

# BISHOP EDDIE LONG

*A Compilation of Opinions*



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YoBo

*Y* 😊 *B* 😊  
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Hey there! This is YoBo ... that's Y-O-B-O ~ YoBo! I'm sure by now you are well aware of the scandal that has rocked the Black American Church. Silly Me sat on the sideline waiting for some sort of response from a visible figure in the Black American Church. There was not even the slightest reference made by a pastor on the live television ministries I watched Sunday via Streaming Faith, other than the comments made by Bishop Eddie Long himself. His name was not mentioned on any radio shows I listened to while driving – and in my area the most popular station devotes Sunday to gospel music, live church services and live talk shows hosted by local pastors. However, us folks on THE SEX, RELIGION AND LOVE SHOW WITH ASK DEANNA (SRL) weren't too "skurd" to say the man's name. It was an interesting and informative dialogue. If you missed the show, we will follow up with a Part Two on next Sunday. Listen live at [www.KTYM.com](http://www.KTYM.com) at 3:00 p.m. (pst) or if you are in the Los Angeles area, tune in to KTYM AM 1460.

While I am well aware that most people don't want to say anything about the gigantic titanic elephant standing right smack dab in the middle of this room, I thought for sure they would say something when it dropped a steaming load of poop in the floor – or at least pinch their noses. But at the same time I feel compelled to applaud my brothers and sisters in the Lord because I recall the last time a scandal of this magnitude hit the church. I watched with my own two eyes and heard with my own two ears as a well-known preacher threw the accused brother straight up under the bus. Two months later that same finger pointing preacher had to crawl under the same bus. I intentionally didn't mention any names because that's the quickest way to get myself thrown under the bus too. I've been under it a time or two ... okay, maybe three or four (hundred, that is). I know from personal experience that it's not a good place to be.

There are a lot of stone throwers, but there are even more people who are genuinely confused. A male caller on Sunday's SRL Show asked a legitimate question: "After something like this, how do we trust the men and women of God?" Pastor Dwayne Shigg pointed out that these are allegations – nothing more and nothing less. I have to add my two cents: "You'd better put your trust in Jesus and keep it moving." I

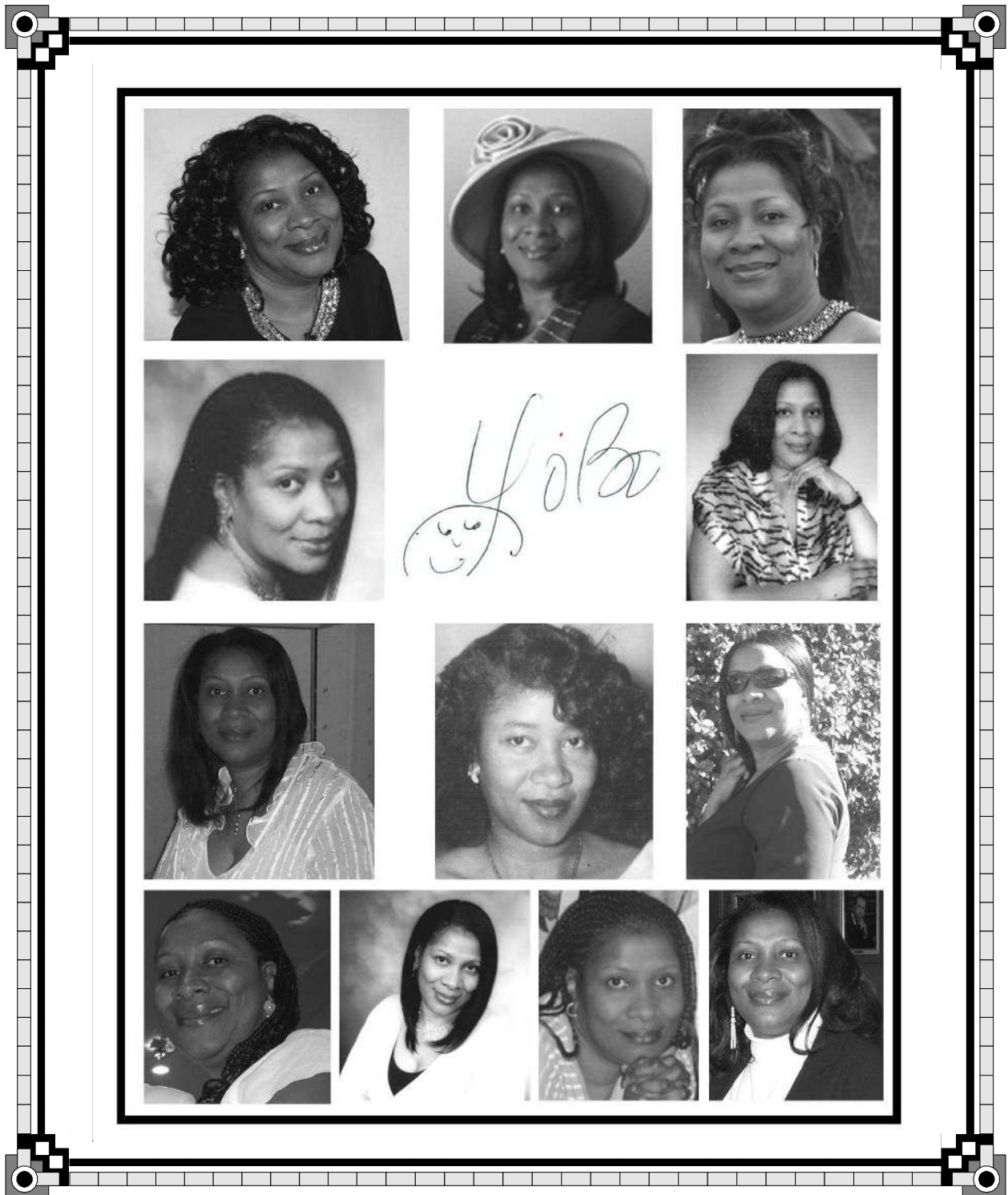
trust two things: (1) Jesus, and (2) time. That's it. I've had my feelings hurt enough over the last 51 years; I trust people a little less than I trust myself.

With the caller's question in mind, as well as the obvious lack of any press from the Black Church at large, I complained to myself, "Self, what's up with this? Why is there no written response, blog, tweet, Facebook post, or even prayer request from somebody on behalf of the Black Christian community?" I immediately recalled my Pastor's advice regarding complainers: "When YOU come to me with a complaint, make sure YOU also come with the solution." So I came up with a solution. I asked the YoBo Productions team of Christian writers/conference speakers to submit an article regarding Bishop Long. (Note that I use the word "Christian" loosely, only because I lived quite a loose life for years while calling myself a Christian. To be honest, as saved and sanctified as I'd like to believe I am now, if tempted with my favorite temptations, there is a good chance that I would backslide today.)

I hope the allegations are not true for the sake of everyone involved: the Bishop, his wife and family, the New Birth family and most of all, the young men. If true, the young men can recover over time. But it's a given that church folks will have nothing to do with Bishop Long (even though we buy food stamps, half-price gift cards, bootleg movies and get our kids' back-to-school supplies from the office supply room). He led a march against same-sex marriage so the gays in Atlanta or anywhere else will support him. Do I think he did it? To be honest, I don't give a blankity-blank. The problems I currently face are a lot bigger than Eddie Long's reputation. My checking account is overdrawn \$155 and I'm trying to figure out how to get in the black. I'd feel like a fool in his business when my reputation with the bank is in shambles.

Mama said to never kick a man when he is down; that is not our role nor our intention. I've been down before and only one person from the household of faith offered to pray for me. Hello somebody! For the record, I was wrong as two left shoes. This compilation is not about the man - the writers are merely discussing a taboo topic and sharing opinions. We all know that opinions are like what? You got it! Everybody's got one - and some of them stink.

*YoBo*



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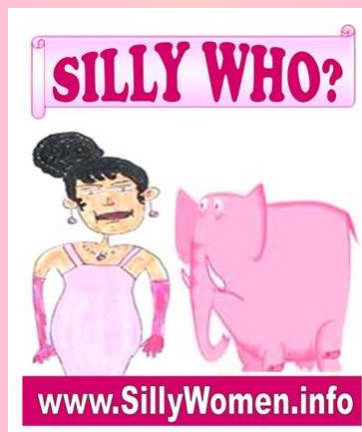
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November 1 ~ Theme:  
**WITH SO FEW MEN IN THE CHURCH,  
WHERE CAN A CHRISTIAN WOMAN  
FIND A GOOD CHRISTIAN MAN? ~ Part Two**  
*Presenters: Donta Morrison and Antoine Garrett*

December 6 ~ Theme:  
**HELP! MY KIDS ARE DRIVING ME CRAZY!**  
*Presenter: Keith “Sarge” Gibbs*

January 10 ~ Theme:  
**A FRESH START**



## DONTA M. MORRISON

# NOW



# WHAT?

**B**ishop Long is still going to Bishop Long whether he is found to be straight, gay, or bisexual. As it stands right now, NOTHING has been proven, but if it is found to be true, then what? Do we cast him aside and place another in his place? Do we stop talking to him as though he never existed? Do we riot and picket outside of his house like a murderous mob? What exactly is the next step? I'll await your answer.....

But while I wait, let me go on record and say this: If Bishop Eddie Long is found guilty of the alleged charges, can we truly blame him 100% for his actions? Let's be honest with ourselves -- regardless to how anointed a man (or woman) is, people would not flock to his church if he were openly gay. Let us not be so quick to forget the great work he has done and the lives that have been changed by his teachings. I'm not saying that to defend him, because if he did coerce young men into having sex, that was wrong on every level. However, what I am saying is that homosexuality has been labeled as the ultimate sin; Bishop Long could have murdered someone and not be viewed as deviant as he would be if he were openly gay. It's sad to say that sexual orientation can make or break your acceptance by the church, even if you are trusted by God - not man - with all the gifts of the anointing. If the allegations are true and Bishop Long had to live a double life, I'm pretty sure the reasons behind it are much deeper.

This is going to be a true test of how we love and

forgive. It is also going to be a true test to see if ALL are truly welcome at the table. Are churches really receptive of everyone or just tolerant for the sake of being "saved"? There are so many critics, judges, and self-made gods walking around that it's no wonder the Christian church is becoming the laughing stock of the world. What is also amazing is the fact that when the Catholic priests were being accused of child molestation, the Black church was making jokes and acting haughty. But now that it has hit home, it ain't so funny. Eddie Long will have his day and be judged accordingly if there is wrong found ... but what about the OTHER Bishop Longs that are out there? Do we honestly believe that Bishop Long is the only pastor with a secret affinity for men? Are we that blind as a church? Or would we rather not know?

***"...when the Catholic priests were being accused of child molestation, the Black church was making jokes and acting haughty. But now that it has hit home, it ain't so funny."***

This is bigger than some church in Atlanta. It's time that the African American Faith Based Institution takes a closer look at the way it operates and who is being affected by its marginalized views on a situation that is much deeper than a few scriptures

in Leviticus. It is so easy to cast someone out for doing something that we ourselves aren't being pulled to do, but what about the issues that we EACH have that go unspoken? Are we really in a position to comment about anything at this point?

**DONTA M. MORRISON** is a veteran of the United States Air Force and has been advocating against the spread of HIV/AIDS for over 10 years. In 2005 he formed The Know U 1st Foundation, a non-profit agency whose mission is to educate youth and young adults within communities of color on the impact of HIV. Donta assisted on research and youth empowerment projects for UCLA and Children's Hospital Los Angeles. He has presented the "HIV 101" workshops for the Tavis Smiley Leadership Institute, University of Texas at Austin, and inmates within Los Angeles' Men's Central Jail and Victorville Federal Prison. Donta is one of the original contributing writers for *Be All You Can Be ~ The Magazine* and is a principal team member of *Silly Women ~ The Conference* and *The ABCs of Life Youth Conference*. [Find Donta and Know U 1st Foundation on Facebook!](#)

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# KNOW



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# CAN YOU KEEP A SECRET?

Anonymous

I did....for 27 long years. That's how long I was married, and that's how long I knew my husband liked men. It wasn't easy getting past the fact that he liked men....but I figured: He'll never cheat on me....at least not with another woman. But cheat he did... many times over those 27 years. In fact, his lover even lived with us for about five years. Why, you ask? Because I never knew they were lovers. I was so naïve; I thought they were only best friends. I did not understand that men can't have a best friend....at least not a gay man. Any friendly contact becomes sexual. I found out about ten years into our marriage that for the first five years I had been living with my husband, his lover and our children. And, I only found out because his lover died of AIDS. Yes, AIDS. Am I scared that I have AIDS and it just hasn't manifested itself? Damn straight I'm scared. Do I let it stop me from living? No, I don't.

I lived with my husband and I put up with my husband and I covered for my husband for so long because he said he loved me and he would change and he wouldn't do it again. But he did, over and over. But I still stayed. The Bible tells us to be submissive. I was always submissive. He did what he wanted, whenever



he wanted. Let me tell you, he put us in many a bind....and I always had to dig us out. I stayed because it was easier to stay than to explain why I left. I stayed because we had a family....and in my mind, a mom and a dad made up the family, and my children needed a mother and a father. I didn't want my children to be the products of a divorce....of a broken family. I did the best I could, the best I knew to

do. I made the best of what I was handed. In my mind it was too difficult to imagine a home with just one income, with just one parent. What would I tell everyone? How would people react? What would his family say!? To me, that was the worst thing I would ever have to do....tell his family.

I left my husband several years ago. Of course, it was on and off for a few years; he'd want to come back and try again, and I let him, twice. Eventually I decided enough was enough. I finally moved out and away, far away, and he was not happy. He didn't want to tell his family we had separated, but eventually he had to tell them. Can you believe that after I left not one of them called me to see how I was or what was going on? I was so hurt.

His father -- my father-in-law for 27 years -- became very ill. I was at the hospital daily, day and night. On the first day his brother said to me: "I am so pissed off at you...so angry with you...you don't even know." On the second day his brother said, "Let's talk...just you and me....let's talk." We went to a hallway away from everyone else and he told me, "I don't understand why you left my brother. He's my only brother and I love him and I want him happy and you make him happy. How could you leave him? How could you do this to him?" I told him not to judge me because he just didn't know, he didn't know anything. I called my husband that night and told him that his brother hurt me so badly by accusing me of being the one who ended the marriage. Evidently my husband had a change of heart that night because he picked his brother up and took him to a fast food restaurant and they had a long talk....and he told him everything....about him being gay....about his lover living with us for five years....about his cheating..... about his desire for men..... about how I tried so hard and so long to keep everything together....he told him everything. A few days later his brother asked me if we could talk again. I was expecting a lecture. Instead I heard a plea for forgiveness. He told me he was sorry and asked that I forgive him for jumping to conclusions.

His family always judged me for leaving him.... My culture teaches that women are to stay with their husbands because it's the right thing to do, so most women put up with the nonsense because they believe that they don't have a choice. Now his family is asking me for forgiveness.

I believe that the majority of gays don't want to be that way. Why? Because they try so hard

to be what they are not. It's not like overeating and you just stop one day. My husband would do what he would do and feel really guilty. He would say he hated himself, he hated his life, he hated he was that way. I always knew when he had done something because he wanted to go to church. He got prayer over and over for deliverance but it was always the same struggle. We also knew other couples with similar marriages and they had the same struggle.

Being with a woman does not come naturally for him. The first time we had sex I was so upset and disappointed. After the entire act was over, he literally got sick and vomited all over the place. Remember, at this time I was the first woman he had ever been with-- and I did NOT know he was gay or that I was his first--so I thought

**"I knew my husband liked men ... In fact, his lover even lived with us for about five years. Why, you ask? Because I never knew they were lovers.... And I only found out because his lover died of AIDS."**

something was wrong with me. I was so sad; I didn't know what was going on. He took me home and I didn't hear from him for a week. Finally he called me and that's when he explained to me that he had never been with a woman. I guess at that point was when I started admiring him for being honest. Remember, I had known him for over four months, we had spoken on the phone and gotten to know each other and I already cared for him as a person, so hearing this from him was not an issue for me. I figured I could change him.

Little did I know....

Fast forward a couple of years. I reconnected with a very good friend of mine from high school. We met up at church of all places. Yes, my husband and I and the children attended church religiously every weekend and once or twice during the week. We went to Sunday morning worship and study, Sunday evening worship and study, Wednesday evening worship and study and he attended the men's

Bible study and I attended the women's Bible study. We were "holy"! I never imagined that during this time my husband was messing around with my friend from high school....as well as several of his friends. It was so hard for me to face this. However, I came to terms with it, and believe me, because of my church upbringing, it was not easy. I believed that I needed to do whatever it took to "save" my marriage. Therefore, I became involved with his "lifestyle"....we shared a lot of things, he'd bring home men and we'd share them, I'd go out and find men for him and bring them home, as I said, doing whatever it took to make the marriage work.

It was amazing to me how many of these men we brought home were "Christian" men from the church. They really struggle with their wants and needs and with trying to be holy and live a holy life. I see why so many men commit suicide. It's so much easier than admitting there is a problem, so much easier than admitting they like men. We all know how "taboo" that is....it's Sodom and Gomorrah.

My husband also had a gay friend who wanted to change. He started going to church and met a wonderful woman. They fell in love and got engaged. They had sex and she got pregnant. They got married and had the baby. He never told her a thing. Ironically, she was a very good friend of mine from high school. I didn't say anything. It wasn't my place. After two years of marriage and him being saved, he started frequenting the gay bars. He got caught up in it and left her for another man. She was so angry at me for not telling her. I told her it wasn't my place. My husband wouldn't let me talk to her because he was afraid I would leave him!

My culture does not accept homosexuality. Boys are taught to be macho. If a father somehow finds out or a son comes out of the closet, they are

disowned and called *putos* (fags)! Had my father-in-law known the truth about my husband, he would have beat the crap out of him and not accepted him at all. The saddest part is that my husband can't even accept himself. He hates himself, has always hated himself, and will always hate himself.

I don't know who Bishop Eddie Long is. But I know who my ex-husband is. He is the father of my children. He was my husband for 27 years. All I can do is respect him for being a good father and for being honest with me. I will always have a special place in my heart for him. He and I grew up together and we grew a family together.

I am angry that he never came to terms and accepted himself for what he is. He doesn't want to be gay. He tried to be heterosexual. I love him for trying because otherwise, I would not have my beautiful children.

**"Yes, my husband and I and the children attended church religiously ... We were "holy"! I never imagined that during this time my husband was messing around with my friend from high school....as well as several of his friends."**

For years I was ashamed. I still am. I am only sharing this story because I know I need to help someone else. All I ask is that you never jump to conclusions.... You just never know why a person does the things they do. I pray that the men and women with "secrets" can each find peace in their lives and come to terms

with their "lot" in life and the hand they were dealt. I lived with a man for 27 years who struggled to be heterosexual; I don't think they can help it.

Those who know my husband would describe him as the most wonderful husband and father a woman could ever want. He cooks, he cleans, he decorates, he babysits, he does everything a woman could ever want.

If those same people knew his secret, they would then accuse him of being a fag! They would say that was the only reason he did all that stuff ... so that he could be the "woman" in the relationship. What does that make me?

# *Silly Women ~ The Conference*

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## **LOOK WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING:**

*"I visited your site. I did not know what to expect and I wasn't exactly sure what you did. But I took the time to read the letters from the young ladies locked up and it was truly a blessing. Please continue to allow God to use you in any way that will help and bless others."*

*"This conference was on the money! It was very encouraging and motivating. I look forward to the next event. Me and my girls are definitely coming out. It was \$10 well spent."*

*"Thanks for bringing our "silly" issues to the forefront. I can only imagine how many "silly" lives you have saved and how many self-esteems you have lifted. I look forward to the LA conference. I wish it was sooner. I'm tired of being silly."*

*"Wonderfully Blessed was the conference. Looking forward to the next one. I love your staff who worked so hard to make this a great conference. I thank God for your vision to empower women to be who we say we are in every part of who we are, emotionally, financially and spiritually, the whole woman."*

*"I have two complaints: I can't remember EVERYTHING that was discussed at the conference and my 25 year old daughter couldn't attend. Besides these 'personal' problems... I was blessed, blessed, blessed! There wasn't one boring moment! The information disseminated was personal, interesting, esteem building and perhaps life saving. I laughed, cried and said a whole lotta amens! I enjoyed each speaker and was moved by the singing. . . . My next door neighbor (who attended the conference) and I got together yesterday to chat about what we had learned. Having been reminded that I have a 'right' to say NO meant so much! I'm waiting for the tape! Until then, I'm lining up young ladies for your [girls] conference!"*

*"I left empowered but better yet my friend left with her self-esteem that she had lost. I've shared the conference information with everyone I've come in contact with."*

**[www.SillyWomen.info](http://www.SillyWomen.info)**



# WWW D ?

**Rev. Dwayne E. Shigg**

*B.Th., M.R.E., Preacher, Teacher, Author*

At the time of this writing, the allegations against Bishop Long are just that: ALLEGATIONS. I believe there are some lessons in this whole thing, one being not to jump to conclusions or judgment. For whatever reason, when someone makes charges against a preacher about money or sex (it's usually one of those two), most people automatically believe that it is true. People do lie on people. Our response as believers should be to pray and to wait to see if the allegations are true. But we also should refrain from throwing stones. The Word says something about those without sin casting the first stone.

When it comes to sin, we all have enough of our own to deal with. I remember hearing something a friend said but I will personalize it to fit my situation. I have to start school in the next few weeks and I don't know how I will pay for

it. I have a mortgage to pay. My wife is recovering from a stroke. I have faults and weaknesses of my own to deal with. I don't have time to spend a lot of time wondering IF these allegations are true.

Another point I'd like to make. This is a good opportunity for believers/disciples to be good witnesses in how to show the love of God. Yes, pray for Bishop Long (whatever the outcome). If you have to give a response, what would you want done if it were you – and it could be you. The only reason the things people have said about you (whether true or untrue) are not plastered over CNN is that you may not be doing as much for the Kingdom, and if you are, you don't have 20,000 people following and being influenced by you. If that were the case, the lie you told last week, or the person you had sex with who was not your spouse,

or the wrong you did the other day would be on CNN.

Somewhere I read that IF a brother is overtaken ... ye who are spiritual RESTORE him. Does this excuse wrong? Of course not, if these allegations are proven to be true. Is it biblically wrong? Yes. Okay then. What do we do to Bishop Long? Stone him? Crucify him? Do we stop believing in the Bible? No. The principles are true and infallible, even if the vessels are not.

But the fact of the matter at this point is that we don't know if the allegations are true. How are we

to respond? How would you want people to respond if it were you? We respond by putting our faith in GOD.

This is an opportunity to witness to the people who know that you are a Christian. Are you going to show the same love that God showed you by saving and

loving you – even after what YOU did?

Yes, this situation hurts the Body. Yes, it will have a bad impact, true or not. But God will deal with ALL of the people involved for what they did, IF ANYTHING. He will also deal with you and I based on the way we deal with it and the way we represent Him in dealing with it. Did we show WWJD or did we show what we would do?

**“The only reason the things people have said about you ... are not plastered on CNN is that ... you don't have 20,000 people following and being influenced by you.”**

*Dwayne E. Shigg has been in the Preaching ministry for 28 years. He is a graduate of the Sacramento Theological Seminary and Bible College (Long Beach campus) with a Bachelor's Degree in Theology, and Bible Believers College and Seminary with a Masters Degree in Religious Education. He was the Pastor of Holy Bible Way Church in Long Beach for 14 years. He has also pastored the Christ Fellowship Church in West Covina. He is available to assist with the initial set up of ministries in the local church, specifically Marriage Ministry, Men's Ministry and Leadership Training. Contact Rev. Shigg at [DShigg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:DShigg@sbcglobal.net)*

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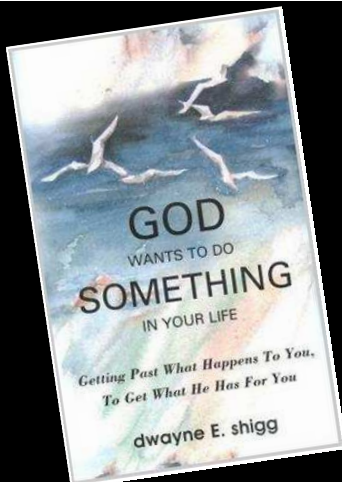


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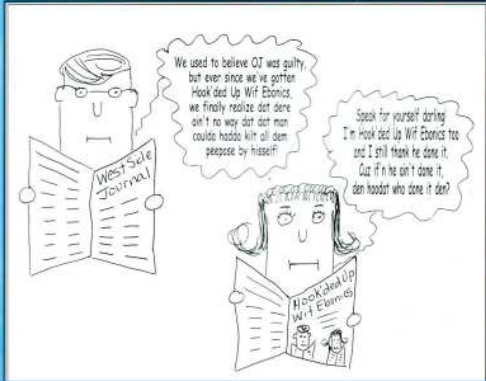
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# IT'S AMAZING TO ME...

Well, well, well ... since last week I have heard lots of talk about Bishop Eddie Long. He has been the lead story on Good Morning America, CNN, MSNBC and Yahoo home page, to name a few. The day the story broke I received a phone call; the caller wanted to know what I thought. I answered honestly: "I have 11 events between now and the end of October and that's all I'm thinking about right now. When I get through handling my business, then I might have time to focus on Eddie Long's business." They wanted to know if I thought the two allegations were true. I said, "I don't know but I know someone who would know." For the record, I talked to that particular someone later that day about something totally unrelated to Bishop Long and he brought it up. He told me that - hold up, wait a minute - I'm not even going to go there because I live my life according to Usher 1:1 - "If I'm gonna tell it then I gotta tell it all." Translation: if I tell your business then I've got to tell mine. And that's what we all aren't about to do!

But with all the talk about Bishop Long, the one thing I have noticed - or perhaps I should say have NOT noticed - is one of Bishop Long's homeboys or homegirls publicly coming to his aid. For those who first heard of Bishop Eddie Long mid-September, let me fill you in a bit. He is a big time preacher who runs with big time preachers, preaching in every big time church all over the world. With all those connections, he ain't got *one* friend in the crowd? While I believe Bishop Long may have gotten a few calls from a few people who said, "I'm with you Doc", I'll bet you five

dollars they won't pledge their support from the pulpit or on CNN. I'm just saying... Oh, I take that back. One pastor has publicly said that people should not rush to judge Bishop Long: Ted Haggard. (And between us, he ain't the one I would want supporting me at a time like this...)

With all the work I have yet to do, I managed to take a little time to check the web for an article containing Bishop Long's name and any other big time preacher that came to mind. I found no recent statements - good, bad, or otherwise. Furthermore, I listened to Christian radio on Sunday and watched the first few minutes of

Christian television shows. Not one pastor said one word about Bishop Eddie Long - well, no one other than Pastor Dwayne E. Shigg as he co-hosted on The Sex, Religion and Love Show with Ask Deanna. I at least expected for somebody to do as my pastor

did by asking us to do one simple thing: "Pray."

That brings me to the whole point of this message. Let me tell you something, my dearest readers. Everybody needs at least one 'ride or die' friend. The song says: *What's the definition of a rider? Through it all they gonna stand right beside ya... They gon' ride til the wheels fall off or the day that I die.* Thankfully I can say I have two ride or die friends. I don't care if paparazzi catch me coming out of the hotel, motel or Holiday Inn with somebody's husband (or wife since that fits the current headlines), those two ladies are going to stand flat-footed beside me. While they may not support my decision to participate in any alleged illegal or immoral activity, they will publicly support me as their friend. I can rob a bank in the

**"While I believe Bishop Long may have gotten a few calls from a few people who said, 'I'm with you Doc', I'll bet you five dollars they won't pledge their support from the pulpit or on CNN."**

next ten minutes, kill a few tellers and police officers and be featured on every news channel. The day after I am arrested a guard will come to my cell and say, "You've got a visit." When I walk out in an orange jumpsuit with my hands cuffed, on the other side of the glass will be Antoinette Evans Persley and Bernadine Hurd Stevens. With the utmost of concern Antoinette will inquire, "Are you okay Yolanda? You need anything? All I have is \$5 but you can have it. I'll send you something every month; I can't say how much it will be but I'll do whatever I can. I won't be able to visit too often; my feet and back hurt from standing in that long line. But you can call the house collect. Just don't call too much and get my phone turned off." And when visiting ends she will walk across the street and stand in another long line to put her last \$5 on my books even with her feet and back aching. Bernadine, on the other hand, will have come to the jailhouse dressed as though she's headed to the Oprah's Academy Awards After Party. She would giggle and say something like, "What's up my girrrrrrrrrl????? We need to talk!!!!"

I am blessed to have a third friend who won't do any riding, but she would surely do some hiding! I'm talking in code right there so I hope you know what I'm saying. I am not mentioning her name because her career path requires a strict security clearance and I don't want to get her in any trouble. Furthermore, it is wise of me to omit her name because in the event I do get caught in the act of committing a crime, I don't want the po-po watching her. Shoooooot, I might need a body buried or some evidence destroyed. And she is laughing out loud as she reads this

paragraph because she knows I'm talking about her.

My friend and business partner LaKeisha McClendon said, "You sure put the YoBo spin on Bishop Long!" That's all I'm trying to do. Almost 50 years ago my childhood pastor, the late Rev. K.L. Givens, defined a friend as, "A person who knows all about you and still loves you." But a real friend is a person who, through no snooping of their own, learns ALL the ugly stuff you don't want anyone to know about you - and still loves you. I advise you to make sure you've got someone in your life who fits that description ... like my friends til the end Antoinette, Bernadine and VJBJJLJ. Everybody needs a rider (and a hider) standing right beside ya!

In closing, I have a message to send to Bishop Eddie Long: "I, Yolanda Roxane Wright Bozant aka YoBo, stand here offering my full public support to you as a friend. As I look to my left and to my right, I see that I stand here alone - not because I have stepped forward in your defense, but because the rest of your "friends" have obviously taken a step backwards. May the Lord God bless you real good."

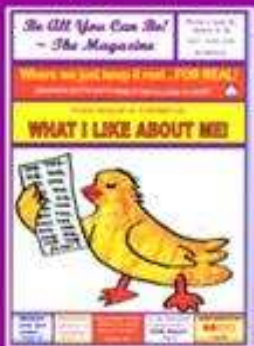
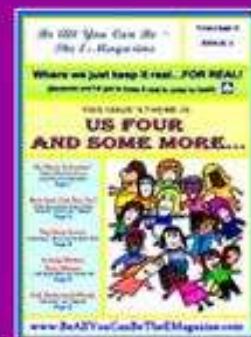
In all seriousness, I could care less if the allegations are true or false. All I know to be true are the many misdeeds I have committed ... and I'm talking about stuff I did after I got through shouting in the morning church service and before I went back to shout some more at the evening church service! The old hymn says, "What a friend we have in Jesus; all our sins and griefs to bear..." It's amazing to me that He still calls me "friend".



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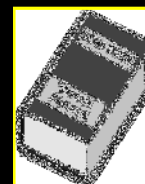
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# Bring the The ABCs of Life Youth Conference to your Youth Group!



**Our message is very simple: every choice has a consequence.**



The ABCs of Life motto is, "**Actions, Behaviors, Choices and Decisions have an Effect on your Future**". We travel across the nation to enlighten, educate and empower young people about the power of choices.

**Life is a series of decisions.** From the time you wake up until you go to bed, you are constantly making decisions:

- you can get up or sleep all day;
- you can eat or be hungry;
- you can study or party;
- you can obey or disobey.

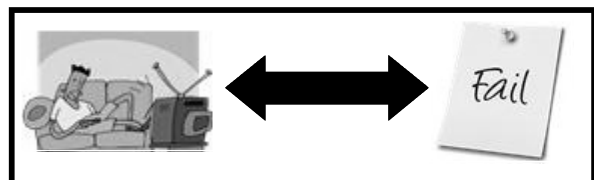
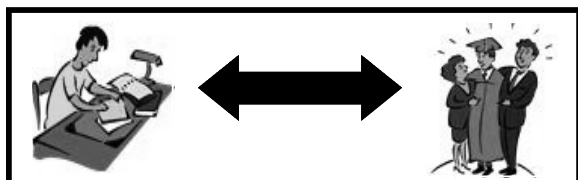


**Good choices lead to good consequences; bad choices lead to bad consequences.**



In those cases where you don't make a choice, you have just exercised your right to choose. It is important to make wise decisions. People can end up in places they don't want to be because of one bad choice. If you expect to have a good life, you must make good choices. Even when someone makes a bad choice that affects you adversely, it is up to you to choose the way you will react.

**There is a price to pay for every decision made.** Wise decisions require payment up front (time and effort). Foolish decisions are costly too; however, the price is paid on the back end and usually when you least expect. One choice (either good or bad) can change your life. **Visit us: [www.TheABCsOfLife.info](http://www.TheABCsOfLife.info).**





**LAKESHA NEWMAN-MCCLENDON, MBA** graduated from Morgan State University (MSU) in 1998 with a Bachelor of Science in Health Education and Administration. LaKeisha earned a Masters in Business with a concentration in Management from MSU in 2003. She currently works for the Food and Drug Administration as a Training and Communications Specialist. Driven by her intense desire to inspire young people to reach their full potential, LaKeisha partnered with YoBo Productions, Inc. This dynamic team provides a powerful platform to spread the message of choices and accountability through Silly Women ~ The Conference and ABCs of Life Youth Workshops and Conferences. LaKeisha resides in Columbia with her husband Richard and children Markus, Mason, Madison and MaKai.



**ANTOINE GARRETT** is a life coach, trainer, speaker and writer. His calling is to empower and educate others. Antoine built an outstanding career in education and human services serving young people and families. Antoine served as the Healthy Relationships Facilitator for the Young Women In Action Initiative (YWIA), through the Baltimore City Mayor's Office, in conjunction with Baltimore City Public Schools. Antoine is a graduate of Hampton University. He completed professional coach training from The Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching (IPEC). Additionally, he is a contributing writer for AskDeanna Magazine, a California-based relationships publication. Antoine partners with the ABC's of Life Youth Foundation and Silly Women ~ The Conference to bring life changing messages to various groups across the United States. Antoine is a happily married father of five children. In his spare time he is a member of the Fine Arts Ministry and assists the Youth Ministry of the New Psalmist Baptist Church in Baltimore, Maryland. Learn more at [www.AntoineKGarrett.com](http://www.AntoineKGarrett.com).



**DONTA M. MORRISON** is a veteran of the United States Air Force and has been advocating against the spread of HIV/AIDS for nearly 10 years. In 2005 he formed The Know U 1st Foundation, a non-profit agency whose mission is to educate youth and young adults within communities of color on the impact of HIV. Donta assisted on research and youth empowerment projects for UCLA and Children's Hospital Los Angeles. He has presented the "HIV 101" workshops for the Tavis Smiley Leadership Institute, University of Texas at Austin, and inmates within Los Angeles' Men's Central Jail and Victorville Federal Prison. Donta is one of the original contributing writers for Be All You Can Be ~ The Magazine and is a principal team member of Silly Women ~ The Conference and The ABCs of Life Youth Conference.



**JORGE A. BECERRA** is a Veterans Per Diem Case Manager for the Salvation Army. He is exclusively assigned to dual diagnosed (addiction to alcohol or drugs and mental disorders) homeless veterans and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Afghanistran Freedom (OAF) veterans. Jorge maintains a personal involvement with various community organizations focusing on gang prevention and intervention, and drug and alcohol awareness. In 2009 Jorge joined the ABCs of Life Conference team and with his unique life experiences reinforces the message on the power of choices.



**KEITH "SARGE" GIBBS** is a 22-year Veteran of the United States Marine Corps and United States Army. As a civilian, Keith took on the task of completing his college degree while maintaining a full time job. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from University of Phoenix in Computer Information Technology. While his career in Information Technology was professionally rewarding, Gibbs realized his true passion was to work with individuals and their communities. This passion led Keith to form Sarges Community Base, Inc. a Non-Profit 501(c)(3) organization that works with youth through a variety of components, providing physical, academic and social programs that teach basic life skills, as well as adult programming to empower and sustain the parents of the children in the youth programs. Keith resides in Altadena, California with his wife Jenifer. They have an adult son, Jermaine. Learn more at [www.SargesCB.org](http://www.SargesCB.org).



**GAIL WRIGHT TARRY** is the Vice President of YoBo Productions, Inc. and has over 30 years of administrative and human resource experience. Gail and her sister Yolanda Wright Bozant formed YoBo Productions in 2004, the parent organization for Silly Women ~ The Conference, The ABCs of Life Youth Conference and Be All You Can Be ~ The Magazine. Gail diligently leads the operational and administrative aspects of YoBo Productions, Inc.



**ELIA COLMENERO** currently works for Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP, Inc.) as a Drug Court Counselor. She started as a gang unit counselor doing intervention and later promoted to treatment counseling. Elia has a California state certification as a substance abuse counselor. While working full-time Elia is pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Social Work and Sociology. Elia is an active member of the ABCs of Life and Silly Women ~ The Conference team. Her passion is helping people in active addiction and stems from her desire to help people just like her dad. Elia is the proud parent of a teenage daughter, the love of her life.



**YOLANDA WRIGHT BOZANT** (affectionately known as YoBo) retired from Corporate America in 2002 to care for her parents. She has published five books. In January 2006, YoBo launched Be All You Can Be ~ The Magazine. YoBo is the co-founder of Silly Women ~ The Conference. In November 2007 The ABCs of Life Youth Foundation was founded. YoBo co-hosts the SEX, RELIGION AND LOVE RADIO SHOW (live Sundays at 3:00 p.m. PST—KTYM AM1460 in Los Angeles or [www.KTYM.com](http://www.KTYM.com)). YoBo resides in Compton, California with her father and her husband, Frank Bozant. They have two adult children: Christa Michelle and Christopher Michael. Visit her at [www.YoBoProductions.com](http://www.YoBoProductions.com).

Lynette Patrice

# THE DOWN LOW CHURCH

July 2008. It had been a hectic week. Someone had broken into our home and stolen items from my husband's studio room. We had gone to Vegas over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. That next Tuesday my husband noticed his mixing board was missing. It had been attached to the computer so he knew it had not been misplaced. The keyboard and microphone were still in place.

I suspected the burglar was an acquaintance of my daughter so I had been going back and forth with her. To be honest, I would have preferred that it was someone she knew who took advantage of the moment as opposed to it being a random burglar. I forbade her to stay at home until an alarm system was installed.

After work, I went by my aunt's home to get my daughter. My husband kept calling, asking when I was coming home because he wanted to talk to me. But I was with my favorite aunt and didn't rush. About 9:00 p.m. he called again. I asked what was so important and offered to meet him at a restaurant. He declined but asked if I could leave my daughter with my aunt.

My daughter ended up staying where she was. It was summertime and school was out. I still



lollygagged because I knew it couldn't be that serious. It took 20 minutes to get home. I turned the corner and noticed the car of the couple over the marriage ministry at our church. It was 10:30 p.m. and a weeknight so I assumed it was something serious. Maybe my husband was about to die.

I went in my house. It was dead quiet. They were sitting at the kitchen table. I had a headache from dealing with my daughter and trying to get an alarm

installed. That was going to be another \$600 expense. All I wanted to do was get in the bed. I walked in wondering what was going on. They said, "Come in and have a seat." I did—after I went to the bathroom.

I took a seat at the table and asked what was going on. The lady over the marriage ministry had a book and read some scripture about the flesh. Then we had a word of prayer. My heart had dropped to the bottom of my stomach. At first I thought my husband was about to die but when she read scriptures about the flesh being weak, I anticipated that he had been unfaithful. She looked at my husband and said, "Okay, tell her."

He asked, "You remember Harry?" I said, "Yes..." He proceeded with his version of the story. Kim (Harry's babymama) had called him three

weeks earlier to let him know Harry had gotten shot and killed. Then she called him the following Tuesday while he was in a staff meeting at church to tell him that she and Harry had been HIV+ since 2006. He finished the sentence with "...and now so am I."

#### THAT'S WHEN I STARTED SCREAMING!

We met with our pastor the next week. The first thing he wanted to know was who knew. At that time it was only a few people: my husband and I, plus the couple who was there the night he told me. I told our pastor that we had not told anyone in our families, but that we would eventually do so. (It had only been a week and at the time I had decided not to tell my daughter, but I eventually told her.)

Our pastor said, "No one else needs to know about this." He asked if I planned to continue with the marriage and if I had medical insurance so that my husband would have health care coverage. He also suggested we could go to counseling to learn how to be safely intimate with each other.

I was still in shock and could not respond. To me it wasn't an actual counseling session. I was not told that I had the right to divorce. After that day my pastor never said another word to me. If I saw him in service he would give the nod that pastors do. There was no follow up session. To this day, the First Lady has never called me. I was the secretary for the Clergy Wives (my husband was an ordained Elder and the Minister of Music) so I interacted with her in ministry. The church was not that large where she would not have come into contact with me. I know she was aware of what happened because the pastor mentioned that she couldn't make the meeting. Woman to woman, I felt something wasn't right about that. Most first ladies are protective of their women. I later speculated that she is covering up her own issues. Interestingly enough, the former Minister of Music at the church and his wife died of AIDS. The wife actually died before he did. I think some of the older members knew about his sexual preference.

Over the next few weeks I tried to communicate with the couple who knew what was going on but they would not return my calls. One night I confronted the wife and she said, "We know you are a strong woman and you'll be okay. We just want

to make sure that [he'll] be okay." After that I realized how things would be going down. This was a couple we went to dinner with every Sunday after church and did the couples thing together. I felt abandoned in a sense by my church family. I might have been a strong woman but they didn't know what I was on the verge of possibly doing.

This all had happened in July and I left the church in November, only returning for funerals. That had been my church for over ten years. I was a tithe paying, offering giving, auxiliary working member, yet I left feeling as though I was an outcast. My husband, on the other hand, was never sat down after the pastor learned about the incident with Harry. He is still an Elder. He is still Minister of Music and leads praise and worship every Sunday. He still wears his wedding ring, from what I'm told. He's still directing the choir for the 'How Sweet The Sound' annual competition.

As for Bishop Eddie Long, I don't know much about him. I've never watched him or heard him preach. When I first heard about the allegations, my first reaction was to pray for his wife. God protected me in spite of all that occurred. That's not always the case for wives.

The thing I do know is that the church needs to wake up. There are undercover stories in the church and eventually this stuff will come out. There are pastors coercing young boys to have sex. It's scary when older men go after young boys. My husband was abused at a young age. I don't know if the molester was a member of their church; I believe it was a close friend or family member. He never got counseling - at least not what I'd call counseling. He never got any professional help. He told his mom, she blamed herself and thought he was okay because he was into church and gospel music. Her solution was to pack up and move to another city and another church.

I don't have data to support what Black families do, but maybe certain families choose not to deal with things, never realizing that it will later have major consequences and repercussions. Who knows what the guy who molested my husband went on to do and how many boys he messed with who now have the same issues as my husband. We don't want to believe that people can be so ghastly. But

they are and in my husband's case, his mother swept the molestation under the rug. As a mother I don't think I would make the assumption that my daughter was okay because she "seemed okay". It's probably the way her mother dealt with situations. When my husband exhibited homosexual behavior, the pastor swept it under the rug at least twice. Everything in the church is swept under the rug. But that's another topic. We've got to break the cycle. This is done through communication and education.

I know that this cycle repeats itself. Harry was not my husband's first; years earlier he had sent an email to a church musician. The musician actually called and told me about it because he was planning to go to our pastor the next day but felt obligated to tell me. He was upset by the email. The next day I got a call from my pastor to come meet about the situation. My husband basically said it was a joke email, and was not serious. I asked to see it but our pastor didn't think that was a good idea. Nevertheless, our pastor chose to believe it was a joke. My husband wasn't Minister of Music at the time; he worked in the music department. He wasn't sat down because he did not have a leadership role. He was an aspiring minister so some of his duties were taken away. Essentially, it was a pat on the hand. At home he apologized and we moved on from there. Keep in mind, I was not allowed to see the email so I didn't have any reason to believe that he wasn't necessarily telling the truth. If I had seen the email perhaps something would have struck a nerve or indicated there was a problem. I didn't know for all those years what he was doing; you can't be led by appearances. I was so happy to marry a nice Christian man, a minister, a decent man who didn't try to get in my pants before marriage. He only kissed me on the cheek and wouldn't French kiss me. (He didn't French kiss me after our marriage either and was never in the mood for sex.)

My soon-to-be-ex-husband is now 40 and I don't know what he's doing. I hope that with his condition he is not out spreading anything around but I really don't know. If he were to see a man, honestly, I don't think he would say anything. I would hope he would use protection but I don't

think he'd disclose his status.

Through my two year journey and from sharing this story, people have said that I am bitter because of what happened to me, and that I'm paranoid and think every man is gay. Now to hear the recent allegations, all I can say is wow.

This issue is bigger than a mega-church pastor and alleged inappropriate behavior. This is about men ... and women doing what they do and coming home to their mates. In my case, it was deeper than a love-triangle. My husband and Harry had a thing going on since 1999. (We got married in 1996.) Harry had a baby mama but was also sleeping with my husband. Now we're up to four people. Yet Harry was at a party with some other chick he was messing with who was also married (now up to six people). Her husband came to the party; he and Harry got into an altercation and the husband shot and killed Harry. The police kept the case open for a while but the husband and wife had both disappeared. It is speculated that they went back to Jamaica, not knowing that they are possibly HIV-positive too.

After Harry's death, my husband wrote him a letter. The couple I mentioned earlier had suggested that he do this because when a person loses a loved one, it can help. The wife is the one who told me about the letter, after I told her that he seemed sad. I later asked my husband if he ever wrote the letter and he said yes, and that she had made the suggestion. He wasn't trying to go to a counselor; he was dealing with it on his own, sweeping it under the rug too. He never wrote a letter to me with an explanation or apology....

It's been hard finding a church. I have been visiting different places but haven't found a church home. That's been a major battle. But the most important thing is that it's been 26 months and I remain HIV-negative. That is a blessing.

CONTACT:

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***Editor's note: Though some people/pastors/peers may have genuine concern, they may not be professionally trained to meet your needs. If faced with life-altering trauma, it may be helpful to also seek the guidance of a licensed, clinical counselor.***

# *The ABCs Of Life Youth Conference*

“ACTIONS, BEHAVIORS, CHOICES AND DECISIONS HAVE AN EFFECT ON YOUR FUTURE!”™



## **LOOK WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING:**

**Here is what Candi M. has to say about ABCs of Life:** “As the Outreach Specialist of the Project YESS Program at Long Beach City College, it is my job to facilitate Life Skills Training Classes for Probation and Foster Youth before they transition out of the foster care system.... Each member of the team brings a different flavor, spin or creativity that makes them all unique. They have a real way of helping our youth feel comfortable and significant at the same time. They have been instrumental in setting the tone for the remaining class sessions within the program and because of this they have become a reoccurring part of our Life Skills Training agenda. I believe, without The ABCs of Life Conference Team, our program would not be the same.”

**Shylee J., a Transition Counselor at a Los Angeles County juvenile detention center says:** “When [ABCs of Life] presents here, the amount of fights decrease; therefore, I know that their presentation has made a huge effect on our students...They inform the students on how important it is to respect authority; they touch on health issues; they inform students how important it is to set goals and be able to achieve them regardless of their circumstances ... and understand that there are better ways to achieve a goal other than selling drugs and robbing people.”

**An incarcerated teen wrote:** “I am a 4<sup>th</sup> timer at [juvenile hall]....I would like to know if you guys can come more often. So the people who are in here for their first time can change. It could be their first and last time.”

**A college student wrote:** “I feel that you have presented new outstanding information to me. I was completely unaware of the fact that I am not using my opportunities. I can constantly change my life by taking advantage of the numerous chances at the University. I absolutely loved it! Thank you so much!! ”

**A parent wrote:** “When speaking to the kids after the conference the boys were like, ‘Yeah it was alright.’ [The girls] couldn’t stop talking about it and said that a lot of the different topics helped them. When speaking to the boys individually they said that it was good and they did get a lot out of it. Keep doing what you’re doing. It does take a Village.”

**[www.TheABCsOfLife.info](http://www.TheABCsOfLife.info)**



# Everybody Loves Granny

[www.EverybodyLovesGranny.com](http://www.EverybodyLovesGranny.com)  
[DearGrannyHerself@yahoo.com](mailto:DearGrannyHerself@yahoo.com)

**H**ello there chirrens. This here is Granny, all blessed and high and favored in the Lard. He have sho nuff bend good to Granny, yes he have. Sometime Granny soul look back and wonder how Granny made it over. But Granny ain't had much time to look back and wonder these past few days cuz Granny bend lookding at all this stuff on TV wif Bishop Eddie Long. Granny git a bunch of TV numbers since Deacon Collins put in a convertible box and Eddie Long bend on all the numbers, even the ones wif white peepose who never heard of him.

There is one thang bout Eddie Long that Granny ain't quite figgered out. How somebody that shawt git a name like Long? Unlessun he got sompfin else long - hehehehahaha! Granny ain't talking bout his legs neiver! Woooo hooooo! But for real tho, he is a itty bitty man. His pulpick stand gotta be special made cuz any other one would go pass his neck. He make sho that no preacher mens be standing behind him in the pulpick and you ain't gonna never see him standing necks to no mens. Leastways no tall mens cuz that's how shawt mens do. Just watch Kurt Frankman on Sunday the Best and see how he shy away from tall mens. Tall womens too.

The thang that Bishop Long is gonna need right now is some prayer. Granny is talking bout some for real prayer but see here chirrens, the prolem is gonna be that church peepose ain't gonna wanna come together and pray. Just like at the church mothers meeting this week. When the church mothers was going over the prayer list Granny said sompfin bout Bishop Eddie Long. Lard Jesus, what Granny say that for? Mother Henderson said she wun't praying for the man and he need to go to jail cuz he suck you know what. So Granny said if that's all it take to go to jail then we's all gonna be locked

up! Hahahohoho! Harharhar! Woo Jesus! Then Mother Jenkins said she was wif Mother Henderson and she wun't praying for Eddie Long eiver. Granny let her slide cuz she is good and homemade crazy. She missed prayer meeting week 'fore last cuz she throwed a party for her son who just got outta jail. All Granny wanna know is who gonna throw him a party when he go back. And she missed prayer meeting the week after that cuz she din't wanna leave that same son at home alone in her house. That makes Granny wonder what the hell he doing up in her house.

Then Mother Thomas said the church mothers need to pray that the will of the Lard be did and not jurge nobody. That's when Mother Henderson and Mother Jenkins turnt on Mother Thomas. Mother Thomas got mad at the two of 'em and said sompfin bout Mother Henderson's crackhead son. That boy will smoke you if he get a lighter close a nuff to you. His lips is all dry but he can sew his butt off. Granny like him cuz he a honest crackhead. He will tell you he need to make some money to git a hit. But yall know peepose don't like nobody talking bout they chirrens, even if it is true. So Mother Henderson told Mother Thomas that she don't need to be talking bout nobody son, not wif that big ol' gap in her son mouf. He do have a gap big a nuff to fit two more teefs in between. That's when Granny jumped in to try and retrofy the sitiation but by then Mother Thomas had grabbed her pocketbook and said she wun't gonna sit there and let them two old grumps defacate her character and she said she wun't gonna have nuffin else to do wif the church mothers unlessun we's was all cooking a mess of food for Mother Henderson's fruneral. And then Mother Henderson told Mother Thomas that she don't need to be tryna pray for nobody anyways cuz it wun't too long ago that she used to go wif a married man who brung her weed and did it to her on the couch. See chirrens, that's why come yall can't be telling peepose all yo bidnis.

Granny turnt to look at the other church mothers but they was sitting there lookding all fiberglasted at what was going on. Granny hollered at 'em all to git up and stop Mother Thomas from walking out the prayer meeting cuz like Granny said, Bishop Eddie Long need some for real prayer. But by the time the

**“There is one thang bout Eddie Long  
that Granny ain’t quite figgered out.  
How somebody that shawt git a name like Long?”**

church mothers got Mother Thomas and Mother Henderson and Mother Jenkins settled down, the church mothers needed some prayer theyselves and Granny needed a drank. Then Mother Jenkins wif her messy self had to say sompfin else. She said that she still wun’t gonna pray for no mens what like to do it wif young boys. And Granny said then you can’t pray no mo for Granny, cuz bout three-fo times the week at bout 1 uh clock in the moaning, whew wee, that’s bout the time Granny nature rise and what Granny would give to git wif a young buck that know how to git his swerve on! Glory be to Jeeeeeeeeeeeeesus! Bless that wunnafro name! Hiya! Hammercy...

Chirrens, listen at Granny. Whatsomever yall do, keep yo hand in the master hand. And if it ain’t too much trouble for all yall chirrens what is saved for really real, say a prayer for Bishop Eddie Long cuz from what Granny sent them church mothers do, ain’t too many peepose praying for him. Oh yeah, one nother thang that Granny might near forgotted. Where is umm, what’s them two scamps name that shows up any time a tv

cambra be round? Granny mine going bad but hole on while it come to Granny rememory ... ..  
... .. errrr uhhhhh Rebm. Jesse Jackson and Rebm. Al Sharpman! Where them two jacklegs at now? Any other time they is all up in the cambra running they moufs and here go a offertunity for to be on tv and they done ranned and hided. That’s the necks thang that won’t be long no more - Eddie Long list of friends. Granny know why come Jesse Jackson is hiding cuz his secret came out the other year. It was Tiger Wood last year, the politicking man wif the baby the year ‘fo that, and sho’ as heaven is happy it’s gonna be somebody else necks year. So sweet chirrens, Granny want yall to stay sweet. Y’all stay wif the Lard and no matter what kinda hanky panky yall git tangled up in, just mermember that Gawd love you and so do Granny. And say a prayer for Bishop Eddie Long cuz them holier-then-now church mothers ain’t fixna pray for the man. And eiver way it go, he sho nuff need some prayer. Them church mothers need some too.

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# I'M JUST SAYIN...

PATRICK BOZANT

The gays are the only ones in the church being transparent. We chastise them in public for what they do while we do our own stuff in private. Yet they are the only ones in the church willing to do what they do in the open. The pastors, deacons, ministers and the rest of us won't do all the stuff we do outside of church in the church.

It's easy to single out the gays; those are the only ones who can be singled out because everyone else is keeping things under wrap. You can tell what the gays do because it's written all over their face (except you DL brothers, shout out to Bishop E-Luv). We might as well accept them because we accept everybody else when we don't know what the hell they do. Everybody else puts on their front, their blinders, and their shields. They see all the stomachs poked out and won't say a word other than we've got some new little saints. But it's the gays who catch a bad rap because they carry what they do to church.

The conception the church has of gays is that they are heathens and carnal — as though a person woke up one day and decided to start liking men. But a pastor can be caught stealing money from the church and sleeping with half the women in the congregation and still be the pastor. But let him sleep with one man and he's lost his anointing. A woman can have 15 babies and never bring a husband to church, and she can still be on the praise and worship team and keep her title of Minister So-and-So.

If all the gay people in church raised their hand and said "I'm gay," we could change the

misconceptions. People watch what we do. We have to live what we talk about. I give props to the gay people because they will be gay in your face and gay outside your face. They won't put bass in their voice and give you a firm hand shake at church. They come in being just who the hell they are, greeting everybody with "Hey girrrrrr!"

This is a message for the pastors. We can learn something from the gays. How about all the saints bring the real you to church next Sunday. If you bring the real you to church, then hopefully your flock will bring the real them to church the next week. If you've got a girlfriend, bring her to church and introduce her to your wife. If you like to get high, go to church high. If you like to get drunk, bring your bottle. Just for one Sunday. But if the pastor brought the real him to church, the people would go find another pastor who fits their image of the perfect pastor. Put a magnifying glass to anybody's life and you will see some faults. I'm just waiting to see who's the next one to get caught.

Where should the line be drawn? At cheating on your wife with a man? Why not cheating on your wife with a woman? Or cheating on your taxes? Should you step down from the pulpit because you set up a separate ministry to avoid tax laws? Every pastor has a ministry outside of the church ministry so they don't have to pay taxes - at least every one I know. A loophole is a loophole. So why can't the gays have a loophole too? If the church wants the gays to live absolute, then we all should live absolute, following the laws of God AND the laws of man.

In law you have two theories. You have the Spirit of the Law (which is the reason or purpose behind the law) and the Rule of the Law (which is the way to enforce the purpose or reason). Take a STOP sign for example. The Spirit of the Law says that to ensure public safety we should have STOP signs. The Rule of the Law says that we are supposed to come to a complete stop at every stop sign. If I am heading down a street at 2 in the morning, not a car in sight, approaching a stop sign and decide not to stop, would you agree that I did not violate the Spirit of the Law, and therefore not violating the Law? Yes, the law says I need to stop, but me not stopping is not endangering public safety. Now take what the Bible says about homosexuality and interject the same example. The Spirit behind the Law is that we had a world to populate at the time and it takes a man and

woman to do so. Fast forward to the present time where we are approaching a worldwide population of seven billion people. I would argue that the Spirit of the Law is no longer being violated; so therefore, the Law is not being broken.

We're supposed to be Christians doing things the right way. Where do we draw the line? Should you step down from any type of ministry because you cussed somebody out? Should you step down because you were at the strip club a

couple days ago while your wife was at home? It's time for us to do a self-examination so we can move on.

I suggest Bishop Long use the Tiger Woods approach and pay about 10 or 15 women to say

they've been sleeping with him for the last year. He'd still take a hit but it won't be that bad. He won't be forced to step down if he's cheating on his wife with another woman. He can go to counseling and be accepted back in the pulpit in a few months because pastor slipped up. But if he's cheating with a man, he's not consecrated anymore and he's not called by God.

The church doesn't have double standards – it has NO standards. If Bishop Long is gay, no one will want him as their pastor. He's the same man he's been. As long we don't know the truth about each other, it's okay. And

that is the problem. This is the perfect opportunity to talk about the bigger issue, but nobody wants to lift up the rug or find the keys to the closet.

**We can learn something from the gays. How about all the saints bring the real you to church next Sunday.... If you've got a girlfriend, bring her to church and introduce her to your wife.... If you like to get drunk, bring your bottle.**



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*Excerpt from "The Prayers Mama Prayed"*

## A PRAYER FOR JUSTICE

Through it all I have learned to live without justice as well as in justice. God watches over all people, even those who do not praise or acknowledge him. Lord God, I love you and I adore you. In all my pride and sinful ways, you continue to love me. I bless and praise you for your watchful eye over all people.

*But I say: Love your enemies!  
Pray for those who persecute you!  
In that way you will be acting as true sons of your Father in heaven.  
For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good,  
and sends rain on the just and on the unjust too.  
If you love only those who love you, what good is that?  
Even scoundrels do that much.  
If you are friendly only to your friends,  
how are you different from anyone else?  
Even the heathen do that.*

MATTHEW 5:44-47

Written July 20, 1993

**JEWEL M. CANTON BOWIE WRIGHT**  
*"Mama"*



# In the Long Run

*Christa Bozant Bereal*

When Bishop Eddie Long is dead and gone, people will only talk about how many lives he saved. Just like they talk about what a legend Michael Jackson is. But when Michael was fighting charges regarding boys sleeping in his bed ... well, you know how that went.

So all I'm saying is, what's really going to matter in the long run? We know what the greater good will be. Bishop Eddie Long will be remembered for being the Man of God.



*LaKeisha Newman McClendon*

**WOW!**

This is between Bishop Long, Mrs. Long, the Long Family, those young men, and the 30,000 members.

Up until the other day, I had not paid any attention to his biceps or his anointing.

In the words of my good friend Forrest Gump, "That's all I have to say about that!"

KEISHA





# Gossip Tips

## FROM AUNT TEE

Okay yall here I go. I wunt gon say nuthin about no Bishop Eddie Longs nor nary no other preacher mens cuz that's just the way Big Mamma raised up us gals. But that trifflin Granny dun worried the dog snot out of Aunt Tee to hurra up an write sommin. And she outta knowed better cuz the other thang Big Mamma taught us gals is that hoing run all up in our fambly. What it gonna look like wif Aunt Tee tryna to sit up and jurge somebody else for what they like to do or git did to them? Shoot, Aunt Tee aint never stopped liking what she liked and that is the sho nuff truth. I betcha that is the same truth for every other person, paster or preacher out there. Like the Bible say, how you gonna tell some nother man he got a twig in his eye when you got a log up in yo own eye? Ooops, now we is gettin sumwheres.

What iffin Aunt Tee was to call the news peopose and say she got sumpin to say bout the Bishop. Da repoter is gonna say OK lets talk but aint gonna say they gonna dig up yo mess too. They gonna start in askin one or two questions bout Eddie Longs. Then the repoter is gonna sneak in a question bout sommin Aunt Tee don't wunt nobody to know bout — like that time Aunt Tee was tryna sneeak back home afta being out all night long. Well it wusnt so much as sneeakin. What Aunt Tee was tryna to do was walk from the car to the front door pass all the neighbors on they ways to church. Now dat dont sound so bad do it? Not unlessin Aunt Tee add the part bout Aunt Tee havin on see thu ho cloves from being at the juke joint the night before. Maybe Aunt Tee woulda been all rite iffin Aunt Tee camed

**“What it gonna look like wif Aunt Tee tryna to sit up and jurge somebody else for what they like to do or git did to them? Shoot, Aunt Tee aint never stopped liking what she liked and that is the sho nuff truth.”**

home afta the juke joint closed. But naw naw, Aunt Tee had to make a stop and get Aunt Tee freak on up in sumbody bed. Now see there goes that there log poppin up in Aunt Tee eye.

Yall know what? As bad as that 'made up' story up yonder sound bout Aunt Tee, it aint got nuthin on what Aunt Tee know bout lots of other folk. But Aunt Tee is gonna shut the shut up. Aunt Tee aint mad bout nary nother preacher mens nor womens commin out sayin nuffin good or bad bout Eddie Longs. Cuz just the way dat repoter can commence to diggin up Aunt Tee skeletons, they can sho nuff dig up other peopose skeletons. Like I said before, what I know bout other folks scare me so I know I

aint tryna stir up no mess. And thats a right much to say cuzza what Aunt Tee knows bout my own kinfolks from the kids generation all the ways back to great great grand kinfolks and all the mess they was doing up in the country. Chile shoot,

aint nuffin changed. Iffen Aunt Tee just talked bout Aunt Tee peopose, shoot, yall would be be tryna say Eddie Longs aint did nuthin. Erbody still alive, wusnt no bullets used, and far as Aunt Tee can tell wusnt nobody kin to each other.

So Auntie gonna stop right thurr cuz it is worster thangs than two unkin growned folks gettin they freak on. I aint gonna talk bout yalls cuz I sho dont want yall talkin bout mines. Erbody else need to keep doin what they doin and keep they moufs shut too. Unlessin they need to use they mouf to do what they like to do. Hahahahehehe!!!

# *Silly Women ~*

## THE CONFERENCE

**“If you’re not one ... you know one!”**

*“For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive*

### **SILLY WOMEN**

*laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning,  
and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

II TIMOTHY 3:6-7 (KJV)

#### MISSION:

To empower and inspire people to facilitate change in their lives  
by making choices that recreate a life aligned to their destiny.



She patiently waits  
at half past eleven  
Her man swore he'd be there  
to get her by seven  
Tho' the situation looks bad,  
it is much worse by far...  
She ain't going nowhere  
**'CAUSE HE'S GOT HER CAR!**

### *Silly Women ~ The Conference*

addresses some of the  
unanswered **“WHY”** questions.

These and many more like  
them are the reason  
so many of us feel burdened  
and unable to reach our  
God-given potential.

**BUT ...**  
**a change is coming!**

**WHY** does he still have a key to your house?

**WHY** do you fight your babydaddy's other babymama?

**WHY** hasn't he introduced you to his family?

**WHY** will he go to bed with you but won't go to church with you?

**WHY** do you eat pork chops and request prayer for your pressure to go down?

**WHY** do you spend your rent money on clothes?

**WHY** are you supporting your grown kids AND their kids too?

**WHY** do you want another husband?

**WHY** do you want her husband?

**WHY** can't you keep a job?

**WHY** do you think *Silly Women ~ The Conference* is not for you?

# JURY'S STILL OUT

ANTOINE K. GARRETT

Did he do it? Is it possibly the same man that others hold up as an example of faith and family? The murmurs and whispering are all around town. The streets are talking, and everybody's wondering when will the truth come out? Behind closed doors there is certain to be frustration, anxiety and many prayers to God, asking "When will this all be over?!" There may have even been a few, "Why me lawd?!" statements of exasperation thrown about! And I'm talking about me.

This describes all that went on during the time that I was away at college in Virginia, while an ex-girlfriend was at home in New York, claiming that I was the father of her child.

Imagine the drama, gossip, and frustration of my family dealing with this major mess, while I am away. It was my mess to deal with. I never answered all the gossips and busybodies asking me questions all the time. I endured stares and whispers. Through five years of turmoil, it was confirmed that I did indeed have a son, and by this time, I'd also had a daughter. So I became a teen father x2. In reality, I live with the consequences of my actions and love my children dearly. I work to get better every day.

I can't write about Bishop Long without looking in the mirror first. I guess you can see that I know a thing or two about drama. In fact, I am well versed in whispers, gossip, and accusations, all while trying to keep my head up. My sins, flaws and faults make me more empathetic and compassionate to others that experience drama. However, while dealing with my mess, I learned firsthand two important lessons:



1) *Never Say Never.* Many times we look at others' circumstances and say, "It'll never be me." I've lived long enough to say with confidence, until you've experienced the exact same circumstance with the same way of thinking, then it is impossible to say what you'll *never* do. It's easy to do. Divorce courts, jails and churches are full of people who said, "I'll never..."

2) *The Devil's in the Details.* It's too easy to cast judgment, and in the process make your sins, faults, or moral indiscretions seem tiny compared to others. The Bible reminds us that, "ALL have fallen short" meaning that no one is perfect. It's not for any one of us spectators to judge. That man, his wife, and their God have to work through this. If you're ready to pass judgment and throw stones, I just hope that your glass house is shatterproof and you've got a great insurance policy, because there are going to be some boulders thrown your way.

*It's not for us to worry if he's guilty, when we're guilty of our own stuff. Thankfully, yours and mine just don't happen to make the news!*

**ANTOINE GARRETT** is a life coach, trainer, speaker and writer. His calling is to empower and educate others. Antoine built an outstanding career in education and human services serving young people and families. Antoine served as the Healthy Relationships Facilitator for the Young Women In Action Initiative (YWIA), through the Baltimore City Mayor's Office, in conjunction with Baltimore City Public Schools. Antoine is a graduate of Hampton University. He completed professional coach training from The Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching (IPEC). Additionally, he is a contributing writer for AskDeanna Magazine, a California-based relationships publication. Antoine partners with the ABC's of Life Youth Foundation and Silly Women ~ The Conference to bring life changing messages to various groups across the United States. Antoine is a happily married father of five children. In his spare time he is a member of the Fine Arts Ministry and assists the Youth Ministry of the New Psalmist Baptist Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

Learn more at [www.AntoineKGarrett.com](http://www.AntoineKGarrett.com)

# Antoine K Garrett

**Are you as successful as you want to be?**  
**Does your income exceed your expectations?**  
**Are you vibrant and excited about life?**  
**Are you having fun?**

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## **Below are some very good reasons to work with a coach:**

World class athletes work with coaches. Coaches keep them on track and help them get to the next level. Coaches help them see things they cannot see by themselves. Many of the most talented and successful people in the world such as Tiger Woods, have a coach.

We are often not motivated to do the things we know we should do. Working with a coach will give you access to motivation you never knew existed. Your level of performance will dramatically improve.

Working with a coach will give you the tools and the structure to be unstoppable in the face of adversity.

Working with a coach is a vehicle to create whatever is important to you.

More importantly your Coach will help you create things you have not and probably will not create on your own.

Your coach will challenge your current mindset, assumptions, and modes of operation and help you to find and do what works!

Coaching will clearly distinguish what you have control over, what you do not have control over and what you may be able to influence.

**Antoine K. Garrett, CEO**  
**EmpowerU Coaching**

**[www.AntoineKGarrett.com](http://www.AntoineKGarrett.com)**

# THE BACK PAGE

*I wrote the following in March 2009. As I type these words, it is September 2010.  
It was appropriate then, it is appropriate now, and will most likely be appropriate for years to come.*

## CHURCH GOSSIP

While running my errands I happened to see  
A gentleman who has always been kind to me  
As usual we struck up a friendly conversation  
And he proceeded to tell me about a Pastor's situation  
He mentioned his name, and I'd heard of so-and-so  
He rattled off the details (as though I didn't know)  
Apparently the man committed an indiscretion or two  
I knew for a fact that this story was true  
Suddenly my mind went back to once upon a time  
When church gossipers were busy spreading business of mine  
I was approached by a woman who told me what she heard  
I listened in silence as she repeated every word  
She adamantly refused to believe any of the tale  
(Apparently she didn't know me very well)  
I didn't have the nerve to say it was all true  
She finished her story with, "I'll be praying for you."  
Isn't it amazing that when I stumbled and fell  
The church folks did nothing but run and tell  
Meanwhile this man kept going on with his story  
About Pastor So-and-So falling from glory  
I thought about the woman who defended my name  
And realized it was time for me to do the same  
"The same God who forgave me can forgive him too  
Because the things I've done – if only you knew...  
I could line up my sin against what this pastor has done  
And I'd have that pastor beat nearly 2 to 1  
I don't do church gossip because I know my place  
I was a filthy sinner whom God saved by grace  
I didn't stop sinning after I came to the Lord  
In fact, I probably cut up worse than before  
Each time I repented after deliberately committing sin  
God offered new mercy time and time again  
As for this situation with Pastor So-and-So  
He is no different from anybody I know  
I advise church gossipers to keep their mouths closed  
Because what lies up ahead, only Heaven knows  
I haven't always tried to be all I can be  
One time the Chief Church Gossiper happened to be me  
I'd repeat a story of gossip – and Lord I'd have a time  
That is, unless the gossip was some business of mine."

©YOLANDA WRIGHT BOZANT

"PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN GLASS HOUSES  
SHOULD NOT THROW STONES."

**MAMA**



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She patiently waits at half past eleven,  
Her man swore he'd be there to get her by seven.  
Tho' the situation looks bad, it is much worse by far—  
She ain't going nowhere...cuz he's got her car!

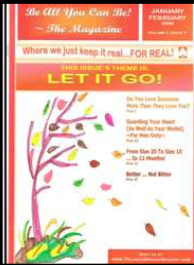
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