord led me to a program called, "Discovering the Jewish Jesus." It is taught by a Rabbi named Kirt Schneider. Rabbi Schneider taught a lesson called "Don't Waste Your Wilderness". This teaching was a valuable blessing to my spirit.

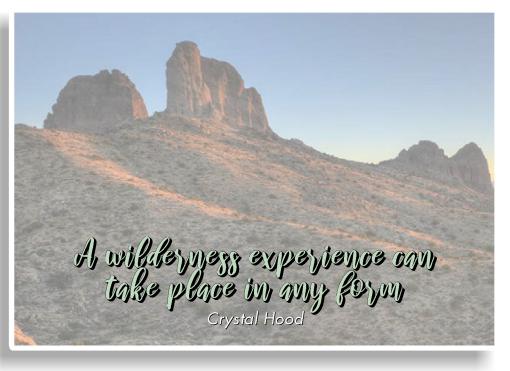
Although this lesson was originally aired in 2016, I found it very powerful and relevant for today's times. In the lesson Rabbi Schneider talked about the Israelites' wilderness experience and stated that it was during this moment that they were able to truly witness the glory of God. He explained that there is a pattern of wilderness experiences that we go through and that it is necessary in order for us to truly see God's power.

A wilderness experience can take place in any form such as the loss of a job, loved one, finances or home. These occasions allow the full manifestation and glory of God to be seen. When the Israelites were in the wilderness they daily had God's glory shown to them. They experienced the pillar of cloud by day and the tower of fire by night. They were given manna from heaven, quail, and water. They had shelter and protection. When God moved they moved. When God stayed they stayed. Regardless of how long God stayed or moved they followed. They were completely dependent upon Him.

The Israelites are a prophetic image of the Church. Paul stated in his letter to the Corinthians that "...these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction..." (1 Corinthians 10:11, NASB). In order for us to better understand our own wilderness moments we need to examine God's purpose in leading the Israelites through their journey.

"You must carefully follow every commandment I am giving you today, so that you may live and multiply, and enter and possess the land that the LORD swore to give your fathers. Remember that these forty years the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness, so that He might humble you and test you in order to know what was in your heart..." (Deuteronomy 8:1-2, BSB).

It was part of God's plan to take Israel through this challenge because there were lessons that God needed to teach Israel that they could only learn through a wilderness experience. The Lord tells Israel specifically that He led them this way in order to humble them. We are humbled by going through difficulty that causes us to depend completely on the Lord. We are in a situation that only by the grace, strength and wisdom of God will we be able to overcome.



Paul told of his own wilderness experience when he pleaded with God about a thorn in his flesh. "Three

times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness...' [Paul then stated], "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest on" (2 Corinthians 12:8-9, BSB). Paul learned that the power of God dwells in us when we are weak.

God led Israel through this experience in order that they may be humbled and by being humbled they may be perfected in what He had for them. God was preparing them to enter into the promise land. God leads us through our various wilderness experiences in order to shape us and prepare us to enter into the promise land.

It is vital that at these times we do not waste this experience, but rejoice. During these difficulties God gives us something that we could

not receive at easy times. In every situation that God humbles us He provides the opportunity for us to be fortified with Godly endurance.

James stated, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you encounter trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Allow perseverance to finish its work, so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." (James 1:2-4, BSB).

**Reference:** The three part series by Rabbi Schneider, "Don't Waste Your Wilderness" can be watched on YouTube. I pray that it blesses you fully and completely according to God's will. The YouTube links are below:

### Introduction:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4C7blKA1ME

### It's Necessary:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eq7g-7Vmvfc&t=1376s

### It's Only a Season:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9faM1rLYPDw



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he words of a classic song say, "When you walk through a storm hold your head up high and don't be afraid of the dark... walk on with hope in your heart and you'll never walk alone." You don't need to be a prophet to recognize that the whole earth is and will be going through a series of unprecedented "storms" for some time to come. Individuals and governments alike are mobilizing to be able to do this one thing, endure with hope.

Hope is delivered in many different forms. Mark Cummings, a 25-year Maryland State trooper and at the time of this interview the Chief of Police for Capitol Heights MD, believes God has blessed him with the needed skills for communities to endure many of these social storms. Mark and I spoke recently.

**Linwood Childs (LC):** With the extra pressures of Covid-19, job losses, and racial tension, society's problems can be hard to navigate. How do you handle the competing groups within the same community you serve?

Mark Cummings (MC): Take the July 4th weekend. At the beginning of the night, I was out in the neighborhood chit-chatting with people who were having cook-outs, asking if they got the flyers about fireworks. Sparklers, or small things are

okay, but no explosives, nothing shooting in the air. Fireworks are basically illegal in Prince George's County and basically in all of Maryland. Most people adhere to that, yet later that evening, everything was going off and we had to confiscate things.

LC: Was it a long night?

**MC:** No, it wasn't an easy night, but wasn't really a long night, which was good. Just around midnight to 1:00 a.m. things quieted down.

**LC:** Were you out in full force?

MC: No. Two years ago, we were. I had all hands-on deck, we saturated the entire town, confiscating fireworks. This year I thought they got the message and I cut the numbers...I was partly right. I should have had more officers out there. The reason we lessened the numbers was because of the present national climate. I didn't want it to seem like we were just jumping on the town's citizens.

**LC:** Trust, but verify.

**MC:** Yes, there you go!

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ask
the Lord
to send

OF PEACE

before

**SPIRIT** 

me

**MARK CUMMINGS** 

Chief of Police Capitol Heights, MD







**LC:** You hold a place in society that would clearly be considered frontline, sometimes the only line of order, and you have to act. Describe the challenge of keeping the public perception of being the "good guys" in some of the no-win situations you face?

MC: Of course, we know as police officers we are sworn to serve and protect, for me, the citizens of Maryland. One of the things I teach the command staff when they come in is this Guardian –vs-Warrior theory. So as police officers we say, we're here to protect and serve. But are we here in the capacity as guardians where we're protecting the peace of the citizens, or are we warriors where we are taking a warrior, or almost a militaristic mentality — attempting to stop every bad thing that happens?

When I became Chief of Police of Capitol Heights, when I arrived there, they typically wore military style uniforms. They had on the BBUs the battle-ready gear, drop holsters and blackened polo shirts. I asked them if they were assigned to SWAT??? I was in Special Ops in the Maryland State Troopers and that's what we wore.

**LC:** (Side Note: Mark would be tapped to serve when it was too severe for the regular troopers or officers.)

MC: So I asked them, if this is your daily uniform, then what signal are we sending the citizens? If we are protectors then our job is not to threaten and make them feel intimidated. Our job is to be professional. So, I changed their uniforms immediately, I put them in more professional uniforms. They had to wear their gray trousers with the stripe down the side, blue shirts and ties. Did they like it? No, not at all!

Society and policing have pushed law enforcement to a place where they are more militaristic, more warrior-like than guardian-like. If you are a guardian, that means you're going to get out and communicate with the citizens, create some dialog so we know what your troubles are. Then I can address that area of protection that's needed.

**LC:** You focus on service?

MC: Yes. I stress the fact that I'm out here for you the people, whatever you need in terms of criminality, with some skew toward social support against social injustice. But for the most part, I'm going to ensure that you're protected and that your rights and peace are preserved. That is us saying we're serving. As guardians, which I prefer officers see themselves as, we are protecting the citizens. Warrior-style policing I disagree with.

Unfortunately, in society were have moved to that.



**LC:** I'm curious about how you developed this perspective.

**MC:** When I grew up... I grew up in Washington, DC, they had the Officer-Friendly programs. Boys and Girls Clubs which were run by the Metro-Police Department. When they came to our schools, they had what was called the Side-by-Side Bands. These were officers who played instruments, they put on an entire show for us, even bringing in their trained dogs to show off. It left a positive impression on the children. Of course, after

that you thought you wanted to be a

police officer.

**LC:** What's happening currently?

**MC:** Capitol Heights wants to me to initiate a community-policing program. I have personally started doing some of it, riding with some officers, walking through neighborhoods and talking with business owners. I called it CCC,

(not Columbia Community Church!), Chief's Community Council held on every 2nd Wednesday evening. I started this before Covid-19 and organized an open forum each month, in the neighborhood to present, discuss and work on their community problems.

I never said, "Tell me your issues and I'll solve them". Rather, tell me what you're having issues with and we'll solve it together. Together we're going to have a dialog and come up with a solution to mitigate the problem. Because I want you involved, it's not just about enforcement. It's about protecting, serving and a dialogue that's going back and forth.

**LC:** Are the responsibilities of law enforcement

shifting? Are they in conflict with our society?

**MC:** You talk about responsibility shifting! They are shifting because society has put more things on the police officer's plate. They want us to be social workers, counselors for any domestic issues -- they want us to fix it. We have to become a mitigator with what's going on. They want me to go to

suicidal individuals and talk them down. They want us to respond to every drug addict who is high on PCP. Society has to decide what it is they truly want.

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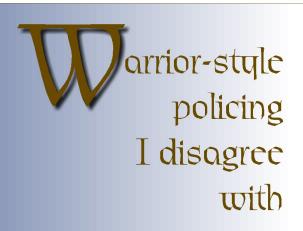
**LC:** This was asked nationally, but I would like to ask you your professional opinion. Do you think that local and state law enforcement have been accurately portrayed in the news outlets?

MC: This is so funny. I did my masters on how the media has strained the relationship between our police and the society. I recall how my professor kept me focused on limiting the work to around 50-pages. He knew if I pursued some of the rabbit holes it would easily blossom into 75 pages. So, we worked on staying focused and I was able to top out at 42 pages.

**LC:** This was your thesis topic?

MC: Yes. The reason why police offers are portrayed adversely...I'm not saying that things don't happen and that things don't go wrong, they do! Also I'm not talking about the George Floyd case. Those guys should be in jail. What they did was illegal. He killed a man on camera. We don't teach "knees-over-necks" nor any of that. Once you are handcuffed whatever the threat is, it should be over. You don't punch a guy in handcuffs, I have seen it done.

Floyd was not resisting arrest nor was he up for some major crime. He reportedly passed a counterfeit \$20 bill. So, I would approach him, tell him he has been accused of passing a counterfeit \$20 bill. I have the phony bill, and I tell him, "I need you to turn around and I need to place you



### **MARK CUMMINGS**

Chief of Police Capitol Heights

Photo Credit: JHU Public Safety Leadership Association Facebook Post





under arrest." Once I put the handcuffs on, it's done. We're going to get you on your butt, get you ready to take the ride to the precinct. That's it.

**LC:** Of course, that seems simple and straight forward enough.

MC: In Georgia, where you had a man who recently got shot. He fell asleep...no he was drunk and passed out while going through a restaurant's drive-thru. When the officers got on the scene, they actually woke him up, told him to move to the side, and they got him up. There was still no fighting going on, everything was proceeding as it was supposed to. They conducted a field sobriety test and the man fails. Now he had a criminal past and he did *not* want to go back to jail.

So, he started to resist being arrested, violently. Here is where officers can get themselves because they were trying to do everything that they could not to really hurt the man. They tased him once, but that didn't work. The tasers now look like real guns. So, not only was this man resisting arrest, but he was winning! I've looked at the film on this, and I said, "You've got to be kidding". He grabbed what he thought was the officer's weapon, started running with it and turned to fire it. That's when he got shot.

**LC:** [Side Note: Mark was an instructor for several years, teaching officer survivor skills.]

MC: As an officer instructor, that was what we call a good shoot. Where I say they did fail, was to get him medical attention and start life-saving measures once they shot him. We have an obligation to try to save your life once we shoot you, stop the bleeding, and call for additional medical attention.

**LC:** The media portrayed this as if this was just another officer exhibiting excessive force.

**MC:** The media continually sensationalizes everything that police officers do. They tend only to find those stories where police officers are acting badly. So, let's give you a ratio. So, let's say there are Imillion police officers in this country, there are probably more. Out of that million, say 1,000 *are* doing what the media portrays they're doing. That is less than one percent.

**LC:** That type of proportion is never portrayed.

MC: My officers have at least 30 contacts with the public per shift. That's hundreds of encounters every day. No incidents occurred, even though we make arrest and go on volatile calls. But the media

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finds that one time, out of this officer's career that he has to act and all of a sudden, he's a villain. If an officer has to go into arrest-mode it's not pretty, especially if they are resisting arrest.

**LC:** Does that explain some of the resistance to wearing body cameras?

MC: In part. What studies have found out is that most officers get exonerated because of the body camera. When someone makes an accusation, we take their statement and then review the film. Most of the time the accusation never happened. As a state trooper we had dash cams, not body cams. Even though you tell them that they are audibly and visually being recorded, some will still accuse a trooper of things that *never* happened. They obviously did not listen or forgot what the trooper said because it's all on film. Then, I have to respond to these folks who make these false accusations. There is no effective recourse to these false accusations.

**LC:** I have often sensed that the media has over sensationalized many things.

MC: I have friends in the media. They have told me, "Mark, I'm sorry to tell you but, we're selling news -- if it bleeds it reads." That's a bad thing to

have to tell that to someone. Unfortunately, they sell to the appetite of the society.

**LC:** What would you really like others to know about law enforcement?

**MC:** They're human. We are recruiting from what we have in society. So whatever personality they were that's what we recruit. That's why we're having the issues we have. We are recruiting from the Gen Z'ers. As a group they have had much less socialization because they have spent most of their time in front of a computer screen and online. Not a lot of actual socialization via actual human interactions. Most of our officer recruitment is coming from rural or suburban areas, who have this low level of socialization. I grew up in Washington DC and I got into several scrapes or scuffles growing up. Most of our recruits have not been in any type of fights or conflicts. And now as officers when they are actually confronted, they think their very lives are being threatened. Instead of reaching for some other part of their utility belt, for less lethal options, they reach for their weapon. Society is asking them to make a less than 2-second decision over life and death.

I was speaking to a group of officials, suggesting they attend a police-run academy course for officers to see what it's like to be a police officer. You know those shoot/no-shoot testing



scenarios, with our computer simulations? The citizens that take them all fail, almost 9.5 out of 10 fail the shoot/no-shoot test. There you have to make a life and death decision over *yourself*. If you respond too quickly you can kill an innocent citizen, and if too slowly then you could allow yourself to be shot or killed. Remember the case when a guy got shot and all he had was a cell-phone in his hand?

The first thing I'd say to the young officers I used to teach is this is not TV. Not TJ Hooker. This is not a western where you stand in the middle of the road and draw your gun like the Wild West. What is the first thing you are supposed to do? You find cover, get behind something and then you can give your orders: "Let me see your hands", "Drop your weapons", "What do you have", etc. If don't do that, then the first thing you're going to do is shoot, because you don't know what's in his hand. But, if you're behind cover, then you actually have time to challenge him. There is so much in that question you're asking until it could take me down so many rabbit holes. The main thing is that these folks [young officers] are human beings and are going to respond like you would respond if you were in that position.

LC: Race relations are at a fever pitch now. How can law enforcement help race relations in

meaningful ways when they may have the same problems within their ranks?

MC: Race relations. What you're seeing is for the most part accurate. This is where we have an issue in law enforcement. Law enforcement has been majority white even back to the 1960s and the state police is starting to go backwards. When I first came to the state police, there were 200, almost 300 blacks, between 5-10%. Now maybe 100. It's always been historically white and we're recruiting from the rural and suburban areas, so what racial make-up is that? We don't have people of color coming from their own neighborhoods willing to do police work because nobody likes the police.

I send my guys to a class called Implied Bias. What you find out is that you have biases that you don't know you have. We all do. We're trying to bring them to the forefront so you can better understand how to deal with other people, people of color, *[people with disabilities]*, or any group. You need to know why you feel the way you feel about that person.

Recall my previous statement about where the majority of our recruits are coming from. These have never been around black people, their only knowledge of them is what they see on TV or portrayed in the media. They get out there and they're thinking that this is the person that I am (Continued on Page 17)



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dealing with; not knowing that is not what really happens in the real world. And for those few that act that way, if you just talk to them, instead of yelling at them they will respond a lot better.

Indeed, there is strain on law enforcement and the only way to dial that down is to have a certain conversation. Police officers are going to have talk to the people they are policing. The main thing is that you have to get officers out of their cars. If you're just driving, the windows rolled up, not waiving at people, barely talking to anyone then you don't know them and they don't know you. But if you're out and walking down the street, then somebody is going to say something to you and you to them. Where I grew up I learned how to talk to people. I would get out walk around and talk to people. Police have to learn to talk to people and also know what they can and cannot arrest people for.

**LC:** People assume [police officers] know.

MC: Yeah, many [police officers] don't know the law that well. If the officer cannot correctly interpret the law, he is going to fumble and make mistakes and hinder race relations. I have blacks and whites challenge me with this. When you're working in mainly inner-city areas, you're probably going to arrest more black people because that is who you are mostly likely to encounter. When I worked in St. Mary's county, I locked up a more white people than you can shake a stick at. I probably beat a couple too. Those were the ones that I

was coming into contact with the most.

In 2018 a black trooper shot this guy out on the west coast. This shows the difference between smaller law enforcement agencies and larger ones. Now most of the things you hear about are coming from smaller municipalities like mine. In the major jurisdictions they're having different issues. So, the trooper warned him several times; drop your weapon; don't make me shoot you; don't make me kill you. The guy came at the trooper anyway and the trooper shot him. What did the people say later? When the bystanders were interviewed later (and these were black people) they said the officer warned him several times. The officer gave orders from behind cover until the guy said I'm coming behind your cover to get you.

People will often say, well he only had a knife. I can take you to my training facility and show you how quickly someone can cover 7 feet and do serious damage with a knife before you can unholster your gun. Did you know this? Our vests are bullet-proof not knife-proof. A knife can go right through them. Did you know that?

LC: No!

**MC:** If an officer gets stabbed, then he is stabbed; no protection from the vests.

LC: The phrase, "speaking truth to power" has again been employed to call for new discussions on persistent problems. It is a call for leadership and policymakers



may have lost sight of and need to refocus upon? Have you been involved in the Black Lives Matter movement?

MC: Although I have not been directly involved with the policing of the Black Lives Matter protests, my fraternity participated in the protests. I have this to say, it comes down to good leadership in general, and specifically to this issue -- good leaders must have emotional intelligence. That's a word that is underused. At some point, officers and leadership in all areas, have to put themselves in the shoes of those they are leading. Ask, why are they not getting what I'm laying down? And why are they saying that I'm not getting what I am complaining about?

That's were a dialog starts. We have to see each other's point of view. This is where leadership is starting to fail. Unfortunately, the infamous words, from Number 45, just empowered police, "Just lock them up, if you hit his head on the way down in the car, then so be it". Many officers took this as marching orders, a blank check if you please, to do whatever you felt you needed to.

In the sixties, when Dr King held a peaceful protest, and the officers turned the hoses and dogs on us, if it were not for the media no one would know of the atrocities that were going on and what police were getting away with. Yet in this day and age, they have sensationalized it to change the dialog, by showing rogue officers here and there. This is not helping society because you're painting all officers with a broad brush

thereby fueling what you see going on. That's the issue, it's not being done to help society. They are trying to paint every officer with racism. I have close white officers, that try their best not to lock up black people, even to the point where I have had to show up on the scene and direct the officer to make the arrest because the circumstances more than justified it. They were not eager to lock them up. In that case the car reeked with marijuana and the search uncovered large amounts of cocaine.

There is an obligation on *both* sides. Unfortunately, we are sending the wrong message to our kids and young people. If adults are willing to police their children then we would not have to. The public tends to want a pretty, a quiet, and a peaceful arrest process. But if the person is unwilling to comply and you don't do anything and walk away then you're accused of not doing your job. But if I have to enter into a confrontation with this guy, then I'm accused of being overly aggressive. You have to use an appropriate level of force when they willfully refuse a lawful order. You can't have it both ways, as a society you have to figure out what you really want.

You can say speak truth to power but it's a dialog; you have to give me something and I have to give you something. It's not a one-way conversation.

**LC:** You have to be honest.

**MC:** Yes! Here's often what has happens. A gang banger is shot and dies, not shot by police but by one of *(Continued on Page 19)* 



their own. Then everyone comes together for a church funeral and talk about how *good* Johnny was. What, is this the same guy?! You knew him as Johnny, I knew him as Pookie, and he was just as bad as the one that shot and killed him. Be honest.

LC: Sadly true. But with all the protests in the air, are policymakers more willing to listen than before the protests?

MC: Yes, emotional intelligence. At some point you have to bring peace back to society. You have to refocus, to understand why people are doing what they are doing. Officers need to know their own biases.

**LC:** What is the main thing that you pray for at work or for work?

**MC:** First, when I'm going to work in the morning, I put on the whole armor of the Lord Jesus Christ. I plead the blood of Jesus from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet, I ask the Lord to send the spirit of peace before me! Wherever I am let the spirit of peace dwell also. I pray for the protection of my officers and the area we're serving in. This is *spiritual* warfare.

LC: Exactly!!

MC: People think it's just bad kids or people acting out, but it not, it's a lot more. Prayer was removed from our schools, homosexuality and more, because we are more accepting of these spirits. It's the spirits acting out, they

are saying in essence, I'm going to do what *I want*. I *know* that I'm not going to be able to successfully confront these spirits if I'm not praying. I have to get spiritual warfare in there, suited up in my spiritual warfare. This way my officers nor myself are getting hurt.

**LC:** Sometimes the damage is not physical.

MC: Exactly.

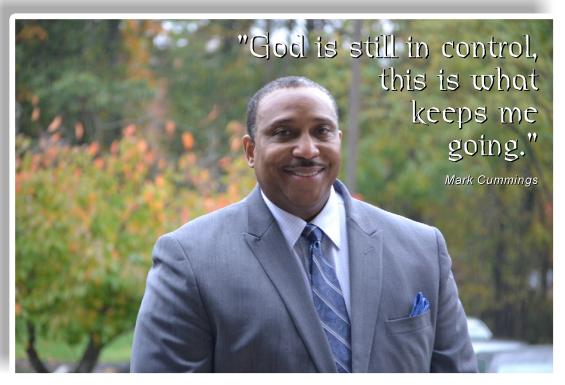
LC: What are the things for which you are most grateful

about work?

MC: The things that I am most grateful for is that we've all returned home safely, both citizen and officer. No one, not citizen or officer was harmed.

LC: Faith goes everywhere. It is clear to almost all, that you are called upon to do the extraordinary in an unusually difficult period in our history. How does your faith in God support your never-ending challenges to

is knowing that we're in the last times. Meaning that *God* is in control. I was recently sharing with someone, and our pastor preaches this also: It does not matter who is in office, these things are still going to happen. It doesn't matter. If you understand that God is still in control, this is what keeps me going. It's a difficult time and we know it, but God's will is going to *have* to be played out. This gives me peace through the day.



protect segments of a community that are increasingly at odds with you?

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taying the course is a phrase usually used in war and battle meaning to pursue a goal regardless of any obstacles or criticism. Often we have to stay the course in prayer because the answer may not come as quickly as we'd like. We have to endure in prayer. What does this actually mean? Well, in our case our pursuit is a relationship with God; it is a pursuit of godliness through prevailing prayer.

Scripture tells us in Acts 13:22 that David was a man after God's own heart. God even said that David will do anything that He asks him to do. God could say this about David because David pursued Him through prayer, which in turned allowed him to enjoy a fruitful relationship with God.

Let's look at another scripture that relates to endurance. Luke 18:1 indicates that Jesus told His disciples a parable about the "persistent widow" to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

I find the first line of this verse very encouraging, particularly because it precedes the famous story of the "persistent widow" who approached a judge for justice from her adversary. The evil judge declined her, but she was so persistent that he gave in and gave her what she wanted. The widow never gave up, she had godly endurance. Instead of the widow asking God why He isn't doing something, I believe she chose to have faith that God was doing something and that is why she kept going back to the judge for the answer she knew God had already provided her. She displayed godly endurance even when it seemed like God had forgotten about her.

How many times have we given up because we didn't get the answer we prayed for? We didn't stick it out. We gave up instead of having godly endurance.

I know we all have stories like this — stories of disappointment in prayer. We tried, we put our faith in God, but nothing seemed to change. We just got the wind knocked out of us. But, Jesus urged us not to give up. He said in verse 1, "always pray and not give up." So here's what I encourage you to do when you grow weary:

**Don't' complain** that prayer doesn't work. Instead, do as David did in Psalms 13:5-6 "<u>But</u> I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me."

**Anchor ourselves** in what is true: our God is good.

I'll share a couple of other stories with you to build your endurance in prayer. The prophet Elijah persistently prayed for rain, and by the seventh time of prostrating himself in prayer, the heavy downpour came (1 King 18:41-45). Moses prayed at the top of the hill while Joshua led the Israelites to fight the Amalekites (Exodus 17:10-13). While Joshua did the physical fighting, Moses did the spiritual fighting. When Moses prayed, Joshua won; when Moses stopped praying, Joshua lost. This demonstrates a direct relationship between the spirit world and the natural world, so again I urge you do not give up. Keep praying.

Let Us Pray...Heavenly Father, teach us to pray like You and like the persistent widow, Moses, and Elijah so that we won't walk away from unanswered prayer. Help us to realize that there is nothing satan would love more than for us to give up praying. When we grow weary direct us back to the Psalms so that when our hearts' cry "how long, O Lord", we like the psalmist can say, "I trust in Your unfailing love" for You have been good to me. Amen.

### new release by: Crystal A. Zlood

Crystal A. Hood

Crystal A. Hood

The Sin Crouching at Your Door

### Aligning Yourself with God THE SIN CROUCHING AT YOUR DOOR

This title may be purchased on Amazon.com in paperback and Kindle.

If you have read any of Crystal Hood's works please bear in mind that a review or rating on the feedback/star system used to rate books on Amazon is the way other people across the United States and in other countries are able to find the books during a general search of a particular genre.

Her fourth and final book in the series: **Aligning Yourself with God - Love God Style**will be released at the end of December 2020





# Dear Valued Reader,

If you have never participated in Operation Christmas Child (OCC) before it is our prayer that you will consider filling a shoe box this holiday season, and if you have done so in the past we "thank you" and it is our prayer that you will continue! When children reach the age of 14 they are no longer allowed to receive shoe boxes and so this powerful witnessing tool may never reach children beyond that age and, consequently, limits their opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

# Boys Ages 10-14 receive the least amount of shoe boxes

Therefore, we ask and strongly encourage our congregation and readers to focus on filling this year's shoe boxes for that demographic so that the Gospel of Jesus Christ may reach these young men before they age out of the OCC program.

For ideas on what to pack visit:

https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/what-goes-in-my-shoebox-suggestions/

### **COVID-19 UPDATES**

**Build a Shoebox Online:** 

https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/?utm\_source=buildonline&utm\_medium=direct&ver=1.2

"At this time there are no changes as to what can and can't be packed in shoebox gifts this year.

We encourage you to continue visiting this page for the latest updates" at:

https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/covid-19

# Complimentary shoe boxes may be picked up at the display table in the Hospitality Room while supplies last!

Janet and I are looking forward to joining our resources with all of you in a unified effort to bless children around the world and share the Good News of Jesus Christ with them and their families!

In Love & In Christ... Mike & Janet Spry



#### **COLUMBIA COMMUNITY CHURCH**

8516 Thomas Williams Way P.O. Box 2292 Columbia, MD 21045

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

### **EVERY SUNDAY:**

10:00 AM Church School (All Ages)11:00 AM Meditation & Prayer11:15 AM Morning Worship

### COMMUNION SERVICES

1st Sunday of Every Month

### **EVERY WEDNESDAY:**

Noon-Day Prayer 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Noon-Day Bible Study 12:00 PM - 01:00 PM Evening Prayer 07:30 PM - 08:00 PM Evening Bible Study 08:00 PM - 09:00 PM

1st & 3rd WEDNESDAYS:

Youth Bible Study 07:00 PM - 08:00 PM

### GENERAL INFORMATION

### **CARE & COMFORT MINISTRY**

Sis. Linda M. Byrd: 410-313-9673 / Sis. Donna Givhan / 410-997-3276 columbiamdcareandcomfort@gmail.com

### **CHURCH CONTACTS**

Phone: 410-465-7040 / Fax: 410-465-0943 Church Website: www.columbiaccmd.org

### **CHURCH LIBRARY**

Open Every Sunday 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM and after service until 2:00 PM