

*Sisters in the Spirit
Ministries, Inc.*



*October 2021
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Sisters in the Spirit Ministries Newsletter

Empowerment for the Christian Woman



By Minister Dr. Katrina White Brown

God's Grace. We all have, do, and will experience it. It's not anything we can earn; not anything we actually deserve; and sometimes we don't even have gratitude for it, yet God still sustains us by His grace.

Grace is God's voluntary and loving favor given to those He saves. It comes only from God's mercy and love, and without it nobody can be saved.

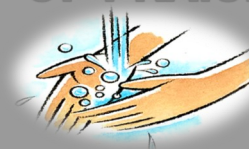
God's grace was certainly on the Apostle Paul's mind when he wrote his second letter to the Christians at the church in Corinth. The church was struggling. Corinth was a giant cultural

melting pot with a great diversity of wealth, religions, and moral standards. The city's prosperity made it ripe for all sorts of corruption, sexual immorality, and idolatry. This backdrop challenged the Corinthian believers and they were struggling to maintain their faith and to live a Christian lifestyle. Paul opens his letter by extending "grace and peace" to the believers, but his tone changed as he shared his own struggles in the faith.

Paul had a strong relationship with the Lord, yet he pointed out "... in order to

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20 SECONDS OF PRAISE



Health officials recommend washing your hands frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds as a primary defense against germs. You can time this by singing the chorus of:

He's Real

By Daryl Coley

*Real, real, Jesus is real to me
Oh, yes - he gives me victory
So many people doubt Him
I can't live without Him
That is why I love Him so
He's so real to me*

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Sisters in the Spirit is an outreach ministry created to empower Christian women in better serving the Lord. We are here to help "equip God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ..."

Ephesians 4:12



Ah yes — the illusive Proverbs 31 woman. Sisters, how many times have we asked ourselves “who is she, and how can I be her?”

This is the woman that King Lemuel talks about at the conclusion of the 31st chapter of Proverbs. Little is known about him except that he was a king who received wise teachings from his mother. The woman he described in verses 10—31 is of strong character and pronounced wisdom; she has many skills; and is of great compassion. This woman is an excellent wife and mother. She is a manufacturer, an importer, manager, realtor, farmer, seamstress, upholsterer, and merchant. She is, in a word, **AMAZING**.

The woman in Proverbs 31 is the portrait of the Christian Super-woman. She does it all **AND** she is the epitome of righteousness. But Sisters, can I share something with you? For many of us, that Proverbs 31 woman has become an idol, and modeling ourselves after an idol is not what God wants for us.

Sisters, we don't need to be her. In fact, I don't know if she was one woman or a composite of several women. I believe King Lemuel painted his portrait of the Proverbs 31 woman using a palette of qualities he wanted to see in his picture of the ideal woman. Since all of us are different, God didn't create us to be that woman. We were “*fearfully and wonderfully made*” by God whose “*works are wonderful*” and we should “*know that full well.*” The character of God is poured into every one of us. When we start to feel that we'll never measure up to the Proverbs 31 woman, remember that God's Spirit makes us more than conquerors in Christ Jesus. God's Spirit gives us the ability to do all things through Christ which strengthens us. God's Spirit helps us walk in our divine purpose so that we can be who we are called to be: women of faith, hope, and love — operating in the spiritual gifts that God gave us, and growing in our relationship with Him.

Sisters, every bump and bruise, every obstacle and obstruction, every failure and flaw—God uses for His glory. You are seasoned by your suffering, tempered by your temptations, crafted by your chaos, and perfected by your praise. Even when you think you are no good at anything, God has positioned you to overcome everything. We are all Christians under construction, but know that “*He who has begun a good work in you will continue it until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*” (Philippians 1:6)

When you look in the mirror, stop trying to see the Proverbs 31 woman. In my spirit I want you to always embrace the grace of the woman God created you to be.

Peace and Blessings Always,

Katrina W. Brown

Finding

Peace

By Jessica Taryn Turner

*in collaboration with
Minister Katrina W. Brown*



"Lizzie" Evans - 08/31/1997 - 09/18/2013

in the midst of pain

On September 18, 2013, 16 year-old Jessica "Jessie" Taryn Turner got a phone call that she wasn't able to answer. Hours later, her phone rang again. Answering that call forever changed her life.

It was during the second phone call that she learned of the death of her best friend Elizabeth "Lizzie" Nicole Evans. The 16-year old took her own life after experiencing bouts of depression, living in a difficult family relationship, and undergoing episodes of bullying at the high school she attended.

Lizzie had been emotionally hurting for a long time. Through it all, standing with her in friendship and love was Jessie. The call that Jessie missed was from Lizzie. That, along with the almost unbearable anguish that comes with losing someone you love, has plagued Jessie for more than eight years. Now, she is publicly sharing her story for the first time with Sisters in the Spirit Ministries (SIS).

SIS: Can you take us through the day that Lizzie died?

Jessie: I had been sick and I didn't go to school that day. Two days before it happened, Lizzie told me that her depression was coming back.

I told her that I would give her until the end of the week to tell her parents about it; if not, I would tell them. Right before she hung up she told me that she loved me and said "see you to-

morrow."

The next day I still was wasn't feeling well and didn't go to school. I had been sleeping all day, and right around dinnertime I noticed that I had a missed call from Lizzie. I tried to call her back but didn't get her - the phone went to voice mail.

My phone started ringing around 5:00 am the next morning. That's when I found out what Lizzie had done. I'll never forget how one of my friends said it—"Lizzie is dead; she hung herself."

I fell to my knees. I was screaming, woke my family up, and tried to get Lizzie's family on the phone. I called and called but couldn't get anyone to answer. Finally Lizzie's brother answered the phone and he was crying. I talked to Lizzie's dad who confirmed what had happened. It was the worst day of my life.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), for youth between the ages of 10 and 24, suicide is the third leading cause of death. More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease, combined.

Suicide results in approximately 4600 lives lost each year. Each day in our nation, there are an average of over 5,400 suicide attempts by young people grades 7-12.

Four out of five teenagers who attempt suicide have given clear warning signs. Kids who are bullied are more than twice as likely to consider suicide, according to a recent study in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Jessie and her family had to go to a hotel to be with Lizzie's family. "The house was initially considered a crime scene, so the family wasn't allowed to be there while the Police were investi-

gating Lizzie's death," she explained. But that wasn't the only painful reminder of what Lizzie had done. The ensuing days were chaotic as the media grabbed hold of the story. Headlines broadcasted that "High school student, 16, kills herself after bullies stuffed her in lockers and trashcans." During interviews with Lizzie's grieving father, he chastised the public school system for what he said happened to his daughter. He said that hopefully "the tragic passing of his daughter can be a lesson to other teenagers who are struggling at school." According to Jessie however, what her friend was experiencing went far deeper than her problems at school.

SIS: Do you know why Lizzie did what she did?

Jessie: Lizzie was experiencing some bullying, but she was also suffering from mental health issues. She had depression, plus she had a difficult relationship with her dad. I really think she was trying to make him mad with what she did; I just don't think she realized it would be so final.

SIS: You told us that Lizzie was a very religious person who believed in God. Do you think God should have intervened in Lizzie's situation?

Jessie: I think He did. Lizzie was going through so much—so much pain and suffering. Well, now she isn't. By taking her up to Heaven, God ended all of her suffering and she is at peace.

SIS: How did Lizzie's death affect you?

Jessie: After she wasn't around anymore, I really didn't want to be around anymore. I mean that I didn't want to be on this earth anymore. But I saw the devastating effect Lizzie's death had on her family. I didn't want

Continues on page 5



Jessie Turner

LORD, SEND A HARVEST

This word search is full of fall harvest treats for you to find!

Just for Fun

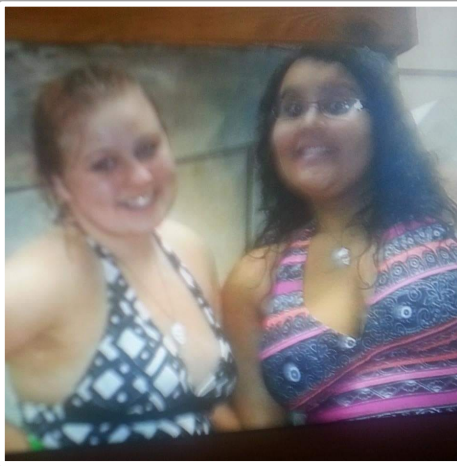
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ACORNS
AGRICULTURE
APPLES
AUTUMN
BALES OF HAY
BUNDLES
CHILLY

COLORS
CORNFIELD
CROPS
FOOTBALL
GATHERING
HARVESTING
HAYRIDE

HOT APPLE CIDER
LEAVES
PINECONES
PUMPKIN SPICE
PUMPKINS
RAKE
REAPING

SCARECROW
SHEAVES
SQUASH
WHEAT



Finding Peace in the Midst of Pain

Continued from page 3

my family to go through that. Plus, if Lizzie were alive and I had taken my own life, she would have been so angry with me, so I knew I had to find a way to get through it.

SIS: Do you feel in some way responsible for what Lizzie did?

Jessie: I do hold some responsibility for what happened, but it depends on the day. Some days I feel that I should have told her parents about how her depression was deepening. I blame myself for not answering that phone call on the day she died. Other days I realize that I couldn't have stopped her. I was 16 years old. I didn't really know what to do.

The American Society for the Positive Care of Children (SPCC) advises that when it comes to teenage suicide, risk factors vary with age, gender, or ethnic group. They may occur in combination or change over time. Some important risk factors are: depression and other mental disorders; substance-abuse disorder (often in combination with other mental disorders); prior suicide attempt;

family history of suicide; family violence including physical or sexual abuse; firearms in the home; incarceration; and exposure to suicidal behavior of others, such as family members or peers.

Some of the signs to be aware of include: talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself; looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun; talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live; talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain; talking about being a burden to others; increasing the use of alcohol or drugs; acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly; sleeping too little or too much; withdrawing or feeling isolated; showing rage or talking about seeking revenge; or displaying extreme mood swings.

SIS: How do you find peace in the midst of the pain of losing your friend?

Jessie: I think about her all the time. She was simply amazing. I'm going to use a *Grey's Anatomy* reference here - Elizabeth was my person! She was the brightest light ever. I never had to keep up any pretense with her. I could just be who I was. She always made me laugh; we could just look at each other and know what we were thinking. She was truly the sunshine on a cloudy day.

I celebrate her birthday every year on August 31st. I have a box that I keep with everything she ever gave me. I often listen to her favorite music and I

have a tattoo of her signature on my wrist with a little heart that says "Love Lizzie." She was truly my person, and I love her and miss her so much.

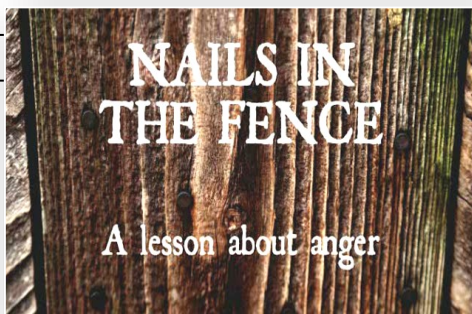
SIS: So many people are living with the same kind of pain you are. What would you say to them about finding peace in the midst of their pain?

Jessie: I would say to them that they have to talk about mental health issues. It doesn't get better if it's not addressed. I would let them know that even though those of us that are left behind are hurting, you've got to keep going, your loved one would want that. And I would tell them that their loved one is okay because they are in a better place.

Jessie says with time she has lost the anger she experienced, and has gained a deeper understanding in dealing with her feelings. "It's been hard on me not having my friend," Jessie said. "But while she was here, she really made a difference in this world."

CALL 911 IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER. OTHERWISE, CALL THE NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE AT 1-800-273-TALK (8255) 24 HOURS A DAY / 7 DAYS A WEEK.

Resources for this story include: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Society for the Positive Care of Children (SPCC).



There once was a little boy who had a very bad temper. His father decided to hand him a bag of nails and told the boy that every time he lost his temper, he had to hammer a nail into the fence.

On the first day, the boy hammered 37 nails into that fence.

The boy gradually began to control his temper over the next few weeks, and the

number of nails he was hammering into the fence slowly decreased. He discovered it was easier to control his temper than to hammer those nails into the fence.

Finally, the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father the news and the father suggested that the boy should now pull out a nail every day he kept his temper under control.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence.

"You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger,

they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a person and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there."

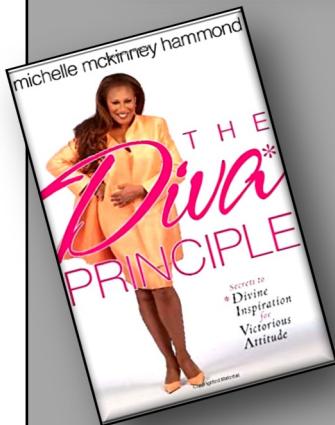
In the Bible, anger is characterized as unrighteousness, and passages in both the Old and New Testaments warn against it. Especially James, who points out in 3:6 that the tongue is a fire and a world of evil that "sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell."

It's as simple as this—control your anger. Don't say things to people in the heat of the moment, that you may later regret. Remember, some things in life, you can't take back, or undo, or repair the damage your anger causes.



WHAT'S YOUR THORN?

Continued from page 1



THE DIVA PRINCIPLE

BY MICHELLE MCKINNEY HAMMOND

Michele McKinney Hammond writes that the secret to living the kind of life you want is all about attitude, or as she puts it, Diva-tude. Although this book was written in 2004, it is

just as relevant today as it was then, for women who want to “get your heart together, get your act together, and get your life together.”

Diva is an acronym for divine inspiration for victorious attitude. Hammond opens her book with a welcome “to the beginning of a whole new attitude—that of Diva-tude.” She says Diva-tude requires “renewing your mind so that your life can be transformed into one of endless possibilities.

Hammond’s primary tool for a victorious attitude is having a relationship with God the Creator. After that, it is important to know who you really are. But she says a diva isn’t self centered; she knows that life is not about her. Instead, Hammond points out that what a diva does is for the greater good of all.

She shares other Diva-tude life lessons: it’s not the severity of the storm that you should be concerned about, but rather how you weather it; a diva is a diva whether broken or thriving, wealthy or poor; a diva is not humiliated by her needs, but rather is profoundly in touch with them; a diva values the contribution she makes to others around her and the legacy she will leave behind. A diva doesn’t entertain constant drama in her life or harbor negativity; a diva sets fashion trends, not necessarily follow them; she keeps her eye on the big picture; she chooses her battles wisely, and she remains cognizant of what is truly important: having an attitude of gratitude for all that God is doing in her divine, inspired, and victorious life!

Hammond suggests that a woman can get her head together by: practicing the art of silence; cultivating a prayer life with consistent spiritual devotions; and living on the principles of “prudence, counsel, knowledge, discretion, sound judgement, and understanding.”

One of the unique approaches she takes is by doing Diva Profiles of women in the Bible. Among these women are: The Shulamite Woman; the Queen of Sheba; Deborah; Ruth; Mary, Mother of Jesus; Esther; and Lydia. Each woman’s story is told with views of her strengths, weaknesses, Diva-tude; and the touch that made a difference in her life. She translates the women’s stories into everyday practical principles for living.

This is a book that’s well worth the read for the woman who ready to take her attitude, or Diva-tude — to a higher altitude for the Lord. **The Diva Principle is available on Amazon.com**

keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.” Paul was trying to encourage the Corinthian believers to remain faithful, no matter what the circumstances, by using his own anguish. Paul said that he pleaded with the Lord to “remove this thorn”, however God revealed to him that “My grace is sufficient for you ...” (2 Cor. 12:9)

What’s your thorn? What has God revealed to you about His grace being sufficient? What have you asked God to remove from your life, yet He has refused? Paul never disclosed what his thorn was. Some have speculated that he may have been suffering from a chronic illness like malaria or epilepsy, but whatever the thorn was, Paul repeatedly asked God to take it away. Paul was a very self sufficient person, so this situation must have been difficult for him physically, emotionally, and perhaps even spiritually.

What’s your thorn? What is keeping you from doing the things you want to do? It could be health issues, finances, relationships, insufficient employment, inadequate housing, or fears about the future. Your thorn is anything that is causing you torment and suffering. But when God tells you His grace is sufficient, know that He has given you far more than you have asked for.

Receiving God’s sufficient grace means that you have everything you need, and more, because God promises that His “power is made perfect in weakness.” The fact that God’s power shows up stronger when we are at our weakest should give us the courage to trust and believe that God is working things out for our good.

Thorns seldom feel like blessings. But just because something doesn’t feel like a blessing, doesn’t mean its not one. Paul realized this and said “I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” This doesn’t mean that we should seek to be weak and passive, but it does confirm that when the thorns of life are breaking us down, we can depend on God’s strength to build us up.

Don’t stop praying for God to remove your thorn; trust in the Lord with all your heart; remember that God will not leave you nor forsake you; and be thankful that God’s grace is sufficient to supply all your needs.



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Your financial support helps provide funds for

- Publishing the newsletter
- The Walter Reed Convalescent Center
- Hour of Praise Power Worship Service
- The Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway
- The Christmas Blessing Program
- The Senior Food Program
- And much more ...

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Contributions of \$30 or more will receive a
Sisters in the Spirit Ministries tee shirt.

Thank you for your generosity!



TEE SHIRT FRONT

"to equip God's people for works
of service, so that the body of Christ
may be built up ... " Eph. 4:12

TEE SHIRT BACK

Use this link to view on You Tube

<https://youtu.be/7vZmFKkDMnQ>

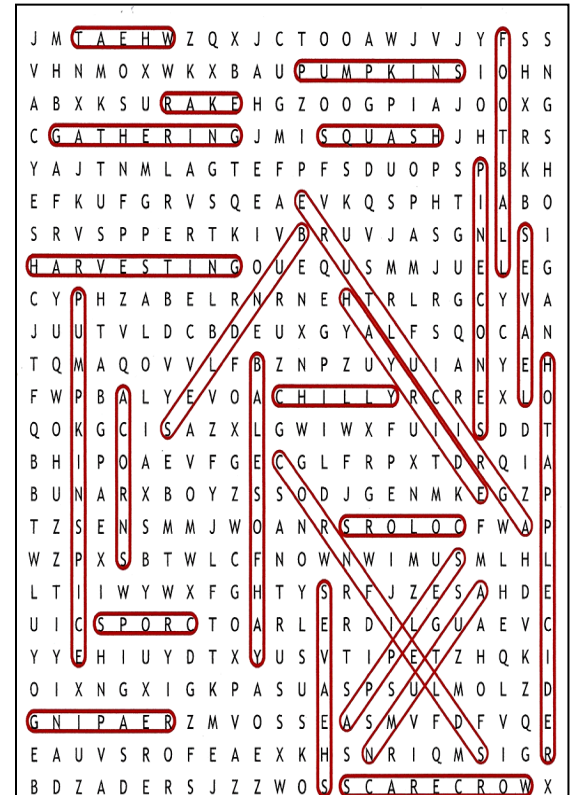
EMPOWERED

VIDEO SERIES

PARENTING WITH A LITTLE MORE JESUS

If you're a parent, you already know that parenting is the toughest job on earth. There's no training, no probation period, and no user's manuals. Back in the day some parents used to threaten kids that got out of line by saying "I brought you into this world and I will take you out!" But before you do that, try parenting with a little more JESUS. This new video from Sisters in the Spirit Ministries can give you some simple tools and tips that will help you start and end your day with a little more Jesus!

WORD SEARCH ANSWERS



Join **Sisters in the Spirit Ministries** on the
2nd Monday of every month at the
Walter Reed Convalescent Center for the



10:30 am - 11:30 am
7602 Meredith Drive * Gloucester, VA 23061
It's Hallelujah Good Time!



Sisters in the Spirit Newsletter

This is a free monthly publication by **Sisters in the Spirit Ministries, Inc.**, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded to empower women in their knowledge and authority, to better operate in their God-given purpose.

Editor: Dr. Katrina W. Brown
The newsletter is also distributed online, and in businesses and organizations throughout the community.

Visit our website:
sistersinthespirit.org



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A NEW FEATURE IS COMING IN NOVEMBER 2021!

Starting next month this Newsletter will feature a "letters to the editor" column entitled

THOUGHTS AND BLESSINGS ...

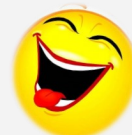
This is your time and space to share whatever you will with our readers. Please send your **THOUGHTS AND BLESSINGS** to

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Gloucester Point, VA 23062

Email your **THOUGHTS AND BLESSINGS** to
sistersinthespiritministries@gmail.com
or
kawbrown@yahoo.com

*"Every time I think of you,
I give thanks to my God."
Philippians 1:3*

THE LAST LAUGH



CHANGES IN AMERICA

In a logic discussion group, the professor was trying to explain how society's ideals and standards change with the times. "For example" she said, "take the woman who won the 1921 Miss America pageant. She stood five feet, one inch tall, weighed 108 pounds, and had measurements of 30-25-32. The professor pointed out that today's standards for beauty pageant winners are much different, and she asked the class "how do you think this contestant would do in today's version of the contest?" The class fell silent for a moment. Then one student piped up and said "she would never have entered the contest today." "Why is that?" asked the professor. "For one thing," the student pointed out, "her grandchildren would never let her."

SLOW SERVICE

Arnold and his wife were cleaning out the attic one day when he came across a ticket from the local shoe repair shop. The date stamped on the ticket showed it was over eleven years old. They both laughed and tried to remember which of them might have forgotten to pick up a pair of shoes over a decade ago. "Do you think the shoes will still be in the shop?" Arnold asked. "Not very likely," his wife answered. "Well, its at least worth a try," Arnold said. He stuck the ticket in his pocket and headed off to the shoe repair shop.

Arnold presented the ticket to the shop owner who said, with a straight face, "just a minute. I'll have to look for these." He disappeared into a dark corner at the back of the shop. Two minutes later, he called out, "here they are." No kidding! Arnold called back. "That's terrific! Who would have thought those shoes would still be here after all this time." The shop owner came back to the counter empty-handed. "They'll be ready on Thursday," he said calmly.

FREE ENTERPRISE

A city boy moved to the country and brought a mule from an old farmer. The farmer agreed to deliver the mule the next day. The next day, the farmer drove up and said, "sorry, but I have some bad news. The mule is dead." "Well then, just give me my money back," the boy said. "Can't do that. I went and spent it already." "Okay," said the city boy. "I'll just unload the mule." "What are you going to do with him?" the farmer asked. "I'm going to raffle him off." "You can't raffle off a dead mule!" protested the farmer. "Sure I can. Just watch me. I won't tell anybody he's dead."

A month later, the farmer met up with the city boy and asked "whatever happened with that dead mule?" "I raffled him off. I sold a hundred tickets at \$2 apiece and made a \$98 profit." "Didn't anyone complain?" asked the farmer. "Just the guy who won. So I gave him the two dollars back."

TRADING JOBS

A cardiologist developed a new operating procedure that would cut down the time heart surgery would take. He began to make more money lecturing about his new procedure than actually using the procedure. So he decided to lecture full time. He hired a driver and purchased a limousine. After about six months of lecturing, his driver turned to him and said "you know, this is not completely fair." "What do you mean?" the surgeon said. "Well, you get paid \$50,000 every time you do this lecture, and that's more than I get paid in a year," complained the driver. The surgeon explained that the procedure was very complicated, and he and only he could explain it. "That's not true. I've heard your lecture so often, I know I could deliver it just as well as you." "Okay, let's see," said the surgeon. "You deliver this lecture." So the driver and the surgeon traded places.

The driver gave a wonderful presentation and answered many questions. Finally a member of the audience stood and asked a very complex question. The driver responded, "you know, I have done this lecture 187 times, and I have never been asked such an easy question. As a matter of fact, that question is so basic that I am going to let my driver answer it!"