

FREE LIFE NEWS

June-July-August 2008

POINTING THE WAY TO LIFE IN THE
RISEN LORD JESUS CHRIST

Issue # 70

MY TESTIMONY—GOD'S VICTORY

I'm writing this letter to tell my testimony of God's victory in my life. I've come a long way and learned a lot. I was raised in a good Christian home. I gave my life to Jesus at a young age, my father wasn't around much due to Military service so my mother was the one always around. My dad unfortunately was an alcoholic, it came to a point in his life to where work and alcohol was his life. He forgot about us.

My mother became very bitter and resentful and divorced him. My mother, sister and I left and moved away. This is where the Devil got a foothold on us and blinded us. My sister & I struggled a lot in school and at home due to what we had seen and went through as youngsters, all the fighting and abuse.

“I decided to run from Him, but His Son has set me free and I am free indeed”

I could never fit in, so I started acting a fool. I started getting high on occasion with the guys after school and it soon got worse and worse to the point where I was completely lost and stuck.

In High School I was in a bad car accident and messed my back up pretty good and had to take physical therapy and pain medication for awhile. I became very depressed, I ended up worse than I was before and doing twice as much dope on top of it all to try to mask the pain. I came to a point where all I was doing was skipping school and getting high because I was so depressed and didn't care anymore.

Shortly after that became very ill and in an extreme amount of pain all over my body, the Doctors couldn't figure out what was wrong with me, they figured I was just so depressed that it was causing me physical pain. It got worse my anxiety became through the roof due to the agony I felt. The doctors sent me to several specialists and found out I had a nerve condition called Fibromyalgia. The Doctors began to put me on heavy pain medication and anxiety medications. I soon became addicted to morphine. I was strung out for six years and it nearly took my life.

My Mom kicked me out because of my drug habit. She couldn't stand by and watch me continue to kill myself. I moved to my Dad's and everything got even worse, I became suicidal and ended up in a couple of mental hospitals due to my drug intake. It came to a realization that I was gonna die if I didn't get help. I started to get clean, slowly getting off my medication, but still I wasn't right. My Dad got tired of all the things that were going on so he booted me out the door as well. I continued going from place to place until I finally hit rock bottom. I became homeless in Dallas, TX, strung out on drugs.

I cried out to God one night, cursing Him for what I had been through, but that night **He reached His hand of grace down and snatched me up**. I knew it was either going to be Him or death. I had to get away and back into His will. I called my Grandparents that night and they came and got me. I was so bound up and tired I didn't care what happened at this point. I went to Mineral Wells and stayed with them. They endured all my hate and selfishness and continued to stick by my side and pray for me and one night I broke. I knew I had to stop resisting and I rededicated my life to Jesus Christ.

I started to do better. I got completely off all the medication and dope. I started going to Church again and tried to stay on the right path, but I gave up shortly after and started drinking very heavy. I ended up taking my sister's car one night and got arrested for DWI. I woke up in Jail miserable and mad at myself for what I did.

I chose to start doing drugs, I chose to stay on them, I chose to live in sin. At this point it was too much to bare, **I needed help.**

I found a program called Teen Challenge and the door was opened for me to go there. I've been in the program for 10 months now, in this time I've learned so much about Jesus and the price He paid for me. I've been redeemed, filled with His Holy Spirit and set apart from the World. The old man I was is gone, a new and improved man has come. I know now I have a purpose in my life and that's to be a Disciple of Jesus Christ.

He allowed me to go through what I went through to bring me to the point of where I am today.

My mind has been renewed by His Word. I've learned that it wasn't what happened to me, it was the sin that caused my down fall, but God is faithful and He saw me through it. It was all His purpose.

God has plans to prosper me, to give me a future and a hope. He took all that bad and turned it around to good. His Word says he will never leave nor forsake us. He never left my side. He's been by my side the whole time.

I just decided to run from Him, but His Son has set me free and I'm free indeed.

Glory, Honor and Praise to God for what he has done. He completely restored all I lost, He's given my health back. He's renewed a steadfast spirit in me as well as delivering me and setting me upon a Rock.

I will not be shaken and I won't be moved, for no weapon formed against me shall prosper, and He Who is in me, is greater than he who is in the World.

My plans today are to be in full time Ministry and help others who are struggling like I once was.

We are so thankful to our Lord for placing His hand of mercy placed upon our Grandson. We are also thankful to Teen Challenge for "challenging" JD to look to God for his deliverance from drugs and alcohol. Thank You, God for giving our son back to our family

Mack & Mitzi



I would like to pose a question to all the many readers of the Free Life News: "Who are you?" "An Inmate"- "A convict" "A Prisoner" Or "A Child of God who happens to be in Prison?" Why is identity important? Until we find our identity, we will be searching for the rest of our lives for peace and fulfillment. The following is an excerpt from "Living above your Circumstances" a book by Bob George. Page 104

Identifying the Real You

You are a child of God.

"To all Who received Him, to those who believed in His Name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12)

Let me illustrate our new identity by comparing it to that of a jar. If there is nothing in a jar, its identity is precisely what it is: a jar. However, if you fill that jar with applesauce, it takes on a new identity—it is a jar of applesauce. Not only has the jar changed in identity, but it has also changed in value. Its identity and value come from what is in the jar.

The same is true with our lives. We come into this world empty of God's Spirit. But when we receive Christ into our

hearts as our Lord and Savior, He comes to take up residents in us and now we are Children of God. Our new identity and value comes from who lives in us. You are...*A Son and since you are a Son, God has made you also an heir.* (Gal. 4:7)

One of the functions of the Holy Spirit is to continually remind us of this truth. Romans 8: 15-16 says, "*you did not receive a Spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of Sonship. And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father' the Holy Spirit Himself testifies with our Spirit that we are God's Children.*"

When trouble comes, we sometimes question God's love and start to doubt our salvation. And Satan is right there to help us along the way, saying, "How could you be a Christian with all this bad stuff happening to you?" Then you may start questioning the sincerity of your faith and wonder. "maybe I didn't really mean what I was praying when I received Christ." This kind of thinking may convince you that you aren't even saved! Of course when such negative thoughts go through your head, God seems a million miles away. Even though the Lord has promised that He will never leave us nor forsake us. (Heb. 13:5) our emotions tell us a different story.

During these times of doubt, our deepest need is to know that we belong to Him. That is why He placed His Spirit in our hearts to bear witness with our Spirits that we truly are Children of God. (Romans 8:16). It is the still, small voice of God's Spirit that will give you the encouragement, strength and confidence knowing Who you belong to and Whom you can trust.

Keep your eyes on Jesus!

Your friend in Christ,

Joe Cushman—Mt Olive, WV

"The Thinker"

Five year old Landon was riding along with his Mom & Dad, and started speaking his mind.

He said, Mommie, your name is "Ma'am,"

and Daddy, your name is "Sir,"

And my name is.....

"Hush"

Landon is the Grandson of Fred & Sally, Free Life Team Members.

HUMILITY

Have you ever met a humble person? If you have, you will probably agree with me that it is an unforgettable experience.

My Mom had a humble spirit in the Lord. She loved children. As we would make our way through a restaurant to our table, my Mom would have to stop and chat a little with each little child she passed along the way. My Mom was born in Germany and though she had been in the United States for over 70 years, her German accent was so prominent, you would have thought she just got off the boat. So the little children that she spoke to on our way to our table were as fascinated with her as she was with them.

When nurses attended my Mom in the hospital, it was not uncommon to hear her tell a nurse, "I love you." Sometimes a nurse would not be able to understand clearly what Mom was saying and she would look at me and ask, "What did your Mom say to me?" After telling the nurse how my Mom expressed her love, it was not uncommon for a nurse to have tears in her eyes as she left Mom's room.

Mom affected many people that way. She was always smiling and always happy. What made Mom the way she was? Jesus' love. His love gave her a humble spirit.

The dictionary gives the definition of HUMBLE as: not haughty, not arrogant, reflecting a spirit of difference or respect toward others. In Andrew Murray's book, "HUMILITY," he writes; "Humility is simply the sense of entire nothingness that comes when we see how truly God is all, and in which we make way for God to be all."

Humility sets us free from our pride which always hinders a humble spirit. Pride and humility cannot co-exist.

Jesus was humble. "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very of a servant, being in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:5-11

When I am humble, I have a teachable spirit. When I look at God's word through a humble spirit, I discover many truths that otherwise I would not see. "He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way." Psalm 25:9

Humility makes us the recipient of promises. "But he gives us more grace. That is why the scripture says, 'God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble.'" James 4:6 In James 4:10 it says, "Humble yourselves, before the Lord, and He will lift you up." And in 1 Peter 5: 6-7, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all you anxiety on him because he cares for you."

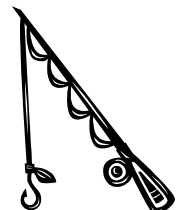
How do we achieve humility? First of all, pride is an enemy to humility. Pride encourages us to keep our minds on ourselves and our situations. Prayer and practice is necessary. We have to constantly renew our minds. We have to think of others ahead of ourselves and we have to think of ourselves through sober judgment. "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given me I say to everyone of you: do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you." Romans 12:2-3

Yes, I like to be around a humble person but even more, I want to become a humble person. So, taking one day at a time is a good start and being thankful no matter what the day may bring. Gratitude frees my heart to hear what Jesus wants me to think and do. "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to admonish one another with all wisdom and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Colossians 3: 15-17

Sally—Free Life Team Member



FATHER'S DAY JUNE 15TH



The Blessed

Part II

An exposition of the Beatitudes

By E.J. Turk

Jesus' second Beatitude:

“Blessed are those who mourn

For they will be comforted.”

Matt. 5:4

The phrase “Blessed are those who mourn. . .” is a seemingly most extreme contrast in terms. One sense of “Blessed” is to be happy, whereas “mourn” is translated elsewhere as “filled with grief”. So what does this seeming contradiction in terms mean? Well, as we saw in the first Beatitude (Matt. 5:3), God seekers are not blessed by being sad, they're blessed as a result of their sadness. But what are they sad about?

Imagine a situation where you're a part of an organization that promotes a terrible evil as a good thing, say like the mistreatment of children. In this hypothetical organization people are committing all kinds of cruel acts of violence and are praising on another for it while all along this same organization did such things until you were deeply entrenched in it. The sense of betrayal you would feel would be bad enough, but people outside of the organization who learned the truth about it would now associate you with these evils. How terrible! Knowing how you would feel about this organization's behavior, how do you think those who condoned the evil should rather feel? Appalled? Disgusted? Filled with grief?

The Greek word translated “mourn” in Matt. 5:4 as “filled with grief” in 1 Cor. 5:2. In that passage there is described a situation of great sexual immorality that people are actually praising! And who are these people? They're the Corinthian church! Paul said, “Shouldn't you rather be filled with grief”? I think we can all agree with that.

So now we're back to the word “mourn”. As we can see, the meaning of this word goes far beyond a mild sadness. But, again, what are we to mourn in order to be blessed? Well, if we look back on the situation in 1 Cor. 5:2 we can extrapolate that Paul was telling them that not only should they be filled with grief because of the reproach brought to the church by this one individual, but also they should be mortified by their own acceptance of the behavior. They should be grief stricken by their own sinful behavior as well as the God dishonoring behavior of the world around them. And that is the kind of mourning Jesus had in mind when He said, “Blessed are those who mourn. . . .”

Have you ever been so depressed because of your own failings that you felt like giving up? Perhaps it was a hurtful attitude or maybe even an addiction that seemed insurmountable to you. You hated yourself for what you were doing but you just couldn't stop. And then you would look at the world around you and be filled with sorrow because of the poor state it is in. Murder. Starvation. Disease. Prejudice. It's so overwhelming it can fill you with agony that causes an unbearable pain to well up until you

scream, “God, where are You?!” As tragic as this is, do you know what you are feeling when you come to this point? You're feeling what is called Godly sorrow. Now you are moving into the sense Jesus meant.

In II Cor. 7:10 Paul writes that Godly sorrow brings repentance. To mourn, to be filled with grief, brings us to the point where we say enough! No more! And then we turn around and head the other direction. We turn to God and repent. And it's not an easy road to change our ways, but we must try, because we know what waits for us in the other direction. But is trying good enough? Sure it is. We must mourn. Paul goes on to say in II Cor. 7:11, “See what this godly sorrow had produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves to be innocent in this matter.” Because you are filled with Godly sorrow and moved to repent.

Did you know that this Beatitude is the first of Jesus' Beatitude to contain a future, as well as an immediate promise? This is the blessing Jesus spoke of for those who mourn, He said, “. . . They will be comforted.” They will see justice. They will see an end to their pain. They will see the world as God meant it to be. Luke 16:25 uses the same Greek word for “comforted”, it reads, “But Abraham replied. ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.’ “Lazarus mourned and he is now comforted. But if we mourn now, if we repent and turn our hearts to God by confessing Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and only hope to rescue us, not only from this wicked world, but also our own wickedness, then we will also be comforted, now. For if we trust in Him He will send The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, Who will fill us, cleanse us, and guarantee us that a day awaits when we shall mourn no more and have our every tear whipped away in the comfort of the kingdom of God.

This world is hard and it is filled with tragedy, but there is hope. Comfort awaits those who realize this, those who sincerely desire to change their sinful course, who actually pray for this sinful world to change. They are the blessed; the promise is for such as these. Won't you become one of the blessed and gain the promises of God?

Dine At The Lord's Table

By Kenneth Lee — Huntsville, TX

“For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.”

Psalm 107: 9

Many of us can remember when we were a child and wanted to eat that ice cream or candy before dinner time. Our mother would respond, “No! If you eat all that stuff you won't want any dinner.” sure enough, we ate the candy or ice cream anyway, stuffing ourselves, and barely touched our meal.

Why do we lose spiritual hunger today? Or, more importantly, why do we sometimes lose our hunger for God? We're consuming everything else, instead! We eat the material things of this life, fully stuffing ourselves, and consequently leave no (pg 5)

Dine At The Lord's Table, cont. from pg 4

room for God. The net effect? We starve ourselves spiritually.

It's like the world is a giant candy store and the devil is the owner, stocking its shelves full of enticing distractions. Fancy, colorful wrappers and clever marketing schemes offer everything the flesh desires to fill up on. We're like that small child running up and down the candy aisle, pointing at this, screaming for that. In effect, we are lured away from the more wholesome and satisfying things of God.

It's a re-enactment of the original sin if Eden, the devil wants us to look at the tree with the false fruit and away from the tree that holds the answer to life. The serpent hangs from the branch of the false tree and whispers, "Psst, over here. These are the things that you need to make you happy."

God has prepared the dinner table, but many of us don't eat because we are too full from the material junk food of this life. We come to the Lord's dinner table already full. "Sorry, I can't eat anything. I'm already full." We either do not sit at the Lord's table, or if we do, we either take no bites from the food that is offered or settle for a couple of spoonfuls. Rarely do we eat of the full meal that God has planned for us.

Others only smell the aroma of the good food that the Lord has prepared as they pass by His table. "It sure smells good. I bet it is really tasty, truly satisfying, but I'm just not hungry right now. Maybe next time."

You have heard the call many times, have noticed the peace, the sense of fullness and joy in those who have eaten from the Lord's table, but you're just not ready for God yet. Maybe later, you decide.

The invitation for dinner will not go on for long, just as Jesus prepared His last supper, so too is the Lord going to prepare His final banquet. With great love, the Lord has prepared a meal for you. Will you not eat what He has to offer?

Imagine coming to the Lord's table completely empty—which is how we should all come—so that you can become full of all that He has to offer! Too many times we do not eat at the Lord's table or we settle for less than what He has to offer. Some people only settle for the crumbs that fall from the Lord's table. Though even the crumbs can bring healing, imagine what would happen if we were to eat a full course meal!

Oh Christian, why do you not desire the deeper things of God?!

Oh non-Christian, why have you not tasted the things of the Lord in heaven?!

Why do you allow yourself to be deceived by the false fruits of this life?

Partake of the meal that God has planned for you, hunger for Him and His righteousness, and learn what it means to be truly satisfied and full. You'll want more of what He has to offer. And you will always get more if you ask for it, there's enough for seconds, thirds, fourths, and so on; He never runs out of blessings!

Maybe you have never eaten from the Lord's table. Maybe you believe you are not invited, you have felt left out most of your life. Dear reader, to believe you are not invited by the Lord is a lie from the devil. You are invited. The God Who created the heavens sent out invitations to all through the death of His Son on a cross. Why not believe God's promises rather than the devil's lies? Taste and you will find that the Lord is good.

Whether you have never sat at the Lord's table or desire more from the food that He has to offer, come to Him emptied of self, emptied of the material things of this life, so that you can become full from what He has to offer, He will satisfy your longing soul and fill it with goodness.

Pray the following prayer;

Lord, God, I'm guilty of filling up on the things of this world and have neglected the fullness of the meal that You have to offer. Oh with what great love you have prepared for me your heavenly feast. Lord satisfy my hunger, fill my longing soul with your full Presence. Let me eat from Your table so that I will hunger no more.

Adapted from;

The Deeper Life; Living Deeper by Reaching Higher
2007 K. Byron Lee

I am so Happy, Joyful, Excited and Thankful !!!**To the Free Life Ministry Team**

It is 8:27 P.M. Tuesday April 7th 2008 as I write this,

My Jury trial was today, and after a year of incarceration I was found Not Guilty by a 12 member Jury. I am now waiting to get my Parole reinstated.

I did have Someone testify for me! My Lord and Savior Jesus delivered me indeed, and testified in a supernatural way for me! In a way that no man of flesh and bone could have ever done.

I am so Happy, Joyful, Excited and Thankful right now. It took the Jury 4 1/2 hours to reach a verdict and I jumped with Joy when the verdict was read, "Not Guilty."

Our God is a deliverer! He is unchanging! So full of Love!

It is a truly powerful testimony that goes to the confirmation of God's very own Word!

"And Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

"I will never leave you or abandon you."

In the day of my trouble I will call for You; For You will answer me"

I praise God for this victory! There is truly Victory in Jesus!

Thank you all very much, May God bless you all abundantly. May the Peace, Love and Joy of Christ be with you always.

Ricky Lowe

A personal note:

We have watched as God worked in Ricky's life the past year. Ricky has come out of Jail a man of God, having hidden God's Word in his heart, and has taken opportunity to preach that Word several times on Monday nights. We look forward to serving the Lord with Ricky by our side. **With God all things are possible.** Praise the Lord.

Mack & Mitzi and the Free Life Team

“Prisoner. . . You are Not Forgotten”

This month (April 2008) marks a year of incarceration for me at Palo Pinto County Jail. I was arrested April 23rd 2007 on a blue warrant for not reporting to my Parole Officer during the month of March. During the arrest I was given a new felony possession charge, which I was not guilty of.

You're thinking. . . . Yea right! “I hear that all the time!” But the fact of after being here a year, I had my day in Court, Tuesday April 8th and my only evidence of innocence was my testimony itself. I told the 12 member Jury the truth that I was unaware of being in possession of anything. After 4 1/2 hours of deliberation they had reached a verdict. I listened on trembling knees as the Judge read out loud to the Court, “ After reviewing the evidence and testimonies, We the Jury, find the Defendant, Richard Eugene Lowe Jr. NOT GUILTY!”

I could never explain in words the joy that passed through and within my Body and Soul at the hearing of that verdict. Although I can testify that our God is truly a deliverer.

And I would like to share with you what Our Heavenly Father has had to say about Prisons and Prisoners.

Psalms 79: 11 “ Let the groaning of the prisoner come before you; according to the greatness of your power.”

So yes, no matter where you are here on earth, even in Prison your cries still come and are heard before the Lord.

Isaiah 61: 1 “ The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.”

So ask yourself, : Ask , “ Am I poor? Am I broken hearted? Am I held captive or am I bound?” And if you are any of these or all of the above then open your eyes and see that God Himself has sent you someone to preach to you Good Tidings. Someone who His very own Spirit is upon to heal your broken heart, to proclaim liberty, to you even in your captivity, to loose you from your bondage and to open up your prison. Give an attentive ear and you undivided attention to that someone or someone's ! Whomever they might be.

Matt. 25: 36 “ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me, I was in Prison and you came to Me.”

Be thankful for that someone or someone's who has come to you in your time of need and imprisonment. Thank God for them! And they themselves should rejoice knowing that Jesus said in coming to us they have also come to Him and did it for Him just the same.

Heb. 13: 3 “ Remember the prisoners as if your were in prison with them.”

That is God giving instruction to His people to remember us who are in prison as if they were in here with us. So if God says to do it then it is because Jesus does it! God remembers us and he is right here with us. You are not forgotten! And praise God for those individuals who have obeyed this instruction from our Creator; they are fulfilling God's will indeed.

Psalms 142: 7 “ Bring my soul out of prison, that I may Praise Your Name; The righteous shall surround me. For You shall deal bountifully with me.”

While you're in prison “and “ when you are brought out of prison Praise the Name of the Lord and you will be surrounded by the righteous who are in Christ and God Himself will bless abundantly!

Psalms 146: 7 “ The Lord gives freedom to the prisoner.”

Don't let all this concrete and these steel bars fool you my friend, The Lord gives us freedom! Focus on Him and not so much on your surroundings and you will indeed know just exactly what I mean and exactly what God meant when He declared what He gave freedom to the prisoners.

Psalms 69: 33 “ the Lord hears the poor and does not despise his prisoners.”

Whose prisoners? His prisoners. That's right you are His. That's good news! And who does He hear? The Poor! How much money you got on your books? I bet it ain't enough to make you rich! God hears you beloved believer!

He has delivered me and as soon as my Blue Warrant is lifted I will be home with my children and family. Real soon, within a week, I should be out. But I'll be back in free-world clothes; this time a member of the closest Prison Ministry that will let me go inside these walls with them to bring you all good tidings and the Gospel of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I'll leave each of you with this Scripture and following comment.

Jeremiah 29: 11 “ For I know the thoughts I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and NOT of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity.”

So first of all let's think about Who said all of this! Who said it? God said it! He said his thoughts of you are good and of peace! So if you ever get the notion to even think, for a minute, otherwise, don't do it! That's the enemy! And you just remind him that you now know that God's thoughts of you

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Word of God

“Resting in His Goodness”

Isn't it a great thing that we can rest in the goodness of God, that we can rest assured in all things in life through His love for us. For the Christian life is not what we can do for God, but what God does for us. Too many times we can become overwhelmed trying to do all we can for God... wearing ourselves out by giving to much of ourselves.

Recently I found myself in this situation... finding myself becoming frustrated... restless... even discouraged. When God put it in my heart to go “home”. That being a little place in Mineral Wells where I find myself surrounded by those people I call family and close friends. I had the pleasure of meeting with these people who consist of people very dear to my heart. People within the Free Life ministry both past and present. Meeting new friends for the first time face to face, as I was the focus of a surprise birthday party. It was the best time I had in some time, sitting around sharing our Lord Jesus, and the fellowship of my brothers and sisters of like faith. Then to my hearts delight a very dear young lady I know gave to me as a gift.. Her God given talent of fiddle playing. I thought back to my time incarcerated when I would hear about her talent and ask her to play me a song over the phone... but in her shyness she would say that I would have to be here to hear her play. As I listened to the beautiful music she played my heart soared to a peaceful place and I began to look around the room at all the people that had come to see me. I thought back to all the dreams and hopes I had while incarcerated... about spending time with these people I had grown to love so much. Remembering how we would talk about getting together one day... sitting around to share about the Lord and spend time together. Realizing at the point that God had allowed all my hopes and dreams to come true. That at that very moment all my worries were gone and I was resting in the goodness of God. That He had put all these people in my life... that He had allowed me the greatest gift of all. The ability to love and to be loved by others. Surrounded by family and friends... sharing our love for the Lord I was surrounded by God's Spirit.

It has been almost a year since I was released from a physical prison but almost fifteen since I was released from a spiritual one. That in that time God has never left me nor forsaked me... and when things get tough... God gets tougher than any problem that can come against me. For those incarcerated and trust in Christ... don't ever be afraid to dream and hope because one day God will bring it to pass. Allowing you to rest in His goodness.... As He has me.

May God hold you in His most Tender embrace

Ronald “Bama” Lang

Bondservant to Christ



“A Different Spirit” Numbers Chapters 13 & 14

God had told Moses to send 12 men to spy on the people of Canaan, because that was the land which God was going to give to the Israelites. (referred to as the “Promised Land” -13:1-2) However, the Israelites were going to have to physically **take** the land from the people there.

Do you remember the story? The Israelites found that the land was lush, green, & had all the amenities they could ever want. They referred to it as the “land of milk and honey”. (13:27) Anyway, out of those 12 men only 2 came back believing they'd be able to take the land: Caleb and Joshua. The rest of the men were so discouraged that they over-inflated all the obstacles they perceived to be problems, & basically gave up hope of ever having the gift of a wonderful life that God had promised them. I guess in their minds, THEIR God just wasn't big enough to do what He said He'd do.

12 men, & only 2 believed. God specifically mentions Caleb in Chapter 14:24 (Read it). The words “different spirit” can also be interpreted as a “special attitude”. Caleb had a “special attitude”. He was useable by God because of that attitude. Caleb didn't succumb to discouragement or unbelief. In Caleb's mind, if God said it, He must have meant it!

Joshua was right there with Caleb, believing the very same thing. As a matter of fact, they courageously spoke to all the people together, stating this (Numbers 14:7-8): *“The land is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey.”*

This story reminded me of you, a Christian inmate, who might be reading this right now. Someone who is searching for that Promised Land which God has called you to. Do you REALLY believe? Are you a Caleb? A Joshua? Then stand firm, proclaim it, & allow God to set you apart from the 12. God is always looking for someone who has a “different spirit”, a “special attitude”. It could be you! If you don't have that attitude, well... then change your attitude! Get on board! Seize the day! Tell God you're ready, & show Him you mean it!

Above all, remember this: When it comes to the things of God, it's not what you get, but what you give. Whether your works for the Lord are big or small, they are giant-sized in the eyes of God. A humble heart & a willingness to be used is all He asks. He wants to bless you abundantly, far beyond what you could ever imagine for yourself.

So go on, give Him a try.

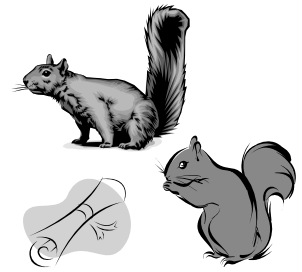
Heather , Free Life Team
Member



The Squirrels that Went to College

Pell and Mell - college graduates, magna cum laude

Jeannie Thompson



They were helpless baby squirrels when I first saw them in a nest partially hidden in the underbrush. Their mother, evidently killed by a wild animal, lay just a few feet away. The babies couldn't have been more than a few weeks old because their eyes were still closed, and fur had not yet completely covered their bodies. It was 1955, and I was home from Trinity University for the weekend. A family friend called to say he had found the two little squirrels and thought I might like to try raising them as pets.

In about an hour, I met him with a small cage, borrowed from another friend, and some rags and twigs and other items I thought might come in handy. Then, I picked up the nest and gently placed it, with its little occupants, in the cage and drove home. At intervals, the rest of that day and through the night, I fed the little squirrels (using doll baby bottles) with a formula suggested by a local wild life preserve.

The next day, I returned to college with "Pell" and "Mell". Believe it or not, the dormitory director did not object when she met me carrying them to my room. (There wasn't much she could say because a little possum was living in a cage in the room next to mine!)

Later that afternoon, my roommate returned from her weekend at home and was as excited as I was about our two new "roommates". It's a good thing, because for awhile the squirrels still had to have night feedings. They were also little chatterboxes when we were trying to study or sleep. But, all in all, things went well, and Pell and Mell enjoyed the attention they received from us and from other human playmates, who lived in the dorm.

We sometimes closed the door to our room and let the squirrels run loose – it was such fun to watch them. They both loved climbing up the bedpost to my top bunk and taking flying leaps to a desk top or some other landing strip. Occasionally, someone would enter our room when the squirrels were loose, and one or both would dash out into the hall. Usually, it was no problem to retrieve them; however, I remember one time when we had to take drastic measures.

Back in those days, the girls had separate dorms from the boys; and whenever a man of any description: parent, brother, boyfriend, etc, was in the dorm, the alert "MAN ON FLOOR!" was issued through the loud speaker. During this particular escape, we quickly captured little Pell, but Mell, the male, made a successful getaway, even though it was to be a temporary one.

After about 15 minutes of an unfruitful search, one of the girls on our floor alerted the office, and immediately, we heard the announcement: "SQUIRREL MAN ON FLOOR!" over the loud speaker. Many giggling girls poured out of their rooms to join the search, which went on for another ten minutes. Then we heard a *shriek* coming from a room a few doors from ours.

One girl had not known of the "crisis" because she had been taking a shower. When she stepped out of the shower, she almost stepped on Mell! She had the presence of mind to quickly close the bathroom door; and, with help from her roommate, we again had a successful roundup.

By this time, the squirrels had almost doubled in size and seemed to be thriving on college life, as well as the readily available snacks of nuts, apples, carrots, various seeds and even an occasional finger! A few weeks earlier, we had moved them to a roomier cage equipped with a tree branch to climb on, and plenty of leaves, twigs and shredded bark. They seemed very pleased with their new accommodations.

It was now May, and before long, the spring semester would be over. I would be graduating, and so would Pell and Mell; it was time to make plans for the future. I would be starting a summer job in Dallas, and I knew the time had come for Pell and Mell to begin living in the outside world with other squirrels and small creatures of the wild.

Before graduation, our dorm had a brief ceremony honoring the senior residents. The committee that planned this event sent special invitations to the seniors, and to Pell and Mell!

On the evening of the ceremony, my roommate and I put Pell and Mell in their carrier, and took them to the meeting room. After a skit and a few preliminaries, awards were presented. Near the end of the ceremony, the dormitory president called Pell and Mell to come forward to receive their awards. We set their carrier on a table at the front of the room, and the final presentation began. Pell and Mell were named "Most Scholarly Residents" for completing their four-year college requirements in four months! Then they were presented with two small silver trophies, engraved with their names and filled with their favorite nuts.

Not far from the campus was a little park, which included a shady wooded area. The park appeared relatively safe from predators and had an abundance of singing birds and chattering squirrels. It seemed the perfect place for two little squirrels with "college degrees" - but very limited knowledge of the outside world.

Squirrels, cont. from page 8

My roommate and several other friends helped me take Pell and Mell to their new home. It was a beautiful afternoon, and when we arrived in the wooded section, we could hear the chirping of birds and see a few squirrels scampering here and there.

We set the cage on the ground and opened the door. At first the squirrels seemed puzzled. Then, almost reluctantly, Mell inched his way out of the cage, with Pell close behind. After a little investigating, they must have sensed that this was where they really belonged. In a few minutes, they were following another squirrel up the trunk of a large tree.

Just as Pell and Mell were reluctant to leave the home they had always known, many people have similar feelings. Even though we Christians look forward to living forever in our glorious heavenly home with our Father and Jesus, we, too, sometimes experience anxiety about death.

What is it like to experience death? I think it might be something like this: When I was a very little girl, and my parents were going out for the evening, they would sometimes put me to bed at a friend's house. Later that night, they would come and carry me to my real home, where I would wake up the next morning in my own bed.

For Christians, the earth is only a temporary home. When it is time, the Lord Jesus comes and carries us to our *real* home in Heaven.

But our citizenship is in Heaven.

(2 Corinthians 5:8)

*and we eagerly await a Savior from there,
the Lord Jesus Christ,
who, by the power that enables Him
to bring everything under His control,
will transform our lowly bodies
so that they will be like His glorious body.*

(Philippians 3:20, 21)

...Absent from the body, present with the Lord.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Trust in God; trust also in Me.

In My Father's house are many rooms;

if it were not so, I would have told you.

I am going there to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you,

will come back and take you to be with Me

that you also may be where I am."

(John 14:1-3)

Prisoner.....from page 6

are not of evil but good. And God Himself has given you a future and a hope. So never let the thief steal either one of those two things from you.

God said He will be found by you when you seek Him with all your heart! So what are waiting for? Get to seeking! You've probably already found Him. He draws near to you when you draw near to Him!

Look around you and don't be troubled, my friend! You're standing knee deep in a river of life, love, freedom and all the good stuff, so don't die of thirst! That would be silly to do wouldn't it? The Lord will bring you out of your captivity! It's just for a little while longer!

God is so good, and so full of love! He loves you, He loves me, He loves all of us so much we can't fathom that great a Love! Remember John 3: 16 and run to the open arms of Jesus and he'll embrace you in an eternal loving hug and lots of Holy kisses too!

Peace be with you

Ricky Lowe.....Palo Pinto County Jail April 2008

Faith is

.....Refusing

the thinking that God

loves and cherishes

**the popular, attractive, talented Christian
more than He**

loves and cherishes me.

...Remembering

I am God's

priceless treasure

When I feel utterly worthless.

Major W. Ian Thomas quotes about Christian behavior

http://torchbearers.gospelcom.net/html/major/major_index.html

By: Major W. Ian Thomas

Christian living is not a method or technique; it is an entirely different, revolutionary principle of life. It is the principle of an *exchanged life* not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

This is all part of our Gospel - it is not the Gospel *plus!* We must not get our terminology wrong. To divorce the behavior of the Christian from the Gospel is entirely false and is not true to the Word of God, yet all too often such is the characteristic of gospel preaching.

I would like to explore with you what is the true spiritual content of our Gospel not just heaven *one day*, but Christ right now! Christ *in you*, on the grounds of redemption, - this is the Gospel! To preach anything less than this must inevitably produce "Evan-jellyfish" - folk with no spiritual vertebrae, whose faith does not "behave!"

Remember what James says in his epistle? "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead" (chapter 2:26). The "spirit" there means breath, and a body without breath is dead. *Stop breathing and folk will bury you!* In other words, a *living body* breathes, and a *living faith* breathes, and a living faith breathes with divine action. A living faith breathes with the activity of Jesus Christ. That is why the Lord Jesus, in John 6:29, said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."

That is the work of God. It is your living faith in the adequacy of the One who is *in you*, which releases His divine action through you. It is the kind of activity that the Bible calls "good works," as opposed to "dead works."

"Good works" are those works that have their origin in Jesus Christ - - whose activity is released through your body, presented to Him as a living sacrifice by a faith that expresses total dependence, as opposed to the Adamic independence (Romans 12: 1,2).

It is only the life of the Lord Jesus --His activity, clothed with you and displayed through you, that ultimately will find the approval of God.

From: The Saving Life of Christ. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. ©1961.

By: Major W. Ian Thomas

The Lord Jesus Christ claims the use of your body, your whole being, your complete personality so that as you give yourself to Him through the eternal Spirit, He may give Himself to you through the eternal Spirit, that all your activity as a human being on earth may be His activity in and through you; that every step you take, every word you speak, everything you do, everything you are, may be an expression of the Son of God, in you as man.

If it is of Him and through Him and to Him, where do you come in? You do not! That is just where you go out! That is what Paul meant when he said, "For me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21).The only Person whom God credits with the right to live in you is Jesus Christ; so reckon yourself to be dead to all that you are apart from what He is, and alive unto God only in all that you are because of what He is (Romans 6:1 1).

From: The Saving Life of Christ. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. ©1961.

By: Major W. Ian Thomas

For godliness is not the consequence of your capacity to imitate God, but the consequence of His capacity to reproduce Himself in you; not self-righteousness, but Christ-righteousness; the righteousness which is by faith a faith which by renewed dependence upon God releases His divine action, to restore the marred image of the Invisible God. It is not inactivity, but Christ-activity; God in action accomplishing the divine end through human personality - never reducing man to the status of a cabbage, but exalting man to the stature of king! "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).

At first sight this might seem to offer to you the possibility of sinless perfection as the result of spiritual regeneration, but this is far from being the case; for it is only your faith and your obedience which allow Him to be in you now what He was then (perfect) - and you will be what He was then only to the degree in which you allow Him to be in you what He is now (perfect)!

From: The Saving Life of Christ. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. ©1961.

"The righteousness that God requires is the righteousness that God's righteousness requires Him to require. The Good News is that the righteousness that is required is also supplied by the Spirit through the Lord Jesus Christ."

Which one do YOU believe?

BELIEVER VERSUS NON-BELIEVER VERSES

Proverbs 3:5-6

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight."

Personalized

Believer will say: I trust in the Lord with all my heart and I do not lean on my own understanding. In all my ways, I acknowledge Him and He makes my path straight.

Non-Believer will say: I do not trust in the Lord. I rely solely upon my own understanding. I will not acknowledge Him and as you can see I am making my own pathway.

Galatians 2:20

Believer says:

"I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and delivered Himself up for me."

Non-believer will say:

I have not been crucified with Christ and it is I who live by and for myself and Christ does not live in me. The life which I now live in the flesh I do not live by faith in the Son of God but in my own strength and I do not believe or care that He is the Son of God or that He loves me or that He delivered Himself up for me.

John, Free Life Team Member

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June-July-August 2008

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A MAN CAN GO TO HEAVEN

WITHOUT HEALTH

WITHOUT WEALTH

WITHOUT FAME

WITHOUT LEARNING

WITHOUT BEAUTY

WITHOUT FRIENDS

WITHOUT TEN THOUSNADS THINGS

BUT HE CAN NEVER GO TO HEAVEN WITHOUT JESUS

"I AM THE WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE;
 NO MAN COMES UNTO THE FATHER BUT BY ME."

John 14;6

Will you trust Him today for His forgiveness and accept His life in exchange for yours?

Jesus is the ONLY One Who can meet all the desires of your heart.

1 Cor. 5:17-21