



*Peace*  
IN THE MIDST  
OF THE  
*Storm*

KALEB THOMPSON

# Peace in the Midst of the Storm



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Kaleb Thompson

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For the unsettled  
For the powerless  
For the hurting  
For the restless

For the strong-willed  
For the changed and the healed  
For the tenacious  
For the secure

For the optimistic  
For the spontaneous  
For the thriving  
For the free

This is for you.

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

—JOHN 14:27

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## Introduction

WHEN THE STORM in your life is raging, remember that it will not last always. This life wasn't promised to be easy for all of us, but we were graced with the vital strength to endure through even the most difficult challenges. Therefore, the inner peace within you will encourage you to hold on and never give into defeat as your divine breakthrough will begin to manifest in the blink of an eye. If you're hurting, it's only temporary. If you're feeling alone, it's only temporary. Constricted in fatigue and restlessness, it's only temporary. What you have started out in becoming will only lead to a valuable transformation where you will no longer be anxious about anything. Hope hears your strained voice as love willingly comforts to make your broken spirit whole. Time enables you to hold yourself accountable for your own happiness. Your seed will sprout into rejuvenation for your tomorrow and the days ahead. I pray you heal from your past, embrace what you have now, and honor the need of choosing yourself as well as prepare for a beautiful future that nourishes and completes your soul.

Faith, resilience, empowerment. The beauty of faith transitions us as troubled individuals into calm-spirited souls as we are at rest knowing that everything will work together for our good. Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things that are unseen. What has been positioned to bring us deserving favor, whether it be a promising career or unexpected financial well-being, is a valuable gift that is not at risk of being taken away. Through the difficult storm, faith enables us to possess clearer vision beyond what others do not have the desire to see themselves. As we embrace the light that has lifted us from where darkness has placed us, we are courageous enough to become resilient in pushing ourselves to be redefined as meek and worthy. We are too involved in pursuing our designated purpose that we have become disinterested in looking back to

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what we once were. We are no longer the same as we refuse to let what was meant to break us affect our mental, physical, and spiritual mentality. I can only imagine how proud we must be to bury distraught and worry and secure the value of expressing the confidence to overcome anything. Therefore, this is where empowerment lies. Empowerment grants us the necessity of giving ourselves the permission to be steadfast in focusing on where we need to go and where we need to be. We were built to heal and elevate from the scars that attempted to permanently damage our sacred temples. We were built to stand firmly, in spite of the obstacles that were repeatedly present. We were built to know that we are enough.

The storms that were created to deter us into a state of depression, hurt, pain, and fear were actually meant to provide strength, a true asset most of us never knew we had. Justified by growth, we have now realized that we are immune to brokenness and are willing to survive from the bondage of negativity. The spirit of discernment is also a key factor towards how our storms can easily dissipate within our lives as the people that are placed around us should be given heavy consideration in terms of their investment within our lives. The people who remain dedicated in growing with us desire to honor commitment and loyalty, resulting in us being at peace with ourselves and simply embracing our storms, knowing that they will wash away. It also begins within us to position ourselves into our manifestation. We must be able to withstand the test, no matter how difficult it may be, for patience and positivity will truly reward us with abundant blessings as the gray clouds disappear and the sun smiles directly on us. We all have been through something, some of us are going through something, but we must adhere to the fact that we have to endure in order to become better than what we originally were. My personal testament of dealing with anxiety, fear, doubt, and hurt are specific issues that I've had to reflect within myself in order to grow boldly in spirit. By the grace of God, I am situated in positive thoughts, healthy well-being, and self-love, which I am very grateful for.

We have to encourage ourselves. The obstacles that we are facing, we have to press through them. The guilt that we have accumulated from our past, we have to let it go. The people who were only meant to be present for a season, we have to let them go, as they were not equipped to accompany us on our journey of fulfillment. It may feel rough being alone, especially when our storms are becoming more aggressive, but that only exudes the strength to come out of them and embrace the better days that will always

## *Introduction*

be ahead. We will make it. We will conquer what was attempting to keep us down. It's time to wipe our tears, move forward in gratitude, and hold ourselves to living in peace.



## Going Through

Another day has passed and here I am once more  
Patiently waiting on the precise moment when self-destruction succumbs  
to true happiness  
Transitioning into a new life that breathes immense passion and newfound  
freedom that my well-being will adore  
I want to be exalted into a meaningful place that dignifies genuine love  
instead of a harrowing emptiness

Excuse me for expressing how I truly feel  
I am not well as my heart and my soul quietly ache  
It's so difficult to continue to live with such unstable pain that I desperately  
want to be unreal  
I am this close to throwing in the towel because of the unmovable demons  
of doubt and brokenness that seem too stagnant to shake

This state of motionless grief that I am heavily consumed in has therefore  
left me speechless  
Bottled up inside a contaminated mind, just realize that I am only going  
through  
The settled darkness has polluted my inability to saturate in the welcoming  
light, leaving me an undesirable mess  
Feeling blue and feeding negative energy in a decaying soul like a rotten  
honeydew

No need to worry . . . for the phase I am in is only temporary  
Once again, I am only going through  
The joy and happiness that I thrive for in life are what my heart longs to carry  
Transcending into a comforting place of serenity will be a hopeful journey  
that my life will soon leap into



## **Lord, Remember Me**

As I self-reflect on life's difficult challenges and bountiful blessings  
Being stricken with anxiety yet embracing divine prayer  
Your evident grace and mercy has strengthened me to keep pressing  
Father God, you've done more than enough as my wonderful counselor and  
waymaker

Falling short of meeting your expectations because of easy temptations  
Disappointment often ensued as I turned my life astray from you  
Realizing that Heaven is what I long for, following the loving example of  
Christ comes with much dedication  
Father God, as I claim you as my Savior with a sincere heart, my life in your  
hands has become greatly anew

Your still, small voice strengthens my ability to achieve my aspirations in  
life, while remaining spiritually intact  
With the mistakes I have made, you still love me and continue to smile  
down on me as I can see  
All of my help comes from you as a matter of fact  
As time never ceases, Lord please remember me

I'm at peace knowing you will never leave me nor forsake me  
For your spirit will remain in me forever and a day  
My life will continue to pour out unto thee  
Your presence and protection will always manifest without delay

Lord, remember me as I have fallen short of your glory  
Renew my mind to embrace confidence instead of constant worry  
From a pastor's son, a child of you I will always be  
Lord, please just remember me as my purpose is to be with you for eternity

## **Forgiven**

Many times I disobeyed  
Sometimes I intentionally did wrongful things  
Rarely did I want to take responsibility for my nonchalant behavior

Father God, thank you for never giving up on me  
As I have continued to ask for your desire to receive second chances  
I know I'm not perfect but being more like you is all that I require to be  
Loving myself and others is what I will always stand by as a beneficial stance

I choose to live the rest of my life in peace  
Through my battles and mistakes, I'm forgiven  
I know better so I'm doing better by putting childish things to a cease  
The old me has washed away; maturity I was indeed given

## **When You Pray**

The instant freedom  
The lasting sensation  
Your heart gradually placed back whole  
The feeling of being consoled

When you pray, doesn't your worries suddenly go away?  
The end result being a dignified praise that you now carry with you each day  
You are restored, resting with your mind and soul in quiet solitude  
Nothing is sweeter than a private interlude that creates a wonderful change  
in sustaining a positive mood

When you pray, the Lord is working on your behalf  
The best is yet to come  
Stand in monumental faith as the miracles fall and the angels harmoniously  
hum  
Stand in spiritual justice for your prayers will be answered in due time

When you pray, the relationship you build with the Lord is complete  
You feel the urge to talk to him about anything, especially when you believe  
you have no one else to talk to  
The everlasting joy you will spread, the worry that you will beat  
Think of the love that the Lord has always had and will continue to have  
for you

Pray with conviction  
Pray with action  
Always remember to pray on your good and rough days  
For when you pray, you will be at rest

## **Amen**

Dear Lord,

Another glorious day has come and I pray that we continue to be more like you

We should not become discouraged when our obstacles attempt to overpower us as your grace and mercy has always brought us through

Help us to be grateful for the small things

For breath in our bodies and sincere happiness supports what the meaning of life divinely brings

I pray that we will all see the bigger picture

Let us not remain comfortable where we easily stand

We have so much more to give; it is our true passion that brings us great rapture

Help us achieve prolonged success that will remain unmoved on our names, our legacies, and our brands

I'm asking you to hold our hands to guide us every step of the way

Place your footprints on our direct paths as we walk towards what you need us to be

May our positive emotions not be shifted by the misty skies presented to us dull and gray

Open our eyes to explore our dreams that you have set into reality

Lord, remind us to remember you

It's so disheartening to forget you as we know we're not perfect

We can be our own hypocrites and these are definitely some hard words to chew

As we feel the need to sin, may your voice come through and intersect

I thank you for being who you are  
Without you, we would be nothing  
Your guiding light and seamless love have brought us this far  
Lord, thank you for simply being our everything

In Jesus name that I pray,

Amen!

## **The Revival**

Our old, crooked ways have freely departed from us  
We're no longer tamed to what we were in the past  
Our toxic emotions have been cremated, where the ashes have passed away  
into the sea of forgetfulness  
How sweet it is to make a conscious decision to celebrate new life

Grooming positive thoughts and actions  
Nurturing spiritual health  
Changing ourselves into more polished brands of what we should aspire  
to be  
The value of growth, what one sees as a ultimate victory

We had to want and do better for ourselves  
To elevate and not to hinder  
To rise and not to fall  
To serve and not to be selfish

We have finally accepted ourselves as grown adults  
Childish mentalities left behind  
Simple-minded thoughts suddenly lost in plain sight  
We have been revived

Armed in mercy  
Forgiveness that was shared  
The jury acquitted us from a life in utter disrepair  
Shame we no longer feel as we have been revived into greater beings

## Rise

What you speak into existence is the summary of everything you wrote  
Just be mindful your tongue does not lash out what you will later regret  
When the Sun comes up, take a good look  
Only in darkness you won't stay long; the next day, you will rise

Your scars will heal  
Inevitable strength that your soul will gain  
Your feelings won't be entrapped by hurtful judgements  
Delivered from the subjected pain your inner demons caused when you  
assumed your life was in vain  
You're no longer insane  
For the baggage that was once chained to your mind has been removed  
The day you embrace when you will reap tears of joy because you have  
decided to rise

Your demeanor reflects insecurities  
Untapped potential because of your unhealthy habit to compare  
Grant yourself the aspect of obtaining truthful courage and rightful liberty  
Remember, the Lord made you perfect in his image; he'll never put more  
on you than you can bear

You pass away slowly like a leaf dissected from its branch  
Withering away with the grass  
Stained with the mud and the dirt that has accumulated your present life  
Oh how wonderful it is when you plant your seed of faith on the brink of  
giving up  
Just as soon as the rain floods necessary abundance will you rise as proud  
as a beautiful sunflower

Your manifestation awaits you  
The endearing future that you couldn't see is now embodied into your destiny  
You no longer settle for less, your obstacles decompressed, a table you have  
built where your enemies have become your guests  
See how quick the tables have turned  
You rose above the madness  
The prideful opinions masqueraded as distracted noises  
All because you continue to fly high instead of waiting to die



## Let Your Light Shine

Aren't you proud of yourself?

Radiating with such positive energy and beaming with perfect health

Those around you astonished, wrongfully contemplating that you would stumble and fall with nothing left

Instead, they feel ashamed because of how you openly emerged with great wealth

Others mistreated you with bruised intentions, you forgave them

Your name was mentioned in foolish gossip, you ignored it

You have the last laugh because of your desire to let your light shine, instead of letting it dim

Your presence only disturbed their stubborn hearts because of your remarkable wit

You gained true respect and lost self-pity

You went through the fire only to be extinguished with grace

You speak and walk with divine favor that inspires plenty

An open heart many love to embrace

I gasp at the self-righteous despising your worth

For they are ignorant of your trying, yet incredible journey

Held back by their insecurities, you maintain the urge to move forth

Continue to unlock amazing opportunities with your humble spirit, you hold the master key

You won

You are handling the world just fine

So much more you have to accomplish as your work is not done

With a conqueror's cry, let your light shine!

## **I Am Not The World**

What society worships, I condemn  
The entitled are placed on a high pedestal, instead of the generous and selfless  
Drama appears to be more of a hopeless gem  
Class and sophistication seem to be so far gone

The world will attempt to conform you into doing things that I know I  
wasn't raised to do  
I was taught to give respect for good things will gravitate towards me  
doublefold  
I pray some will adapt to this mentality as we all need a helping hand to hold  
For a better place the world will be when we all come together

I desire to walk free in my own right  
Controlling my independence and minding my own business  
I've subscribed towards creating my own path instead of quickly following  
behind others  
As I know that my peace will be guarded

It's a scary feeling how we come to realize that this world has been going  
backwards  
Equality and equity are rarely existent  
We tear each other down more than ever  
Modeling disloyalty and turmoil continue to be the norms society adheres to

I am changed into the man that I have grown to be  
I am not persuaded to be a reproductive copy of anyone else  
I will never devalue myself to what the world remains standardized to  
I am what I am; I am not the world

## **The Boy Who Never Frowns**

Keeping a smile in this bitter world seems so hard to do  
But when love and peace overpower pain and guilt, no underlying issue will  
ever tremble the soul  
Continue to embody the essence of a guiding light, shining very bright and  
inspiring others, even if only a few  
In this world where desperation and negativity seem to reign, we need to  
be made whole

Being raised to always appreciate the smallest things  
Positivity is a true gem that will never go unrecognized  
Waking up every day to simply enjoy the richest blessings that life truly brings  
There rises a giddy feeling when true happiness often leaves one mesmerized

Who am I? I am the boy that never frowns  
This joy that I have, the world can't take it away  
You see, the Lord created a natural-born king that never tilts his crown  
Embracing every beautiful person with a gracious heart that will never  
decay

Through the storm and through the rain, I smile  
Every obstacle that I face is just one step closer to a breakthrough  
A life of gratitude I will always cherish as I refuse to live a life unnecessarily  
vile  
Remaining kind and letting my light shine will always be my point of view

Issues at stake, but know to never concede  
As kings and queens, remember to never tilt your crowns  
Listen carefully as I plead  
Again, I say, I am the boy who never frowns

## **Love Yourself (Cause The World Don't)**

Born masterfully to endure, you have true purpose  
Intended to value self-respect and dismiss low self-esteem  
Uniquely placed in a dark world where your sparkling light gleams  
Sustained confidence where your self-worth will not diminish will never  
run you off course

In a world where integrity is often compromised, do not lose yourself  
For greater is in store for ones who continue to live right  
This world, with so much chaos and confusion, entails problematic  
pressures and constant battles to fight  
Secure your inner and outer peace with all your might

Appreciate self-love as people who demean you are only jealous souls  
Don't you know that others value you more six feet under, lying there to rot  
Remain true for your sanity as giving yourself to corruption only digs  
deeper holes  
Therefore, love yourself completely because truth be told, the world does not

## **The Devil Strikes (When You're Closer To God)**

Baptized and freed into a hallow soul so fresh and mature  
The relationship that I have with my God is personal and pure  
I insanely laugh in the face of the Devil  
Knowing that he will never reach the Lord's level

It must be so uncomfortable to desire a humble and peaceful spirit more  
I know he can't help it for my life has never been the same  
The closer that I am with my Father, the more that he loves to play tug-of-war  
Satan, how old are you? . . . because I do not participate in childish games

My heart is secured as I ignore the wrath of the Devil  
Sin, you deliver; righteousness, you despise  
You smile when I struggle, satisfied when I fail but I refuse to stoop to your level  
As you are willingly and deservingly chastised

Do not fall for everything for even angels on Earth can drip with iniquity  
The more you are exposed to the tricks of the enemy, the more you stray  
away from doing what is morally right  
Submitting yourself to him subjects to absolute pity  
Secluded in darkness facing persuasive demons in an unfortunate plight

Joy, peace, love, and meekness clothed through the armor of God  
All because you chose to be closer to the most High  
You will no longer fall victim to blind and coercive leadership, regardless of  
what the Devil continues to try  
Misery, you will lose and generosity, you will gain as your well will never  
run dry

## **I've Learned To Accept My Mistakes**

Sin consistently seeped into me  
Sincere prayer set me free  
A new life has been invested with a positive outlook where I no longer feel  
captive to where I have been  
For my past has been repressed and forgiven

Careless mishaps molded into careful observations  
Untimely failure transforming into valuable success  
Second chances arising from unfulfilled declarations  
A beautiful future where miraculous blessings will divinely fall into place  
I know to expect nothing less

The confidence that was granted through enduring harsh obstacles  
The vital lessons that were groomed through the many horrible decisions  
that my life has had to take  
The better person that I have become through the instant changes that I  
had to make  
All because of simply learning to accept my mistakes

## Success In My Name

I thank the Good Lord for blessing me with a righteous mind  
For anxiety dwindles in my presence  
No longer does my faith and fear ineffectively bind  
Experiencing much-needed growth in living a peaceful life that brings  
complete essence

Generational sacrifices, dignified effort  
Youthful wisdom, acquired respect  
Spiritual warfare, divine intervention  
Disciplined decisions, favored position

Filled with hope instead of lingering sorrow, now my today urges for  
tomorrow  
For my name will be written above what the sky limits  
The power of my conquering spirit will speak volumes that no envious  
human being will borrow  
My mouth shall never utter defeat as success will remain unchanged in a  
life deemed so precious and fit

## Jealous Souls

Wolves in sheep's clothing  
Congratulate you publicly yet hate you privately  
Criticize and dehumanize as an excuse for remaining motionless in their own lives like a timid bird who doesn't know how to use its wings  
May you quietly accomplish every aspiration and let your success truly ring

Strangers with demented spirits, not knowing the envy some of your family and friends calmly hide  
Claim to be supportive and proud  
Disrupted by the realm of emotional distress similar to the moon forcibly controlling the ocean tides  
You could never tell how much they lied

I hope you can abide by this spoken word  
If my ambitious drive offends you, either make yourself better or continue to watch  
A jealous soul coated with greed and manipulation cannot breed success moving forward  
*Sincerely, an unbothered individual whose life will continue to overflow with great reward*



## **From My Heart To Yours**

I sympathize with you  
Feeling hopeless and having no sense of direction  
Remaining stagnant through life's pivotal trials after all you've been through  
What follows is the dismay of personal failure and imminent rejection

I empathize with you  
Losing a close family member or friend  
Emotionally and physically drained in knowing there was nothing else you could do  
Lord, please give us the vital strength in helping our broken hearts to mend

A genuine heart you will allow others to receive  
True kindness and respect will never waver  
You will never be in vain being a beacon of light in this dark world, best believe  
This is sound advice to keep with you always, not just a simple favor

Be grateful for the life that you are living  
You were created for a purpose and set to pursue a distinct vision  
Remain consistent in being a person so nurturing and giving  
In terms of governing your own success, embrace the best decisions

From my heart to yours, I love you  
Invest in your inner peace and be enriched by the joy of others  
Surround yourself with people who value your presence but never forget to love yourself too  
From my heart to yours, be wholesome in sustaining a fruitful life my sisters and brothers

## **Strength is Power**

Slipping and falling on a weary road where your mentality falls victim to subconscious lies

Experiencing the devastating losses of loved ones who you knew passed away too soon

Embracing failure after failure when you remain very close in touching the rim of success, no matter the amount of tries

Ever wonder why you tend to recover from your disappointments and become consistently resilient in overcoming your battles? You have indescribable strength

Kindness should never be taken for granted

For people are easily misinformed that weakness stems from such a powerful emotion

The spirit of discernment is more prevalent these days as we focus on the ones who truly value our presence

Therefore, we no longer dwell in the surroundings of the pretenders as we have been emancipated

The comforting feeling that overflows when your inner wealth is protected

You have true strength

The moment when you openly accept faith into your heart to overcome anything

You have spiritual strength

Allow yourself permission to be placed first

For pure strength is what you have longed to thirst

Imminent power is now written in your story

As you have the ability to change the circumstances that choose to reign over your life

A different person that you have now become  
You are courageous enough to travel down that narrow path instead of  
quickly taking the usual shortcuts  
The power of your being rises within you  
If only you take the first step to influence the world to be still in gravitating  
towards the magnitude of strength

## **For Richer and Not For Poorer**

When you wake up in the morning, do yourself a favor and look around  
I hope you realize that you were fit to see another day  
Your family is still here, your health remains intact, the people you care  
about are still here  
Know that you're blessed, in spite of each day that you had to shed a tear

Note that money isn't everything  
For true happiness should be the most honorable thing  
You have what you need as what you desire will come to pass  
Material things drift away, but spiritual wholeness will always last

Never claim to be poor or destitute, for you are rich in spirit  
Life can be riveting, but it gives you the power to navigate your own course  
Growth is situated through your mentality  
When you speak and act on good things, your reality of self will be so much  
easier to see

Hope sets in  
It's critical to love your life and not complain  
Invite your passions and bury the inhibitions  
Your spirit will continue to rise from within

You're still living  
Make every moment count  
Remember that you're special and that you're needed  
You're rich because you choose to embrace gratitude, that's what life is about

## **Life's Journey**

Success is not given, it is earned  
Through life's choices from which we have learned  
Believe in yourself and follow your dream  
It's not as hard as it may seem

## Friends As These

In a society so fragile, the company you keep may not have your best interest at heart

You give yourself so freely but your friends never offer the same in return  
Don't tell yourself that you're not good enough; the Good Lord's only telling you it's time to grow apart

It was for your own good; please refrain from expressing any concern

I was in your shoes; Helped in any way I could but ended up being used

Smiling in my face but talking about me behind my back

I soon realized I had to remove myself altogether, instead of forever living my life emotionally abused

Waiting for God to bless me with the right friends in order to keep myself on track

During my college journey, I was blessed to be enriched with the right people in my life

My friends who continue to motivate me, uplift me, pray for me . . . they get the hint

To become a better me, I had to distance myself from the superficial attitudes and unnecessary strife

To say that I have great friends is truly an understatement . . . they are simply God-sent

So, I encourage you to be of good faith and courage to people who value your present and your future

Friends as these who God has blessed you with shall claim victory and unwavering favor over your life

No longer will negativity plague your spirit as positivity will shower newfound joy and peace, that's for sure

This day forward, be strengthened by your friends as these as you had so much pain and hurt to endure

Open your heart to trust the people who have been placed to help you  
grow; you will never walk alone  
Genuine hearts and precious souls that will sincerely put you at ease  
Your overall life has been shifted to embrace greater and to realize that the  
hurtful past is now gone  
Move forward as you have been blessed to have friends as these

## Fond Of You

Raising a generation of strong-willed, independent kings and queens  
Working to make a living with so little but the foundation of faith and love  
was all you ever needed to get by  
Nurturing sharp-tongued wisdom to last a lifetime, being a helpful shoulder  
that deserves much leaning  
Rejoicing, for your children have made something of themselves and have  
gained the courage to willingly fly

That gentle smile fixated on your beautiful melanated skin  
The warm hugs squeezed so tightly you never want to let go  
Indescribable excitement your loved ones feel in your presence, especially  
when you have never given up through the thick and thin  
And let's not forget the decadent, home-cooked meals and delectable  
desserts made freshly homemade and so mellow

You've inspired, uplifted, amazed, and valued so many, even strangers who  
you claim as your own  
I give you thanks for showing how a true legacy should be remembered  
Your sweet spirit and gentle, healing touch are your finest attributes that  
will forever be known  
Happiness you always saw, positive remarks you always heard

Each day you are here brings everlasting paradise  
For you continue living a life so full and rich  
Sacrificing yourself for others, you never had to think about twice  
You will always be loved because of your shining personality deemed so  
lovable and nice



## Love, Family

Togetherness instead of brokenness  
Jubilance instead of misery  
Meekness instead of hopelessness  
Forgiveness instead of a broken history

The beauty of a tight-knit family never growing apart  
The contagious smiles and encouraging words that bring forth imminent healing like powerful medicine  
Perfectly singing with beautiful melodies and lasting harmonies will forever be a work of art  
Loving personalities so infectious that it completes others from within

Celebrate the living, honor the deceased  
We sow positive seeds for our children to reap, through what we learn from our elders  
The needed help and the unfiltered truth will always be leased  
I think of my 95 year-old grandmother who is here to witness the knowledge of spiritual fulfillment that she has instilled through generations  
Look at how proud we made her

The unbreakable relationships that foster loyal commitment  
How necessary it is for their undying support to remain the same through ample achievements and dreadful downfalls  
Deep love remains rooted when you do everything in your power to care for your own, regardless of how far our back is bent  
Through it all, family will be there when you call

Related through bloodline, our last names are permanently signed  
In their hearts is where you'll always be, in their arms is where you can be free  
Our souls knowingly align showing an emotion so joyous and benign  
We grace our love for eternity; that's simply family

## He's O.K.

August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017

The day you stepped on that football field brought a surprising revelation  
that none of us would have seen

Who would've thought your college football journey would be sidetracked  
by a full-blown concussion?

38 days with the ugly truth admitting that you were only existing . . . as a  
mere repercussion

I could not even imagine how that weekend felt when a heavy bump to the  
head would diminish your memory

You were slowly losing yourself; we did not want to assume the worst

Oh how emotional we felt when you could not even grasp the presence of  
your loving family; the blank stare that soon came to be

We had to understand that this happened for a reason and we had to remain  
incredibly strong, for it was you we had to put first

You took a temporary detour from your collegiate journey; it was time to  
come home

Those weary days when you felt depressed and alone at the unsettling  
thought of not remembering anyone

We couldn't let you give up; we had to stay positive in order for you to  
remarkably glow like the value of chrome

Remember my little brother, you were healing through your pain

This battle you were fighting had to be won

I saw your struggle; your negative thoughts gave you much ridicule

Your evident body language was enough for us to see

My God, please perform a miracle

My brother just wants to be free

September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Our fervent prayers came to pass as you rose from a riveting, lengthy nightmare

How relieved your family and close friends were on this day that the Lord nurtured you with tender care

You won this battle, relinquished from this devastating scare

Your college journey has resumed, excelling as an ambitious student-athlete  
Overcoming that perilous ordeal, you're ok

The desired aspirations that you have set for yourself, your soul is so dedicated to complete

My brother, you're still here, sewing inspiration and resilience into your legacy where it is meant to stay

## Love Ain't

Absorbed as a tactic of healing, yet dismembered from the souls of the depressed and brokenhearted

A deeper feeling that transcends over the grotesque realm of hate

True emotion that gives honor to every life once departed

Expressed freely, helping to foreshadow a meaningful destiny and I hope, favorable fate

Love does not belittle, devour, instigate, or envy

It tastefully remains truthful, sufficient, inevitable, and sustainable

With the disrespect and deceit that we continue to show to each other, an outpour of love desires to be our welcoming plea

Love, a persuasive force that will never lose its ability to be attainable

Using people for your own advantage ain't love

Abuse of any kind ain't love

Self-pity and emotional distress ain't love

Somebody, please detach yourself from the strained relationship of needless hate and foolish love

Love is cherished and bound

A feeling never lost but easily found

Knowingly sure and defiant to being faint

Love ain't meant to end, it just ain't

## Heavenly Shadow

I feel your spiritual presence, cherished memories remembering your essence, leaving here suddenly sure left us speechless but your transition made perfect sense

The battle you fought was won and the race you partook in was gracefully completed

Another angel was chosen; no need to tirelessly be included with a world deemed so shallow and dense

Our minds have processed that you are no longer with us, but with our hearts, you will never be deleted

Your angelic spirit exudes harmony and protection

No longer imperfect and your silent, heroic guidance carries us into a sacred place of compassion

Honoring your humble legacy helps lead our family in a profound direction

Your valued time in this world and the life that you now live for eternally will continue to be discussed with so much passion

You are missed, but not forgotten

Physically unseen, but spiritually birthed

Perfect in all your ways, delivered from all of your sins

For you to be settled in an eternal place of serenity, we just knew that you had so much worth

You are our reminder of how much you are still needed

You had to let us know you're still here with us through the constant visit of your heavenly shadow

We were excited that you became situated in a better place but our hearts still grieved heavy, which is one thing you greatly heeded

To be absent in the body is to be present with the Lord—a saying that encourages our family to peacefully grow

Too proud to have had you as our loved one  
Your heavenly shadow symbolizes the unwavering love and generosity that  
you graciously gave us  
How your presence used to brighten up the lives of others as compared to  
the light of the sun  
We will always love you  
Being a true asset in our family was definitely an ultimate plus

## **Angels on Earth**

Just when I was about to give up on this life  
As I thought nothing was going right  
Just when my toughest days were getting more weary  
As darkness remained there in sight  
Angels on this Earth intervened on my behalf

The sleepless nights  
The streams of tears that flowed  
The aching of my soul and mind  
The feeling of weakness that I have known  
I have regained my strength because of the angels on Earth who prayed for  
me

I feel secure  
I no longer feel broken  
A radiant smile I proudly show  
Another chance to live in glory, a rewarding token  
With this, I express gratitude to the angels on Earth who made me whole

Eager to set a positive example  
Passionate in denouncing negativity of any kind  
A better tomorrow set to be delivered  
Rare gems so pleasing to find  
How relieving it is to have angels on Earth invested in cleansing this world  
with unity and love

I leave behind my self-pity  
It's a new day to let it all go  
Frustrations deepened my void, yet it makes all the difference when I am  
motivated to forget the bad  
Here awaits a positive flow as I gave myself permission to grow  
The result caused by the angels on this Earth who had me on their minds to  
elevate into the blue skies



## The Smallest Things

I hope each day allows you to be mindful of what you have

Peace of mind

Impeccable health

A forgiving heart, especially when you have chosen to own a wholesome life justified through optimism and worth

A diamond-studded circle of true friends who celebrate your presence; an irreplaceable void that is felt when your absence is noticed

A touch from the most High to see a new day

Tenacious strength to persevere

Grace and mercy that saw fit to gift you with a second chance

The warm embrace from family

The warm greeting from a stranger

Prolific words and heartfelt actions showcasing how much you're loved

The beautiful growth you've experienced in loving yourself

A self-fulfilling career that adores your true passion

Your children with their joyous pride, knowing how determined they are to be a rich reflection of you

Your parents are still charming this Earth with their grace, daily praising you of how proud they are

You have a humble spirit, never let it deflect from such a good heart

You breathe life and not death

You see beyond the scope as material things and wealth do not take favor over your soul

You are what the world, I sincerely hope, transforms to desperately be

You're happy to be happy, that's what matters

## Easy

Hard is not an option  
I'll figure it out the best way I can  
As long as I never give up, success will never bother to leave me  
On optimism and confidence I stand

Reset, prepare, act  
My mind has to reset in order to solely focus on my aspirations  
An unafraid mentality, one that will prepare me to honor my wins and  
accept my losses  
I can speak and think of my future as gladly as I please but will not gain  
anything if I don't act on my desired plans

Stronger I will be when my fears are invalid  
The time that won't be wasted being frantic in taking that first step  
Changed I will be when my challenges will not define me  
The way I move forward and don't look back while adversity fails to rear its  
ugly head . . . a feeling so adequate

Nothing is ever given, but rightfully earned  
Shortcuts are not meant to be taken for the ones who remain poised in  
endurance and humility  
For uncompromised integrity and a diligent work ethic are true concepts  
that will provide significant importance  
Through this will God's grace and favor be evidently attracted to

I can sleep real good, knowing I will overcome anything  
For life will be so much easier to withstand  
Thank you Lord for your comforting touch; the troubles of this world no  
longer scare me  
And I am grateful to say that I am not afraid

## **Patience**

Success does not happen overnight

Your dreams are planted where your vision will blossom in due season

Your presence was carefully designed to impact this world for a beneficial reason

By faith and your good works, your life has breathed light, and you have already won

The overflow of blessings you have received because you decided not to act too soon

You have a characteristic many find appreciative yet are found in very few

Everything happens for a reason which is why everything falls into place when it's your time

That's why patience is defined as such a virtue

You wait, knowing your dreams and aspirations will align perfectly

What you have planned for a successful life was never intended to be rushed

The peace you will gain when time permits reality to reward you with what you desired to be

For impatience only hinders the miserable and the anxious

The breakthrough that was in store, you were willing to wait

Standing in righteousness empowered you to not extend an invitation to the negative hand of fate

You know that through God, he delivers his promises at the right time as there is never a moment when he comes late

Therefore, may serenity remain infiltrated in such a positive mind state

Your time has come  
Embrace what you have been patiently waiting for  
Favor will consistently shower upon your life as not one man can put  
asunder the manifestation of your destiny  
Walk in what God has blessed you to achieve on your journey as every  
chapter lies an open door

## **Breathe**

Close your eyes

Relax and meditate

Unravel the delayed confidence from the hurtful thoughts that's brought forth aggravating headaches

Collect your inner peace from the calming aura of the sky

Only then will you be authorized to let it all go

Trouble may hinder you, but it's never positioned to stay

Depression is joy's worst enemy, but through time, that joy will come around and won't be turned loose

Fear imposes on the meek, but when hope is regained, fear will no longer possess control

Adversity might cause you to stumble, but your strength to endure will allow you to walk straight

Hold on and remain focused

Setbacks only last for a season

You're gonna make it

You've come too far to fall behind

Inhale positive energy as you exhale the heavy load

See, now your shoulders can also relax

Don't rush this experience as you should expect so much in return

Take the time to be your best self

Instill the courage to leap over your obstacles

Come into agreement that you have power over your situations

Cover yourself to not be easily shaken

Be still and detach yourself from panic

Breathe

## Sick

Constant sneezing  
Runny nose that seems to never end  
Abrupt coughing  
We've all experienced these symptoms of the common cold

As you become older, please keep your health and wellness foremost  
Take it from me, as I am currently learning  
I'm only 23 but I was too docile to the sickening issue of stress  
I know life is too short but I want to live with as much longevity as I can

Sinuses and allergies affecting me since a very young age  
Chest pains at 20  
Hives at 22, an on-and-off relationship  
The two latter being life-changing experiences that positively altered the  
direction of my life  
To think I would be exposed to chest pains during my junior year of college  
and hives a few months into my full-time job . . . utterly speechless

Your body will thank you as you take great care of it  
Feeling energized instead of slumped  
Being consciously healthy  
A temple that you are preserving greatly

Your health remains intact to your physical and spiritual wealth  
If you're sick of the detriment effect your career is having on you, leave and  
value your own worth  
If you're sick of being taken advantage of for the last time, distance yourself  
from those lukewarm individuals  
If you're sick of complaining of things beyond your control, give it all to  
God as he will bring you through

We have been healed from the situations that threatened to take a  
devastating toll on us  
We're soldiers, marching on our own freedom roads, tired of succumbing  
to unhealthy distractions  
Each day we live to see, we're destined to be better  
We're no longer sick, we're indebted to change

## Talking To Myself

Besides the Good Lord above, I have complete trust in myself  
Why do I need to apologize for what others dictate as strange?  
I am my own person so don't be disturbed when I engage in self-served  
conversations; I won't ever change  
My best decisions seem to come from my final say, instead of relying on the  
thoughts and words of others

I am my own friend  
For my ability to deter toxicity will never end  
An open mind with a creative spark that will continue to be stronger over  
time  
I choose to follow my instincts; the soothing effect that soon comes like the  
sound of the heavenly bells that softly chime

I'd rather keep my plans tucked away in my own thoughts and not bear the  
option of letting others gain access to them  
My mouth can either be my saving grace or a destructive weapon, but it's  
the energy from which it stems  
The more happiness that I show, the more that misery struggles to flee  
My good character shall not interfere with the presence of bad company

My life, my journey, my story  
Every year distinguished as my chapter is narrated by me  
I don't ever recall having to receive the approval of others to define my  
existence  
For their solemn advice disguised as bitter hatred is non-existent



My state of mind is protected

I have walked away from peer reviews as they often became misconstrued

I bid farewell to vain, unhappy souls for in my life, their true colors are permanently ejected

I am in control of my own destiny and I have so much more to do

## **Broken Mirror**

You pick and judge others based on assumptions  
Somehow, you thought your own skeletons seemed to have rotted away  
Please remind me when your life endured no scratches, no burns, no stains  
As you perceive to live an easy life with no complaints

When your approach becomes one of egotism, you have already threw dirt  
on your supposedly clean slate  
Your wrongful mentality of mistreating others will deliver hurtful karma,  
a devastating fate  
As time permits, may you take the chance to humble yourself  
For you will finally realize that perfection does not live in this world

I can see why it can be easier to judge on the outside instead of looking  
from within  
You're too comfortable looking through a broken mirror  
Shattered, inaccurate pieces; experiencing the difficulty in seeing a flawed  
reflection  
Hopefully, you fix what was broken so you can see yourself much clearer

Think about this: the broken mirror prevents you from seeing yourself  
completely but it can also symbolize your perfect image falling apart  
Treat people right, they are more similar to you than you could ever imagine  
You never know what they go through and where they have been  
Let your conscience encourage you to be a helping hand to lend

I pray that you understand the severity of your words and actions  
You are not superior over anyone  
I can only imagine the speechless expression that is given  
As your complete reflection will only reveal what you have assumed  
everyone else to be, an imperfect character

## **A Life Not To Live**

Don't ever assume  
One day, it will all come back to you  
Don't ever think you are better than anyone else  
As you know you're not perfect  
With this in mind, I hope you remain drenched in humility

Doubt and clouded sanity will only reel you into dying obscurity  
Unhardened, unbreakable love will forever grant you lasting liberty  
Always be fit to honor the matriarchs, patriarchs, and the one true God that shall remain first  
They have gifted you with a legacy, gracefully kept and generationally preserved

You commit many wrongdoings but never hold yourself accountable  
Haven't you learned the basis of karma?  
Haven't you finally realized that it's time to grow up?  
It's the season of change as you should desire to choose a prosperous, wholesome life instead of a bitter, ungrateful one, and that's a rhetorical dilemma

You should not emotionally detach yourself from the ones you love  
You should not exist in moral disconnect but live in truth  
You should not conform to the likeness of what others want you to be instead of what you were created to be  
You should not be complacent in a life that tortures your mind and buries your soul

A life to influence  
A life to freely invest compassion and empathy unto others  
A life to share, a life to give  
Sooner than later, real soon, will your life mirror what you were put on purpose in this world to do and to be

## Blame

“The new kid did it”

“He doesn’t know what he’s doing”

“I have to explain this over and over for him to finally get it”

“He asks too many questions”

Forgive me, but I just started, please be patient with me

I thought some adults perfectly transitioned from the mindset of a child  
I see that their swift temper tantrums and impatience proved otherwise  
The frightening stare glued upon my face  
A mature young man in the midst of grown adults who don’t know how  
and when to grow up is not only surprising, it’s disturbing

I believe in myself

I know I have potential

I put my trust in the wrong people, the ones who didn’t want to secure my  
value

Here sits the déjà vu

I’m not afraid to admit my setbacks

It’s rare to see the beauty of honesty

Lessons are learned as they make me better

No need to lie and maliciously cover my tracks

That’s what manipulators do

I only hope they are provided the chance to see me today

Confident in my walk, easily adapted to growth

An epiphany inspired by tactless minds remaining blind to my obsession  
with success

Unashamed of the blame, a narrow-minded game where the dishonest  
choose to be unaccountable and end up perishing slowly

## Micromanaged

Ever wonder why people watch every single thing you do  
Through every aspect of your career, your education, and even your life  
They could be jealous of where you're going; don't fret, you deserve it  
They feel you're not good enough to be in the position that you're in; that's  
why you constantly prove them wrong  
They want to live their own stagnant lives through you  
Ignore the mess and let them see why you're so blessed

I know it's tiring as you've been through it all before  
Yet be encouraged as you were able to step out of that revolving door, as the  
naysayers decided to keep spinning a little bit more  
I love that you're glowing while the hearts and minds of others seem to be  
a bit sore  
Therefore, your dignity was indeed exquisite in fighting for

Your growth is magnified as the negative opinions of others do not deter  
you from following your true calling  
Take to heart Exodus 14:14—"Be still; The Lord will fight for you and you  
have only to be silent"  
Seek your quiet place where you block out the unwanted noise  
Be empowered as a flourishing model exemplifying the golden rule  
Treat others the way you want to be treated as you're so much better than  
the ones who doubted you the very first time

Walking with a purpose, you stood tall  
Focusing on yourself and giving your all  
You never thought small  
For others' stubbornness didn't make you fall

Attempted misfortunes granted you good fortune  
The negative opinions surfaced around you granted you mercy  
You see, you're too good for others to devour your journey only for them to  
conclude your success is not in vain  
An ideal warrior that you are, you have survived what you been through  
and will thrive in what you will be

## Can I

The alarming opinions that I would hear  
It hurts, but please have the courage to come to me in person  
Why do I allow myself to be validated by others?  
Their facades are very convincing as their faces illuminate astonishment,  
but their hearts hold on to jealousy

I listened and the words were hard to let go  
Instead of relying on my own confidence, I babysat the nonsense of foolish  
pride  
It's my fault thinking they were proud supporters of mine but ended up  
being two-faced foes  
It's a shame their insecurities were too difficult to hide

Can I just be great?  
For I know that I am a go-getter  
Can I just do what's best for me?  
For I shouldn't hold myself back to please others

Can I deserve better?  
Can I give myself peace?  
Can I not be happy?  
Can I simply live?

Their words may have started to cut me, but they didn't permanently  
bruise me  
For I am realizing that I don't need permission from anyone to secure a  
successful life  
I'm moving on and I'm strong enough to do so  
Their words have also empowered me and the surprising expressions that  
they will show when they are proven wrong will be worthwhile

## No Substance

Why be so hypocritical?  
Judging the mishaps of others but never find fault in your own reflection  
How I wish that personal lives will not be publicly advertised, the day we all  
wait for this undisclosed miracle  
Maybe it will be understood that placing tender care in our own lives will  
move us in the right direction

So much disdain, people hiding behind a mask comfortably, which seems  
to be their primary domain  
Secrets to be kept have no issue of being breached  
Leading with the misconception of a perfect life where there is no sight of  
rain  
Yet you trying to preach, but you seldom teach and reach

Blinded by the disgusted slander and libel  
Obscured vision in recognizing your own skeletons  
Before you aim your senseless feelings to hurt and devour, read your Holy  
Bible  
Give yourself a second chance to be redeemed again

Your negative actions induces complicated reactions  
How you supposed to bind in spiritual health but have a materialistic spirit?  
A disgrace to be involved in a pompous and negatively conscious faction  
Where integrity and sympathy unevenly split

I pray you find displeasure in welcoming unhealthy distractions  
Open your eyes to seize the chance to put spiteful things behind you  
The stress and lack of energy that you consumed should hopefully fade  
away like the pain of contractions  
Therefore, I hope that the people you hurt will forgive you too



## Enough

I refuse to be labeled as soft or overly sensitive  
Why do people constantly mistake a good heart for a weak mind?  
It is very rare these days to be someone who has so much to give  
Even more so be a genuinely good person which can be so difficult to find

I refuse to be slandered as naïve  
For my objective is to see the good in people  
I remain sickened with evil dwelling in the arms of tranquility as I press for  
it to permanently leave  
We have to elevate one another instead of the lying and chastising that is  
openly conceived

I refuse to be a punching bag  
Belittled and battered with harsh words and reckless feelings  
Yes, I am kindhearted and calm-natured but at the sight of malicious intent,  
I gladly gag  
How much of one's immaturity is so long-term that it deteriorates the  
mindset of a victim needing imminent healing

The time will come when the spirit of discernment overflows  
People will begin to realize that strength and intolerability have leveled my  
backbone  
Flesh attempted to bound me but I gradually fought it off by repeatedly  
saying no  
I do not apologize if I disappoint you for your opinions of me I no longer  
loan

Chained with my passive thoughts, I broke free  
I am enough but I've had enough with ignorant bliss  
My life is bigger than one's insecurities and I am so proud that I can finally  
breathe  
The new me is now embraced and the stress that once overtook me I do  
not miss

## **Child, Why Are You Weeping?**

Crushed into pieces, sewn back together  
Brushed aggressively in the fire, showered by the pouring rain  
Confined to regrets, diligent in moving on  
Child, the Lord gave you grace

Overlooked and misunderstood, praised for your vulnerability  
Inaccurately judged, settling rumors  
Contemplated suicide, being loved  
Child, the Lord knew you had to be kept

Drowned in desperation, lifted in hope  
Knocked unconsciously into your forgotten past  
Only to awaken to the promised future that you had envisioned  
Erased into obscurity, sketched in remembrance  
Child, the Lord had great plans for you

Driven to the ground, placed back on your feet  
Deserted by so-called companions, supported by strangers  
Couldn't bear the thought of anybody to turn to  
Yet one comes to mind who is always there  
Child, the Lord will never leave you alone  
It's time to smile again  
Every obstacle caused a revelation that has wiped your tears away  
Remember to pray and not doubt  
For the Lord will work everything out

## **Anyday**

Hands clasped tightly, closed eyes with purpose, heads arched downward  
praying that our home will soon be a better place

The selflessness, kindness, and respect that we had for one another has  
become very minimal these days, sometimes too barren to trace

How we anxiously wait in flooded tears, for the hour when divisiveness will  
weaken anyway

I'm at a loss for words . . . I just don't know what to say

## Midnight

Today defeated me; I lost this battle  
Loss after loss, failure after failure, I feel dead inside, completely damaged  
My soul has been shaken aggressively to its core like a useless rattle  
This day I can't seem to let go, vigorously haunting me, preparing me to  
become bitter and aged

What am I supposed to do? Please, self, enlighten me  
I can't grace myself or anyone with a sweet smile, a heartfelt conversation,  
or a gentle laugh  
I'm losing myself, mentally and spiritually  
Chaotic unrest my spirit quickly lies in as my life is not precisely whole but  
devastatingly cut in half

My mind striking at a piercing tension  
How I just itch to be calm and settled in a place encompassed with sheer  
delight  
As I resort to cry and pray, my lips are eager to speak this day into an  
honorable mention  
May my heart experience tranquil freedom as I close my eyes at midnight

A new day has arise and here I stand feeling completely different than the  
day before  
My mindset switched from uncontrollable fear to unquestionable resilience  
This day that altered my perception of being in control of all things is  
behind me and I can focus on myself even more  
I can smile, talk, laugh, envision, and not dissipate into unbearable silence

I stress the importance of spiritual and mental release as I am no longer  
held captive to an unapologetic nightmare  
An urgent scare provoking greater transparency when a speechless day  
inhibits agitated self-care  
I have detached myself from the demonic pressure that occupied me in  
what I believed was a strenuous fight  
All because I rested at midnight

## **Soldiers Handcrafted By God**

Created to face overwhelming challenges yet remain resilient  
Embedded with such a distinct fulfillment of strength and grace  
Emptied of moral disfunction and filled with divine peace as one kneels  
towards a cry of repent  
Bruised and battered by the heavy lows in this life but always rise proudly  
with pleasant smiles situated on our faces

Our strengths and weaknesses intertwined as one  
Disheartened by the strains of life yet captivated by the willingness to move  
on and never give up  
While enduring through some harsh trials, walking confidently with our  
heads held high should be all said and done  
Self-value placed above harmful doubt should continually be embraced  
second to none

Molded gracefully from crystal dust  
Perfectly made whole  
Painted to reflect images of truth and serenity furnished through the rust  
Destined to live a gracious life in spite of our imperfections shall be valued  
as our end goal

Through tears of sorrow, we are still wonderfully made  
Through constant defeat, we are built to regain power  
Through perfect position in God's will, our sincere faith will never fade  
As long as time permits, we will finish the course on this Earth as fearless  
human beings in the final hour

We did not come this far to remain discouraged within our disappointments  
For every battle that we won, God has truly blessed us to never enable our  
shining light to dim

Only what we do with a positive mindset and a generous attitude will bring  
forth much contentment

Being created with a divine purpose, we have been symbolically and  
beautifully handcrafted by him



## One

For all of God's children inhabited among this world, we are all one  
Skin color, nationality, religion; divinely being human is our main depiction  
Some lust behind the notion of being superior, thrusting meaningless  
actions and spewing hostility, ultimately leaving broken hearts undone  
As we wish to face the reality of a perfect fairytale, this life that was given  
to us all is far from fiction

A melting pot of beautiful creations  
Welcomed to care for each other for dust we will pass away in  
How I pray strong faith and unified courage will alleviate the hurt of a  
crooked nation  
We all bleed the same, but live in a country with such a tainted name

Division steered through prejudice, racism, and injustice  
The difficulty of coming together when we steadily drift so far apart  
Equality and fairness, the pillars of justice  
Too many years wasted to get it right but now is the perfect time to start

Come what may  
The pursuit of the heart freeing love  
An open environment where no separation will refrain us to lay  
Where we can all fly together in peace like beautiful white doves

We are all one  
Never disconnected  
Face the reality  
Our souls do intersect

## **I Am, You Are**

Let it be forever when we encourage one another and not just in the moment  
We all have been placed in this world for a unique reason  
Why does jealousy and competitive pressure even exist?  
It is mandatory to support and acknowledge the emotional drive of one  
another as deception continues to linger in the midst

We're not meant to stay here for long  
Therefore, it is necessary for all of us to get along  
The anger that needs to be held back  
The love that shall be forbidden to slack

Life is too short but too valuable to waste  
Consider the precious moments that won't be taken into excessive haste for  
they will soon be unforgettable memories  
Evil enjoys the sight of all of us tearing each other down  
May it drown in the sea of togetherness as we strive to compliment one  
another

I am content, you are complete  
I am kind, you are respected  
I am intelligent, you are a visionary  
I am everything, you are everything

*Let me repeat this:*

I am content, you are complete  
I am kind, you are respected  
I am intelligent, you are a visionary  
I am everything, you are everything

Take this to heart

We need each other, we are one and the same, know your part

We're here to unify, motivate, and honor as we all have to leave from this world one day

To care for each other and to preserve positive minds and healthy lives will be the most integral way

## Speak Up

You've been quiet for too long  
Suffering each day holding everything in  
You have a voice  
Make use of it

Created to stand out, not to follow  
Let others know where you stand  
Show that you have dignity  
For self-respect carries you much further than excessive flattery

When heavy problems arise, know how to withstand them in order to  
successfully bring them into closure  
Just as Jesus exclaimed, "Peace Be Still", to calm the raging storm  
You have the power to silence your own storm  
Only then will your confidence to speak up will form

You've fought your battles long enough  
Your emotions have been bottled up for so long  
Your mind constantly replayed the times you've been used and tore down,  
all because you didn't see value in your voice  
Seize the need to speak up to release your troubled soul

Establishing your independence instead of basking in the shadows of others  
Standing firm in your honest truth  
Simply accepting the benefit of being heard  
You will no longer remain in silence as your voice will be impactful in  
moving mountains

## The Outcast

The loner  
The quiet one  
The awkward one  
The one that can't be figured out

I was labeled as a nerd just because I used my brain a lot more  
Teased for being unaesthetic to plenty  
Targeted due to my calm, reserved nature  
Through it all, I was protected through self-love as I was too proud and too bold to ever fit in

Middle school and high school brought some trying times for some  
Hormones raging, puberty in full effect  
Easily obliged to peer pressure, knowing that it interfered with the morals and values that were taught  
Leaving good friends behind to blend in with the wrong crowd, only for reality to announce that you need them again

I didn't need to impress anyone  
For I am here to please the Lord himself  
I've always been pushed to live my life on my own standards  
Not from the thoughts of anyone else

An honorable life I chose to settle in  
How frustrating it must be to follow behind the shadows of others  
I would rather view myself as an outcast instead of a people-pleaser  
Spontaneous and generous I will continue to be, inconsistent and shifty I will always frown upon

## Tree Of Life

God is so great to have created a symbol of strength that represents the evident beauty of nature

The resilient tree that holds unique aspects to make it whole:

- The branches
- The leaves
- The roots

How amazing it is for our lives to correlate with the essence of the tree adapted to be so firm

The branches are what I claim to be the glue

They hold the leaves (our decisions) together where they can help express our beauty and make us who we are

They tighten their grips when the rushing wind attempts to pull us into independence too soon

In due time, some may break due to weariness but it's the branches that remain attached that keep us in line

The leaves are what I claim to be the masterpiece

They represent our overall character

They feed into experience, as our decisions and flaws influence us to acquire maturity

It's also clear that some leaves do wilt, fall off, and pass away, which represents our bad decisions and scars being buried behind us

The roots are what I claim to be the foundation

They hold true to being the forefront, keeping everything in perfect shape  
Easy to withstand, difficult to tear away

When the tree begins to lean, it's the roots that straighten it to where it originally stood

The tree of life  
A majestic force of nature  
On solid ground where it shall never be moved  
On uninterrupted land where it shall forever stand

## Positive Fruit

A healthy tree bears great fruit

Love heals

Authenticity creates

Empathy fulfills

Selfless leadership empowers

Poignant grace inspires

Inner confidence transcends

Complete strength prevails

Sympathy soothes the urge to grieve

Kindness changes the evil blueprint that this cruel world was determined to leave

Hope enlightens adequate progress towards a grateful destiny

Faith truly unlocks the riveting potential for where one needs to go and needs to be

Respect blushes to integrity

Joy resents to the turmoil of pain

Maturity turns its slick back to corrupt behavior

Wisdom remains the catalyst to the journeys of those rich in growth

Vital happiness symbolized by the beaming sunshine

Unity we all should bleed

Laughter that refreshes the soul

The positive fruit that nurtures a divine temple



## **Thank You Mom and Dad**

To my beautiful mother, my main encourager

To my humble father, my main inspiration

Through your intercessory prayer and gracious support, my spirit was always uplifted, never discouraged

Your endless love and comforting wisdom will seldom fade and remain still in my heart for a lasting duration

You raised me to cherish the spiritual fulfillment of Christ Jesus, along with my tenacious siblings

Wrapped me with unparalleled fortitude in order to endure through the harshest trials

Compassion and faith . . . acquired assets that benefit what a glorious life brings

Being my absolute best stems from your sound advice and how much you sacrificed with the extra mile

Mom, you inspire precocious children with your gifted abilities of teaching and nurturing

Dad, you guide spiritually-grounded believers towards salvation

What more could I have of a strong-minded, sharp-tongued, patient, and understanding queen and king

Obedience and morality resulting in the betterment of mankind, the equation helping to evoke a healthy conversation

Your tough love and open transparency enables me to realize there's no such thing as perfection

I feel much better knowing that through all of my mistakes, you still love me

Please do know that your willingness to direct me on the right path as well as helping others will forever be recognized

When in doubt, you push me to pursue my limitless dreams once thought imaginary

We celebrate the both of you  
To my mother, you will never be compared to another  
To my father, your presence as a natural-born leader inspires your two sons  
and one daughter  
Carrying out both of your legacies is what we will intend to do

As each day passes by, we are reminded  
As the both of you grow older, we honor  
We laugh, cry, and engage when sudden memories play into rewind  
Mom and Dad, thank you for simply being you and we thank the Good  
Lord for the blessings that he has in store

## Wishing You Well

The storm is passing over  
You've been entrapped in your feelings of brokenness and guilt  
Fear and struggle lured you into being a lost cause  
With the premature effect of a dimmed life unfortunately built

The day has come  
You have encountered your greatest blessing  
Now free from desperation, you are equipped for greatness  
How beautiful it is to accept change for such a defeated spirit

A soul now made whole  
As you have settled in strength  
A life that once disappeared within the darkness  
Your light now gleams so brightly that it will shine forever

Remember to look at yourself in the mirror  
Be vigilant of the tapped potential that's been longing to exist  
You are a gift  
You are enough

Your future remains in your hands  
The daylight unapologetically basks upon your face  
Overwhelming peace that you are fully covered in  
You are a living testimony of significant growth

## A Lifelong Dream (Intro)

This specific poem is a special one that I intended to save for last. The significant meaning behind this poem lies from a soldier who exemplified extraordinary resilience, unmasked courage, lasting faith, sound integrity, wholesome gratitude, and impeccable confidence. This impactful human being is known as Jesse Owens. A selfless man who had to endure and persevere through harsh obstacles to become an influential force to be reckoned with in the versatile sport of track and field. Not only was Jesse successful in achieving his aspirations but he was one of many who broke barriers for African-Americans, both male and female, to reflect their own history in being renowned track and field athletes. In terms of the immaculate legacy that he had left behind, it was realized that Jesse approached divine peace in the midst of his own storm as he faced his share of racism, disrespect, and negativity while preparing for and competing in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. However, with the tenacity, hope, purpose, and worth that he embraced within himself, he was able to move forward from the background noise and receive four gold medals in a city where he was heavily disliked, specifically from its dictator during that time.

This poem also resonates with me because of not only symbolizing the overall theme of this book but because this was my very first poem that I wrote when I was twelve years old, during my time in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. While I also had the option of writing an essay or doing a collage, this was something I knew in my heart I could set forth to do as I saw fit in capturing his essence through the powerful and stirring concept of poetry. As the poem was reflected upon once more, I wanted to preserve its authenticity that was placed into it when I first wrote it. I also want to mention that it is amazing how my very first poem has come around full-circle in helping to represent my debut poetry collection. Therefore, it was with my distinct pleasure that I present to you, *A Lifelong Dream*.

## A Lifelong Dream

It all started when this great child of God was born into his mother's hands  
At the age of five, his mother torn open his chest to take a huge bump out so  
he wouldn't experience any concussions and growth defects  
Even though his family was poor to see a doctor, his mother still had the  
faith and the courage to do what was needed for the bump to be removed  
He cried like a loud horn until the treatment was over  
The sigh of relief his father felt as soon as he became calm

Jesse worked in cotton fields, picking up hundreds of cotton  
He took care of his four sisters and four brothers until the tragic, untimely  
death of his adult sister  
So you're probably wondering why did his mother have that many children?  
It's in the heart of being a Christian, teaching her children what's right and  
reading the Bible, so they can walk into their future that will shine very bright

In high school, a young man arrived, very athletic and very gifted  
Each time he ran, he went faster  
He didn't need a fan  
All he needed was good hydration and a new coach  
Thank goodness for change as his coach taught him everything he needed  
to know, especially when he earned his medals

"Kolledge" (college) happened for him as well  
Winning track meets with gifted speed and endurance  
He married his college sweetheart and also practiced everyday for the  
Olympics so Adolf Hitler wouldn't get in his way  
Many German athletes adored him and how pleasurable it was when they  
liked you for who you were

Jesse, we all know that you died of lung cancer but we are pleased with the fine legacy that you have left behind  
The people you knew and loved will always remember you as a dove of peace  
Your family and friends will forever honor you as their lifelong dream

*In Memory of Jesse Owens: A Life of Endurance*  
(September 12, 1913—March 31, 1980)

