

# 8-Year-Old Preacher: 'God's Got My Back'

In Matthew 19:14, Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Most likely, Jesus is very proud of 8-year-old Samuel Green of Jackson, Miss., who at his tender age is bringing the kingdom of heaven to the masses. An active member of Berean Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Jackson, Green has been preaching for more than two years and has been the subject of many newspaper articles and national news broadcast segments, bringing the glory of the Lord through the media.

NBC's *Today* hosts Kathie Lee Gifford and Hoda Kotb interviewed Green about the confidence he displays in the pulpit.

"I really don't get nervous because I know God has my back," Green said.

Green delivered his first live sermon in Birmingham, Ala., at the age of 6 in May 2011. That's when his mother, Joann, first realized her son's gift.

"I was very surprised—my husband and I were very surprised just to hear Samuel preach without any notes or anything," she told Gifford and Kotb on *Today*.

Green's mentor, Beverly Coleman, has worked with Green since he was just over a year old.

"He was brought to me at 13 months. By 18 months, I knew he was gifted academically," Coleman said on *Today*.

Green has his own website, , and his own local television show, *The Simple Truth*, which airs from 11 to 11:30 a.m. on Jackson, Miss., Comcast channel 18.

Green also is a member of the New Heights Seventh-day Adventist church choir.

Green told Gifford and Kotb that he plans to continue to deliver sermons and wants to become a pediatrician.

“I want to grow up to be a preacher and a doctor that takes care of children,” he said.

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## **Sam Hinn Getting Re-Ordained 8 Months After Sexual Misconduct**

Less than eight months after Sam Hinn stepped down from the pulpit of his Orlando-area church amid a sexual scandal, the younger brother of evangelist Benny Hinn is being publicly re-ordained on Sunday.

Bishop Mark Chironna, founder and senior pastor of Church on the Living Edge in Longwood, Fla., sent out a phone message to the church’s members this week announcing that Hinn would be “re-ordained” by Chironna, Archbishop Lonnie Langston and six other bishops. The message indicated that Langston, founder of Tabernacle Bible College and Seminary, would be installing Hinn as a professor at the Tampa, Fla., school.

Neither Chironna nor Langston returned Charisma News’ calls seeking comment on the re-ordination, but the message from Chironna’s ministry said:

“This Sunday evening at 7:30, Bishop Lonnie Langston and a presbytery of 6 other pastors and bishops, including myself,

are gonna be re-ordaining Pastor Sam Hinn at Church on the Living Edge. And I want to encourage as many of you that love Pastor Sam to come out and be a part of that.

“I’ve been part of the presbytery team in Pastor Sam’s journey in the last number of months with everything that’s gone on—and the bishops and pastors are all in hearty agreement that it’s time to re-ordain Pastor Sam as he’s gonna be working with the Tabernacle Bible College and Seminary as a professor. And we want to affirm that he’s doing well and he certainly is, and that his family is doing well and they certainly are.

“And so Sunday night is gonna be a very special night—if you have any relationship at all with Pastor Sam, I know that he’d be blessed if you would be a part of that. So, I wanna let everyone know that’s a special—special night; and we would love for you to join us and be part of that on Sunday evening at 7:30.”

Earlier this year, Hinn admitted to allowing himself “to be drawn into a relationship that has caused much hurt and pain to my wife and family. I have repented and asked for and received their forgiveness. Scripture states that I must bring forth the fruit of repentance if I expect to be restored.”

Hinn served as pastor of the Gathering Place Worship Center in Sanford, Fla., which holds two morning services attended by about 300 people each, plus a small Arabic service on Sunday afternoon. When Hinn admitted to an immoral relationship that lasted more than four years, the church board said, “Pastor Sam Hinn has been relieved of all ministry responsibilities and as the official board, we have outlined a restoration process. This process includes pastoral and professional counseling, as well as a mandatory time out of ministry so that all fractures in both his personal and family life may be healed.”

Ron Johnson, pastor of One Church (Assembly of God) in nearby Longwood, was asked by the Gathering Place's church board to oversee the restoration process and did so for the first three months. After a disagreement over restoration stipulations, however, Johnson became estranged from the process. He told Charisma News he does not agree with timing of the re-ordination and will be making a public statement through this platform in the coming days.

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## **Alveda King: Would MLK Boycott Florida After Zimmerman Trial?**

In light of all the discussions occurring now about boycotting the state of Florida because of the unrest over the Martin/Zimmerman verdict, I believe that certainly it is appropriate to express, in a peaceful and nonviolent manner, the concerns that are being raised.

In regards to the 1960s, people are asking me, "Would this Florida boycott have been an appropriate target back then?" Certainly in the 20th century, boycotts were the order of that day, so possibly yes, that could have happened back then. Of course I cannot say whether Martin Luther King Jr. would have led such a march since he's not here, but according to his own words, we can believe he would have opposed stereotyping and profiling. Yet we can also believe he would be calling for peaceful, nonviolent resolution as well as reconciliation of the one human race.

In his April 16, 1968, "Letter from Birmingham Jail," he wrote, "We who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the

creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive.”

He said in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, “I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant.”

Along these lines, there is a movement that is occurring at the same time as the Florida boycott, and that is the reconciliation rallies rising up in Florida at this time led by people of good will in every ethnic group.

*Charisma* magazine’s Steve Strang, one of the organizers of the restoration meetings in central Florida, had this to say in a recent column: “The George Zimmerman acquittal a week ago has brought to the surface racial divides in our country, and it’s time for believers in Jesus to get involved because the best answers are spiritual, available to us through fervent prayer. There must be forgiveness, and mercy always triumphs over justice.”

The organizers are planning on taking the reconciliation rallies across the country, saying, pretty much, that mercy overrides human judgment.

We know the judgment that acquitted George Zimmerman was man’s judgment based on man’s law—the “stand your ground” law. Admittedly, there are some problems with that law. However, God’s justice does contain mercy. We are required to do justice, love mercy and walk upright and humbly before God.

So I’m asking that there be a reconciliation message for Florida and for the country—that we must reconcile as one blood, one human race. Truly we are one human race, and indeed we can be brothers and sisters and not combat and fight each other and kill each other.

“We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together

as fools," King said in a speech in St. Louis on March 22, 1964.

This nation needs healing. It needs a message of reconciliation. As a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I am appealing to all concerned to please consider reconciliation as a major part of the message that must be delivered.

Now, does there need to be justice for Trayvon? I happen to believe there should be. What form will that justice take? The answer has yet to be revealed.

I was truly saddened to hear that some have besmirched the memory of Trayvon by relegating him to the category of being labeled a thug with the implication that he deserves to be dead. Our children have a right to be born, to dream and to see their dreams come true. When they get off track, they should be firmly yet lovingly corrected. If we teach them and love them, they can live and not die!

This is a very tragic situation. Trayvon's dreams went to his grave with him. I'm praying that God will have the final word on all of this.

I'm praying for the Martins. I'm praying for the Zimmermans. I'm praying for all concerned.

Reconciliation is in order!

Many celebrity protestors are quietly pro-life. It would be good if they would speak to sanctity of life from conception till natural death in their efforts. Finally, in every conflict let us strongly urge repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation over boycotts.

**Alveda C. King** is the daughter of the late civil-rights activist the Rev. A.D. King and niece of Martin Luther King Jr. She is also a civil rights and pro-life activist, as well

as director of the African-American outreach for Priests for Life. [Click here to visit her blog.](#)

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## Transgender Agenda Finds 'Father Knows Best'-Style Poster Child

In a disturbing book that celebrates the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender agenda, a transgender woman is promoting the chronicles of her transition from father to mother.

Jennifer Finney Boylan, the father-turned-mother of two boys, describes her journey in the just-released *Stuck in the Middle With You: A Memoir of Parenting in Three Genders*. She's getting plenty of mainstream media attention for her work. She has appeared on MSNBC, CNN, *The Today Show* and *Rock Center With Brian Williams* on NBC. The liberal media is essentially positioning her as a *Father Knows Best* who has wit and wisdom for today's parents. She may indeed have wit and wisdom, but it saddens me to see her exploited by the LGBT agenda.

Although Boylan is thrilled about the march toward equality for gays and lesbians, she's not satisfied because, as she told Reuters, "the giddiness around marriage equality can sometimes overshadow the fact that transgender people are really suffering in this country and are vulnerable to violence and suicide. ... It's important for people to remember that for transgender people, the fight for equality is a long way off."

**Transgender Suicide Risks Are Real**

The risk of harassment and suicide among transgender people is well documented—and it's heartbreaking. According to a Case Western Reserve University study, 36 percent of LGBT undergrad students have experienced harassment within the past year. That harassment usually comes in the form of derogatory remarks (89 percent).

More disturbing, two out of every three transgender individuals have considered suicide, according to a study conducted by Ryan J. Testa of the Center for LGBTQ Evidence-Based Applied Research. (By comparison, the suicide rate of the general population ranges from between 6 percent and 12 percent.) And 26.3 percent of trans women and 30.4 percent of trans men reported a history of suicide attempts.

But I submit to you that celebrating the transgender lifestyle isn't the answer to end transgender suicidal thoughts—or suicide attempts. And Sy Rogers agrees with me. I know because I once heard Rogers speak at a church. He has been open with his struggles as a transsexual in order to set other captives free, and his story touched my heart—and touches the hearts of many transsexuals seeking deliverance from the suicidal thoughts that torment them.

Rogers explains, "It wasn't that my parents didn't love me, but a series of tragic circumstances deprived me of a normal childhood. I was born the only child of a disintegrating middle-class couple. Due to my mother's alcoholism, she was often incapable of nurturing and protecting me. As a result, I was sexually molested at age three by a man who was a 'friend' of the family. Although the molestation didn't make me a homosexual, it left me deeply confused, fearful of men, and imprinted with a powerful, perverted knowledge of sexuality."

Rogers goes on to discuss how he lived a double life. He was active in church, school and Boy Scouts. He played football and went out for track and the swim team. But he felt like a failure as a boy and begged God to change him into a woman. He

later joined the military, where he says some men sought him out for secret encounters. Eventually, he decided to take the plunge—to set out on the journey to surgically become a woman.

### **Encountering His Deliverer**

Ultimately, it was an encounter with God that delivered Rogers from the transsexual lifestyle. He never had the sexual reassignment surgery. And although he admits he continued to struggle in many respects after handing his life over to God, he is today happily married to a beautiful woman, and God is using him mightily to speak the truth in love about the bondage of gender identity issues.

“In over a decade of living this challenging yet satisfying new life, I’ve had a unique opportunity to travel the world and minister to the sexually broken,” he says. “I have met many hundreds—if not thousands—of men and women who have overcome various sexual disorders. Many more are ‘in process of recovery’—a phrase I believe accurately describes God’s ongoing triumph in the lives of those reconciled to Him. As has often been said, ‘God gets glory out of the *process*—not just the end *result*.’ Becoming a Christian is just the beginning!”

So, Mrs. Boylan, with all due respect to you and with an acknowledgment that transgender people are suffering in this country and are vulnerable to violence and suicide, it’s important for you to know that fighting for transgender equality is not the answer—and Jesus will help you gain victory over the fight for your true identity in Christ, if you’ll let Him. He loves you. He loves transgenders, cross-dressers and others who are struggling with gender identity issues. I encourage you and any others struggling with these issues to read Rogers’ whole story, and I pray the Lord will speak to your heart.

**Jennifer LeClaire** is news editor at Charisma. She is also the

*author of several books, including The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.*

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## **Churchgoing Men Would Appreciate Less Cleavage in Church Too**

On Thursday, my editor and Christian sister Jennifer LeClaire wrote an opinion piece for *Charisma* titled, "Why Do So Many 'Born-Again, Spirit-Filled Women' Show off Cleavage in Church?" As many of you who read *Charisma* know, Jennifer's opinion pieces often garner a great deal of attention, and this one certainly wasn't any different.

As of early Friday afternoon, the column had gotten more than 15,000 hits and nearly 200 comments from our readers—some of them flattering and some of them not-so-flattering. Many have chastised Jennifer for being judgmental about what she said in the article.

If you know Jennifer and you know where her heart is, you wouldn't think that for a second. Jennifer is one of the most on-fire-for-God and tuned-into-the-Holy-Spirit people I've ever known. I know what she wrote came from the heart and was God-inspired.

I'm sure not many of you know me, as I've only been at *Charisma* for a year. But I'm going to follow up on Jennifer's article, and this time from a man's point of view.

Jennifer pointed out that she is “talking about so-called ‘mature believers,’ not lost souls or baby Christians [that] come into God’s sanctuary on Sunday morning wearing clothes you might rather expect to see them wearing at a dance club on Saturday night.” She wrote, “I’m talking about those who claim to be ‘born-again, baptized, blood-bought’ (even tongue-talking) members of the church!”

I’ve attended many churches where I have seen this. This is even an issue in my own church. I’m not quite sure what the rest of the women in the congregation think, but my wife is absolutely amazed when she sees women who are dressed as described above.

I can’t pretend to think like a woman or know what is in their hearts. However, I will say this, and I’m going to be as transparent as I possibly can in this forum: I’m not sure that many women understand or even think about the consequences of the way they dress in church (or on the street, for that matter) as it pertains to the men of their congregation. I’m not sure that they understand that lust of the eyes is something we men struggle with every day, all the time.

Every day, we are bombarded with images of scantily dressed beautiful women in society from advertising in every possible medium. It’s difficult to escape it, and society doesn’t care because they’re only trying to sell their products and make their companies more attractive to the consumer.

The last thing we need is to walk into church—a place where we have come to worship God freely and love Him with all of our hearts—and to have our attention diverted by the way some women are dressed. And not to mention if you happen to look at a women dressed that way and you’re with your wife, how does that make her feel? You know she’s thinking, “So, I guess that’s attractive to you, and I’m not?”

I know exactly what a lot of you are going to say. I can hear

it now: "Well, that's your problem. If you can't divert your eyes from a woman like that, then you have a big-time problem with your heart, and you don't really love your wife or God."

My retort to that would be: Any man who says he isn't at least slightly affected by a scantily dressed woman—as described by Jennifer in her article—is either a eunuch, gay or someone who isn't telling the truth.

The problem isn't that we don't love our wives. I certainly do, and I know most men love their wives and wouldn't do anything in the world to hurt their feelings or self-esteem. And as Christians, we love God with all of our heart (at least I hope we do).

No, the problem is found in the fact that we are only human, and we're going to be tempted to at least look. Again, men, don't tell me that you don't.

And when we do look, we could find ourselves guilty of lust in our heart. Matthew 5:27-28 says, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

You never know what it could lead to. You look at the above-mentioned women and that image won't leave your mind. You go home and get on the Internet, and then who knows what can happen? Even mature Christian men can get sidetracked by lustful desires. James 1:14-15 says, "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

At a recent meeting of my men's group at my home, we talked about this and how much of a problem it is and how much we struggle with it—and I'm talking about a group of guys who love Jesus and want to serve Him with all their heart. But we were all transparent, and we all want to be held accountable

for our actions and what's in our hearts. If I've got a problem, then I want someone to tell me about it so I can go to God in prayer and fix it.

So, what is the solution? I believe it can be found in Romans 14:13, which says, "Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way."

Mark 9:42 says, "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea." And then there's Luke 17:1, which states, "Then He said to the disciples, 'It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!'"

It's like drinking alcohol in front of an alcoholic or taking a man who has trouble with pornography or is struggling in his marriage out to lunch at Hooters. It simply shouldn't be done.

I do want our women readers to know that I am not putting the blame completely on them. Men should be responsible for their own actions, and they will be responsible to God for what they've done ultimately. My point is that women shouldn't exacerbate the problem by dressing immodestly. Yes, we have to pray that God shows us a way to "divert our eyes" and to be sexually pure. But I do believe that women need to keep in mind what they do can have a huge impact on us.

Some women may not care, and simply push the blame all off on men. I've seen it in some of these comments. They don't they need to be responsible for their actions. But there are other women that have commented that do care and they are gracious and realize that it is a two-way street. That's what everybody has to keep in mind – that indeed it is a two-way street.

To our female readers, I'm not demanding anything from you. What you do is certainly between you and God, and I realize that you're there to worship too. However, I am asking that

you search your hearts. If anything I've said resonates with you and you realize that how you dress can cause a man—any man, even your pastor—to stumble, then please rethink your wardrobe before you walk out the door (not just on Sunday morning, either).

As someone who has struggled with the subject and knows many who have (again, transparency), we would appreciate a little more modesty.

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## **Why Do So Many 'Born-Again, Spirit-Filled' Women Show Off Cleavage in Church?**

"I know I'm inappropriate, but I'm trying to save time. I know I'm in the wrong. My mother would not approve. But would it be better that I not come?" Those were the words of a 30-year-old woman entering church in Maryland wearing a revealing tank top and tight pants.

God bless her, but that's in the same spirit as saying, "I know it's inappropriate to cuss in church, but I can't think of any better way to say it," or, "I know it's inappropriate to smoke during praise and worship, but I didn't have time to finish my Marlboro on the way here."

Some women—and I am talking about so-called "mature believers," not lost souls or baby Christians—come into God's sanctuary on Sunday morning wearing clothes you might rather expect to see them wearing at a dance club on Saturday night.

Their blouses cling to their bodies, their necklines dip so low and stretch so wide that they reveal cleavage, and the slits up the sides of their skirts offer more than an innocent glimpse of their thighs. Again, I'm not talking about sinners seeking God or new believers who plain don't know better. I'm talking about those who claim to be "born-again, baptized, blood-bought" (even tongue-talking) members of the church!

Paul instructed Timothy that women should "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation" (1 Tim. 2:9), and he told the church at Corinth that "our unpresentable parts have greater modesty" (1 Cor. 12:23). Regardless of how hot it is outside or how busy we are, there's no justification for **Spirit-filled** women to come to church wearing clothes that cause some men to pay more attention to the things of the flesh than the things of the Spirit.

But rather than repenting, some of these progressive women are lashing out against campaigns like Modest Is Hottest, calling it sexist. In her critique of Modest Is Hottest, Sharon Hodde Miller, a doctoral student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, argues, "A woman's breasts and buttocks and thighs all proclaim the glory of the Lord." Maybe, but I somehow doubt Jesus intended for this aspect of His glory to manifest in church.

**Worship** artist Jaime Jamgochian launched Modest Is Hottest to reach out to teen girls with the love of Christ. She says, "I feel like there's always more to it when a girl is dressed inappropriately than 'I just want to look cute.'"

I agree—and the same goes for older women who call Jesus Lord. I'm not suggesting that women subscribe to the Holiness Movement's guidelines for women's clothing and makeup. No, I'm not suggesting religious rules and regulations. But I don't think Christian women should dress like the worldly women in church or anywhere else. It's not about a shame-based approach to modesty that Miller opines about in her column. It's about

self-respect—and respect for others.

“I love what Jaime is doing; she is right on: Modest is hottest! I think this is such a good message to convey. Jaime is not being sexist but rather sharing that as beautiful women of God we can look so gorgeous without being revealing,” says Alyssa Shull, a youth pastor at Words of Life in North Miami and founder of The Pink Lid, a conference designed for girls between the ages of 12-18 where beauty and purity are key themes.

“You are respecting yourself and those around you when you are modest,” Shull says. “Lust is very prevalent in our culture, but Jesus says in Matthew 5:28, even if you look at a woman with lust in your eyes it is adultery. So I believe that women can do their part and display themselves in a beautiful way without promoting lust. You can be stylish and modest! I agree with Shull and, as the mother of a 16-year-old girl, appreciate what she and Jamgochian are doing for young teens.

Again, it’s not about the sinner coming in to look for Jesus or the baby Christian still shaking off the dust of the world. We’re talking about tongue-talking women wearing clothes so tight they may as well have been spray-painted on and cleavage falling out of their blouses. That’s why Facebook comments about this topic like this one trouble me: “Get to where God sees and don’t worry about the wardrobe of another person unless you are inclined to buying them new clothes to wear.” And this one: “Even if they aren’t lost, they have an identity issue. Who are we to judge?”

If we can “judge” that they have an identity issue, can’t we judge that they shouldn’t be showing cleavage in church? Isn’t the Word of God clear on this matter? And it’s not our responsibility to buy a woman new clothes just because she’s wearing seductive garb to church. But it is our responsibility to speak the truth in love to those who may not know better and to lead by example. In too many ways—including sometimes

our wardrobe—Christians have conformed to the world. Paul warned us not to “be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Rom. 12:2).

It’s not about being the fashion police, and it’s not about condemnation. If the Holy Spirit convicted your heart about the way you dress as you read this, don’t let the devil beat you up. Just buy a few new modest outfits and keep praising God! It’s about not purposely opening the door to the spirit of immorality. Sure, as one Facebook commenter noted, a woman could wear a burlap sack to church and still find lustful eyes upon her. But does that mean we let it all hang out in the name of liberty? God forbid.

**Jennifer LeClaire** *is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including The Spiritual Warrior’s Guide to Defeating Jezebel. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.*

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## **You Will Walk in the Lord’s Spirit of Excellence**

You will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; but I will be to you an everlasting light and your glory. Though you may be hard-pressed on every side, you will not be crushed. When you are perplexed, I will not forsake you. If you are struck down, you will not be

destroyed. By faith you will know that just as I raised up My Son, Jesus, I will also raise you up with Jesus and will bring you before My throne in heaven. Therefore, do not lose heart. For your light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for you a far more eternal victory. Do not look on the things that you see, but look at those things that are not seen.

Isaiah 60:1, 15–16; 2 Corinthians 4:7–18

### Prayer Declaration

*Because the Spirit of God is at work within me, I am empowered to walk in the excellence of God. When troubling and perplexing circumstances come into my life, I will not lose heart. I will not look at things as they are seen, but I will look at the unseen power of God. I will place my eyes on my Father's throne in heaven, and as I walk in His excellence, His Spirit will enable me to radiate His glory.*

All of these are from *Daily Declarations for Spiritual Warfare* by John Eckhardt.

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# Interpreting Your Prophetic Revelation

Some years ago, I was traveling through the night by train from the Frankfurt, Germany region to Rossenheim in southern Bavaria. I was in one of the sleeping cars but, unable to sleep, I spent much of my time praying in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit kept speaking to me over and over, "Where are My Daniels? Where are My Esthers? Where are My Josephs, and where are My Deborahs?"

After many years of pondering on this word, I believe that the Holy Spirit is on a quest to find believers He can work with – Believers who will dream God's dreams at any cost – who have a discerning spirit to properly interpret the times, and learn to intercede out of a posture of revelation.

Daniel, Esther, Joseph, and Deborah were godly people who possessed the Spirit of Revelation and who altered destinies and changed history through the revelation that was bestowed on them. They trusted the Lord for wisdom and insight and served His purposes in their generation. Today the Spirit of God is looking for like-minded and like-hearted individuals who will be the Daniels, the Esthers, the Josephs, and the Deborahs for their day.

Like the Biblical heroes before them, these modern-day trailblazers will study to show themselves approved as workmen for God, rightly dividing the word of truth (revelation) that is given to them (see 2 Timothy 2:15 KJV). And, like their Old Testament counterparts, they will learn to speak the language of that revelation in a manner that is relevant to their contemporaries.

## What Language Do You Speak?

Before you can interpret your dreams and visions properly or intercede effectively from the posture of revelation, you must understand the language of that revelation.

## Dream

What language do you speak? Have you learned your spiritual alphabet? Your spiritual alphabet will be unique to you. God will speak revelation to you according to the language you speak.

Doctors, nurses, and other medical and health professionals have a language all their own, a technical vocabulary that untrained lay people cannot understand. Music has a written language that is incomprehensible to anyone who has never been taught to read the symbols. Pastors have their own language, too. This can cause problems when their language does not match that of their congregations!

What language do you speak? Whatever your language is, the Holy Spirit will speak to you in that language. Of course, I am not talking so much about languages like English, French, German, Russian, or Spanish, as I am the "language" with which we interpret life. Because each of us have different life experiences, the language by which we receive and impart revelation will be distinct to each of us. We each have a personal walk and, in a sense, a personal talk. Our spiritual alphabet, though similar, is unique to each individual.

Regardless of how our individual spiritual alphabets differ, our basic approach to interpretation should be the same. Proper interpretation can occur on many different levels. Here are three simple steps for interpreting your dream revelation:

1. Study the interpretation of words and symbols by researching their meanings as recorded in Scripture and other historical literature. Find out how Biblical characters and other figures from the past interpreted these words and symbols in a dream context. This is an excellent (and probably the easiest) way to begin.

2. Develop the habit of journaling. Effective interpretation is a skill that is learned over time and with experience. Your spiritual alphabet is unique to you. Journaling will help you capture your distinct pictures, grant

understanding over time, and give wisdom for your journey.

3. Welcome the anointing, gifting, and presence of the Holy Spirit. He will guide you into truth, keeping things safe yet adventurous and pure yet unreligious.

In your eagerness to reach step three, don't bypass steps one and two. Always begin with the Scriptures. Let the Bible be its own best commentary. God will never contradict His Word. Let His written Word give you insight into the meaning of His visionary revelation. Study it thoroughly. Pray over it. Lay a solid foundation of the Word in your life to give the Holy Spirit something to breathe upon.

Interpreting dreams is like putting together a giant jigsaw puzzle with thousands of tiny pieces that must be fitted together in exactly the right order. The quickest way to complete a jigsaw puzzle is to start with the border—the framework—and the same is true with dream interpretation.

Once you have the framework in place it becomes easier to see where the rest of the pieces go. Before long, the big picture begins to take shape. At least, that's the way it usually works for me. I ask the Holy Spirit to give me a thought or a word. He sheds His light on one thing, which leads me to another, and another, and then everything just starts to click.

### **Interpretations Belong to God**

The cardinal rule to keep in mind when properly interpreting dreams and visions is that "interpretations belong to God." He who gives you the Spirit of Revelation is also the One who gives you the capacity to interpret that revelation. Here are some Biblical examples:

From the life of Joseph:

Then they said to him, "We have had a dream and there is no one to interpret it." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell it to me, please" (Genesis

40:8).

Imagine being in the place where you are so sure that interpretations belong to God and so absolutely confident in His anointing that, like Joseph, you could say to someone, "Tell it [your dream] to me," and know that God would give you the interpretation!

From the life of Daniel:

As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all kinds of visions and dreams. ... As for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them 10 times better than all the magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm (Daniel 1:17, 20).

Daniel was even given the ability to interpret the handwriting on the wall that King Belshazzar saw, which foretold the king's death under God's judgment (see Daniel 5:1-31).

### **Journal your dreams**

Although it may not come out in Aramaic or Hebrew or Greek or English or Spanish, God writes in signs to His people and He wants to give us the capacity to interpret the signs of the times.

We need to pray for the Lord to release in our own day godly people of wisdom who can interpret the handwriting on the wall for our generation.

From the life of Issachar:

Of the sons of Issachar, men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their kinsmen were at their command (1 Chronicles 12:32).

Two hundred chiefs "who understood the times" held an entire tribe under their command. How? People will follow a person

who has revelation. People will be drawn to anyone who walks with integrity in the Spirit of wisdom and revelation.

The more you learn how to listen and recognize the voice of the Spirit of God, the more He will enable you to operate on multiple levels of insight. God is the master multi-tasker and He can enable you to be a multi-tasker as well.

You can listen on more than one level. You can listen to the heart of a person, you can listen to the realm of the soul, and you can listen to the Holy Spirit. It requires a fair measure of grace and the ability to block out the noise of friction, static, and distractions, but all things are possible.

What God did before, He wants to do again! Right here, right now!

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**God Is Not a Racist:**

# Christian Accuser Needs Revelation of His Love

In my role as news editor at *Charisma* magazine, I've been grieved by many of the responses to the George Zimmerman verdict. But the accusation that God is a racist sent me into intercession for a woman with an impressive string of credentials in the world of Christianity—but seemingly devoid of a revelation of God's love.

I intentionally didn't add my voice to the Zimmerman verdict mix—until I read about this Ivy League professor's blog post casting the hateful darkness of racism on God. This perspective likely comes out of Professor Anthea Butler's personal and painful experiences with racism.

I can't possibly understand that pain. But God can.

That's why I pray Butler will come to know God for who He really is and repent of statements like this one:

"God ain't good all of the time. In fact, sometimes, God is not for us. As a black woman in a nation that has taken too many pains to remind me that I am not a white man, and am not capable of taking care of my reproductive rights, or my voting rights, I know that this American god ain't my god. As a matter of fact, I think he's a white racist god with a problem. More importantly, he is carrying a gun and stalking young black men."

Grieving my spirit is not a strong enough phrase to describe how this accusation against God impacts me. Yes, it bothers me that she's maligning a God who loves her. And beyond that, it saddens me that her life experience has been such that she has drawn this conclusion about a God who loves her passionately. It also grieves me that Butler may not be the only one who feels this way. She is voicing an accusation that others may

be thinking but don't have the platform to utter.

And it gets worse. Butler, author of *Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World*, went to ask, "Is God the old white male racist looking down from white heaven, ready to bless me if I just believe the white men like Rick Perry who say the Zimmerman case has nothing to do with race?"

After receiving some nasty backlash (which I find inappropriate against a woman who seems to be writing out of a wounded soul), Butler defended her post, noting the difference between the big "G" God as deity and the little "g" god, referring to different kinds of gods. But she negated the difference when she told *The Huffington Post* that her statements were "especially touchy for [conservative Christians] because I hit on some things that are kind of true."

But nothing she is saying about God is true. Not in the least.

More than that, Butler used the capital "G" when she said, "God ain't good all of the time. In fact, sometimes, God is not for us," and when she asked, "Is God the old white male racist looking down from white heaven, ready to bless me if I just believe the white men like Rick Perry who say the Zimmerman case has nothing to do with race?"

There's no skirting the fact that the associate professor of religious studies and African studies at the University of Pennsylvania (and Fuller Theological Seminary graduate) with a long list of credentials has serious misperceptions of God.

God is good all of the time (Ps. 136:1; Nahum 1:7). And God is for us, not against us (Rom. 8:28-31). I could go on and on about the love of God, the grace of God, the mercy of God, the kindness of God. God is not a racist.

I'm not the only one who feels this way. William Lane Craig, a

Christian philosopher, theologian and founder of , says Butler is anthropomorphizing political and social situations into theology, which is simply ludicrous on many levels.

“Professor Butler seems to believe in a theology of divine oppression, where God doesn’t liberate a people but instead oppresses them,” Craig says. “This train of thought is flawed—it goes against theology by positioning God as an antagonist working against human progress, which is just not the case.”

What happened to Trayvon Martin was tragic. Many people are hurting. But we can’t blame God for any of it. And we shouldn’t be exploiting this tragedy to stir strife or to forward an agenda. The world is watching how the church is responding, and, sadly, painting God with a hateful brush of racism is adding to the problem. God is not a racist.

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## **Alveda King Cries Foul Over Image of MLK Wearing Hoodie**

While I salute the passion and creativity of artist Nikkolas Smith in reference to the image of Martin Luther King Jr. wearing a hoodie, I feel compelled to cry, “Foul, shame on you,” to the media moguls and **civil rights** legends who want to stir up a controversy where there is none.

I am not angered by the artistic expression. I am just plain hurt and saddened to see the message of my uncle reduced to a debate over an article of clothing. I would love to talk with the artist about my uncle.

“Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will,” reads his letter from the Birmingham Jail on April 16, 1963.

My grandfather was always a meticulously dressed and well groomed man. He encouraged and actually insisted that his family follow his lead, because he was grooming us all to represent Jesus, our family and our community. Uncle M.L. and my daddy grew up to become leaders and did their best to honor and respect their father’s teachings. Like all humans, they sometimes fell short, but not for lack of trying.

I am no way suggesting that hoodies are a bad thing. The young folks in my family wear them. They are actually handy in the rain. Yet there are other ways to remember Dr. King. Perhaps most importantly, that way would be found in his sermons and letters.

“We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools,” he said in a speech in St. Louis, Mo., on March 22, 1964.

As to the controversy, **George Zimmerman** seemingly never explored the content of Trayvon Martin’s character. Rather, he identified and profiled **Trayvon Martin** according to Trayvon’s choice of attire, which was a hoodie.

We as African-Americans should never be racially profiled. We must advocate as Martin Luther King Jr. advocated: for defining ourselves by the content of our character rather than according to the color of our skin or our choice of attire. This should be the standard for every ethnic group, every family and every individual.

Unfortunately, the trial was about finding reasonable doubt in a murder case concerning what happened the night Zimmerman shot Trayvon. Reasonable doubt was established, and thus human justice was served in a human court of law. Yet was everyone so concerned about serving man's legal system that we forgot to serve God?

Sadly, the legal aspects of the trial were not about whether or not **George Zimmerman** racially profiled Trayvon Martin. That issue now becomes a matter of civil rather than criminal law.

The criminal legal process was not about hoodies and candy. It wasn't even about smoking marijuana. (By the way, two United States presidents admit to having smoked marijuana as young men; one says he inhaled, and one says he didn't.)

This leads me to wonder what kind of man **Trayvon Martin** would have become if he had been allowed to live. By observing his parents during the time of his tragic and fatal shooting and this trial, I am sure that Trayvon would have turned out just fine. His parents have called for justice and peace during their suffering and loss throughout this entire ordeal. My prayers continue to go out to them.

In the final analysis, **Trayvon Martin** represented humanity, life and purpose as ordained by God for all persons, in and out of the womb, and he deserved not to be profiled but rather regarded as precious soul.

Trayvon wore a hoodie not because he was black, but because it was his choice of style, as it is for teens in this time in our society. His clothing should never have been a factor in defining him.

As Martin Luther King Jr. was called to greatness, you, me and, yes, **Trayvon Martin** and George Zimmerman, have also been called to greatness, purpose and the right to live in America. The difference is that MLK lived long enough to answer his call. Trayvon was killed before he could live out his call and

dream, which is buried with him. George Zimmerman made a decision that has changed his life as well.

Every human being is part of the one single human race. We are one blood. One race. We are created with a dream inside, and when we are allowed to be born and to live out our God-ordained lives, we have a chance to be great.

Would Martin Luther King Jr., as a teenager, wear a hoodie in the 21st century? I may not think so, but who knows? Would Martin Luther King Jr. weep at the tragic loss of the life and dream of Trayvon Martin and the now-deferred dream of George Zimmerman? Most likely.

**Alveda C. King** is the daughter of the late civil-rights activist the Rev. A.D. King and niece of Martin Luther King Jr. She is also a civil rights and pro-life activist, as well as director of African-American outreach for Priests for Life. [Click here to visit her blog.](#)