

He Alone...



I was born with a hard head; I lived by my own set of rules.
Greed and pride kept me believing I couldn't be had and that I didn't need God.
The truth is, I was lost and living in a self-made prison of drugs, money and sex...
A prison much stronger and more debilitating than the physical kind.
The real question isn't why I came back to prison, but rather why I wasn't dead.
I was so close to hell you could smell the smoke on my clothing.
But, God in His mercy and love snatched me away from that destiny.
Roy A. Borges

For those of us that enter into the Correctional Facilities across the state we see and witness the same thing weekly. Nothing in there ever seems to change. Every day for the inmate the same routine. Everyday the same clothes, the same people, the same Correctional Facility food and everyday for the vast majority of inmates that same feeling that their life is being wasted there. That is why as an Outreach Ministry the H.I.M. Ministry enters those Correctional Facilities to share the unconditional love of our Savior and to help them understand that not everyone has forgotten them.

*Read Psalm 31 (Most everyone but God has not forgotten them)
For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing...
But, I trust in you, O Lord; I say, "You are my God."*

For many incarcerated the great temptation is to use their obvious failures and disappointments in life to convince themselves that they really are not worth being loved. After all, what do they have at that particular moment upon first meeting them to show for themselves? But, for a person of faith the opposite is true. Their many failures may open that place in them where they have nothing to brag about but everything to be loved for. Upon accepting Jesus into their lives it can be for them like becoming a child all over again, a child who is loved simply for being, simply for smiling, simply for reaching out.

Children have a lesson that we as adults should take into consideration and learn for ourselves and that is not to be ashamed of failing, but to get up and try again. Many of us adults are so afraid, so cautious, so "Safe," and therefore so shrinking and rigid and afraid. That is why we as humans fail. That is why far too many of those sitting behind bars and concrete walls fail. Many middle-aged adults resign them to failure. Overwhelmed by shame and despair.

Consider the Dry Bones of Ezekiel's vision (*Ezekiel 37:1-14 God breathes life into a valley full of dry bones.*)

Consider the dead body of Lazarus (*John 11:1-44 Jesus, in great distress, raises his beloved friend Lazarus.*)

Realize that sometimes those we minister to in the Correctional Facilities are sometimes dry, lifeless, despairing of their faith and despairing of their actions. When the H.I.M. Ministry enters those facilities, shows the love of God and teaches His Word many of those incarcerated recognize that they are not fully alive and some have even just given up. They have given in to the despair; they have been lifeless, not life-giving. Like the *Dry Bones* in Ezekiel they lack the ability to arise and to move forward. They are brittle and if asked to bend they may even break. Like the friends and family of *Lazarus* they have no hope for new life.

Through the Alcoholic's For Christ Meetings, Bible Studies, Worship Services and One-On-One Visitations this Ministry does through the Correctional Facilities, we take in the Word of God and His Restoration Message and Power. Our prayer is that the Spirit of God would empower and fill those inmates. Our prayer is that even in their *Valley of Stone Walls* and *Dry Bones* their faith would become alive and active.

As an Outreach Ministry we know that He will breathe “*New Life*” into dead surroundings and through it all His name will be glorified. If God could breathe new life into them today He could and would change their perspective, their attitude and their actions. He can and will change their heart. They would not have to feel as though they were a failure overwhelmed by shame and by rage. They would not be in the *Valley of Stone Walls* and *Dry Bones*. We must always show to them the love of God to help them open up to the power of the Holy Spirit that they would be filled with New Life. We must help them to remember always that God will never abandon them. That He does seek out those who are lost like a Shepherd searches for the Lost Lamb. *Those incarcerated are His lost sheep. They are His lost. Help them to find the road that will lead them to the Foot of the Cross...We pray in Jesus name.*

I personally have heard on too many occasions, even from those who call themselves a Christian, that those sitting behind that *Valley of Stone Walls* and *Iron Bars* are....*Losers!* All I can say is “*Praise God*” because there were times when I felt like Jonah. I felt I was imprisoned in the belly of a large fish. I felt and lived through the huge waves that tossed me about and I had no sense of direction. He alone led me to solid ground through His mercy and His unconditional love. He alone gave me the confidence to take new steps when I had no idea where I was going. He alone gave me the confidence when I could not see the road ahead of me and I did not know for certain where it would end. He alone led me on a new road to the Foot of the Cross with His Word as the light to guide me. He alone took my hand, precious Lord and He led me on.

A loving God heard my sighs and He heard me when I prayed.....Pam Daly

