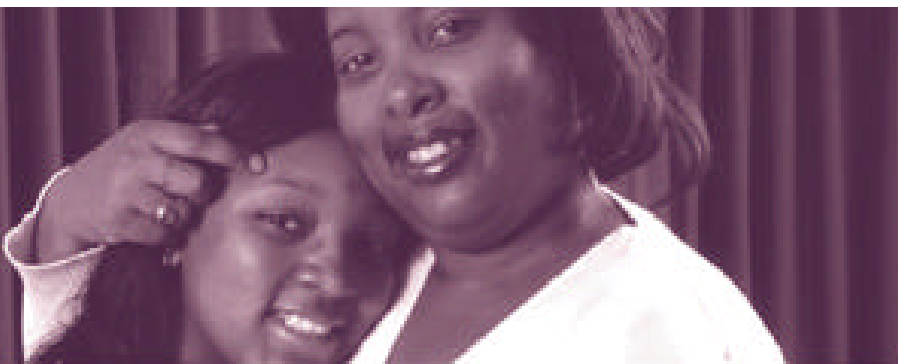


A Desire to
LOVE

A Reason to
ADOPT



Give An Older African-American Child A Family

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A Flash of Fate, A Bus Ride to Freedom

Department of Justice worker Calvin Spigner didn't realize that he and civil rights heroine Rosa Parks would share something in common: a fateful, life-altering ride to freedom. Calvin lives his life by what he can only explain as "the Spirit of God." It was this voice that led him to adopt the first of his three sons. The inspiration came, of all places, on a bus.

SILVER SPRING, MD (**January 26, 2004**) – Calvin Spigner was in his late 30's when he was taking the bus home and looked up to see the faces of a happy father surrounded by three smiling children staring at him from an ad across the aisle. He doesn't remember what was being advertised, only that something about it hit his heart. To his surprise, a voice in him said, "I want that." In a flash, he knew his days of being a bachelor were over.

A devoutly spiritual man, Calvin pays attention when this voice in him speaks. He knew his next steps in life would be to adopt a child, and shortly after his revelation, he found Marcel, then 12, his first son. "When I saw Marcel, I knew he was supposed to be my son. I just knew it," he says.

Calvin, who at first considered adopting a younger child, found his natural gifts being a father to teenagers. Calvin treated his son with the respect he needed. Calvin knew they would get nowhere if Marcel did not trust him. "When you stick by kids, it gives you points in their eyes. I stood by Marcel and defended him, and I earned enough points," he says.

Three years later, Calvin heard the voice of divine inspiration again and found himself on the same road, this time with Williard, his second son, whom he adopted by working with Adoptions Together, a Silver-Spring, Md.-based private, non-profit child placement agency licensed by the State of Maryland and District of Columbia. Project "If Not Us," an initiative of Adoptions Together, is designed to find adoptive homes for older African-American children.

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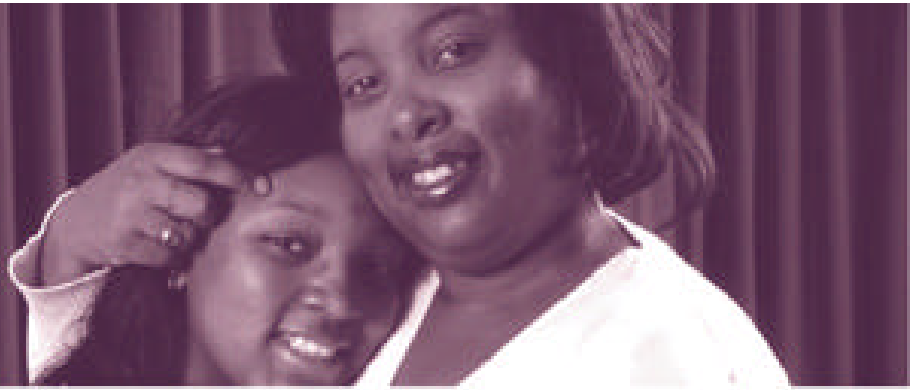
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“Project If Not Us specializes in working with individuals like Calvin who want to welcome an older African-American child into their hearts and home,” explains Sabrena McAllister, director of Project “If Not Us.”

“When I saw Williard, I was so nervous. It was a happy nervous. I couldn’t believe God would send me such a beautiful kid.” Now the father of two teenage sons, Calvin thought his life was complete, but it turned out that he wasn’t finished yet. He was at work last year when the call came again. “Something told me to go to the adoptions website. I’d been on it before, but this time I saw Teako and thought, ‘that’s my son.’” In November 2003, Teako became an official member of the Spigner family.

Calvin is a happy and proud father of three teenaged boys. “I don’t know how I’m doing it,” he laughs. “I’m just doing it. My pastor says I have a heart for it.” Now seven years since that fateful bus ride, Calvin Spigner looks just like the man in the advertisement. “My sons helped me grow up. Until Marcel I was worried just about me, but now I understand responsibility,” he says. “My father wasn’t there for me, and they have helped me heal because now I am doing for them what didn’t happen for me.”

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