

## FINDING JUSTIN

*By Robin Price-Boyd, QMHP, HSC, M.A., TH.M*

**Justin** was a bright young man. He was very likable and handsome! He loved hard, enjoyed his family and music was his passion. Recently, I had the opportunity to listen to his music...which I thoroughly enjoyed. He was indeed musically inclined and talented. I learned from his mother (Christine) that his stage name was "JUSTICE," how powerful as we walk through these trying times today with law enforcement concerns and the black lives matter movement.

**Justin** grew up in a Christian environment...learning about God. For many years, he served in Church as an usher. I can recall those hazel green eyes, pretty curly hair and gentle smile. Yes, I knew Justin and his family. You see Justin's story is special. As **Served Raw Deal** was in its infancy stages, God impressed upon my heart to use his story to begin a real dialogue about suicide; to reach others, to impact lives...to make a difference! The therapeutic cards in this game were designed to help players who might be contemplating suicide, who might be battling suicidal ideation, who might have bouts of depression, who might struggle with their identity, who might be drowning in sorrow and find it difficult to get out of bed. You see, hopelessness and helplessness are real for some; feeling trapped, anxious and seemingly being all alone is real for others. For sure, no two people are alike!

**Suicide** is something you never get over but you get through it one day at a time. There is no magic number for how many days you mourn! By God's grace however, you try to see the bright side...the happy times, the cherished moments, the laughs, the hugs, and yes, even the trying times that are purposed to strengthen the family. Prayers of comfort and encouragement go a long way while waiting to understand what happened to a loved one. The choice to take ones' own life is and always will be baffling. We each have to trust God to unveil the mystery, to uncover that which was hidden...to download the answers to questions.

**Did You Know:** (1) That depression is a form of Mental illness! (2) That depression is a major cause of why young people commit suicide! (3) That suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for 24 – 35 year olds. (4) That males make up over 70% of all suicides with depression being the leading cause! (5) That suicide is treatable and when properly diagnosed the victim can live life. (6) That there are 7 recorded stories of suicide in the Bible. (7) Suicide is nothing new under the sun! (8) God sees the heart...He knows the ending from the beginning. Our responsibility is to encourage, edify, comfort and instill hope, not to judge.

### **Romans 15:4**

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

**Finding Justin**, others who may be facing bouts of depression, feelings of hopelessness, conversations of giving up, withdrawn, feelings of anxiety, trapped or alone; are our priority and we seek to reach them. How possible is it for the victim to surrender the last word? How possible is it for the victim to abort his or her faulty mindset? **Served Raw Deal** offers a strategic way (with real possibilities) to discovering those contemplating suicide. Question,

have you ever come in contact with someone who talked of committing suicide? Familiar with the direct or indirect statements used? Have you known of a family member, friend, classmate or anyone else who succeeded in committing SUICIDE? What impact did it have on you? How did you cope with the tragedy? Finally, are you aware of the suicide hotline for those contemplating suicide? **1.800.273.8255** or **1.800.273.TALK**. We hope that you will be proactive in helping those close to you going forward.

**Blessings!**

