



A moment of reflection and testimony came upon me and I was reminded how humbled I am by how this column is received. As you may or may not know, I am not nor do I profess to be an ordained minister of any kind and to be honest, I was overwhelmed at the prospect of even attempting to write a spiritual column. I first had to accept my ability to write as a blessing that I was not using properly as the initial catalyst.

I had awards and recognition but I had not acknowledged the source of this gift. Christ was not a part of the equation. As events began to unfold, I became increasingly aware that in my taking this gift for granted, my ignoring God could easily be taken by Him as a personal affront. The best way to describe this to you is by declaring I was totally out of focus; no balance, no peace, no purpose. Perhaps some of you have been out of balance in your own lives before. For me, it didn't happen in a flash of light on the road to Damascus, but if I shared with you the events leading up to my salvation, you might see some similarities between me and Paul. My point is with a great deal of humility, I began to write this column from the only perspective that made sense to me, a personal one. A blessing, any blessing should be recognized as such and then used in some way to acknowledge where it came from.

Spiritually Speaking...with James Washington A New Year

Written by James Washington
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Since then I have learned that ministry comes in many different forms and manifestations. You are gifted and being blessed requires being a blessing. Therefore I now understand the reaction to the words of this column from many of you as possibly being struggling flawed and fragile believers as I am also. Perfection is an unattainable goal, but absolutely worthy of the attempt. Prior to writing this column, I can't say even my closest friends knew of any faith that I might have because I never, ever allowed anyone to get close enough to get a peek at who I really am. It sounds incredibly silly to me now, but it was all about who I presented myself to be. It was all about how I wanted to be perceived. Clearly, to even begin on a very private level to acknowledge God can be life changing. But to understand public acknowledgement of the Almighty was and continues to be powerful stuff. There seems to be a public invitation open to anyone willing to discuss, testify and share experiences relative to spiritual as well as worldly events. I'm still to this day moved by how many people I thought I knew well before salvation, who have shown me so much more depth and substance because I have an open invitation sign hung around my neck. To merely let someone know I've found my way to church, or to let someone know I'm struggling with a faith issue or prayer concerns, have led to discussions and testimony I would never have dreamed possible; all because I was a locked up closed up unsaved individual.

To say this all happened because I began to write this column would be an understatement. Too much happened to me prior to that to attribute my metamorphosis to simply penning a few words to paper. But to understand the nature of this blessing and having this platform to showcase the gift has been a road worth taking. I am indeed humbled and urge you to look past that which you take for granted and see the blessing in it. Once you do that, I'm here to testify there's power in 'dem there blessings. You may or may not know that what you struggle with each and every day may in fact be your route to your salvation. God is an awesome God and to use your gifts in his name is an awesome undertaking. But what I'm trying to say is, that's just my point. May God bless and keep you always. Have a great 2013.

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