

## Faith Is the Solder That Has Kept My Life Together

Faith has been the solder that has kept my life together. I grew up in a family where we had no other choice but to trust God. After my parents separated my mother knew that in order to provide for five children she needed to put her dreams aside so that she could provide the care that we so desperately needed. It was her desire to keep her family together so she worked as a domestic worker to provide for our needs. Mother had several rules for her family. Three of those rules had a lasting impression on my life: a). each child was required to obtain an education; b) we were expected to respect our elders; and c) we were expected to worship God.



Catherine R. Gayle

Sunday after Sunday we walked to church. Sometimes it was a task but as I got older and started to seek God, I began to know Him for myself. He was no longer my mother's God, but He became my God. I remember being a precocious child. Mother was at odds as to how to handle my personality. I remember being sent to my room a lot. But this was one of the best things that could have happened to me because I learned how to read the bible.

As I matured from a secular perspective I also found myself growing spiritually. I began to put God's word into action. I obtained the faith to believe that he would continue to provide for me after leaving Savannah for Tuskegee Institute (University). Now a number of years later, I have completed a doctorate degree, obtained my social work licensure, written a book, become an ordained minister, and presently I serve as the Director of the Social Work Program at Tuskegee University. A strong faith drove me to believe in a God who was and is real and to rest in the fact that He has his loving hands on my life.

This is truly the solder that has kept my life together, along with my love for people and the desire to see that no person is ever mistreated, which is the driving force behind my love for the social work profession. I especially enjoy teaching because I get an opportunity to impart theoretical as well as practical knowledge to my students. I stress compassion as well as observing the strength perspective when dealing with our clients. I am quick to remind the students that by the grace of God we sit on the other side of the table. My students take note of my genuine desire to serve others. I see it as giving back some of what I have received from Him. I have been through a lot, and as the adage goes, "I survived," but I want to add the fact that I survived because God kept me. I owe my life to Him. This is why I am not ashamed of where I came from and where I am going. I have the faith to get there!

Catherine R. Gayle  
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## Call for Board Nominations for 2013 - 2015

Current members of NACSW are invited to propose candidates to run for NACSW's Board of Directors for terms starting 2013. Board members are primarily responsible for setting NACSW's future goals and direction, developing policies to guide the organization's efforts to meet those goals, and ensuring that the organization has and uses effectively the resources required to accomplish its mission. Nominees will be evaluated and prioritized in accordance with current Board needs for expertise and diversity.

Board candidates must be NACSW members who are committed to the mission of NACSW. They must be willing and able to attend the six semi-annual meetings of the Board that occur in various locations over the three year term. Board members are responsible for most of their own travel, lodging, and meal expenses.

To propose a nominee, you can download a nomination form from NACSW's website at: <http://www.nacsw.org/Board-Nom3.htm>, or contact the NACSW office.

## I Buried My Dad Today

*"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness."—Lamentations 3:22, 23*

I buried my Dad Today,  
It wasn't anything like I thought it would be,  
I'd envisioned myself thinking good memories,  
But, all I could do was raise my hand to the Almighty,  
Because I knew no one would ever be as faithful to me,  
I thought about all the misunderstandings we had,  
And how I was always trying to prove that I wasn't bad,  
I remembered the time that he beat me running backwards,  
And how he always encouraged me to be strong,  
I remembered the times he made me really laugh,  
He was a stern, but loving Dad,  
Who worked hard to see that I always had  
Especially when I was in a struggle  
He would always slip me a fifty,  
That was my Daddy, as generous as he could afford,  
And ready to fix whatever was broken,  
That's why I could only give honor,  
And realized how I was blessed,  
When they played, "Great is thy Faithfulness,"  
As I laid my earthly father to rest,  
It gave me comfort to know that he was returning  
To be received by our Heavenly Father at peace  
And that he had passed his final test.

W. J. Underwood