

Free Life News



ISSUE # 78

2 Cor. 5: 17-21

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MY PLEDGE

By: David Brock—Hughes Unit, TX

As I woke this morning troubled by a night of buffeting, I was attacked again by disturbing dreams. I have been told that Satan's battlefield is in my mind, I am troubled by my past, and the sin that is always present in my life. I begin to question my salvation. Satan's words creep into my mind, and I ask myself, "am I even saved? Why is being a Christian so hard? Why can't I just accept Jesus into my life, and live happily ever after?"

So I begin to wake up and fall into my morning routine. I open a daily devotional and brush the cob webs from my mind. A cup of coffee and our daily bread helps me to get started. As I peer into the looking glass, I begin to get my eyes to focus. As I squint to see, a shadowed image starts to come into view. Is that Jesus' face I'm beginning to see in the mirror?

I have to stop and gather my thoughts for a moment. Then Satan speaks again saying, "I'm just a sinner. I can't be like Jesus!" As thoughts streak across my mind, my heart quickens and I begin to panic. I say under my breath; " Lord, help me, I can't keep going on like this. I'm only a babe in Christ. I don't want to keep on sinning, and I don't want to end up in hell!"

I start making progress with myself before the Lord. I have to make myself pure and blameless, as the bride of Christ. I know I have to deny myself, take up my cross daily and follow Him. My first priority is to stop sinning,

and to stop giving in to my lustful desires. It's called the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, God placed a thorn in my flesh and I begged him to take it away, and he said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." For when I am weak, the power of Christ may rest upon me, then I am made strong.

In God's word it explained to me that there-hath no temptation taken you but that is common to man, but know that God is faithful not to let you be tempted above what you can bear, he makes a way of escape so that you may be able to bear it. So I cried out to God in prayer, He told me to, "resist the devil and he will flee. He is a liar and the father of lies. You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith. And always know I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

As I thought about it, I realize that maybe it's not that hard after all. God is teaching me that only by obedience can we find the victory. I read that lawlessness is sin, and sin is death. Spiritual death is being separated from God. Being one with the world is being an enemy against God. I didn't want that. If we disobey God, then we will miss our blessings, we will either receive blessings or curses. I don't need any curses, I have enough trouble on my own!

I see that our lives work in circles or cycles, some call it seasons, but it's always trying to pull us back to where we started. They say that history always repeats itself.

Today it stops because today is the day of salvation! I have become sick and tired of sin

in my life, and I made a pledge with myself; with God and with Christ being my mediator and my witness. Jesus said to "count it all joy that I should go through these trials, knowing that the testing of my faith produces patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Job said it best, "for when I have been tested, I will come forth as gold." Pure gold reflects the light of Jesus, but it only comes by the refiners fire.

So I cried out to God. I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined his ear to me, and heard my cry. I made a promise to preserve my body for my wife. One that God has chosen for me. I want God to hand pick my bride, and be sure to let me know when I meet her. I don't want to miss my blessing! In God's word it says, "wait on the Lord, be strong and of good courage and he will strengthen your heart. Be still and know that I am God."

Paul tells us, "wherefore seeing we are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Put on the mind of Christ and take every thought captive for the pulling down of strongholds. That we may seek first the kingdom of God and all his righteousness, and know that all things will be given to us as well. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

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MY PLEDGE, CONTINUES

Therefore by the mercies of God, present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. . . . And be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Being confident of this very thing, that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. For it is God that works in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. For I am forgiven, and the power of Christ through his Spirit, lives within me. Jesus said, "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." I know I am an over-comer because of the deliverance of God and by the salvation of our Lord and Savior. Thanks to Brother Mack and Mitzi I learned that if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away behold all things become new.

I can relate to Paul because he was always so real with his life experiences. He said, "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death. **I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." This I say, we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. For as many are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God.

I really like the book of John because it says that these things are written that we might believe. It tells me that if Christ is the vine, you are the branches. He that abides in Me, and I in Him, the same brings forth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing. If you abide in Me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. Herein My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so shall you be My disciples. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. For the love of Christ is what draws us, and we want to walk in God's commandments with thanksgiving and a grateful heart. Our reverence for God should compel us to act by obligation. In John it also tells us that he that has My commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves Me, and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

When God manifests himself to you, then you will know Him. You will walk in a personal relationship with Him. In Exodus God gives us a glimpse of who He is. And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood before him and proclaimed, "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands and forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin." Then Christ will walk along side you as a friend, and his Spirit will live in you to guide you in all truth which proceeds from the Father. He shall testify of me, and you shall bear witness because you have been with me for the beginning. And this Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you. He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you. But you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry "Abba Father." The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

If for any reason you ever doubt that you are saved, if Satan comes against you, or if you ever question your faith? Get up and kick Satan to the curb. go to God's word and see what he says about you. Just turn to Romans and read chapters 6,7, and 8 and see for yourself. John says to confess your sins and he is faithful and just to forgive **all** unrighteousness. Then plead the blood of Jesus over your life, and walk in victory. We are more than conquerors, and we can do all things through Christ. In Revelation it says they over came him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. Now that's something to write home about. Always remember, the joy of the Lord is our strength!

Let God speak to you as you are on your knees in prayer. Then stand to your feet and walk in victory. The prayer of a righteous man avails much.

May grace be with you all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in all sincerity. Amen

Fighting the good fight of faith

2 Tim. 2: 3-4

Pray one for another

An apology and testimony A fathers' letter to his son.

" Hello Ryan,

To begin I want to tell you how sorry I am for my blindness, inconsideration, and most of all for having put pride before you. Had made up my mind I wasn't going to write, at least not until I heard from you, and justified these actions by telling myself it wasn't me who had stopped writing. Realize how wrong I was, for I didn't concern myself with how you were doing, much less with trying to find out what your reasons were for not replying. My own concerns and feeling were placed first, it was not in me to see through anyone else's eyes but my own.

Used to hate being in this place more than just about anything else, cause I felt it not only took from me my freedom, it also kept me from being part of the lives of those I loved. But now, after all that's been brought to my understanding, after all that I've been given, I would not trade these past 10 months in here for the freedom of the mountains I miss so much. At 56 years old I've been given a new life, and the chance to live that life for all I love. It's as if I met myself and found the person who I thought I was- really only a reflection of who I could be.

Now don't start thinking that your ole Dad has finally lost it, cause I haven't. In fact the contrary is true. I've a story to tell you that you may find hard to believe., for if it had not happened to me, knowing the kind of person it happened to, I too would have a hard time believing. . .

It's hard for me to explain why I asked Jesus to let me feel His love, or even why I went to church that night, for I hadn't yet been told of my medical condition nor was I aware of anything special going on. It wouldn't have mattered much anyway, cause I hadn't went or attended a church service, to hear about our Lord since the early 90's.

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DON'T CRY "Your trying moments can be a solution for another person's trying moments" [Isaiah 40;29-31]

"Pastor, I am very tired of my daughters! I am going to run away and go very far, were no body else knows not." Were the words that came from a grown up healthy looking brown lady of about 45 years . As she narrated her ordeal, with tears streaming from of her eyes like "rain", her face smile had vanished with her worries, she indeed looked very distressed . it was indeed very obvious that she was very DETERMINED TO DO WHAT SHE SAID.

This lady. on several occasions had intervened me in her family problems and my counseling to her on those occasions had proven a success. At one time she came to me saying "Pastor, this time, I am going , "I am very serious Pastor, so many times you have counseled me but today I don't think, this time there is anything else you can tell me to deter me from my determination." In fact this time the situation was so intense that this Lady called me after she had put up all her luggage together, she spoke to me while showing me the "set to go" luggage at her door way." She wanted my immediate response in regards to her decision. As I looked at her big luggage, anticipating what to tell her, With every evidence proving and justifying her words in place, I told her "don't cry, just be firm," running away from here won't be the solution.

With many other words I continued to tell her how God was still concerned about her life. But for this particular morning I seemed to have no more words that could calm this woman. The issue that had perturbed this woman that morning , was of her daughters. One who had failed at zero level her final exams, and the other had gotten pregnant and bad enough all this happened concurrently. Surprisingly the husband to this women put the entire blame on the wife saying that SHE BORE STUPID AND HOPELESS GIRLS. This caused a lot of tension between the man and woman.

Unfortunately at the same time this lady came to church seeking for my counsel, I too was going through some hard moments, with the people I keep at church. These people were under my care, but are very disobedient and rebellious, I had on several occasions sat them down as a parent speaking

to them, but still they did not comply to my desired expectations, and this pained me much , I felt like chasing all of them out, or JUST RUN away from them myself. So it was this very morning as I was still nursing my wounds that this lady came to me . As Pastor, I had no alternative but to sit down and counsel this grieved lady, I had to come out of my trying moments, to get into this grieved lady's problems to help her through,

Little did I know that as I counseled this lady I would end up getting a solution to my trying moment. As she fully opened up to me, I sat opposite her listening attentively " Pastor, I have been patient enough." she continued. After everything was out of her, I smoothly asked "Have you finished?" "Yes " she replied, as she rubbed tears off her face, and as I continued counseling her I asked " Does your husband, beat you? Does he not buy food?, has he told you to go out of his house? To all these questions she responded negatively. I went on to tell her that there are women that have stood and endured even to the point of death, but as they prayed and committed their problems to God, they now have a testimony of success . I told her patience will never be ENOUGH . PATIENCE will always demand more of her self for any break through to be realized. Even in our walk with God we still need patience . As I counseled her, I told her of the very situation I was also going through and that at one time I proposed running away, but after I had put this in my mind I got a heart conviction that my running away from these people with such a heart would never be the solution to my moment of trial. In fact it would just increase tension and this would cause more pain, for these people were a part of my life, so running away was wrong and the Spirit of God was instructing me to stand firm and cling to his grace.

RUTH AND LYDIA

As I continued to counsel this lady, I remembered Ruth and Lydia testimonies. Ruth was a married lady who had spent several years in marriage yet without children. This pained Ruth terribly, yet she was very rich, The men relative always spoke ill of her and whenever Ruth saw other people's children she would feel bad wishing that she was the one who birthed them, but these were only wishes that never materialized, so she proposed to walk and throw herself in a lake

about 10 miles from were she stayed.

On the other side of the country there was another lady called Lydia, she had 4 children but all of them very disobedient. These 4 children indeed gave headache and a bad name to their mother, Lydia regretted why she had given birth to such hostile children. She said, " I wish I never birthed these children." The father to these children had even gone away from his family due to bad character of the children, this family had children yet with no funds to carter for them. This also contributed more to the bad character of the children. Yet for Ruth it was the opposite, she had everything yet no child. She one time said " I wish I was poor, than having all this for no body". Lydia also proposed to go and throw her self in the same lake that Ruth had in mind , but Lydia was 15 miles from this lake . Surprisingly the ladies did not know each other, but both had a need and God did it in such a way that both got the same mind of going to the same lake with the same intension of drowning them selves.

As Lydia stood on the other side of the lake, to throw her self in the lake, looking, here and there to see if any one was nearby looking at her, incidentally Ruth was also on the other side of the lake looking , around to see if any person saw her, unfortunately eyes caught up together, and each of them shouted to each other, "Why are you here"?

" What are you doing ?" pointing hands at each other, looking guilty like 2 thieves that have discovered them selves in the same place with intent of stealing, Lydia profusely crying , narrated her problems to Ruth " that's why I have come to throw my self in this lake". "I thought you who have children are very happy, but if you have them yet you are not okay, then I should be thankful for what I am now " responded Ruth, At this Lydia also said " oh I should love my children, because now for you, you are desiring to have them but then you don't have them". These two women ended by realizing that TRUSTING IN GOD WAS THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THEIR PROBLEMS,

As they were still speaking to each other, God caused a Gospel preacher to pass by the way of the lake, so as he walked he saw these two women, inside his spirit he felt a compelling desire to preach to these women" believe in Christ". He is the only

Don't Cry, continues from page 3

one who can deliver you from your problems". Little did this preacher know that he was speaking to the very heart of these women .. The preacher went on to say " Don't cry, Jesus cares." The two ladies gave their lives to Christ, the preacher prayed for them and proceeded on his way. Surely the preacher had finished doing his designated task.

As the two ladies parted company for each to go home, they both shared their home addresses, actually this was the genesis of a very strong relationship. each of these ladies joined a church in their area and as each concentrated on God, things started happening , HALLELUYAH, As Ruth prayed and served God faithful, no longer minding of her "lack of child situation" God gave her baby twins, a boy and a girl after spending about 20 years in marriage without any child, .Also as Lydia continued to serve God, her children got transformed and her husband returned back home, and now God made provisions for the supplies of her family, .These two ladies are now mighty servants of God testifying of His goodness. God can divinely connect you to some one thru a darkness moment.

Earlier on I had thought that these people I am living with at church had they been my own biological children may be they would comply to every thing I told them, but I was indeed terribly wrong with this kind of perception, Here was now my counsel from this grieved lady I was counseling, her trying moments were in turn my solution. It's then that I realized that even your very people can refuse to adhere to what you tell them not minding of every good thing you do for them. my spirit revived back, I understood that in every corner of this world, there is a stressing aspect, and actually life is made up of trials, but what keeps people moving even amidst the chaos of this life is their knowledge of Christ and accepting his Grace, strength and power to give them patience to stand the hardships of life

Not every mountain in this life will ever vanish, some mountains are meant to be climbed by you. After counseling this lady she went back home happy, I too was revived and went on to love the people that I had gotten tired of.

JOSEPH THE PRISONER

In his confinement as prisoner, God was training and teaching Joseph, the way of life, he was in class , Maybe God has confined you in that situation wanting to teach you something that will in return help you live a successful life in this world . Even in his confinement God was with Joseph because he held tight on him, Even in the darkest dungeon God was there with Joseph, Can you imagine, even in the darkest moments of life God is very close to you

Many times God uses trying moments in life to take us to our God destined places of accomplishing His will for our lives, He took Joseph as captive to Egypt were he was later to be leader, tears later turned to joy .The trials in life sometimes act as " shipments to our God destined places and calls " later his sufferings turned into Egypt's deliverance in the famine season, TODAY YOU MAY SEEM TO BE PRICELESS BUT GIVE IT TIME YOU WILL BECOME PRICEFUL

Remember patience is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit ,Gal. 5, so with patience, you can stand even the toughest moments of life. Have you forgotten , "when you pass through waters ,,,",Isaiah ,43;2 , Surely this means that waters, fire must be there, but one encouraging thing is that He says, he shall be with us.

His grace is more sufficient. Just lift up your situation to him "JOEL, 2;3. Don't run away from situations , with perseverance, patience stand firm as Lion and you will be able to come through even the burning furnace as long as you put God first. From that furnace of fire you will be as pure as Gold testifying the goodness of God. Even as you read this, Jesus is coming your way .Some people grumble to God for lack of shoes forgetting that there are those even without legs to wear the shoes, some curse God for not giving them marriages not knowing that there are those regretting why they ever got married. So the issue here is to accept God grace to uphold you, not having what you want. God will always do things at His right time and pace.

One thing I have come to understand is that pure JOY,PEACE,AND EXICITEMENT IS NOT FROM THE MATERIAL THINGS WE HAVE OR NEED although we need them, but true life and peace is received from our knowledge of Him who died for us . HAVING HIM AS OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR WILL BRING EVERYTHING YOU NEED AT THE RIGHT TIME.

Eccle, 3;1

Think of this for a moment ...The most powerful events in the Bible that talk of our salvation happened in " darkness" talk of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, it took place in darkness. Darkness had to fill the entire earth as Jesus was on the cross and it is then that He gave out HIS SPIRIT, Luke 23:34 Remember as it dawns to morning, the scientists say that then it is more darkest KEEP STABLE THEN IN THE LORD HE IS THERE FOR YOU

When things are tough for you just say as Jesus said "in thy hands I commit my Spirit" and surely his Spirit will be there to help you overcome, PHILP ,4;6

BE BLESSED JESUS TIMES

FROM PASTOR ROBERT SISYE

UGANDA EAST AFRICA

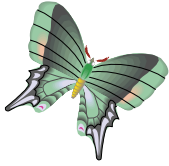
Pastor Robert voiced this prayer for us.



God, Father of heaven and earth, thanks so much for the height, depth, width and height of the inspiration, conviction, edification that the FLN is bringing to the hearts of those who know You, and those who never believed in You. Thanks so much for all other contributors who have given in their time, thoughts, dedication , and those who have stayed long hours in the night purposely to have something useful for your people to read. Thanks for all those that have given in finances or anything in kind to make the FLN a reality. Now Father I pray with all my heart, mind and soul, this time use this edition to do mighty exploits in your Name, may everyone who reads it be restored back to faith, health, and happiness. I pray that You let this vision live even beyond the life span of the vision bearers, for Your given visions are Eternal, save those who will read this edition, the ones in offices, Prisons, Hospitals, and every place where the FLN will reach.

Praying for us—cont.

Strengthen the faith of those that have already been saved. Thank You for hearing my prayer, In Jesus Name I have prayed, thanking. Amen and amen.



BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Upon receiving the newsletter from our ministry partners, **Rodney and Kathie Carpenter**, we want to inform you of the Bible Study Course they have started. If you are interested in taking a correspondence course, you may write your request to: **Lighthouse Mission Ministry**,

6280 FM 913

Stephenville, TX 76401

MY LIFE

By Jose Andino - Telford Unit-TX

My life, My life, cause this is my life, my life.
My life, my life, cause this is my life, my life.

As I sit here reminicin' on my past, I finally realize some things joy won't last. Someone in the future you will see, if it

means being behind bars and no longer free. I've done my share of crimes and dirt, I was living in the lane, but everyday I hurt. I'm dying on the inside can't you tell? I keep on going cause I know I can't fail. Everybody always said, "live your dreams." but what were mine except for plotting schemes. This was me day in and day out. I'm thinking now did I go down the right route.

My life, my life, cause this is my life. My life my life, cause this is my life, my life.

I need to change from these old habit ways but this will only happen if I start to pray. I found this out when I asked for His help, I told Him the things in my heart that I truly felt. The Lord will help you and be by your side through thick and thin, He'll be there for the ride. He sent down some angels from heaven's above, now I know the true meaning of the word Love. I never thought I'd make it this far along, but I found my place and where I really belong. Just the other day I allowed Him into my heart, my whole life was changed and given a whole new start.



My life, my life, cause this is my life, My life ,
my life cause this is my life, my life.

I wrote this song for you and me, so you can look back in your history. Let the Lord Jesus show you a new path and you will see what a brighter future has. It won't be all the suffering and the pain, You'll feel happiness, joy, and eternity you will gain. These are just a few things that come your way, when you believe that Christ is the One who paid. So remember that you will always have a choice because the Lord will never leave, he'll always hear your voice, Set an example if you have kids or even a wife, by doing some thing good and changing your life.

My life, my life, cause this is my life. My life,
my life, cause this is my life, my life.

Thank you for sharing your heart with us, Jose, this song says it all. We are thankful you heard God's voice and invited Him into your heart and received new life. Even though you are locked behind bars, Jesus can't be locked out, through His Holy Spirit He is everywhere all the time. Reach out to Him, He is closer than your think. You are never alone. In Him you will always have a friend that sticks closer than a brother

Mitzi & the Free Life team

JESUS SAID, "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE, NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER, BUT BY ME." John 14:6

FOR THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE WHAT WAS LOST. John 19:10

The Joys of Living

By Edward Hanvey - Greenville Corr. Center, VA

To Wake up each morning with a stream of sunlight flooding your room. To hear the birds chirping and the bees buzzing around the flowers. To see the first bud on the old Oak tree and the first daffodil bloom. To taste the sweet nectar of Honeysuckle and the Persimmon's sourness.

To smell the sweet aroma of the Crimson roses and pale violets. To feel the warmth of the sun and the coolness of the breeze. To look at the sky with its clouds and imagine them as planes with no pilots. To stand at the edge of a brook and wonder how far it goes before it connects with the Sea

To fall asleep listening to the rain falling and hitting the housetop from above. To dream of our joys which were created, by these things which were created by God,

Whom we love.

LET'S BE FAIR

by Ricky Lowe, Jr. Walker Sayle Unit, TX

When I was a kid I had walked down the road from my home quite a ways. To be exact, I had probably walked about two miles and was heading back to my house. I reckon I was around 10 years old at the time. As I walked I began to tire. Suddenly this little feller came around the corner on a bicycle and stomped on his brakes. "Need a ride?" he asked. "Sure" I replied and stood on a set of pegs his bicycle had installed on it. He peddled me all the way back to my home and come to find out, he only lived 4 streets down from me. I made him my best friend from that day forward. Josh & I were practically inseparable! We went on adventures together nearly every day.

Though years later as adults he married and had children as I did and we don't see each other quite as much, I still consider him one of my closest friends, to this very day, twenty years after the famous lift he politely gave me along the roadside of our home town.

As I said, since then I met this extremely beautiful girl, she was nice and sweet to me, and always listened to me when I needed an ear. I fell in love with her and we had two beautiful children together., and all these 10 years later I love her even deeper. It all started by her beauty catching my eye and leading me to discover her generous and loving personality. She is sweet and means a lot to me.

I made a few mistakes (a lot) and landed myself in prison years back and one night I was hungry when this guy asked, "are you hungry?" So I answered truthfully. "I sure am." His name was Reggie and he cooked some soups that evening and fed me. That was cool! We became friends and cut-up all the time We were always cracking jokes. I called Reggie my brother from another

Mother, and he called me his brotha from another Motha! We were two different colors on the surface but it didn't stop Reggie from helping me out and feeding me, and we ended up friends. We've lost contact, but I love ole Reggie, my Brother from another Mother. Hopefully I'll run into him under better circumstances before this life here is passed by.

I accepted my best childhood friend due to a bicycle ride he gave me. My wife for being pretty and sweet. Reggie my close friend for giving me a meal once when I was hungry. I've had many dogs as pets that didn't do anything special at all and I openly accepted them into my home and gave them a special place in my heart.

Do you have any pets you loved? Have you ever had a cat or dog or anything else that you accepted into you life? Have you ever become someone's friend following an act of kindness from them? Have you ever given someone of the opposite sex your special undivided attention simply because their looks enticed you? What about someone who isn't a cat or dog? Someone you can't be for sure certain as to exactly what they physically look like? Someone who gave up their very life so that you might have it, and have it more abundantly?

Would you let this person into your home? Will you accept Jesus Christ into your life? Would you be so kind as to be his friend? Though He is no pet, though you haven't seen Him in the flesh, he chose death on a cross so that you, if you believe, would not perish but have everlasting life. Would you allow Him some of your time. . . .would you give Him your undivided attention? He'd gladly give you a bicycle, He'd graciously feed you if and when you are hungry. He paid the ultimate sacrifice so that you might be saved from Eternal darkness and Eternal separation from God the Father. Won't you accept Him

today?

Confess to God that you are sinner. Believe that the Lord Jesus Christ did, in fact, die on the cross for your sins and then rose again for your justification. Receive Him and confess Him as your personal Savior.

Have you ever had a pet? Ever had a friend? Ever been married, or are you currently married? What more has your cat or dog, friend or spouse done for you than what Jesus done? Let's be fair. . . shall we?

HE PAID THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

**JESUS SAID:
"YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN"**

HAVE YOU BEEN? BORN AGAIN?

NO???
YOU CAN BE

JUST SAY, YES

**COME INTO MY HEART
LORD JESUS, I THANK YOU
FOR TAKING AWAY MY
SIN, I NOW RECEIVE YOUR
OFFER OF ETERNAL SAL-
VATION. COME INTO MY
HEART AND GIVE ME NEW
LIFE IN CHRIST.
OLD THINGS ARE PASSED
AWAY AND ALL THINGS
HAVE BECOME NEW.
THANK YOU, FATHER FOR
SENDING YOUR SON JUST
FOR ME!**

AMEN

From the Other Side of the Wall

Hello,

I pray for our Lord and Savior, Jesus to be with you all.

I am writing from the other side of the wall in hopes that you will see



this life from a larger perspective. There is much to be said but for now I will try to give only an overview. We can be in prison or have freedom on both sides of the wall and I know this because I have been outside the wall but still in prison (38 years) and outside the wall but with freedom in Jesus Christ (18 years).

My Father, two brothers, and many childhood friends have been incarcerated. It was a full time job arranging visitation, sending money (that we did not have), writing letters, completing requests of those family members incarcerated, along with daily living responsibilities... avoiding the truth, and pretending all is ok.

We have to learn to accept the realities; learn to take responsibility for the now and sometimes for our part in what got us to this point. As a child, I had no part of how my Father got to prison but as an adult I did have choices. Everything we do, every action taken or not taken has an affect on others sometimes for generations...in many different ways. When on the inside you may perceive it to be a worse position than your friends and family members on the outside. On the outside we may perceive it to be a worse position than our family member that is incarcerated.

Truth: until you have freedom in Jesus Christ, we are all in prison.

I do not know how families survive the going into prison or the coming out without Jesus. As a child, we not only lost our Daddy, our support system, but our main source of income. Our Mothers go through even more loss as they now they have to carry the responsibility of working to bring home the money, caring for the family, taking care of the house, being the emotional security for the children, her husband, and herself, taking care of her husband's requests...such as lawyer/court correspondence, writing letters, and visiting only at the time allowed and hope that it fits within the work schedule. She has to learn to work a three-ring circus having to jump through the right hoop on the right day.

In Catholic school, I was the charity case...

they pay for a few under privileged kids to go to school. They taught you good as far as academics but that was about it. I was 7 years old and in second grade and already by then I knew my Family didn't have it right and neither did the Catholic school. I was standing in the hall at school, alone talking to God...the only God I knew, thinking he was a big man in the sky with a baseball bat ready to hit me on the head every chance he could. I eventually found out I was wrong.

Anyway, I talked with Him stating that I just thought they all had it wrong, I would do whatever was right but I needed to know the TRUTH. At the same time, I am also pleading for my life as I did not know what He would do to me for speaking so bold. I am so glad He, our awesome God did not give up on me. When I look back I can see many times He was right there with me.

When I left home my sister was writing to a man in prison, she wanted me to write to his friend. I said, after all we have lived through as children and you want to live through it again in your adult life? But, as it is we gravitate towards what is familiar...not what is good for us. Things that are good for us feel uncomfortable because we are not use to it and we tend to run from it. We need to learn balance, healthy ways of living, boundaries, how to really love one another and not going on our feelings because they are flighty...they bounce around and react to whatever is around us. This is why we all need to have a relationship with Jesus because He gives us Joy...True Joy...not like the temporary happiness that is fleeting.

The crazy thing is even though I knew I did not want a life like the one I came from, I did not have the wisdom or the knowledge to know how to live differently. Oh sure, I stayed out of trouble, worked, raised my children, went back to school and got an education but still it all seemed so empty and always felt like I trying to run in the dark through quicksand.

My Husband was incarcerated. Life as the world offers it had brought me to my knees in Sept of 1992 and Jesus found me... saved me from the world and from myself. My Husband learned much...most of which would cause him more harm. I had to find a way to learn how to live and to share that with my husband in hopes the positive would override the negative around him. I would pray to God and ask Him to please give me the wisdom, strength, faith, patience, and anything else He knew I needed to be a godly woman and to be a witness to my husband through my actions, words, and love. He said he knew Jesus and he did know who Jesus is but he did not know Jesus, as his Savior and have a relationship with Him. So I contin-

ued to pray. I wrote letters every week, visited twice a week, completed his requests such as attorney correspondence and prayed some more. Prison life even from the outside is hard...we not only are trying to survive against the world on our own without any support. We try to have a functional life and it takes time to learn to be comfortable in the middle...part of us in prison and part of us out of prison and trusting our God will take care of us.

I searched for many years for a support system as back then, families of inmates and the inmates were invisible to society. I felt like if I could just see someone who survived this life and learn how they did it that I would be strengthened. I reached out of my comfort zone and started talking with the wives, mothers, sisters, family members waiting to be processed (makes us sound like fast food) on visiting days. As much as I needed emotional support, I saw Families who needed it more than I did. So as uncomfortable as it was I started to talk with people I did not know on the way going in and talked with them coming out as processing always took about an hour in and at least a half hour coming out, sometimes longer. Sometimes we just talked about anything, sometimes talked about our trials & joys, sometimes cried with each other. I seen people come and go and I continued to pray...pray for my husband, my family, inmates and their families, the warden, the guards...Yes, we must pray for the prison, the warden, and the guards as they have control over our husbands needs. I can honestly, sincerely, joyfully tell you that prayer is our strongest defense and Jesus leads the way...all we have to do is follow Him, read His Word... for this is how we get to know Him. Have faith in the One who is offering the free gift of everlasting life for He has overcome and He is victorious and this life here passes quickly. Don't make yourself too comfortable for we are just visitors...this is not our home for our Father has a mansion and a banquet awaiting us and it is there with Him we will be complete. We have life everlasting through our Savior Jesus. Come to Him now...just as you are, He loves us all so much.

There is so much more but I do pray you open yourself to Jesus and be transformed from the inside out. He has an awesome future for us all...Jeremiah 29:11.

Thank you and may God Bless you all abundantly.

Sherrie Sanchez

Note: Sherrie will be sharing more of her testimony in future editions as a regular contributor to the Free Life News.

A father's letter to his son, continues

Maybe it was cause I was just tired of feeling only emptiness and being alone, or maybe it's cause I was just tired of just not feeling. Whatever the reasons, as I listened to the message our outside speaker brought, about the crucifixion of our Lord, I tried to imagine the love He



must have for us and thought what I would give to know that kind of love. It was then I asked Jesus to come into my life, I asked Him to let me

know the debasement, humiliation, abuse and torment He took upon Himself that we may have forgiveness and life.

In prison you're not suppose to cry, but as I stood in the assembly I couldn't stop the tears, and the tears were not for me, but for Him. The love the Lord has for us is a most awesome living blessing! Yet even after all that Jesus had shown and given me, it wasn't long until I was caught-up in my old pursuits. The only way I had to take care of myself, with no one sending me any money, was to run a gambling operation or do legal work. Needless to say, with clients being far between, my life centered around the game. Was just one major problem, regardless of the excuses I made to justify my actions, it sure was getting harder for me to live with myself. I was not living my life for God. Within the next couple of months, this was a bout to change in ways that I would never have thought possible.

June of last year, I was called to the medical department where via telecommunications, I was informed by a specialist on liver diseases that in conformity to recent blood tests, it was his diagnoses I had liver cancer. He also informed me my enzyme count for hepatitis C was rampant, and my white cell blood count was critically low. He than told me it was for this later reason he was having me brought to the hospital in Galveston ; to have an upper G.I. and Cat-Scan done. He was afraid that the veins in my esophagus may have enlarged, and if one should burst the bleeding would be almost impossible to stop due to my white platelet count being so low.

Needless to say this more than rattled my cage, for I already knew my liver was enlarged and that my body was both swelling and retain-

ing fluids. It was my belief I had a very short time left, for I had previously been treated for cirrhosis, which had placed it only briefly in remission.

I wrote to your mother concerning this, cause I felt with her being a nurse she could give me a better understanding as to what my actual chances were, but I never received any reply. What her reasons were for not writing maybe one day I'll know, but I don't blame her regardless of what they were, for if I'd returned only half the love she'd given me we'd still be together.

I just pray she is doing alright. Didn't tell you or your sister cause you'd both stopped answering my letters, and though I'd give about most anything if things were different between us- I didn't want your sympathy, and for this reason I did not write. It was still all about self, I was clinging to me regardless of the blessing that the Lord had shown.

When I arrived at the hospital I was placed in the isolation ward, where I was provided with an outdated Daily Bread and the Holy Bible. Guess this was about the best thing that could have happened to me for as I lay there, with nothing to entertain and distract, I looked back at the wretched creature I'd become and tried to recall just one good I had done in this life that wasn't done to benefit self. In shame, other than my part in the birth of you and your sister, I could not recall a single time my life had purpose for someone else. Thought about death, and man was I ever scared, not then of death but of dying alone in here. Hadn't came to the realization yet, that when we have Jesus in our lives we're never alone. Thought then of the numberless promises I'd made to God, if He would do this or that—then I'd do either this or that. Now even then the prayers God had answered, though I'd never kept one promise. It's a loss, that for so many of us, before we're willing to give our lives to God—we're willing to give up on life. With nothing left to give I asked God if it be his will, not mine I should live, with all my heart I would give myself in trying to serve Him. I went to sleep with songs in my heart and words of praise, something I had never done before.

The next morning I was given an upper G.I. . And after it was completed I asked the doctor of my condition, he told me the veins in my

esophagus appeared normal. Later that day the Cat-scan was done, however this individual refused to give me any information, and it was not until months later I was to learn what he saw-or I should say what it was that he didn't see.

Going to the hospital I was full of worry and concern, but it was not until some time later when they took more blood tests did I give thought to my health. Maybe it's because there were so many changes going on in my life, didn't have time to worry about the body, yet it was that old me that was causing the majority of the problems. Was trying to live for the Lord but the main problem, rather that trusting in Him, I still was relying on the old self to make it through the day. This too, was soon to change.

In September, I was notified of being selected to participate in the Kairos Walk . Kairos is basically a program that teaches Christian beliefs, and the love of our Savior. Recall the first day, the talks, the sharing, and the feeling of belonging I felt. Guess it was these things, and the love that Jesus had touched my heart with, which brought me back the second day. It's hard for me to explain all that went on inside me as I walked into church that morning, for it was almost as if I'd walked into the middle of a raging war and I was the battlefield being torn in two ; with one part being pulled back towards the door, while the other part desperately refused to go. Think my Christian advisor knew what I was going through cause he came over and asked if I wanted to talk, and though I knew he was not trying to intrude only help, I heard myself rudely tell him no. Time was being taken from me and in it's place I was given a choice—to serve God or self. Nothing but everything , a reflection of life or life, self but not me, I humbly thank God he chose me. How great, our God!

Can't tell you all the times I've stumbled and fell since confessing Jesus as my Savior and Lord. Nor each time that I've reached for the Lord's hand, or asked Him to help others, he has answered each prayer. I can tell you about all the changes which have occurred within me, since asking our Father to baptize me with the Holy Spirit , but this letter would turn into a book! However, before I bring this to a close, there are a couple more things I would like to share with you. (Turn to page 9)

A father's letter to his son

In December, I was called to the medical department, where as before I spoke with the doctor who six months earlier diagnosed me with liver cancer and advanced hepatitis C. Our conversation began with him telling me he could find no trace of hepatitis C or cancer in the blood tests recently taken, and the Cat-scan had shown a normal sized liver with some tissue scarring. He went on to tell me in less than 1% of the cases he'd treated had he seen a liver heal itself of hepatitis C, much less seen a person that had healed himself of both cancer and hepatitis C. He concluded by saying he still couldn't believe I'd healed myself. At last, he and I are in agreement about one thing- I don't believe that I healed myself either.

Ryan, if you were to ask me less than a year ago why the Lord chose to bless me, I would not have known how to answer. Now my answer is for this reason I share with you my testimony, for in all things this life I now live by grace, I pray to live serving our Lord and glorifying our Holy Father. I know God's thoughts towards me are thoughts of peace, to give me a future and a hope., so I'll rest in this truth as he guides my footsteps and pray they lead me back to you.

Wilson E. Brown

Hughes Unit-Texas

FULL

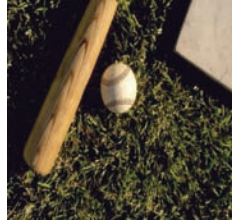
FAITH

AHEAD

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.

THE LORD'S BASEBALL GAME

Freddy and the Lord stood by to observe a baseball game. The Lord's team was playing Satan's team.



The Lord's team was at bat, the score was tied zero to zero, and it was the bottom of the 9th inning with two outs. They continued to watch as a batter stepped up to the plate named 'Love'.

Love swung at the first pitch and hit a single, because **"Love never fails"**.

The next batter was named Faith, who also got a single because **Faith works with Love**.

The next batter up was named Godly Wisdom. Satan wound up and threw the first pitch. Godly Wisdom looked it over and let it pass: Ball one! Three more pitches and Godly Wisdom walked because **he never swings at what Satan throws**.

The bases are loaded. The Lord then turned to Freddy and told him He was going to bring in His star player. Up to the plate stepped Grace. Freddy said, "He sure doesn't look like much!"

Satan's whole team relaxed when they saw Grace. Thinking he had won the game, Satan wound up and fired his first pitch. To the shock of everyone, Grace hit the ball harder than anyone had ever seen! But Satan was not worried; his center fielder let very few get by.

He went up for the ball, but it went right through his glove, hit him on the head and sent him crashing on

the ground. The roaring crowds went wild as the ball continued over the fence. . . For a home run!

The Lord's team won!

The Lord then asked Freddy if he knew why Love, Faith and Godly Wisdom could get on base but couldn't win the game? Freddy answered that he didn't know why.

The Lord explained, "If your love, faith, and wisdom had won the game, you would think you had done it by yourself. **Love, Faith and Wisdom will get you on base but only my Grace can get you Home:** "For by grace are you saved through faith, it is a gift of God, not of works, lest any many should boast." Eph. 2:8-9

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly" Ps 84:11

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" Phil.4:13

Got a Problem?
Don't fret about it—

JUST KNOW IN YOUR
HEART THAT- - -

GOD
IS
ON THE
CASE!!

A CALL INTO ACTION TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD

My arms that I had wrapped around my body to serve as a blanket did little to protect from the cool Ugandan night. Nor were they a match for the swarm of mosquitoes that were feasting on my flesh, Slap! Slap! Slap! I don't know how the mosquitoes can find any nutrition from my starvation ravaged body. I wondered as I tossed and turned on the thin mat I was lying on. Looking into the darkness that surrounded me in the food kiosk. I recalled the stagnant water trench close by that provided the guests for the banquet table of my flesh. Why did the workers of the Kalerwe food kiosk allow standing water to remain, knowing the threat of mosquitoes? Of course it was of no concern of theirs; they weren't the ones sleeping homelessly tonight. They weren't the ones called to leave their homes to travel on foot to an unknown land to begin a church. They had food in their stomachs. But despite my condition, I give praise to God and thanked Him for His presence. His comfort. His provisions.

Surely God has been with me and had provided. During the maize season I would find some discarded cobs along the ground. I could find a few scant grains of corn from the already plucked cobs. Thanking the Lord, I would eat them as my empty stomach groaned for more. One time as I was going to the prayer mountain after leaving Namasuba, I became very weak because I had spent three days without finding any food to eat. I said, "God, I am very hungry." After a short while a rubbish truck passed by at a great speed and a piece of dry, rotten bread flew out of the truck. I quickly picked it up and thanked God for it then ate it. Indeed it was rotten! But due to the hunger I had no option.

One Sunday afternoon I went to Evangelical Church at Bwaise; though the service was over, I sat crying and praying. "Why me Lord? I am so hungry." then I looked up and saw a young boy who appeared to be about 15 years old walking towards me carrying some water and two

chapattis. As he extended them towards me I asked him, "They're for who?" "For you." he replied. When I asked him who told him to bring them to me, he further stated, "I heard something telling me to bring them to you."

While many of us Christians read about the fellowship of Christ's suffering, Pastor Robert Sisye is living it.

Called by God to begin a church, he has battled starvation, demonic attacks via witchcraft, homelessness, attacks from Religious groups, along with rejection from his family and friends. At one occasion a man tried to burn down his church structure (which was nothing more than four poles with paper wrapped around them to serve as walls) but the Lord protected it; despite several attempts, the structure would not burn!

While in the middle of grave circumstances, the Lord gave Pastor Robert a word from Isaiah 60. though in the midst of such trials and uncertainty, Pastor Robert couldn't see how such a word applied to him. After reading Pastor Robert's testimony and viewing the picture of the collapsed walls of his last structure in 2009, I realized that the Lord gave a prophetic word concerning Pastor Robert's ministry, and that here it is 2010 and I am seeing the beginning of that fulfillment and that I had the privilege—along with the Body of Christ in Mineral Wells, TX (Free Life Ministry)—of participating. What a joy it brought my spirit knowing that I could honor the Lord by helping Him fulfill His word! Isaiah 60:10 puts it clearly; "And the sons of strangers shall build up the walls."

Then it occurred to me; that's what the people of God are supposed to do (help fulfill His Word). Joshua did it when he crossed Jordan and claimed the land according to the promise. John the Baptist did it by preparing the way of the Lord. No greater mandate do we have then to fulfill God's Word. Though it is the Lord Who will fulfill it, we must be instruments for Him to use toward that

end. As the Word puts it we should be "meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Timothy 2:21).

So Body of Christ this is a call to action. Those of you who can provide ongoing financial support, please do so; if you're looking for a great way to tithe, this is it!

Maybe you can only provide a onetime gift offering. Don't think it too small for God to use. Maybe you know someone who has better resources than you do; family, friends, or church members who have access to missions groups, those who have global resources who can assist in building a church, provide pews, funds, Bibles, etc. if nothing more, then offer prayers; intercessory prayer is a very important function of the Body.

I've read Pastor Robert's testimony and it encouraged and inspired me. It certainly put my own faith and call to ministry into perspective! I pray the Lord awaken and stir my spirit the way Pastor Robert has been stirred. We can all learn lessons from his examples. I pray the Lord stir your heart as well, Please heed this call. For we are not just building some walls, we are helping God to build His Kingdom.

Opening story adapted from Pastor Robert's testimony. Though I provided much of the narrative (set the scenery, interjected the mental dialogue) the factual basis of the transpiring events are true. By no means have I captured the essence of Pastor Robert's sufferings. I apologize for those areas where I failed to do so.

Kenneth Lee

Wynne Unit-Huntsville TX.

Thank you, Kenneth for sharing your heart and God's leading in your life with us. I know I have been challenged by your heartfelt words, and pray others will be also.

LET ME CRY WITH YOU

By David Shepherd- Wynne Unit, TX

May I sit here with you, share the pain your going through, I don't mind if you cry, I'm here to cry too.

I know how it feels, to lose loved ones, I really do, you see, I once lost My Son, on a hill called Calvary.

I did not hurt alone, some cried with me too, they love Him like I do, the same as I love you.

So go ahead and cry, I'll cry even more, for every tear you drop, I hope I drop four.

Every ounce of pain you feel, pounds more I will bear, so go ahead and cry, I'll just sit here and cry too. Show how much I really care, let you know how much I do.

Let me hug your heart, I'll let you hug mine, Let's both squeeze real tight, until relief do we find.

Then when all is said and done, there's something I want you to know, your loved ones are not dead, they're up there walking streets of gold.

Someday you will join them, in mansions in the sky, where no more pain will you feel, no more will you and I cry.

But for now we will keep in touch, you for them and Me for you, I know how much you love them, it's that much. . . And more. . . I love you too.

This poem expresses where the Lord is at times in our lives. Fact is, He's right there with us. When we cry, He cries with us. When we hurt, He shares our pain and even more. When we are joyous, His heart dances with joy too. There is not one single ounce of our lives that the Lord isn't sharing in. Even in our sins He's right there hoping we repent and hoping we learn from our mistakes and work more toward glorifying Him. Whether you're crying or jumping for joy, living in His glory or sinning, He's right there hoping the best for you. He loves you more that He loves anything else. You matter that much to Him. So, go ahead and call on Him. I challenge you to. He's right there anxiously waiting, He always was, he always will be.

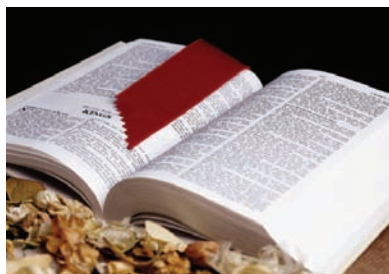
Today God Says: "The name of Jesus is above every name."

He promises me: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth; And that every tongue should confess the Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil.2:9-11

My response to the Word: *The name of Jesus is the most pre-eminent name in the entire universe. One day every knee will bow at His name, and every tongue will confess the Jesus Christ is Lord. This will bring glory to my Father in heaven. Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior, and I will proclaim His all-powerful name wherever I go.*

My Prayer; *Heavenly Father, thank you for Jesus Christ, and for the power of His name. When I pray in the name of Jesus demons flee, I experience joy, and my prayers are answered. Thank you, Lord.*

Today's Scriptures: 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:21; Col. 3:17



THOUGHTS IN MY HEAD

By John Wayne Ford, Sr.

Pack One Unit, Navasota, TX

As I close my eyes and lay here in my bed, lost memories of the love for my family fill my head, Do they often take time to stop and think, does he get fed enough, does he get enough to drink. As I sit to play dominoes or a game of scrabble, all guys talk about in here is how they want to squabble.

As I sit here so very scared and deeply sad, I may have lost the best thing I ever had. As I lay here with thoughts, emotions, and depression, I find myself trying to tune my radio and find some reception.

My thoughts are on the loved ones I've hurt, do they think, is he safe, and out of harms way? With the thoughts that he'd soon be home one day.

When I open my eyes to a blurred vision of tears, I wonder what my family out there mostly fears. Through the windows and bars I watch the sunrise, when no one is looking I wipe the tears from my eyes.

In the afternoon some of us go outside, while the rest of us just stay back and hide. Everyone in here talks about being free and being with family is where we want to be.

As I read the word of God each day, it teaches me more and more on how to pray. I know that none of us are ever perfect and Lord Jesus knows I'm far from it

As I sit here all alone and stay off to the side, I know that the Lord Jesus is always by my side. I know Who holds the future and I know Who holds my hand with God things don't just happen, everything by Him is planned.

EVERY TEAR HAS A THANK YOU

A SONG

BY KENNETH LEE—WYNNE UNIT, TX

On a rugged cross so long ago
 There's a story to be told,
 Of Jesus' love for a dying world
 In His arms He did hold,
 He bled, He died, was crucified
 Then rose triumphantly,
 And there's coming a grand ole day
 When He'll return for me.
 Every tear has a thank you
 For what He's done for me.
 He has healed my broken heart,
 Oh yes, He set me free!
 He's given me victory over death
 And the cruel embrace of sin
 And one day He'll proclaim to me
 Well done, now enter in.
 When I think of all He's done for me
 I always start to cry,
 Don't think these tears only cross my face
 They come from deep inside
 They rise from the fountains of my heart,
 For that's where they touched me
 And I know that some day soon
 Again, Him I'll see
 Every tear has a story to tell
 Of new life and victory
 They tell of where He's brought me from
 And where He's taking me.
 They describe an empty heart now full
 Of His amazing grace and love
 How my eyes continue to search the heavens above
 But these tears speak so much more,
 That I have yet to tell
 They tell of those still hurting
 Of those still bound for hell,
 Those tears are for those who don't know Him
 For those who still are lost
 For those who haven't found the love
 He shared there on His cross

BORROWED LIVES

by E.J. Turk—Lynaugh Unit, TX

"I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept my word, and have not denied My name." Rev. 3:8

Oncology. Such a strange word to ordinary folk. It comes from the Greek word "onkos" meaning bulk or mass.

Tumor.

Sam looked down at Becky. She was just sitting there quietly, her hands folded in her lap. She was wearing Little Mermaid tennis shoes with green soles, pink cargo pants, a Winnie the Pooh t-shirt, and a leopard print jacket complete with fuzzy collar. If it weren't for the purple and pink knit cap she wore covering her bald scalp, one might not suspect there was anything wrong with this otherwise normal 8 year old girl. But her stoic resolve betrayed her wild, childish attire and spoke of a black misery that was ravaging her young body.

Sam watched his little daughter for several more moments as they sat silently in the waiting area of the oncology specialist.

"Becky?" Sam broke the silence. A pause, then Sam spoke again, "Becky? Are you al—"

"Yes, Daddy?" The little girl turned her face toward her father and smiled. "Are you alright, Baby? You look as if something's bothering you." Sam felt foolish for stating the obvious. "I mean, is there anything you'd like to talk about?"

Becky looked up and scrunched her face as is she were giving the question some serious consideration. God, Sam thought, how do you expect me to know how to father such a sick child?

"Daddy?" Becky's eyes were big and brown and completely serious.

"Yes, Baby?"

"Who's taking care of all those Hai-

tian kids who lost their parents in the quake?"

Sam wasn't expecting that question. "Well, I don't know, Baby. Relief workers I suppose. I know some of the people from our church went down there last month. I'm sure someone is. Why?"

Becky looked down at the floor as she gently swung her feet. "I have a bunch of extra clothes and toys that I never use, and I thought maybe we could give them to the kids down there."

"Oh, Baby." Sam consoled. "There's plenty of people taking care of that. Let's just think of getting you better for now. Okay?" Sam couldn't believe his poor daughter was taking on worrying about someone else's problems. Didn't she have enough of her own?

Becky reached over and touched her father's hand. She looked up into Sam's eyes. "But, Daddy, they don't have moms or dads to take care of them. They don't even have houses anymore. I'm sick, but I'm loved. Who's gonna love them, Daddy? Who?"

The oncologist appointment came and went. It was long, wearisome, and painful, and the final prognosis wasn't what Sam had been hoping for.

Terminal.

The ride home was somber and uneventful. Neither one of them very much until they were only blocks away from their home. As they approached a stop-light Becky noticed a bedraggled old woman shuffling down the sidewalk. The woman was shivering under her tattered shawl and making her way toward a trash bin situated on the corner. Becky watched in stunned silence as the old woman plunged both of her arms into the trash bin. She had nearly doubled completely over when suddenly she bolted upright, a discarded fast food wrapper in hand. Becky watched in horror as the woman stuffed some unseen object from the wrapper into her toothless mouth.

BORROWED LIVES, CONTINUES

Sam was lost in his thoughts oblivious to what Becky was watching. Silently he prayed, “God, I don’t understand what’s happening with my Becky. Please help me Lord, I can’t bear the thought of losing my little girl.” A tear snuck down Sam’s cheek and he quickly wiped it away, he had to be strong for Becky. “Whatever You want me to do Lord, I’ll do it — ANYTHING! But please — PLEASE—save my little girl!”

Sam’s prayer was suddenly interrupted by the sound of Beck’s window rolling down. Before he could do anything he watched in disbelief as Becky handed her Happy Meal and soda out the window to a wild haired homeless woman. Quickly Sam pushed the control switch and raised the window back up. The old woman touched the window with grimy fingers as Becky touched the glass from the inside. As Sam pulled through the green light he watched the old woman mouth “thank You” while waving to Becky.

Why did you do that?” Sam asked, surprised.

“She was hungry Daddy, and I didn’t really want my hamburger.”

“But how did she know you had food?”

“I showed it to her and waved her over.”

“But how did you kn—”

“I saw her eat something out of a trash can,” Becky stated, incredulous.

“Oh,” Sam whispered.

“Daddy? Who feeds those people?”

Sam remained silent as he continued driving. He honestly didn’t know, and hadn’t really given it much thought. He shrugged his shoulders, “I’m not sure, Baby,. But I don’t want you worrying about that. Somebody feeds them, I mean, that woman has obviously been around for a long time.” immediately he regretted his words and cringed inside for saying them. How long would Becky be around? What an irony.

“Daddy?”

“Yes Baby?”

“I have some money in my bank on my

dresser. I really don’t need anything, so, I was wondering , can we use it to buy some food for that lady?”

Sam could hardly believe his ears. Doesn’t she have enough to worry about? Doesn’t she realize that she’s — He couldn’t even bear to think it! But it was true. Becky was going to die , and soon.

Becky reached over and touched her father’s arm, “If we don’t feed her Daddy, who will? Who will?”

After going home Becky asked some more about the homeless woman, and Sam assured her that they would get her some thing to eat. And they did too. The very next day Sam made good on his promise. He took Becky and her money to the local supermarket where they filled a small knap sack full of ready to eat canned foods. The had also prepared a picnic lunch to share with the old woman.

It took awhile but they finally found her not too far from where they had first saw her. She was actually quite friendly, and once she was convinced that they meant her no harm , the woman accompanied Sam and Becky to a nearby park where they shared their lunch. The woman’s name was Marge, and after her husband had passed away she’d lost her house and had been on the streets ever since. Three years so far.

“Oh there’s a shelter I stay nights at,” Marge explained, “They say I might be able to get some assistance from Social Security. But I get by alright, especially since I met Jesus. The nice folks at the shelter introduced us awhile back.” Marge flashed a big toothless grin,. “he’s made all the difference in the world!”

As they were about to part ways Becky asked if they would mind if she said a prayer. They agreed, so Becky began, “Dear Jesus, I want to thank You for helping Marge and my Dad and me. Please keep us safe. Watch over Marge , and always let her know You’re there with her. And Jesus, please be strong for my Daddy and me. I love You Jesus. Amen.”

Becky and Sam spent the rest of their afternoon together and even went for ice cream before going home. It had been a big day for Becky and she was tired. She decided not to watch any television and went

to bed early.

Sam sat alone in his dimly lit living room. On the end table sat a picture of a beautiful young woman holding a baby. Her name was Linda and the baby was Becky when she was three years old. Sam and Linda had been married for four years when the picture was taken. She’d been gone now for five. Sam sighed and looked at the ceiling. Linda had been a wonderful Christian woman who was deeply devoted to God. As a matter of fact it was her who had led Sam to faith in Jesus Christ. And Jesus had been good to him, but life was becoming increasingly harder to bear. First his wife dies in a senseless car accident, and now his precious Becky—

Sam rolled down from the couch and onto the carpeted living room floor. He spread out face down, his head resting on his forearms. Silently he began praying, “Lord God, what words can I say? I don’t understand any of this! And my poor daughter, she prays that I’ll be strong! She’s the one who’s dying! But I feel as if I am dying too. Pastor says that people don’t belong to each other, that they belong to You; we just get to borrow them for awhile. But Lord, I’m not ready to let her go!” Sam shuddered under the weight of his anguish. He was crying deep wrenching sobs when he felt something touch his shoulder. Quickly he wiped his eyes then looked to see Becky on her knees beside him. She had her hand on his shoulder and was praying for him.



“Lord Jesus,” Becky prayed, “Please help my Daddy. Please show him that You’re with us. I need my Daddy to be strong , Lord Jesus. He’s who You gave me to help me, but he hurts so bad right now . You said that when we help others we’re helping You. I need my Daddy to help me Jesus. I love my Daddy, and I know he’s scared, he just needs to know that you’re here and that You care. Please help him Jesus. Amen.”

Sam scooped Becky into his arms and held her close as he rocked on his knees. Sam looked up, his tears streaming , and prayed. “Thank You Jesus, for blessing me with such a wonderful daughter! She has truly blessed my life! I will be strong, with your strength Lord. For her. For You.”

BORROWED LIVES continues

Sam looked down at Becky, she was already trying to fall asleep in his arms. “*I love you little girl,*” Sam whispered.

“*I love you too Daddy, and Jesus does too.*” Becky put her hand against Sam’s chest over his heart, “*Be strong, Daddy. If you didn’t take care of me, who would?*” Daddy? Who would?

In the days following, Becky’s health began to rapidly decline. Finally Sam had to admit her to the hospital where she would spend her last few days. Sam stayed with her day and night, singing to her and laughing with her while she was awake, praying for her and crying over her while she slept. In the we hours of one morning, a week after being admitted , Becky woke up looking for her Daddy.

“*Here I am Baby,*” Sam whispered, “*I’ve got your hand.*”

Becky squeezed Sam’s hand with her tiny fingers. “*Help them Daddy,*” she said weakly, *:if you don’t who will?’* she licked her lips than a swallowed hard. “*I love you Daddy. I’m gonna go now.*” with that her hand relaxed, and she was gone.

Sam mourned his daughter’s death for several months. She was so strong and so concerned for others. He had cherished every moment spent with her and had come to realize that she had taught him so much. Because of Becky, he realized now, that every human being possessed incredible worth, especially in the eyes of God. That every person he encountered was actually an opportunity to serve God.

Sam ran his fingers through his hair and squinted through his sunglasses at the hot sun. Already his shirt was clinging to his sweaty skin, and the package he carried weighed heavily in his arms. But is was a blessed burden. Sam relished the salty breeze blowing in from the Caribbean. He only had to walk a few yards once the taxi dropped him off, and now finally he had arrived.

Just ahead was a small group of children huddled under the shade of a straw hut on a small patch of grass. They were being taught by a tall woman wearing a flowery dress. When the woman saw Sam she

reached down and taped one of the children, then pointed to Sam. The little Haitian girl jumped right up and began running toward Sam, her pigtails streaming behind her. She was smiling from ear to ear and stopped right in front of Sam, her hands clasped behind her back.

“*Well hello little girl!* Looks like someone’s happy to see me!” Sam removed his sunglasses and winked. “*My name is Sam. Can you tell me your name?*” he held out his hand, smiling at the girl.

She giggled looking at the ground, then raised he big brown eyes to his. Smiling, she took Sam’s hand. In her Creole accent she softly told him, “*Rebecca.*”

“*Then the King will say to those on His right hand, “Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was in prison and you came to Me. . . Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”*”

Matthew 25: 34-36, 40b

A SILENT SERMON

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him.

It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his pastor’s visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited.

The pastor made himself at home but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone then he sat back in his chair, still silent.

The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember’s flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was

cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The pastor glanced at his watch and realized it was time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said with a tear running down his cheek, ‘Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I will be back in church next Sunday’.

We live in a world today, which tries to say too much with too little. Consequently, few listen. Sometimes the best sermons are the ones left unspoken.

The Lord is my Shepherd — that’s a Relationship!

I shall not want — that’s Supply!

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures —that’s Rest!

He leadeth me beside the still waters — that’s Refreshment!

He restoreth my soul — that’s Healing!

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness —that’s Guidance!

For His name sake — that’s Purpose!

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death—that’s Testing!

I will fear no evil — that’s Protection!

For Thou art with me — that’s Faithfulness!

Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me —that’s Discipline!

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies—that’s Hope!

Thou annointest my head with oil — that’s Consecration!

My cup runneth over — that’s Abundance!

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life—that’s Blessing!

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord — that’s Security!

Coming Home to Contentment

Dr. Michael Youssef

Leading The Way Ministries

Do you feel like you are missing out on something in life? Do you feel discontent or disappointed with your circumstances? We often try to find contentment by making surface changes in our lives—switching jobs, moving to a new city, beginning a new relationship—but nothing seems to work. We fail because we try to apply human solutions to a spiritual problem.

In the Bible we see two examples of discontentment in the lives of Cain and the prodigal son. Although they both experienced restlessness, their responses were completely different. Cain allowed his misery to drive himself further away from God; the prodigal son allowed his misery to lead him back home.

Cain's restlessness began with jealousy toward his brother Abel. "In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast" (Genesis 4:3-5). Abel remembered his parents' teaching about the cost of sin. He remembered that God required an animal sacrifice. Cain wanted to please God in his own way and gave God a grain sacrifice. Perhaps Cain's sacrifice was just as costly as Abel's, but the price was not what was important. What mattered was obedience to God's commands, and Cain did not follow God's requirements.

When God rebuked Cain for his inadequate sacrifice, Cain responded with a renewed fury and hatred toward his brother. Cain could have used his failure to turn his pride and willfulness into submission to God; instead he further rebelled and killed his brother. God let Cain remain in his discontentment and said, "You will be a restless wanderer on the earth" (Genesis 4:12).

Running from God will never alleviate our problems - or quell our guilt, or quiet

our consciences. Running from God will never cure our restlessness and discontent—it will only make our situations worse. Only running toward God will bring us healing, restoration, joy and peace.

In contrast to Cain, the prodigal son shows us how God can use our discontentment to turn our hearts back to Him. Read Luke 15:11-32. The prodigal son was also restless and discontent. He also ran away from his father. Yet instead of allowing his misery to drive him further and further away, the prodigal son realizes that running away is not the answer. Unlike Cain, the prodigal used his discontent to repent and restore his relationship with his father.

"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men'" (Luke 15:17-19).

Because the prodigal son sought contentment through his father and not his rebellion, he finally found happiness and peace. The father did not punish his son or send him away but instead welcomed him home with love.

How will you respond to your seasons of discontent? Will you become like Cain who used his own solutions to try to solve his spiritual problems? Will you allow your envy and pride to fuel your rebellion against God's plan for your life? Or will you treat your spiritual problem of discontentment with God's spiritual answers? Will you find the courage to repent of your rebellion and come back home to the Father?

If you are tired of wandering and searching, confess to God today your restlessness and discontentment. Ask him to forgive your pride and stubbornness. Thank Him for His unfailing mercy and His willingness to forgive the repentant heart.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise." Ps 51:17

ANOTHER CHANCE TO PRAY

By Chris Rogers- LCF- Harvest, AL

Sometimes I kneel down, with good intentions to pray, but at the least little sound those intentions are carried away.

So I refocus my thoughts on the conversation at hand, but in my mind I again get lost on the cares and worries on man.

Frustrated now, I try once more to make my petitions to God, feeling my words are falling to the floor, my prayers seem rushed, unfeeling and odd.

Why do sometimes I feel as though I am in the arms of the Lord, when other times my selfishness shows, and I feel as if I'm being ignored?

When we bow our heads in prayer, Satan takes it as a threat. So he begins to put out a snare that often catches us when set.

Anything to take us away from the Throne of grace above. Anything that will make us stray away from God's power and God's love,

So when your train of thought falters in your conversation with the Master, remember it's the enemy trying to alter the very thing that brings him disaster.

In our prayers there is a power and power in Jesus' name, Satan's works they will devour, healing the sick, the blind, the lame.

So when you are struggling to focus in your petition for those all around, know that it's because a battle is before us, it's the enemy trying to confound.

If you wake up in the morning realizing you fell asleep during your prayers, many of God's children you are joining who fell asleep the same way unaware.

It's okay for a child to lay their head in the lap of their Father to talk, their Father will gently put them to bed if they become too sleepy to walk.

So don't get discouraged or worry when you fall asleep this way, for the next morning comes in a hurry, so does the next chance to pray!

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TIME

Sent in by Horacio Dohnal- Rudd Unit, TX

"My name is time. I haven't always been and I won't always be, but right now I'm on the move, measuring out life. Men wait for me, submit to me, fear me, but no one can stop me. Except God. He is in control and He says I am running out. . . Most men couldn't care less. They think I'm on the move forever. But I'm not. When I stop, eternity will keep right on going. . . And it will be too late. . .too late for repentance; too late for forgiveness. . . Too late for getting right with God through Jesus Christ, His Son; too late for faith. Just forever left for tears and anguish and regrets. . .

Now is the day of salvation. Will it be that day for you? My name is time and I'm on the move. I'm nearing the end. And I'm taking you with me. . . Into eternity. "

Will you take a moment now to get your Bible and turn to Romans 10: 8 -10;13

Read what you must do to be saved today. Our prayer is for you to receive the life of Christ today, a life of hope and peace. Don't let time run out on you, you still have today. God said, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts ". Heb 4:7

Make the right choice, Choose Jesus