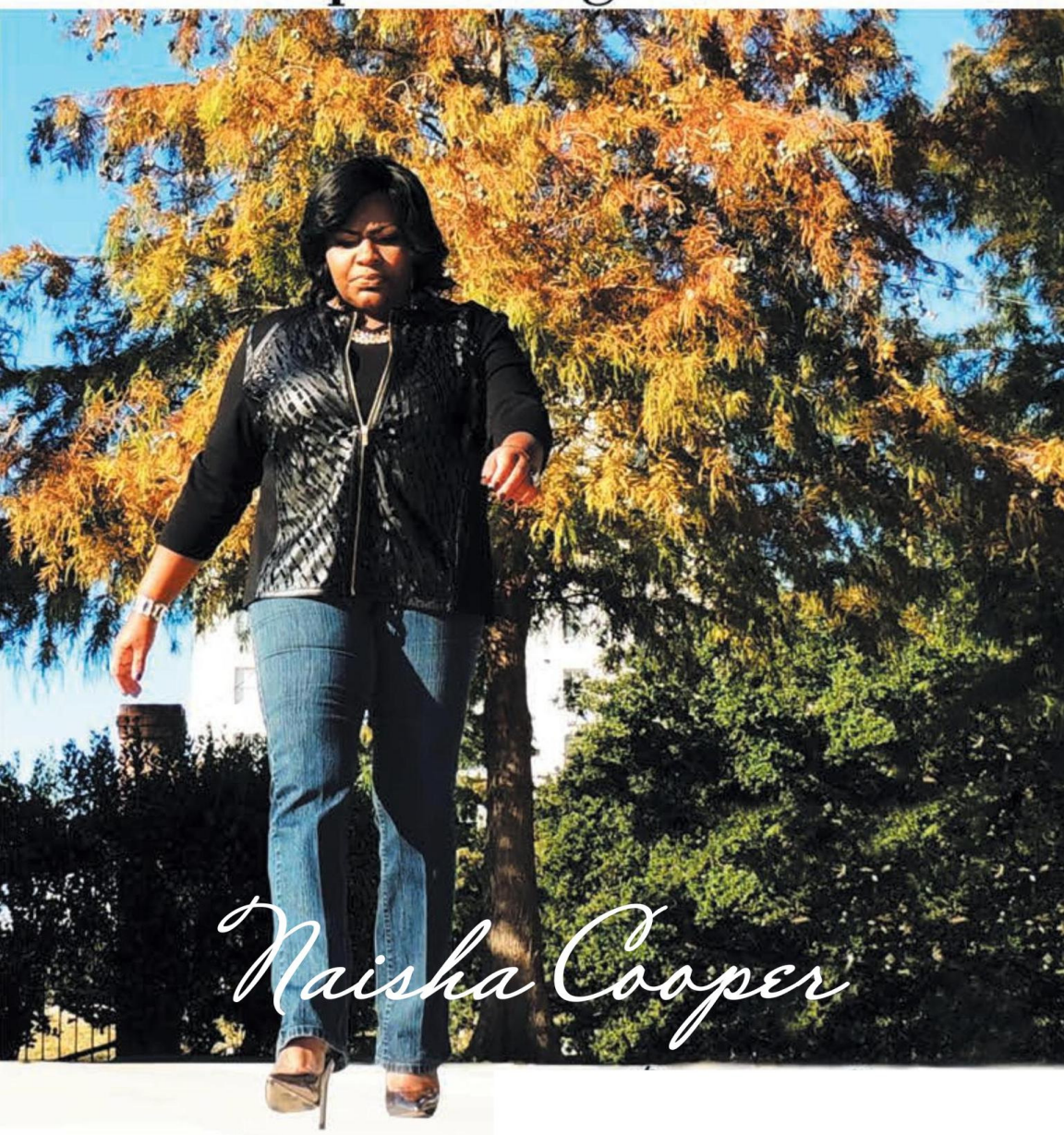


Gumbo

A Recipe for Righteousness



Naisha Cooper

Gumba

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ESV

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KJV

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Introduction

Gumbo is the official cuisine of Louisiana. It is a flavorful stew which features a number of ingredients, such as okra, which hailed from Africa; andouille, which originated in France; seafood from the Gulf of Mexico and creole seasoning from the south. If you “google” gumbo, you will find hundreds of recipes with a variety of ingredients, but it is the roux, seasoning and meat which gives the dish its identity. The roux is created by stirring flour and oil (or butter) over heat. When the roux reaches the desired color and consistency, it is seasoned with chopped bell pepper, onion and celery. Water (or stock) is poured into the roux and after it has simmered a while, the meat is added to the pot to marinate until the gumbo is complete. The end result is a savory dish that is unlike any other.

If you expected a well-written gumbo recipe, with a list of ingredients, pre-prep instructions, cooking temperatures and exact measurements, you are looking in the wrong book. Metaphorically speaking, the gumbo that I refer to represents a unique mixture of circumstances, trials, tribulations and experiences that make you who you are.

Like gumbo, you are a culmination of everything that has transpired in your life. The ingredients in your gumbo might be different from your neighbor, because she uses oil and you use butter. You may prefer shrimp and okra in your gumbo, but your friend puts chicken and sausage in hers, simply because that's what she had in her freezer or maybe that's all she can afford.

Just like the ingredients in gumbo will be different from cook to cook, life experiences will vary from woman to woman. I am no different. My unique experiences created a pot of gumbo that tells my story. I was raised in a middle class two-parent home with two sisters. I had a normal and healthy upbringing, but at the age of 16, I was forced into motherhood. I obtained my GED and enrolled in cosmetology school. I got married in my 20's and had two more children – one which has a disability (autism). After enduring mental and physical abuse in my marriage, I decided to get a divorce. Seven years later, I remarried (the same man) in an attempt to be a family again for the children. Ironically, the remarriage proved that we were better off apart, so we divorced again shortly thereafter!

The ingredients in my gumbo may seem to be a plethora of trials and tribulations, but if you stir the pot, you will discover that I accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior at the age of 21, opened my first salon at the age of 22 and became an ordained minister at the age of 34. Even in the

midst of divorce, depression and disabilities, God was with me. He supplied my needs and my family is truly blessed! I am not boasting, but I am thankful that God preserved me. I have survived what many have succumbed to. I will never be ashamed of where I've been, because eyes haven't seen where I'm going! I tell my story, because others will see God in it.

This pot of "Gumbo" has been marinating inside me for a long time. I have read my Bible, prayed and written in journals for many years. I wrote most of this book during my quiet time with God, but I also remember writing when my body was in pain and while I was on vacation with my family. Parts of this book were written when my pillow was drenched with tears and even as I waited in a courthouse for a restraining order. When I felt like giving up on everything, I heard God tell me to keep going and He kept sending people to get a portion of the "Gumbo" I had. I didn't write this book because I've reached a place of perfection, but I wrote it to share the recipe that God gave to me.

God wants you to grow closer to Him through daily worship, study and prayer. This book is divided into the 3 core components of gumbo (roux, seasoning and meat) with 7 instructions in each section. If you complete 1 instruction per day, you will have a flavorful pot of "Gumbo" in 21 days. As you read this book, please take every word into consideration. Read the scriptures and

write down the things that resonate in your spirit. As you “let it marinate,” consider yourself and apply the lesson to your daily life. Don’t just say the “prayer,” pray the prayer. The prayers of the righteous are powerful and effective (James 5:16).

God wants you to seek His righteousness the way that you desire food when you’re hungry and water when you’re thirsty. I can’t guarantee that you will gain a house, car, husband or a dog after you read this book, but I guarantee if you go to God honestly and fervently concerning your life and obey His instructions, He will add the things you need (Matthew 6:33). This “Gumbo” is ready in season and out of season to fill you up, feed your soul, renew your mind and strengthen your walk with God. Grab a bowl - so that you may taste and see that God is good! Bon Appétit.

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be filled.
Matthew 5:6*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be filled.*

Matthew 5:6

This 21 day devotional contains wisdom, encouragement and enlightenment to guide you on the path of righteousness and strengthen your walk with God through daily worship, study and prayer. It will get you in the habit of seeking God's will in everything you do, say, think or feel and inspire you to break ungodly habits. This "Gumbo" is ready in season and out of season to fill you up, feed your soul and renew your mind. Grab a bowl - so that you may taste and see that God is good! Bon Appétit.



Naisha Cooper is an ordained minister, entrepreneur and author. For over a decade, Naisha has been on a mission to reach the lost and reaffirm the called. She has ministered to the hearts and souls of others and shares an incredible testimony of perseverance in the midst of adversity. By the grace of God, Naisha has emerged with joy, strength

and victory to effectively reach the masses with a message of hope in Jesus Christ through social media, books and community outreach. Naisha is a mother of three children - D'Henrei, Dacien and A'naisha.

