

INSPIRATION *ministries*
138 East 7th Street
Auburn, Indiana 46706

*"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility
of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves."*

Philippians 2:3

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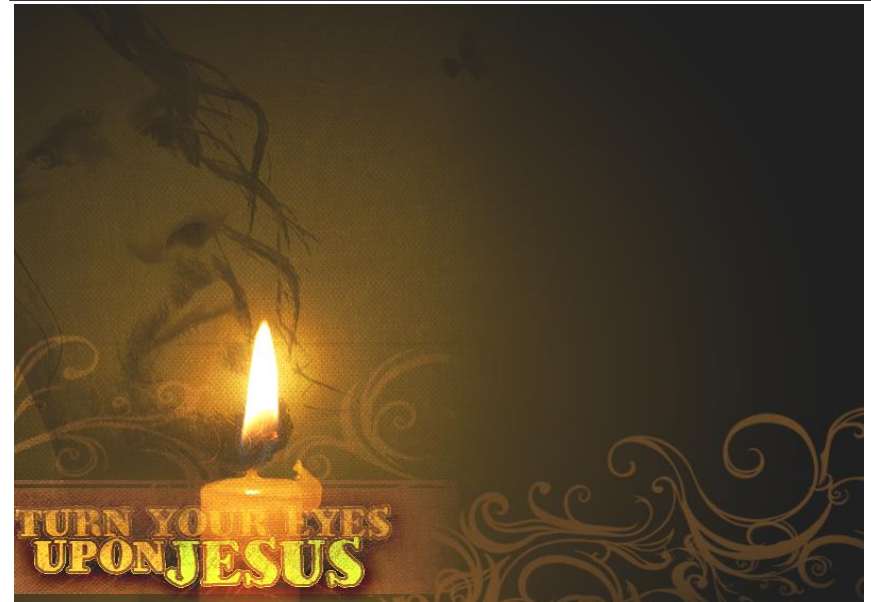
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The Cupbearer Café

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*Unifying the body of Christ in order to most glorify God and inspire
others to accept the saving and satisfying love of Jesus Christ.*

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Letter from the Editor

On behalf of all of us with Inspiration Ministries and The Cupbearer Café, we want to say thank you for remembering us in your prayers. We know the prayer of the righteous avail much, and we are blessed to be walking daily in an answered prayer. It's only by the grace of God that we are able to call ourselves children of God, having the honor to pursue after the high calling in Christ Jesus.

During devotions this morning I was inspired by the Apostle Paul's encouragement to be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. It is so easy to confuse the will of God because we usually tie it into a "Does God want me to do this or that?" idea. However, Paul gives us a few important identifiers to whether we are walking "in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects." He makes it clear that "bearing fruit in every good work, increasing in the knowledge of God, and giving thanks to the Father" are essential ingredients to understanding the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God (Col. 1:9-12).

I challenge you today, regardless of what side of the wall you are on, to understand that the will of God is not as mysterious as we often make it. Our strength, inspiration, and satisfaction are always going to rely on our Lord Jesus Christ. He commanded us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. That command is about *being* more than it is *doing*. The more we love Him, the more we increase in our knowledge of Him.

My prayer is that I can concentrate on *being* a man of God and not just *doing* things that I believe a man of God should be doing. Join me in this effort to love God with your whole heart, so that you may live a life that displays the love of Christ, a love that never fails. It is then that we will experience the fullness of what God has planned for our lives.

Reunion with a Familiar face



Kim Neely & Andrew Foster

We recently had an exciting week with a familiar face. If you've read the first newsletters, you've seen the name Kimberly Neely. Kim has been with Inspiration since its beginning. In fact, Kim worked for the prison where the Lord started unfolding this ministry. Inspiration was meeting every week and she would attend. What started as just praying for her resulted in her participation in the development of

the ministry, "I had never seen men so on fire for Christ not only wanting to change their lives, but make difference in the lives of others.

It seems like so long ago, but since that time, God has built this ministry as promised. Kim retired from DOC soon after that and followed the calling God put on her life to go to nursing school. She will be graduating in February, and we are excited to see how the Lord uses her to reach people in the name of Jesus Christ. To look back at God did on that compound still fills my heart with such joy. The best part is that the foundation laid at Quincy Annex is still being built upon by our Ambassadors for Christ in Chains, who are committed to spreading the gospel. We are so proud to be fellow workers in the cause for Christ with brothers and sisters who realize that our love for others is perfected when our goal is reaching them with the news of salvation found only in Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCING VULNERABILITY MINISTRIES

In ministry, when you explain your vision to people, they usually have somebody with whom you should meet. The idea is to share your vision for the ministry and pray about whether God is intending for us to work together to achieve a common goal. Inspiration's vision centers around the idea of unifying the efforts of our community's churches and people to most effectively minister the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sometimes that unification can be difficult. Some ideas, visions, or personalities don't work well together. Sometimes the idea of working with people is too messy. Inspiration's involvement with vulnerable people can be a bit much to take when we are trying to minister to the community as a whole, which includes our incarcerated men and women or victims of abuse, which involves a lot of tears and Kleenex.

So, imagine my surprise when I meet Clara Boggs, author, life coach, and director of Vulnerability Ministries, with her testimony of rape, rebuilding, refocus, and now ministry to women of all ages. Out of a mess God called Carla into full-time ministry, and has given her a message the Holy Spirit has been using to transform lives. Carla knows she is vulnerable and the work she does is messy, so who better to join with in ministry than me, a set-free ex-con who loves Jesus, in the effort to reach broken souls with the love of Christ.

Carla and I have a lot in common. We feel called into full-time ministry, we are broke, but we are rich in Christ. Hallelujah! It's a good team, and that is why I am thrilled to have The Cupbearer Café be a place where Inspiration and Vulnerability can join together in the effort to be obedient to the call of God. Look for more from Carla in the coming months and enjoy getting to know her.

Praise God for a place of ministry that includes men's and women's groups, live worship music, life coaching, and a Christ-centered atmosphere. Please continue to pray as we set our sights on God's desire for this ministry. We're in this together!

Be inspired,

Andrew L. Foster

Inspiration Ministries INC, Director
The Cupbearer Café, Owner



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Being Vulnerable

by Carla Boggs, Author & Life Coach



I am a writer. I love writing. I remember being in elementary and writing in my journal. I loved that journal because it had a tiny pad lock on it, and I hid the key so my mom never read what I wrote. I think that's why today I'm still so free in my writing, because I learned early how to write without the fear of others reading it. I wrote all sorts of things in that journal, my dreams, my fears, drawings, even poetry. But mostly I wrote about my wounds. I didn't know how to always talk about what I was feeling or experiencing, but when I sat down with a pen in hand and my journal...my heart opened and the words poured out. I rarely showed anyone what I wrote. The thought of someone reading my thoughts...well, I would just stop writing if I thought that was going to happen.

Fast forward years later, I'm finishing college and the professor asks the class "what are you good at?" Each person takes their turn and then, it's my turn. I just sit there. I don't know what to say because I felt I was good at nothing. As if on cue, the others in class say in unison "writing." They knew the writing assignments came easily to me and apparently they were impressed with what I would write. I broke out in sweat, my heart began to race and I blurted out "but I don't let anyone read most of what I write." After class the professor asked me to stay behind; she began to tell me how she came to be a professor and by the end of the conversation she had me convinced to start a blog online.

"Vulnerability" was created because I finally listened when I was told "you're good at this," and I finally trusted God enough to believe He'd given me a talent. Ok, to be totally honest, I also created the blog because the professor told me I could control who reads it by simply telling or not telling people about it. Control. I liked that.

Today I am a writer who shares my writing out loud for all to read. I've published a book, *Pieces of Me* and I'm working on my next one (about dating as a Christian Mom). I simply love that God has given me this talent and has given me the courage to share it with others. But please know I still get sweaty palms when I am writing, and I let myself think about the fact that others will be reading what I'm writing. It totally freaks me out to think that I cannot control who is reading my words. Satan has a way of creeping in, whispering things in my ear like "they won't like it," "you'll just be offending them," "nothing good will come from what you're writing so why are you even bothering," etc...

And yet I write anyway. Because "greater is He that is in me than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Words are powerful my friends. Don't EVER forget that. We know they are powerful because John 1 says "In the beginning was the Word. He was with God and He was God." Did you catch that? The Word!! Writing, speaking...words are powerful!! I was thrilled when Andy asked me to begin writing to you and I look forward to us getting to know one another through this newsletter and your letters that are coming in to Inspiration Ministries. Write, please. Write for yourself (it's a way of having a conversation with God), write to us, write for others. Write.

My goal in the newsletters that will be coming to you is very simple, to help you begin to see yourself as the sons and daughters of God that you ARE so that you can walk empowered by Him, not held down by the weight of who you "think" you are. What we do, what we think...that's not our identity. Our identity is in God's eyes. Own it. Hold your head high and know that circumstances, living quarters, past choices—none of that changes your identity.

I mentioned that I wrote a book. It's called *Pieces of Me* because it's excerpts from my blog which is my online journal. I thought I'd share a few pages from the book ...I look forward to your thoughts!

August 27, 2008 Fences

I titled this blog Vulnerability for one reason; it's the one word in our language that frightens me more than any other word. Even more than failure. I gave it that title because it's a word I need to overcome, a word I need to find peace in. My goal, my prayer, is that I will find healing in being vulnerable enough to write; understanding not everyone will like my words or even respect them. The truth is though, it's not really about my writing, I'm seeking the ability to be vulnerable in my friendships with those I love and I'm seeking to know how to instill healthy boundaries with everyone, even those I love.

Growing up boundaries wasn't a word used in my house. Nor was failure or vulnerability. Success, strong, endure...those are words I know. The concept of healthy boundaries was totally foreign to me and truthfully a concept I ignored for many years. God has a way of getting our attention though. I was stripped of my life as I knew and left empty handed, literally. The words I knew and depended on, success and strong and endure were words I couldn't even remember how to say because I was on the other side of the fence. But in that time I was still a Christian and through His love I began to climb the fence first standing upright on it, balancing if you will because I was unsure if I really wanted to be on the other side. The whole time God just kept talking to me, whispering, calling my name over and over. He was patient with me, gentle with me, but the whole time never letting me sit back down on the fence so I could put my feet one on each side. Soon it became too much to balance on the fence and I cried louder than I've ever cried, begging him to just pick me up...make the decision for me or let me go back to where I was. Where I was might have been painful, but I knew it. I understood it. All the while He was patient with me, gentle with me, but the whole time whispering my name. Finally I fell to the

other side of the fence, the fall was unbearable. And then...I felt His arms around my whole body. All the time He was whispering my name.

What I've learned from that fence moment was that I had to be vulnerable enough to stand and then to fall. I had to trust Him. Many times I've tested God and EVERY time He's caught me. I've also learned that mankind is not the same. Many times I've tested and MANY times I've been let down. With God vulnerability is actually safe and trusting God is actually amazing. With people it gets a little complicated and that's where boundaries comes in. Fence walking is painful and scary, but being vulnerable to let God bring you to the other side of the fence...that is strong and success and true endurance.

Friday, September 19, 2008 *Life with Trials*

I've heard the phrase be careful what you wish for...like patience. People will be quick to tell you not to pray for patience because instead of God poofing patience on you, He makes you endure trials that teach you to be more patient. I will admit I'm one of those people saying oh don't pray for patience! But I quickly follow it up with I'm definitely a more patient person now! So I guess in a way what we're saying to you is through your wanting to be more patient just know you'll feel pain first, then patience.

As I've mentioned before I'm on a quest to discover why God created me a woman and what my role is in His plan. Last night I took a bath and cried, harder than I've cried in a long time. I just let it all out...finally. I cried because today I am going to the doctor for a third procedure to be done since I've had my hysterectomy in March. I just can't seem to heal completely. Today is not a fun day to be a woman. I cried because what I really wanted last night was for my husband to hold me and pray with me. I long for a godly man to come alongside me and be my best friend in times like this. I cried because my kids are moving into the teenage years and I'm entering it alone, being Mom and Dad. I cried because I don't have any job offers coming in and Christmas is right around the corner, but I can't even pay my rent this month. I cried because I am overwhelmed with life in general.

Part of being vulnerable is allowing myself to be weak in the presence of God. Allowing myself to say I can't take another step and trust that He doesn't shake His head at me and say "How can you be so weak?" Instead He scoops me into His arms, holds me close, and says "It's ok, I am strong enough for us both."

So, I say be careful when you set out on a voyage to discover who you are because you'll endure pain first; however, I say this, "The idea of being lost and then found has such profound meaning for me. The pain I am enduring along this journey in discovering who I am is nothing in comparison to the feeling of not belonging which I felt the first part to my life. I would walk this path any day over the path I was on, including today. I love who God is molding me to be, I love being a woman, and I absolutely love being His princess."

It sure would be nice if He could just poof things on us though!

If Only...

by Abby Carnahan

If only I had a job, I would be thankful.
If only I could lose 10 pounds, I would be happy.
If only my kids weren't in so much trouble, I would be content.
If only it wasn't raining, I could see the sun.

We utter phrases like these all the time. Your "If only..." may sound entirely different depending on the season you're in, but the mentality is just the same: I can't praise/worship/honor/thank God until this situation is different. There is no sugar-coating it—that is what we're communicating to Him. You may even be negative to others. But above all, the Lord is the one being hurt by our unwillingness to step outside ourselves and simply show Him our gratitude.

Paul urges us in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 to "Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus." We were promised to have challenges and struggles in this life, but we can't forget the most important part of that promise—Jesus has overcome the world! Your "If only..." pales in comparison to what you have: victory in the Most High God!

"Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe" (Hebrews 12:28). This may look different for each of us, but it is imperative that we make the choice to show God our gratitude in both big and little things. Jesus taught the principle of integrity when he said "If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones" (Luke 16:10). I believe that same integrity can be shown in the way we honor God with our thanksgiving. He wants to bless us, but His greater desire is for us to acknowledge Him as the source of each blessing.

I challenge you to start a habit of showering God with thanks and praise for who He is and for all He has done. Start with the small things if everything else seems too heavy...but start somewhere. I am praying that your spirit will be lifted as you choose to honor the Lord with your thanksgiving!

**Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth!
Worship the Lord with gladness.
Come before him, singing with joy.
Acknowledge that the Lord is God!
He made us, and we are his.
We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
Go into his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him and praise his name.
For the Lord is good.
His unfailing love continues forever,
And his faithfulness continues to each generation.
Psalm 100**

The Crime that is Unforgivable

by John Kuhle, Calhoun CI, FL

This crime will sentence you forever to Hell. God does not want any man or woman to go to Hell, and He did not create Hell for man. In 2 Peter 3:9 it says: The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

We are all criminals

Crime began in the Garden of Eden, with Adam and Eve, the first man and woman God created. Adam and Eve disobeyed God's law against eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). And this caused spiritual death upon all of us. As a result of their disobedience, sin entered into the world, and, by sin, death. And so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned (Romans 5:12).

Today, Adam and Eve's crime has blossomed into a \$1.7 trillion problem with 2 million inmates, costing every American citizen \$4,100.00 per year. Sadly, while ninety-five percent will one day be released, three-fourths of them will return to prison within 48 months.

"But," some say, "that's them and this is us, right?" Oh, how wrong they are! God makes no distinction between criminals or their crimes. Everyone of us has sinned...and everyone who sins is breaking God's law (Romans 3:23 & 1 John 3:4). That, my friend, makes all of us criminals, facing the grim truth that:

We are all on death row

The Old Testament law of Moses consisted of 613 judgments, ordinances, and commandments. Not surprising, men and women have succeeded in breaking every last one of them. Man's laws have been patterned after God's. However, there is a marked difference. Laws governing society carry varying penalties for those who break them. Breaking any one of God's 613 laws carries the mandatory death sentence: For the wages of sin is *death*, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23).

Listen, please. If we die in our sins and face the Holy Judge of the Universe (God) as a condemned criminal, you will be sentenced with other cursed law breakers to everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).

But wait! This isn't as hopeless as it appears. God has provided a pardon for every crime ever committed except for one. Have you accepted or received the pardon God provided? Almost 2,000 years ago, the Creator left Heaven to join His creation. His mission was clear: to provide a full pardon for us undeserving criminals by giving His life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28). God, who cannot die, had to take the form of a man, incarnate in Jesus Christ (Isaiah 7: 14 & 9:6-7; Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-3) so that a body of flesh could be offered as final sacrificial payment that ultimately secured the exoneration of guilty criminals who couldn't be pardoned in any other way.

Think about it seriously. In this strange twist of divine irony, God the Judge became Christ the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Once completed and verified by His resurrection (Romans 1:4), there would be three unalterable stipulations to the pardon:

1. The pardon comes through Jesus Christ alone. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed (John 8:36). Neither is there salvation in any other: For there is no other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12).
2. Pardon is offered to all criminals freely and equally. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Romans 10:13).
3. If we fail to accept God's pardon it is worse than any other crime on the books. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him? (Hebrews 2:3). Answer? You won't! And while this pardon is offered to us freely, without charge, it cost God everything: His Only Begotten Son in what turned out to be.....

The World's Bloodiest Execution

The deity of Jesus Christ still has them talking. And why not? It is another example of what sets Christianity apart from all other religions. Though Jesus was God, he did not think equality with God as something to cling to. He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared in human form, He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on the cross (Philippians 2:6-8).

Lest we gloss over those last four words, death on a cross, we need to be reminded of just what that meant to the Lord. It was without question the bloodiest execution in world history. If you saw Mel Gibson's *Passion of the Christ*, you have an idea of what our precious Jesus went through, for Christ suffered for us in the flesh (1 Peter 4:1). He who knew no sin became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). The innocent Savior submitted Himself to unfair judgment, lying witnesses, inappropriate sentencing and harsh treatment by wicked men who hated Him. They mocked Him, spit on and kicked Him, pounded Him and thrashed Him so severely His swollen body and lacerated skin rendered Him grotesque and unrecognizable (Isaiah 50: 4-7; 52:14 and chapter 53). Jesus paid the ultimate price with His innocent blood. Now every crime in the world has been atoned for except one that if committed will surely send every person guilty of it to a Christless eternity.

My dear friend, the crime that will sentence you to Hell is not murder, burglary, fraud, substance abuse, rape, extortion, arson, embezzlement, kidnapping, sexual perversion, adultery or anything of the sort. It is something far more grimy and godless. Jesus said it is the crime of unbelief: rejecting Jesus as Savior and Lord will condemn one to Hell for evermore. "He that believeth on Him in not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God...and when He

(the Holy Spirit) is come, He will reprove (convict) the world of sin...because they *believe not on Me* (Jesus) (John 3:18 & 16:8-9).

Final Plea for a Full Pardon

Imagine your date with death was scheduled for tomorrow. You've ordered your final meal, written your last letter, and soon you will tell your family goodbye. You hear guards preparing for the last walk down the cold corridor leading to the room where you will die for your crime. Suddenly, the judge arrives with a full pardon ordering your release from prison forever. He stops at your cell, looks you in the eye, and asks if you want it. What would you say?

Please, understand. If you do nothing, you refuse the pardon. This refusal is the unforgivable crime that condemns your soul to Hell where there are no stays, no comfort,s and no more pardons – forever and ever.

Please hear the voice of the Lord Jesus now, my friend. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out (John 6:37). You can rid yourself of the one unforgivable crime by praying this simple but heartfelt prayer with me right now, receiving your full pardon from Jesus Christ. Pray with me to God for your pardon: *Heavenly Father, I come to You right now. I am a guilty sinner (criminal) that has been sentenced to death and Hell. I believe Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead to bring forgiveness and a full pardon from You for all of my crimes. Please forgive me and come into my heart now, Lord Jesus. I believe in what You did on the cross for me and I will live for You all the days of my life.*

In Your Name, Jesus. Amen! Receive your pardon!

...I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. Ezekiel 36:26

If you've ever wondered what is the actual work of grace that the Lord Jesus displays in the lives of those who are truly saved, this is it: Ezekiel is given a word from the Lord on the supernatural work a man receives to ultimately live out the statutes of God in this life. This is exactly what the Lord Jesus was explaining to Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews, when He said a man must be born again to see the Kingdom of God. See, my friends, we can't just be satisfied with bringing our same old heart and expect God to make us do good with what we give Him. We need a new, spiritually-transformed heart - one that is softened and new, with a new spirit that is directing our thoughts and conduct. The transformation takes out the stubborn self-willed heart of stone. And here is the beautiful part: If you want to know how this heart is equipped, the Lord tells us in the next verse. His Spirit will, "Cause you to walk in His statutes..." (v.27). It can be yours; just ask for it!

--Unknown

Breaking Down Walls

Unifying the Body of Christ

"I was in prison, and you came to me" Matthew 25:36c



Character is Constructed

by Dan Evans

"But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness." 1 Timothy 6:11

Whenever I think about being incarcerated, one character in the Bible represents who we should be and how we should act as men of God, and that is Joseph. Some end up on the other side of the razor wire because we deserved to put there, and there are others who have no business being where they are, but it makes no difference where you're at or why you are there. The difference is how you respond to your situation regardless of how you got there.

In Genesis chapters 39 & 40, we pick up Joseph's story as he is sold into slavery and goes to work in the house of Potiphar, a captain in Pharaoh's army. Joseph faced three crossroads. You'll face the same crossroads. How are you going to handle them? Let's see how Joseph handled it. The first crossroad is the temptation to quit. Being sold by his brothers into slavery could have caused Joseph to throw in the towel, but verse 39:2 tells me that the Lord was with Joseph, and he was successful. Joseph kept God at the forefront of his life. The flip side of this crossroad is that because of his success, Joseph could have decided, "I've arrived", and just took it easy from here on out. Good thing he didn't do that as we'll see from the next crossroad. What about you? Did someone sell you out? Want to quit and give up? It is always easier to quit than to endure. Don't let Satan defeat you! God is still in control and He has a plan! How about you praise team member, chapel clerk, and admin orderly? You think you got it made? Think you can just sit back, relax, and just skate from here? Don't do it! Strong character and faith is constructed when we refuse to quit and we choose to endure, regardless of our circumstances or situation. Keep God first and be about His business because temptation can come around any corner.

The second crossroad Joseph faced was that sin starts to look good. Joseph was entrusted with everything and Potiphar didn't worry about anything. Then Joseph has this beautiful woman take notice. Don't tell me that didn't look good. We face the same things. We are trying to live right and be Christ-like, but "something/someone" gets placed before our eyes day after day after day, just like Joseph had to endure. How do you resist looking at a female officer with lust in your heart? How do you resist looking at those magazines that you

know the guy two cells down has stashed under his bunk? Sin can look real good! That's Satan's job. Again, it goes back to where God is placed in your life. Is He first? If not, you will yield to those temptations and fall. Joseph didn't yield. That's not natural, it was supernatural. Joseph decided to choose God and possibly end up with nothing instead of rejecting God and supposedly end up with everything. What choice will you make today?

Making the right choice doesn't always give us immediate, positive results. Joseph made the right choice and got locked up for it! A similar thing happened to me. After something happened to my friends and I at work, only one was going to take the fall. Although I was indirectly involved in the situation, I was still responsible. So while my friend, Billy, was in the office explaining what happened, I went in and accepted mutual responsibility. We thought we would get fired and that would be it, but we ended up in jail for 60 days and lost 364 days of gain time for telling the truth! Joseph could relate. That takes us to the third crossroad; the temptation to lose compassion. When Joseph went to prison, he could have lost focus and made it all about him. He definitely had a right to, didn't he? He didn't do what Potiphar's wife says he did. That's not fair! I want to appeal! I'm going to write a grievance! Sound familiar? However, if keep reading, you see how Joseph reacted. He kept his eyes on the Lord. When we take our eyes off God and place them on ourselves, we lose compassion for others. Joseph was able to help two men who were incarcerated with him. He couldn't have done that if he was busy trying to file paperwork on somebody! In the midst of your mess, keep your eyes on the Lord and see the needs of others. I was able to minister to some men during my 60 days that I normally wouldn't have had that opportunity. And because of my gain time being lost, I was incarcerated longer than I anticipated, but during that extended time the Lord brought some of the greatest ministry opportunities across my path!

How is your character being constructed behind the fences? The little things do matter? God sees, and He wants to construct a masterpiece in your life. Will you allow Him to be in control, and will you keep Him first in every situation you find yourself in? Joseph did and you see the results. God will do the same in your life. Read Romans 8:35-39 and be encouraged today. Stand strong!

A Sinner's Cry

by Thomas Reardon

Heavenly Father, I place my trust in Thee;
I pray to Thy son, Jesus, to intercede for me.
For the sorrow within my heart, I cannot bear,
Jesus has said, "Give it to me, for I will share."
As I carry this prayer to your heavenly door,
I hear Jesus say, "I have it now, worry no more."
"Come to Me in prayer, let your faith be undaunted,
for the faith you have in Me, will soon be rewarded."
"And believe in this, on the day of final rest,
you will be with Me in Heaven, for you have passed the test."

INSPIRATION tracts

Writing for Inspiration Ministries

It is awesome to receive mail about what the Lord is doing in the lives of so many. God is inspiring men and women in prisons and on this side of the wall to forfeit the things of this world and pledge obedience to the One who deserves all the glory from our lives.

The most amazing part is that often our inspiration comes from the Word of God. No matter how many times we have read the Bible, it is the Holy Spirit who speaks to our hearts and teaches us to be like Christ. We pray that these tracts, testimonies, and other spiritual nuggets will inspire you as they have us.

Please feel free to write or email us as you diligently seek God's face to share your heart and what the Lord is teaching you through His Word. I guarantee the Lord will use it to inspire others.

Restoration

by Don Chaffin

God forgives
And He forgets
And so should I
To have no frets

For faith is sure
By grace divine
And in my heart
I can't repine

But humans are
The strangest sort
To take the past
With each retort

For God restores me
Every day
With peace and love
That comes my way

And live them all
That they have done
In heart and soul
Which isn't fun

No greater gift
Than restoration
To soothe my soul
From aggravation

But God restores us
One and all
With mercy great
As I recall



LORD, LORD?

by Rigdel De Lardilles
Vice President, A.C.C.

Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit of God can ever say, Jesus be

cursed! and no one can really say Jesus is Lord, except by and under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:3

Romans 10:9a talks about confessing Jesus Christ as Lord, but what does that actually mean? Let's start with what it does not mean. In Matthew 15:7-8 Jesus condemns the religious leaders of His time for hypocrisy; they honored God with their lips but their hearts were far from Him. Many say Jesus is Lord as long as nothing is expected of them that would cause them to prove it. Matthew 7:21-23 says that many will cry out, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles" but yet they too were rejected despite doing all the "right things."

How many of us today feel as if we go to church, drop a couple dollars in the collection tray, and promise a few people we'll pray for them, but our service to God stops at the church doors? We easily develop an attitude that Sundays are His, but leave Monday through Saturday to my own will.

In Luke 17:7-10 Jesus speaks about the unworthy slave; He turns and says, "and you too, when you do all things which are commanded you say, "we are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done." What does it mean to say Jesus is Lord? Lord or *Kurios* in Greek means authority, Lord, or Master. Basically it means that He runs the show. God is not interested in just being included in your plans. He wants all of you. He demands His rightful place as King of your heart, your decisions, and in every area of life. "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it and he who has lost his life for my sake will find it." **Matthew 10:37-39**

Do these sound like the words of someone who expects anything less than everything? God calls us to a radical obedience, to shake off the shackles of ordinary and follow Him who calms the storm with a word of power, He who is even gentle enough to care for even the sparrows which fall from the sky.

Do as I do, not just as I say!

by Lowell Davis, A.C.C.



Paul, being a doer of the word and not a hearer only, proved it's our actions that speak volumes. In Acts Chapter 16 we read that Timothy was half Jew and Greek, and the brothers at Lystra *spoke* well of him. Paul, wanting to take Timothy with him, ensured he was circumcised. The Jews in that area knew his father was a Greek, and being marked as one of God's people spoke louder than any words, and didn't send mixed messages to new believers. Later, Paul and Silas being beat, stripped, and thrown into prison. All this was for ridding a slave girl of a spirit of divination, which her owners were using for gain.

After being imprisoned and beaten for being obedient to their calling, Paul and Silas began praying and singing hymns to God. Their example to the other prisoners and guards had a profound affect on those individuals. An earthquake shook the walls down and the chains fell off the prisoners supernaturally, and because of Paul's example (not just what he said) no prisoners fled. When the jailer took notice, he thought the prisoners had escaped and he would be executed. So he was about to impale himself on his own sword when Paul said, "Don't harm yourself, we are *all* here." The jailer fell, trembling before Paul and Silas and then asked the *right* question, "What must I do to be saved?" They directed the jailer to Christ the Messiah; he and his whole house were saved and baptized. In the morning the magistrate told the jailer to release them knowing God had acted on their behalf. Paul refused to go out quietly as if they had done something wrong, and again his integrity spoke volumes of the intervention by his Heavenly Father. He then demanded to be released publicly just as they had been punished. His character communicated what words could not.

Brothers and sisters, words of faith without works is dead; they have no life within them. We must not allow our words and deeds to conflict, sending mixed messages. God is not the author of confusion, but the source of character and integrity. The reason the path to righteousness is so narrow is because only a limited number of individuals are able to "Talk the talk and walk the walk." Our challenge is to travel the road less traveled, as Paul did, able to say, "I have run the race and kept the faith." Words accompanied by corresponding deeds, within God's will, will never fail.

Chain Gang Mentality

by James Summers, A.C.C.



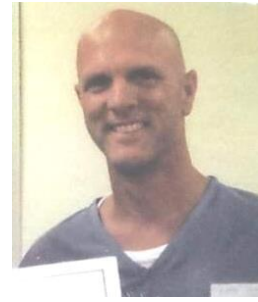
Chain - Something that binds or restrains; **Gang** - A group of people with compatible tastes or mutual interests, or a group of people who work together; **Mentality** - The set of one's mind, view, outlook, or perspective. Together these three create a **mindset** that restrains the ability to obtain a healthy perspective because it is based on a group of individuals who have conformed to a low moral standard. It breeds an attitude of entitlement that perverts the truth and distorts

one's ability to distinguish right from wrong properly. It promotes and influences immorality, and it enables an individual through a spirit of codependency!

However, that's not all it does; it also plants seeds of rebellion which overtime contributes to a reprobate mind and hardened heart, leaving a person lying in a pit hosting a pity party while slowly becoming a prisoner of his or her own mind. This mentality slowly kills the ability to use better judgment. Furthermore, it eats away the natural capacity to retain anything positive and is fueled by the negativity found in selfishness, self-centeredness, stubbornness, and pride. Often this mindset is established because of insecurities and the fear of failure! The best way to counteract this chain-gang mentality is to decrease self and allow God to increase in life.

The following statements are essential: 1) If you can find the faith to move beyond your perceived short-comings, even your worst abilities have the potential to become your greatest assets. 2) What you think determines how you feel, and how you feel determines how you act. If you can change how you think, then you can change how you feel, and as a result you can change how you act which dictates how you live. 3) The truth of this matter is that if nothing changes, then nothing changes and only the truth can and will set you free.

In closing, I would like to say that in my lifetime I have always heard the saying, "The truth hurts." Unfortunately, I have learned the hard way that this is true, but that it is only true because so often we don't stand up and face our fears and as a result we allow whatever it is that we fear to consume us and everything we stand for in the process. The reality is we don't have to stay defeated.



The Desire of His Heart

by Christopher Bachman, A.C.C.

Many of us know that Jesus came to save us from sin, but that's not the only reason. He also came so that we would give the Father the desire of His heart. If anyone knows God's desire, it would certainly be His Son. And, according to Jesus, God's desire is worship (John 4:22). God desires worship above all else, yet, we've given Him everything, but worship. And this is no accident. For our adversary, the devil, would have us do everything but worship God. To understand this, we must realize what worship is and why it's important to God.

First, worship is nothing new. Before people were created, before the earth was formed, worship was taking place. Referring to the angels, Nehemiah 9:6 says, "The heavenly host bows before you." God is so passionate about worship that He created, designed, and appointed a special angel (Lucifer) to lead all angels in worship to Him (Ezekiel 28:11-14). But seeing how much pleasure worship brought God, caused Lucifer to become envious and revolt; taking a third of the angels with him. For he had said in his heart, "I shall be like the most high" (Isa. 14:14). There's only one way Lucifer (now called Satan) could be like God, and that's to be worshiped. It's clear he wanted the angels that revolted with him to worship him because their called "his" angels (Matt. 25:41, Rev. 12:9).

But God judged Satan for his rebellion (Isaiah 14:14). I can only imagine his appeal, "I just wanted to be like You. You can't fault me for that. You can't punish me because everything You create will want to be like You." To refute Satan's claim, God created man. And look at Adam's response when he opened his eyes for the first time and stared into the face of his Glorious Creator? Worship! Then, when Satan saw the heart-stirring excitement God received from Adam and Eve's worship, he became envious again, and thought, "I would certainly be like the most High if I could get His image and likeness to worship me." He then set in motion a diabolical scheme to separate them from God (Gen. 3:1-13). It worked. Remarkably, they fell for the exact lie that Satan told himself, "God does know that on the day you eat of the tree, you shall be as gods" (Gen. 3:5). As soon as they disobeyed, they ceased worshiping God and were banished from the garden (Gen. 3:22-24). It also gives us insight as to why Satan wanted Jesus to worship him (Matthew 4:9) thinking, "Surely, if I could get the Son of God to worship me, then I'd really be like the most High."

Is the whole world in the mess it is because of worship? It certainly appears that way because each time God delivers His people, He does it for the purpose of worship. We see it with the Israelites, after God delivered them, the first command He gave them was "to not have any gods before Him, nor bow down to them" (Exodus 20:1-5). According to Jesus, this was the purpose of saving us. In Luke 19, Jesus explains His reason for coming to the earth "to seek and save

that which is lost" (vs. 10). Then, in John 4, He reveals His purpose for seeking "For the Father seeks such people as these as His worshipers" (vs. 23, Amp.).

Knowing how much pleasure worship brought His Father, of course Jesus would be a worshiper. He reveals this in His talk with a Samaritan woman, "You know not what you worship, but *we* know what *we* worship, for salvation is of the Jews" (Jn. 4:22). Did you also notice that Jesus associated worship with salvation? We may not be aware of it, but Jesus' death not only did away with the Jewish system, but also introduced a new way of worship-in Spirit!

The reason why worship is so important to God and us is because it's the way He has chosen for us to demonstrate our loyalty and allegiance to Him. In fact, our first command is the same as the one God gave the Israelites, just more to the point. When Jesus commanded us "to love God with all our heart" (Matt. 22:37), he was commanding us to worship God with all our heart. The word "love" has the same meaning as the word "worship" in (Ex. 34:14), "You shall worship no other god." They both mean to "Affectionately reverence."

Worship was no laughing matter in the early church because worship was the first visible expression of true faith, "But if all prophesy, and there in one that believes not, and he is convinced of all, and thus, the secrets of his heart made manifest and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in your midst" (1 Cor. 14:25-26). The Apostle Paul was fanatic about worship. He not only preferred to lodge with other worshipers on his journeys (Acts. 18:7), but also persuaded men to worship God through Christ. So much so, that he was persecuted for it, "The Jews made a united attack against Paul, and brought him before the Judge's bench. This man, they said, persuades men to worship God contrary to the law" (Acts. 18:13). Paul defended his worship of God, "But this I confess, I worship the God of my father's" (Acts. 24:14). Paul then gave arguably the best definition of a Christian in the Bible: "For we are the circumcision, who worship God in Spirit" (Phil. 3:3). The fruit of the Spirit we know is love, but the mark of a Christian is that he or she is a worshiper.

Now, there are things we do that God considers as acts of worship, such as praising, praying, tithing, serving, giving, etc... but nothing stirs the heart of God more than when his children prostrate themselves before Him in worship and worship Him for Who He is (Psa. 95:1-7). And knowing how important worship is to God, Satan has blinded us from this truth. Somehow he was able to blind the minds of our forefather's of the faith and kept them from passing on the legacy of prostrating ourselves before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Satan continues to do all he can to blind us from the importance of worshiping our God, but God is now removing the blinders and revealing once again His will for His people to worship Him. God requires worship because it is through worship that we recognize His supreme worth.

And because God is so passionate about worship, there are special benefits to the worshiper. Personally, I was never one who prostrated myself before God. I always thought that that was something they did in other countries. I didn't understand. But then, the Holy Spirit revealed the truth to me. As a result, I too

have become a persuader of men to worship God. Worship corrected my perception of God immediately. I'd been saved for years with Christ as my Savior, but never experienced Him as the Lord of my life. That was until I began to worship God. Worship connects us to a real relationship with the Lordship of Christ. No act of service can do that. And because Christ is now the Lord of my life, I have experienced His liberating power. I struggled for years to overcome the sin in my life. But as I continued to present myself before Him, He released a power that set me free, worship releases the anointing (of the Holy Spirit) that destroys the yokes of bondage (Isa. 10:27). Through worship we decrease and He increases! Worship also releases the wisdom of God (Psalm 111:10, Amp.). Then, there's the intimacy one share's with the Lord, "The secret (of the sweet, satisfying companionship of the Lord, have they who fear (revere and worship) Him" (Ps. 25:14, Amp). God has also prepared and preserved special things for the worshiper, "what the eye has not seen and ear not heard and has not entered into the heart of man, (all that) God has prepared (made and keeps ready) for those who will love Him (who hold Him in affectionate reverence)" (1 Corinthians 2:9, Amp.). Worship also gets God's attention when all else fails. There was a woman who's daughter was possessed. She went to Jesus saying all the right things, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on m." But he paid her no attention. But then, she came and fell before Him and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me" (Matt. 15:21-25). Jesus then talked with her and eventually healed her daughter (vv. 26-28). Jesus honored her worship!

Oh, child of God, do you not sense the longing of the Father's heart? Do you long to experience the lordship of Christ in your life? Do you want victory over the flesh? Do you desire the wisdom of God? Do you want ALL that God has prepared for you? Do you sense something lacking in your walk with God? Without worship everything will be spiritually out of sync. Do you need a miracle, a breakthrough? Will you worship God for Who He is? Is He not worthy to receive you worship? Do you want God to bless you with the desires of your heart? Of course, you do! And God will give you the desires of your heart, when you give Him "The Desire of His heart" (Psalm 37:4)!

Tratados Cortos

by Wilson Gonzalez,
Ministerio de Inspiracion

**Que mucho vivimos o que tauto realizamos en la vida, no importa tauto como para quien realmente vivimos (lee. Filipenses 1:21).

**No es necio aquel que da lo que no puede guardar para obtener lo que no puede perder (lee. Juan 3:16).

**Realiza , que solo cambiando tu manera de pensar, es lo que hara que cambies tu forma de vivir (lee. Romanos 12:2).