

“Letter From M.O.M.”

The **Monthly** newsletter of **Moving On Ministry**

WWW.MovingOnMinistry.com

www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon

Volume 44 – January, 2009

“I Can Only Imagine”

As you receive this volume of **Letter From M.O.M.**, we have many new writers of articles, we are putting some more of the testimonies of “How God Changes Lives” as well as some of our own written articles. We can truly say that the “high” that many of our inmates have been trying to get through the wrong methods, is being surpassed by those putting God in control of their lives.

Watch our website

www.MovingOnMinistry.com

We are affiliated with International Prison Fellowship

<http://PrisonMinistry.net/movingon>

and Good News Jail & Prison Ministry Volunteer

www.GoodNewsJail.com



You can't cut out the Middle Man

Letter From M.O.M. Volume 44
January 2009

Intentions & Wishes

The intentions of this newsletter are to allow an understanding of jail & prison ministries. It is our intentions to get input from those incarcerated as well as those “free” to visit. Life experiences of the faith and fellowship from those locked up in the facilities are always desired to let others know of the value of “visitation”. I am certain that each of us have many stories of the miracles God has done in our lives.

Our wishes are that we would have a list of supportive churches that individuals might look forward to attending once released.

A list of services, such as housing, employment, and counseling services, as well as some individuals available for friendly fellowship are also much needed items.

God's Word says if a man stumbles, how can he continue lest there be another to help him up. **Ecc. 4:10** “For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him [that is] alone when he falleth; for [he hath] not another to help him up.” **Proverbs 24:17** “Rejoice not when thy enemy falleth, and let not thy heart be glad when he stumbleth.” **John 11:10** “But if a man walketh in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.”

Please help us with input for this newsletter as we strive to serve God. We appreciate any articles or input.

Addresses to contact Ministry Volunteers

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**Moving On Ministry
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**Jesus Prayer Ministry
Sis Denise
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**Christ First Discipleship
PMB #198
23170 Northern Ave. Suite B
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**Set Free Prison Ministries
Bible Correspondence Course
P.O. Box 5440
Riverside, CA. 92517-9986**

**Prison Fellowship
Chuck Colson
P.O. Box 1550
Merrifield, VA 22116-1550**

**Armor in Ministry (A.I.M.)
Brother Rocky
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**Ask for a copy of our complete
“Resource Supplemental Letter”**

For 2008, Bob is doing Bible study at BWDF on Mondays and at MCF on Thursdays.

The Sunday after the 2nd Saturday of each month is Bob and Linda's assigned day for 3 to 4 chapel Services at Corcoran State Prison (“Old” Corcoran). 11/09/08, & 12/14/08, may be skipped because of the chaplain being gone for 6 weeks..

Bob and Rocky have also added the Miramonte Conservation Camp #5 to their list of locations to present chapel services every other Friday.

Bob and Linda did the Bill Glass Ministry in Santa Rita Co. Jail in Oct. 2008. Then in Nov. 2008 Bob and Linda did the Bill Glass Ministry with Bob going to Chino State Prison and Linda going to Glen Helen Rehab. Center for women.

M.O.M. Needs

- Tractor repair or replacement for Camp Clarius development.
- Pen-pals to write inmates
- Finances
- Testimonies
- Development of Squaw Valley Property (Camp Clarius)
- Development of Nevada property
- Development of Arizona property
- Graphics artist for books

Prayer Request

The Mom of M.O.M. (Jeanne) needs prayer. She has many fractured vertebrae in her neck. The doctors have mentioned putting a rod down her neck and putting her in a halo that has screws into the skull to keep it stationary. Please pray for guidance in the doctors and a speedy recovery.

Letters that Express it All

We like to post real life situations, because God works in real lives and He is the one that gives "Eternal Life." Every week we get many letters that state "I love hearing the testimonies." There are so many, we cannot publish them all, and the sad part is – people not involved in jail / prison ministry do not get to read the many letters we receive daily (average 2 to 11 each day) and try to keep up with and answer.

Simple Truth

I just wanted to thank you for the last issue of M.O.M. It touched on things I needed to hear about. And was a blessing.

I just wanted you to know that I wrote to Fran Florez (prior article on her running for Calif. Congress) about being a "willing to work" inmate with a huge restitution/fine. I have been without a job in prison (waiting for a job at CSATF) for 16 months. I have education completed (in custody), plus special skills. I have filed inmate appeals/complaints to no avail. I shouldn't complain, as there are inmates which have been waiting 36 months without work.

Also, thanks for the info on Arizona, and the brain teasers. Combined, it was a much needed uplifting at the time. And I just wanted you to know. **MO**

Jail Bird

At this prison, a very familiar daily occurrence is the flocking of of pigeons around the entrance of the dining hall during meal times. In the eyes of some, these birds are representatives of God's handiwork. Maybe to some they represent friends. And to some, freedom itself. From these individuals, the birds receive breadcrumb handouts. "I call them Pigeon-Lovers."

For others, these birds obviously represent something of a darker nature, because these individuals can be seen kicking at, scaring and/or cursing these defenseless feathered creatures. For these individuals, maybe it's a subconscious jealousy that they too, can't take flight and escape the confines of prison at any given time. "I call these Pigeon-Haters."

One afternoon, while returning from chow (lunch), I noticed a pigeon who's left wing was bent and dragging the ground. I could only assume that maybe the foot of a "Pigeon-Hater" had finally found its mark. I assumed this because if the bird had received it's injury outside the prison, it wouldn't have been able to fly into the prison. Being that I'm among the "Pigeon-Lovers" crowd, I felt compassion for the feathered creature and silently asked our Divine Father to watch over it.

Since the bird couldn't fly up to roost with the rest of it's companions, it spent at least two nights, that I know of, near the door of my housing unit. While there, another compassionate heart put a cup of water and some bread crumbs out for the wounded pigeon to eat. For the rest of the week, during the day, I would see this wounded pigeon foraging around with the other pigeons.

As always, when we would go to the dining hall, the birds would gather around to wait on their daily handouts. Eventually a “Pigeon-Lover” would emerge from the dining hall, and toss a handful of bread crumbs. Immediately the birds would mount upon their wings and flock right to it. All except the pigeon with the bent and dragging wing. He could only walk in the direction of the bread feast, and by the time he arrived, all the bread would be gone!

After a week and a half, or so, I no longer saw the bent winged pigeon; I assumed the worst. Frankly, I thought that he had perished at the hands of one of the “Pigeon-Haters” or met some other form of tragic demise. Finally a little over a month had passed, but every time I went to the dining hall and saw the pigeons, I would remember the wounded pigeon that couldn’t fly.

Now get this; two days ago (before I wrote this story), I was on my way from the dining hall and the “Pigeon-Lover” walking in front of me tossed out some bread crumbs. As usual, the birds immediately flocked towards us. Again, thoughts of the bent wing pigeon entered my mind. Then, low and behold, one of the pigeons landed right at my feet. It was the bent-winged pigeon!

It only took me a second to realize that it was him, because his left wing was still bent downward and he was the same color markings. The only difference was that he was once again flying with his companions! All of a sudden, I heard a (small still voice) whisper into my spirit, “You too will fly again!” Right then I knew that the Great and Almighty Father, Creator of both the bird and myself, had just used that pigeon to inspire my soul with renewed encouragement to carry on.

So, if you have been kicked around and injured by the words and/or deeds of Satan, through another, or even yourself, just remember the bent-winged pigeon. And with the passing of time, and in due season, you too, by the abundant graces of Father God, and His son Jesus Christ, will heal and soon fly again! God bless all who read this short story **RLA**

A New Year

Hello my brothers and sisters:
During these last few years of this ministry, “Moving On Ministry” aka M.O.M, I have read hundreds of letters. I am going to be very honest with you all. As I remember back at the content of the writings of some of the first letters we received from individuals, I can see such a spiritual growth and the genuine requests for prayer and clearly see that most are on the right path. I want to share a bit of myself with you all including the persons that are only fooling themselves. Just as the scriptures say: KING JAMES, NEW KING JAMES AND NIV VERSION
Proverbs 24:26 (God knows what I think and every word that comes out of my mouth)
An **honest** answer is like a kiss on the lips
1 Chronicles 29:17 (Who am I when no one is looking?)
I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity.....

Matthew 7:26(Am I really listening or playing the part for show? In one ear and out of the other?)

26But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

Ephesians 5:4 (Show me who you hang around with and I will tell you who you are.)

4Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.

Read Psalm 73 NIV VERSION, ZONDERVAN, THE QUEST STUDY BIBLE

(about when you believe that life is so unfair)

If we are not doing what God's Word tell us we are only fooling ourselves. Sometimes we cannot see the truth because we are dumbfounded by the enemy that confuses us with lies, deceit, bitterness, loneliness, anger, fear, envy, worry and so on..... most of all pride. It will get the better of us. We are such a visual people. We have to see something before we believe. I was one of those people, not to say that I am better either, I consider myself to be the lowest of the low, the worst of the worst sinners. I have lied, stolen, deceived, beaten, almost killed, committed adultery, had a promiscuous lifestyle, hung around people that only lived for themselves in this dog eat dog society....the list goes on and on. Now we all know that what goes around comes around***** Living a lifestyle like that was not getting me anywhere. I was lied to, thieves stole much from me, I was beaten, raped, molested, almost killed 6-7 times , relationship after relationship, taking along with me, on this train ride to hell, my precious children that only had me for guidance. What a disgrace of a mother I was.

The only thing I knew was to survive. No more getting stepped on. No more of being a nobody, no more sadness. I thought I had it right being a "survivor" so I had to be on the defensive all of the time. No trusting anyone, being aware of anyone near me or listening very closely to the

smooth talkers and their ungodly actions. No more hanging around with anyone anymore. Reality struck. I was on my own. Time had come for something new in my life. My heart was void of any feeling of real love and my mind was filled with struggling with life and seeing myself trying to climb up and falling further down in this dark pit of hopelessness.

When I was very young I thought there was no gist to life. What in hell is life all about? Little did I know that God knew me even at my worst and even more that He had a genuine love for me that I could not even imagine, and, He gave His all for me! Me?! Who am I for someone to do such a thing?!! The Lord heard my lonely silent cries throughout the dark abyss that I was involved in and pulled me out into His light.

Psalm 18 (King James Version)

(read all of the chapter)

.. **16**He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters...

God sent His one and only son Jesus to die for you. Do you believe and accept this?

God knew every single detail of my life all along and I know what He expects of me daily. There is a true love that I know and a trust that you can know now of our King of Kings. The choice is yours and yours alone. No one can do it for you. It is your life, your choice, your eternity. Heaven or Hell? Your children, your family and your friends might be influenced by your choice, positive or negative? Do not try to be someone you are not. Be honest, be faithful to read and listen to His Voice and instruction for tomorrow might be too late. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in what you do. Write words from your heart, do not copy

others writings or artwork. Whatever you write sign it as the author. If you use someone's material give the author the credit. I expect that from a Christian, wouldn't you?

Now I guess this is not just a little note. This is what was in my heart and had the need to share with you. I pray that if you feel uncomfortable with this then wake up and prepare yourself for what God has in store for your spiritual growth.

Job 38 (read all of it)

1Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

2Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

3Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.....

May our Lord touch your heart for doing His will for your life and bless you beyond your own imagination and expectations. He is 100 percent guaranteed. Believe and live. NEVER LOSE HOPE, TRUST IN THE LORD AND FOLLOW HIS WILL FOR YOU. You do not need to belong to any group or cult to "be someone". Be yourself. Be the man or woman of Integrity that God wants for you. If you want to be a winner, you have to hang around with winners. A fool follows fools and a winner follows "Direct orders from the KING"

In His Service, Volunteer Linda

Testimony

By
Stephen Wallace

To receive, you must believe, . . .

Hello my fellow brothers and Sisters. God bless you all and may He give you peace and joy He gave me, thank you Father God.

For those of you that know me and are reading this testimony of mine, understand the situation for you have been there. For you who don't know me, let me give you some of my background – hold on for it is a wild "ride" I'm about to take you on.

I was raised in a family of 4 without a father figure. I ran around the Northside of Visalia like it was the the thing to do, until one day the County (CPS) thought I needed guidance in order to become a man.

I was moved to a foster home in Pixley, a loving family who accepted me as one of their own from the first day. You can say I was one of the lucky ones who happened to find a wonderful home and loving family. This family taught me how to trust, to love, and respect others, things the Northside didn't teach. The Northside taught us the "other-side" of life.

I was lucky, I had a chance to see both "worlds," better yet, both sides of life. My new family taught me morals, values, and how to believe in myself. Don't get me wrong, my mother (Nora) did her best, but it was truly hard for a single mother of 3 in the 60's (my

little brother was born in the 70's). My parents gave me responsibilities, and chores. They punished me for breaking rules, and rewarded me for doing good, but regardless of the situation, they always showed me love.

I graduated from high school with honors, a 3.95 GPA, the top 2% of the class. I was even good in sports, and received a full academic scholarship to a major university, but instead of going to the major university, I went to the "college of hard knocks." In 1989, I went to prison for 13 months, came home, and 121 days later, I was looking at 75 years to life. From July 1990 to Dec. 2002, I was in prison doing my time there. I went through different phases in my life, I was a Muslim, but something was still missing.

I came back to Tulare County Jail (BWDF) to have a re-trial in my case. I met Chaplain Bob, and I only listened to one of his Bible studies, and a couple of days later I was released, my case was overturned. Two years later, I was back, facing yet another life term. I was moved to BWDF unit 41-105, and Tuesday night Bob came to my cell looking for someone else. We talked the whole hour. He gave me my first Bible and made suggestions of what to read.

One week later, he was back, boy did I have questions. I read what he asked me to, plus much more. I had read most of the New Testament, I believe I was in Acts, anyway, once again we talked the whole hour. He answered my questions, but I only had more questions. Thursday night, low and behold, here is chaplain Bob again. That night 16 of us were let out so that he could talk to us all. Boy, was that a wonderful night. I gave my life to Christ (June 16, 2004). I remember, for I went to court the next day. Boy, did things change for me.

That night I slept peacefully for the first time in so long. I awakened with a smile and ready to face the world, but first I had to face the judge. I had 37 major felonies from attempted murder, to assault with a deadly weapon. My deal was like 47 years. That day the DA took away the deal and placed a charge – 666.7(5)(b) – habitual criminal which carries life without the possibility of parole.

Talk about destroyed, my hopes were shattered. I came back and wrote Bob a long letter, Tuesday night he came and talked to me, but he had not received my letter yet. We talked, but he asked me "Did you pray and give God your problems?" I said "no." We prayed, and after praying, I felt relieved.

Later that week I received a letter from Bob, actually my first copy of "**Letter from M.O.M.**" (monthly newsletter) along with other reading stuff.

To make a long story short, I started my trial and after 2 weeks, I was found guilty of one (1) charge out of 37. I ended up with 6 years, instead of life.

I remember saying "Thank you Father!" After the jury was dismissed, the judge ask me a question in his chambers – "Why did you take such a great risk?" My reply was very simple – "I placed all my problems in God's hand and I will do His will."

For the next 3 ½ years my faith grew. I was giving God more and more of my time and I felt I was ready to face the world again. Believe me, it was easier said than done!

For about 9 months I was faithful going to church, I even enrolled in a Christian program, but I was not ready. Satan was too much for me, his temptations got me, even "running" with Satan. God was there with me, showing

me my wrongs, as well as showing me how to get back to Him, but in the end, I turned and went my way and it didn't take long for Satan to do his work. I was back using and stealing.

Through all this, Bob and Linda were there for me. Bob sent me letters, he even came looking for me. Leaving messages for me to call him, but me being so prideful, thinking I can do this by myself. And I was wrong. I didn't just fail me, I failed all those who loved me, most of all, I failed God. He was there for me, but I was not there for Him.

When I finally realized this fact, I once again asked our father God to forgive me and come back into my life, take control and lead me down His path of forgiveness. I have been walking this "road" for two years now. Everyday it is a struggle, but God helps me through every one of them. Remember, He says "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have troubles, but take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

I no longer worry about "life's troubles" for God will get me through anything I may put myself in, for God said it all in Isaiah 42:16.

Isaiah 42:16 And I will bring the blind by a way [that] they knew not; I will lead them in paths [that] they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

I'm here to let you know, that if you place your trust, your faith, and humble yourself before God, he will

keep his promises to all who believe in Him.

There are over a thousand promises from God's Words but "To receive, you must believe, repent, and ask for forgiveness."

Your Brother in Christ,
- **Stephen** -

Remember Deuteronomy 7:12

Deuteronomy 7:12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers:

p.s. Before I close this out, let me say thanks to those who have helped me see the "light" in my time of Darkness –

Chaplain Bob & Linda

Chaplain John & Chaplain May

Ruben, Ben, & Voilt, the volunteers who come and teach us God's Word and show us His love for us.

Don't let me forget Sis Denise, thank you for all the things you have done in keeping me growing in my faith.

God blessed me with these wonderful caring people. Thank you Father.

- **Stephen** -

Poetry Section

By Faith I'm Free, But Yet in Prison

I'm a prisoner, but I don't mind
For I'm the happiest jailbird you'll ever
find.
Although I may be behind this stone
wall,
I'm behind it with no worries at all.

I am no longer filled with sin,
But with the Holy Ghost within.
It took a place like this for me to see,
That without Jesus I can never be free.

And if they would open up those iron
gates today,
And say "You can go but your faith must
stay."
I would reply, "Then lock me up and
throw away the key,
Because without Jesus I can never be
free." **RLA**

I submit this poem as a contribution to
my mentors, Bob and Linda and to
everyone else there at Moving On
Ministry. God bless you all. May each
of you shine bright like the sun in His
awesome radiance

The Season Remains

A hush surrounds the world
As The Gift is sent to Earth.
The angels sing, announce the King;
Our precious savior's birth.

The shepherds come to see
The baby soft and sweet;
The Chosen One, God's Holy Son,
They bow down at His feet.

Though none of us was there
And we did not see the star
That led men there to the baby fair,
(they came from lands afar),
We still can share The Gift
If we choose to just believe.
By God's own grace we will see His face
Eternal life receive.

The hush still fills the world
On this glorious Christmas day
As we feel God's love, sent from Heaven
above
Let us bow our heads and pray
For ways to share The Gift
With others who are poor.
Help show The Way in our lives today
Throw open Heaven's door.

Let us each a servant be
For we freely have received
Our saving Lord, ever more adored
Never seen, yet still believed.

Yes, the hush still fills the world
If we only stop, we'll hear
As the angels sing to announce our King
Every day throughout the year.

Barbara Larue 2007

The Lighter Side

These are from a book called Disorder in the American Courts, and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and now published by court reporters who had the torment of staying calm while these exchanges were actually taking place.

ATTORNEY: Are you sexually active?

WITNESS: No, I just lie there.

ATTORNEY: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

WITNESS: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

ATTORNEY: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

WITNESS: I forget.

ATTORNEY: You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

ATTORNEY: What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?

WITNESS: He said, 'Where am I, Cathy?'

ATTORNEY: And why did that upset you?

WITNESS: My name is Susan!

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the twenty-one-year-old, how old is he?

WITNESS: Uh, he's twenty-one.

ATTORNEY: Were you present when your picture was taken?

WITNESS: Is this a trick question?

ATTORNEY: So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8th?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And what were you doing at that time?

WITNESS: Uh.... I was getting laid!

ATTORNEY: She had three children, right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Are you shittin' me? Your Honor, I think I need a different attorney. Can I get a new

attorney?

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Now whose death do you suppose terminated it?

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard.

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

WITNESS:
Guess.

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All my autopsies are performed on dead people. Would you like to rephrase that?

ATTORNEY: ALL your responses MUST be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

WITNESS: Oral.

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: No, he was sitting on the table wondering why I was doing an autopsy on him!

-- And the best for last: - --

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: I see, but could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

Looking at the Facts 2 "Extreme Makeover" "God Edition"

Sin is any failure to conform to God's law. (Action, neglect, attitude)

Romans 1:18 Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven . . .

Romans 6:23 Wages of sin is death . . .

The things that I should do, those I don't; and the things I should not do, those I do.

Chaplain Bob has derived and modified the following from sermons by Pastor James MacDonald

"Find out what pleases the Lord." Ephesians 5:10 "Proving what is acceptable to the Lord"

Attempting to please other people brings pain and stress. I am not here to please man, but I am here to please God. My prayer is that I do not leave here with you "feeling good," but rather continue your journey "feeling God." If your main goal in life is to please others, you're putting yourself in bondage.

Jesus came to set you free from this painful pattern of living. "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed," (John 8:36). Two choices that help are:

Choice #1 I minimize my focus on what others think of me.

Paul faced the temptation to people-please. Notice his response to people comparing his and Apollos' ministries in 1 Corinthians 4:3:

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself."

He minimized the weight he placed on others' opinions. "It's a very small thing," he said. Remember the individuals would put on sack cloth and ashes – to signify "not me, but God"

Choice #2 I maximize my focus on what God thinks of me.

I've had to come to the place in my life where my consuming passion is to focus on God's evaluation. Let me suggest four ways to do this:

#1 Spend quality and quantity time

with the Lord. More time with Him will help you know and desire to do what pleases Him most. 10% of our time devoted (2.4 hours a day.- reading, listening

#2 Don't be controlled or manipulated by emotional blackmail.

Some people hold a dynamite stick in one hand and a match in the other and threaten to control you by intimidation. Just walk away.

#3 Limit enslaving friendships. People who base relationships on performance, not acceptance, are never satisfied. Limit their influence and the time you spend with them. "New faces, new places"

Isaiah 59:1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid [his] face from you, that he will not hear.

Isaiah 59:3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your

fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. "Location, location, location" determines the value of life, just as it does for property.

#4 Get alone with the Lord on a daily basis and ask, "Lord, are you pleased with my life?" God is the only one who has all the facts, sees all the motives and knows why your boss is never satisfied or why your dad won't accept you as you are. Let it go and focus on pleasing Him alone.

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition [between us];

5 Truths on Sin:

1. Sin will pursue you – Sin chases and is persistent. You do not have to look for it, it will find you.
2. Sin will disappoint you – pleasure but for a season.
Proverbs 16:25 There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.
3. Sin will trip you up – tries to keep you down. It may disguise itself as something else.
4. Sin will enslave you – you become bound to it. You become more dependent on it. Remember, it is easy to say "no" to something, when you have already said "yes" to something better.

5. Sin will expose you – Your sins will find you out

2 Timothy 4:6-8

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. [7] I have fought the good fight, I have **finished** the race, I have **kept** the faith. [8] Henceforth there is **laid up** for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. It is always about "finishing the race" and does not specify coming in first, but finishing.

Most of us have been around long enough to know some men and women whose lives were totally sold out to God a few years ago but who have since walked off the track in the middle of the race. They've given up. They've lost their longing for God and all He is. They're deserters from the Christian life .

The fear of following in their footsteps haunts me. It should you, too. The possibility is real for all of us unless we allow our hearts to be completely gripped by God . . . today- starting now. The faithfulness of my walk with God in the next year and the next decades depends on my willingness to stay current with God. In a word- **to stay in relationship with Him**. We are to daily grow closer.

I never want to lose the grip God's greatness has on my life and the supreme privilege it is to be in a relationship with Him and to serve Him faithfully till the day I am welcomed into His presence (not death, but actually a graduation). That passion compels me. It keeps me very honest and very humble before God.

The last thing I want to do is crawl across the finish line a defeated, derailed Christian or worse-give up the race before my life is over. I want to break that tape with arms high and my face to the sun and say with the apostle Paul, "I have finished the course; I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 3:7).

So what can we do now to ensure that finish line victory? We can get back to basics:

Honestly answer these seven questions: Review your life often with these questions:

1. Do I hunger after God? When we think of hunger, it brings visions of "extreme."
2. Does God's Word govern my life? – wwjd or wwjhyd
3. Do I grieve over sin? Or do we tolerate and accept it?
4. How quickly do I repent when I see my wrong? Can we see a point of repentance in our life? Is the concern on getting caught, or on doing what is right?
5. Am I sensitive to the Spirit's prompting me? Do I follow?
6. Do I obey?
7. Is my faith growing? We expect to see a child grow and progress. Shouldn't we expect the same with a child of God?

We are good when we are in control of things. How well do we do when God is in control?

Checks and Balances

James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, It is sin.

You cannot enter the gates of Heaven if:

Galatians 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Galatians 5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

Galatians 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told [you] in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

So how do we get accepted to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

Revelation 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be his son.

Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Matthew 24:13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Matthew 12:31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy [against] the [Holy] Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

Matthew 12:32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven

him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the [world] to come.

“Having once been enlightened, and then . . .”

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

Hebrews 6:2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Hebrews 6:3 And this will we do, if God permit.

Hebrews 6:4 For [it is] impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

Hebrews 6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

Hebrews 6:6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto

repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put [him] to an open shame.

Hebrews 6:7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

Hebrews 6:8 But that which beareth thorns and briers [is] rejected, and [is] nigh unto cursing; whose end [is] to be burned.

Hebrews 6:9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

Hebrews 6:10 For God [is] not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Hebrews 6:11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

Hebrews 6:12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

**Inmate Art by Richard Sanchez
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