

Reach UP

The Magazine to Empower and Enrich Today's Woman

Spring 2019



Faith
Good Friday Grief

Lifestyle
Fired Up

HELLO Dear Friend,

Backstory: the story behind the story. I love learning the backstories of people and events. Maybe that's because I like the twists and turns in the process of something becoming a story.

In this issue, the backstory to Kyiva's story links to Karen's article. Both dealt with disappointments, and both overcame them.

In the early 2000s, Karen was going through the biggest shock and major upheaval in her life. As she was working through her own sadness with God, she

reached out to help children who, through no fault of their own, were also experiencing sadness. Among these little kids was seven-year-old Kyiva.

Kyiva was bounced between mother types of neighbors and friends as her mother struggled with alcoholism. Hearing about the kids' program at a nearby church, Kyiva started going. There she met this nice, tall white woman with an easy laugh and kind eyes who kept telling her about Jesus. Karen would also visit Kyiva and her brother every week to see how they were doing.

Fast forward to January 2019. Karen is living in Virginia. It has been years since she last saw Kyiva, but she receives an unexpected message from her. Does Karen have time to meet? Over two hours in a diner, they get caught up on what has happened in each other's lives.



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Editor-in-Chief	Crystal Wacker Knapp
Writing Editor	Christina Williams
Spanish Translation	Paula Padilla Viquez
Spanish Editor	Mona Ré Shields
Contributing Writers	Kyiva Beasley Danette Davis Karen Duckett Deborah Gilliland Amber McCarty-Daniels
Graphic Artist	Robert Gibson
Photographs	iStock Photos

The next day Karen calls me and says, "This is a story for *Reach UP*. Want it?" Do I? Of course! Our readers LOVE first-person stories of other women who are reaching up beyond their circumstances and making a life for themselves.

Karen calls Kyiva and tells her about *Reach UP*. "Would you be willing tell your story so that others are inspired to 'reach UP' and change their lives?"

In next few pages you can read about Kyiva's response.

Backstory. Everyone has a story. What's yours? Maybe it's time to share it.

Reaching out to you,

Crystal Wacker Knapp

Editor-in-Chief: crystal@reachupmag.org

What a **MURDER**

Taught me About

Good Friday Grief

by Amber McCarty-Daniels

Good Friday is the day each year when Christians remember the death of Jesus on the Cross. Until I was 18 years old, I did not understand the grief that His death caused others.

Just a couple of weeks before Good Friday in 2011, the twelve-year-old brother of my best friend murdered her parents and attempted to murder her younger siblings.

The phone call that delivered this news to me changed my life and my view of grief forever.

If we look closer at the account in the Bible, we find it relates to us today. The followers and closest friends of Jesus experienced deep grief while watching Him die on the cross for our sins.

They grieved.

So did I.

Sometimes I wondered how it was possible to cry so much.

They were afraid for their lives.

So was I.

Knowing that someone I trusted could turn into such a cruel monster left me doubting I could ever trust another human ever again.

Their grief was real and raw.

So was mine.

Months later, the pain was still raw and the grief process still real and long.

Here's where things take a leap up. The followers of

Jesus had no idea that in three days He would rise from the dead and conquer sin, death, and the grave. Instead, all they could see was the grief of the moment.

That's what Jesus did for you and me: He conquered death. Death would not win – ever!

When we are in the midst of our grief, we too can forget that God is there. He is at work. He has not left us alone. He is catching every tear we cry. His heart is breaking right alongside our heart. Good Friday grief is real.

But so is Easter Sunday morning joy.

Jesus died and rose again so we can each experience a personal relationship with Him forever and ever. Eternal life! Not only did Jesus defeat death, but, in exchange for believing in Him as God, you get life – forever!

You may be in deep grief. Know that God is with you. Trust that because of Good Friday grief, we get the joy of knowing freedom from grief and sin and death because Jesus rose again!

If we trust Him with our lives, He will turn our Good Friday grief into joy that will last forever.

Amber McCarty-Daniels is married with three children.
Read more of her blogs at amber@ambitionsforchrist.com

ALL IN TO GET ALL OUT OF DISAPPOINTMENT

by Karen Duckett

I was not allowed to be disappointed when I was a kid. In my family we always had to “look on the bright side” and be positive. Maybe it was because my mom had a lot of hardship in her life. My father left her with two little kids and one on the way. The next man she married turned out to be an alcoholic and abuser. And on and on.

We could never complain.

Somehow complaining was bad and “God didn’t like it,” we were told. That’s not quite true, but that was the message we received.

The truth is, bad things do happen.

- ✓ You don’t get the job you were trying for.
- ✓ Your kid is doing poorly in school, even though you’ve done your best to help.
- ✓ The man you love says he doesn’t love you anymore.

Things don’t work out like you thought they would. It’s disappointing.



A lot of people say, “Think positive! Say these ten positive sentences every day!” But that doesn’t allow for the **all** – the **all** of you and the **all** of what you experience and, most important, the **all of God** – **all** of who is He is and how He wants to connect with you and help you in difficult, disappointing times.

It may seem that if you let yourself feel the disappointment, you will be overwhelmed by it and never come out of that dark hole. But I think that depends on what you do with disappointment.

Here’s what I’ve learned to do with disappointment (and I’m not stuck in a dark hole):

Acknowledge the disappointment to yourself. Putting it in a sentence helps. “I feel disappointed that....”

Take your disappointment to God. Talk to Him. Tell him how you really feel. It helps to write it down. (You can always throw it out later if you don’t want anyone to see it.) He understands. The world is not like He wanted it to be either!

Once you’ve invited Jesus Christ in as Savior, invite Him in as Counselor, Comforter, and Friend. As you invite Him into the hurt and disappointed areas in you, He will fill the deficits – which are like big holes – in your heart and mind. Only God can do this, and He does it so well!

With a trusted friend, create a safe space for both of you to talk about your disappointments. Listen to and acknowledge each other’s disappointments and pain. Pray for each other without telling each other what to do. A sincere “I hear you” and “I’m sorry for your pain” is always good.

Do this with all disappointments, not just the big ones.

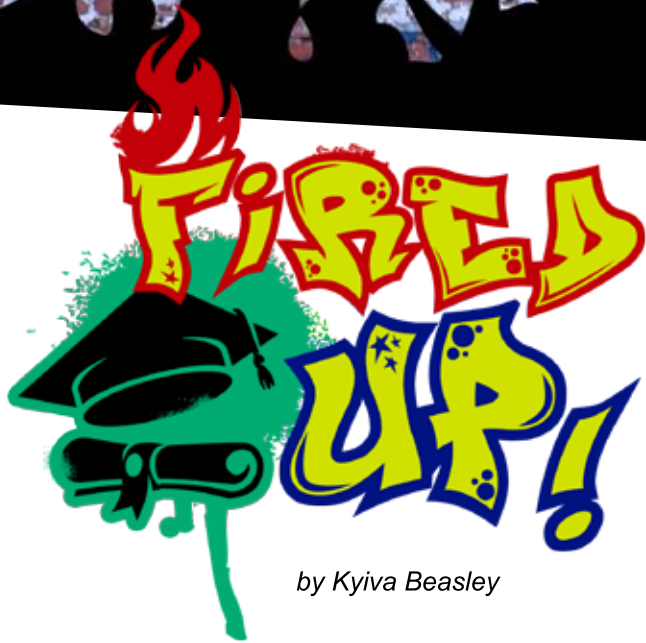
Don’t miss out on the sweetness of the Lord and the fellowship of His sufferings (Philippians 3:10). He knows what it’s like to suffer, and if you’ll draw near to Him in those times, He will draw near to you (James 4:8).

Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul would have soon settled in silence (Psalm 94:17).

I’ve practiced this for quite a few years now through some pretty rough disappointments. I can tell you that the sun will come out again and things will look better.

At the same time, because you’ve kept it real with God, yourself, and others through the difficulties and disappointments, your life will be a whole lot richer and real.

Karen Duckett is a board member and frequent writer for *Reach UP*. She also has her own ministry of prayer and help, *Rescued 4 Destiny* – Joel 2 Army.



by Kyiva Beasley

You will never make it past the 8th grade!

We think she is bipolar.

Wow, Kyiva, I didn't think you were gonna make it!

All these things were said about me or to me throughout my youth. These comments could have defined me, crippled me, and set my life on a downward spiral. But I had a fire in me, a fire for a

greater cause, for something bigger than me. The fire that God puts in every person was alive in me.

I was a child who struggled with anger, sadness, and bitterness. I had to depend on multiple mom-types for a place to stay because my mother fought the battle of addiction. I felt forgotten.

Early in my childhood, I was exposed to Christ and His message. As a first-grader I went to a Wednesday church sponsored program. A few years later, an afterschool program, Graffiti 2, really made a difference. I might have been little, but I received their messages that no matter what your circumstances are or what people say about you, God has a future for you! He makes all things new and supplies the power for life. My fire and His fire started working together.

Unfortunately, like many young teens I cried out in hurtful ways. I began spending my weekends drinking and partying. I was searching for something, but I

would soon find out that God is the only thing that could fill my void.

I always knew God had a plan for me. When I was fifteen years old, He moved me from my devastating home environment in the Bronx, New York, to the suburbs of Arlington, Texas. I thought this was my big break, that I had made it out of the “hood.”

That worked for awhile. But drama and miscommunication about me swirled. Once again I had to leave that home for another just before my senior year in high school. Would anything ever work out?

I remembered my times of bitterness and sadness. I wondered how God had let this happen to me. I had followed His plan. I had been obedient. “Why me?” I asked.

I had believed that the grass was greener on the other side. However, there was something missing in Texas just as it had been missing in the South Bronx.

The truth is, there was a clear disconnect between my desire and my motivation. God answered. God showed me firsthand that no matter where I am in the world, He is still the only thing that will hold me steady in trying times. Sure I made mistakes, but God would not give up on me!

With the fire in me and the fire of God, I pushed through against the odds and graduated from high school!

I didn't stop there. I went on to college and graduated with honors in social work and criminal justice. Now I'm heading to graduate school. After that I want to go back to my neighborhood in the Bronx and help people. Yes, this same little girl whom people said wouldn't make it past the 8th grade is coming back to help!

2 Corinthians 5:17 speaks of renewal through Christ. We are not tied to our past or what people think about us. Jesus died on the cross to bear our burdens and then rose again to life so we can live a full and meaningful life! The same power that raised Jesus Christ on Easter is in us who believe! (Ephesians 1:19-20)

What does this all mean?

Get FIRED UP!! The fire God placed in you is still there. Go after it. Then connect with the fire of God. Together, you and God are unstoppable!



Want to know how to start the pathway to college?

Look up our back issue,

“So You Want to Go to College,”

www.reachupmag.org/en/reach-spring-2017



Decorating TIPS

From a **PRO**

by Deborah Gililand

I didn't grow up with a mom who decorated our home. It wasn't until I was taught to sew that I learned about a world of color and texture. Suddenly it mattered to me how a room looked and felt.

So no matter how little you have, your home or your space can be a little bit of heaven on earth and can bring you a smile.

Where do you start? What is your style? How much is this going to cost? Is it worth it? Is there a guarantee you'll like your changes once you're done?

It may seem easy to just go straight to the stage that people enjoy most, like choosing the paint colors, finding fabric, or looking for a piece of furniture. But I don't recommend that.

Take a deep breath.

The first rule of decorating that I have discovered is to **learn to be patient.** (Not what you expected, is it?)

Before running to the store to buy something, take a long hard look at the space you are changing. This means you need to **look beyond what you see now.** (Can't help saying, that's good advice in a lot of situations.)

Look past the color on your wall and what is on the walls now. Look past your furniture and existing décor. Look at your walls and floors. Are there any architectural features? Some old apartments are hiding some really nice features.

What is the natural light doing in the room? The amount of natural light a room tells you how much other light you need as well as which paint color to choose.

Space will always be your first consideration. What is the size of the room? What is its shape? What is the function of the space?

So often we live in a space for so long that we can lose sight of other uses. For example, a bedroom may be used for more than sleeping. Perhaps you could use it for a

study or an exercise area, or for reading a good book. Changing the use of a room can be beneficial. Value can be added in the most unlikely places.

Once you have assessed the space and decided just how you want to use it, you can begin to **think about the style or mood you want to create.** You may not know your style. That's normal, which is why many people get stuck at this part of the project. So here is where patience begins.

You need an inspiration board. I would suggest getting some poster board or a three-ring notebook. Start looking for pictures of spaces and places you love. You might find them in catalogs, advertisements, online, or in magazines. Cut them out or print them and paste them on your board or in your notebook. This may take some time, and that's a good thing. You really can't do it in one sitting at the computer or the library. Remember, there doesn't have to be any rhyme or

reason to it. It's just a place to start.

An inspiration board or notebook will help you begin to think about and define what you really like. You will never regret taking the time to see fresh ideas and possibilities.

Once you have enough pictures, take a long look at them. Are there similarities in the photos? You will probably have pictures of a variety of spaces and looks, but there will be a trend with the look you like. Delete those pictures that you just sort of like and only keep what you love. This will help you narrow down the field and get you well on your way to the style that is just right for your space.

If you find out you need to save some money for the look you love, that's okay. You now have a dream board and a plan. Maybe in a year, you will be enjoying a whole new room in the same old place!

I hope this helps you begin your journey to make the place you live a place you love.

See more of Deborah Gililand's suggestions at www.interiorpursuits.com



Laundry 101

by Danette Davis

Managing every day household chores can seem like a big task, especially if you have never been taught how to do them.

Today, let's focus on laundry.

First, separate all the clothes into piles.

- whites
- like colors, such as medium colors or dark colors
- delicates

Next, choose the load size. Be sure to only fill the machine 3/4 of the way up, and don't pack the clothes in. Overfilling the machine could result in damage, and the clothes won't come out clean since they need room to move around in the washer.

Third, choose the right cycle. This will vary depending on the clothing. You may choose extra heavy (for jeans) or normal (for shirts and other clothes) or delicate (for undergarments).

Now choose the best temperature.

- hot for whites
- cold for like colors
- warm for delicates

Fill the machine about two inches, then add the detergent to the water. Pouring detergent on clothing can permanently stain it. Choose a decent detergent. Cheap detergents aren't good. If you like, add a fabric softener to keep clothes soft, static-free, and smelling fabulous. Read the label to find out when to add the softener.

Now add the clothing.

When the cycle is finished, it's time to dry the clothes.

Again, choosing the correct temperature depends on the clothing. Heavier clothing like jeans and towels will require higher heat and a longer time. Delicate clothing needs a lower temperature and a shorter dry time. You may add a dryer sheet for extra static-free protection.

Fold or hang the clothing immediately when the drying cycle is finished to avoid wrinkles. If clothes do become wrinkled, use an iron at the correct setting. Or, you can hang up the clothes up to dry instead of putting them in a dryer. This actually protects the clothing because exposure to heat causes clothing to wear out faster. And, if you are like me, you like the idea of saving money.

Taking proper care of your clothing saves money, and you will look great in clothes that are cared for!



The logo for Reach UP, featuring the word "Reach" in a teal script font and "UP" in a bold, pink, sans-serif font.

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