



Christian Fellowship Prison Newsletter

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Boise, ID

All my life I've said I was a religious person, went to church every now and then, prayed when times were tough... See, my parents planted that seed in me as a youth, so I guess I've always known God was there. But being honest with myself, I was never serious about the church, or God. My whole adult life I've been drowning, lost, basically committing spiritual suicide. I saw signs but I just ignored them. I put my flesh above everything, I mean EVERYTHING. See, I've been in prison for almost 7 years. I've had chances to get out, seen the board four times already, and been denied four times too. But that's no one's fault besides my own. I always thought no one can tell me anything! Nada, zero, zip! Just mad at the world and can't stay out of trouble long enough for the board to see a difference. So to be blunt, I've always picked sin over my freedom. You'd think someone who's lost it all would wake up. It's like I've been content living in this hell. It wasn't till recently that I got myself into some deep waters, I mean the type of trouble that would make a grown man cry! I messed up to the point I knew something had to change. Life has to be more than this. I dropped to my knees and put my hands to praying. I cried out to God, and he heard me! It's like He was waiting for me. This was two months ago and let me promise you

I can't deny He's not here for me! For example: I was on the phone with my mother telling her I need her to send me a Bible, but I asked her for a Fire Bible/ study Bible, something that would help me take the first steps. Well, a few days later, I got a study Bible sent to me, but not from my mom. It was from the chapel. I thought that was strange, but it got deeper. The night I got the Bible, I put my hands on it, and prayed for help, for Providence, for answers to what my purpose is! I prayed till all my tears were out, and I couldn't say anymore. Then I opened the Bible. It took me to the first chapter of Joshua. And see this hit me because my name is Joshua, and in that first chapter, God tells Joshua to be strong and have courage! Three times he says this and I knew at this point, he was talking to me! I know God has a plan for me and I know I'm going to do whatever it takes to see that plan through. My name is Joshua Ray Pedroza. I am 30 years old, and have been incarcerated almost 7 years in maximum security penitentiary. I've been an addict, a gang member, a horrible father, and son. I've lived a life of suffering. But I know that it was a blessing because through all this suffering it gave me the chance to get close with God. I know God has a plan for me and right now I know God wants me to give everything I have to learning His Word. I need to "position myself, stand still, and see the salvation of

the Lord, who is with me." (2 Chron. 20:17 NKJV) All my life, God has blessed me with a voice that people listen to. I know if I can save myself, I can also save so many more! This thought gives me passion with hope for a greater purpose. My trials have made me uniquely equipped to lead, and I know with the right help I can save lives. I want to be a positive influence that is armed with the knowledge and wisdom of the gospel. **J.P.**

Lovelady, TX

I am uncertain where to begin. I grew up attending a Catholic Church with my mother, but we were never really involved in the church. As far back as I can remember I was aware of an existence of God, but not really what or who He was. I definitely didn't know the power of God. We mostly attended Christmas and Easter mass. I knew Jesus had been alive, and that He died, that's about it. I didn't know who He was. Eventually we stopped going all together. When I was about 10 years old, my friend and I were walking home from school one day, and we were approached by someone who talked to us about and led us to Christ. I realize now that at that time, I really didn't understand what had happened. But I do realize that God had been protecting me since then. He knew what I would become, and He would use the experience for the next 40 years, that I would have, to use me

in the ministry that He is now preparing for me. Because not long after my conversion experience at 10, my friend and I found a stack of pornographic magazines, which started my lifelong struggle with porn and sexual immorality. I'll sum up this part by saying it eventually became so bad that Satan took a God-given desire, and severely twisted it. So much, that my first wife and I became swingers. Well, that didn't end well. She ended up contracting HIV and dying of AIDS in 2009. I tell you this, because I know God has been protecting me because I never contracted any STDs or such in the 40 years of my promiscuity. But that still wasn't enough for Him to get my attention. We can be so hardheaded. He had to allow something to happen that would put me in prison with a life without parole sentence. God has finally awoken me and completely has my attention. He is totally transformed me from the inside out. I mean I no longer struggle even with lustful thoughts. It's amazing the clarity I now have. I want to serve God wholeheartedly. He has revealed to me my life ministry is going to be with men who struggle with porn and sexual immorality. Especially husbands or fathers. I am trying to learn all I can about God and ministries. I don't feel like I am in prison, I feel like I am Jonah in the belly of the great fish, where God is equipping and preparing me for His call on my life. **R.B.**

Dallas, TX

Since I was a kid, I was rebellious. My mother is a praying woman, and she never stopped praying for me and my siblings. I

started my criminal behavior out stealing petty things, then graduated to burglarizing homes, which I got caught for, and got sentenced to TYC (Texas Youth Commission). After I left TYC, I started attending church with my younger sister Ashli. There God touched me. But due to entertaining things of the world, I fell off track. I started smoking weed, then graduated to selling it. Before long, I was selling crack cocaine too. Didn't get caught for selling the cocaine, but did get caught for selling weed. Which I ended up doing state time for. Inside of prison, God used the Holy Spirit to speak to me. I started reading my Bible again, which changed my mind set. I got out of prison, stayed focused for a while, then, once again, the things of the world pulled me away from the path I'm supposed to be on. Got back involved in selling drugs. It wasn't very long and I was back in prison. I did multiple TDC bids, before I realized going against God's plan for my life will only keep me in a cycle of prison appearances. So, I decided to surrender. I know that apart from the Lord, I am a mess. I am a firm believer in Jesus Christ. And I stand on the battlefield today, serving Him day by day. **B.B.**

Clifton, TN

My name is Philip. I was raised to believe in God, saying my nightly prayers, and having a fear in all of the Creator. Into my teens, my faith became a quest to determine if God existed, and, if so, why did I have to endure years of psychological and emotional abuse? At age 17, my disbelief began and quickly devolved into rebellion. I would

begin to practice literal witchcraft, satanism, and worshipping idols, eating the food offered to them. I believed in everything, but a loving God and a Savior that would die for me that I might live. At age 40, my sins/crime began to catch up to me and I would eventually serve several years incarcerated. However, just before I was locked up, I was impoverished, depressed, and cursing God, for circumstances all too familiar from my teens. I ran into a pastor at a Church-run charity, and a floodgate of emotions was released. I broke down, and accepted the fact that God was real, loved me, and went to the cross for someone, as Paul summarized, that was chief among sinners. Behind bars, I would be baptized, and spend many a waking hour in the Word. He has since given me a grace that I do not deserve, favor that I didn't merit, and a love I do not fully comprehend. I implore those reading this whose relationship with God is uncertain, if He can save someone that worshipped the evil one, He can, and WILL save you if you just accept the free gift of salvation. God is patient and infinite, but time isn't! **P.Y.**

**Send your testimony letters to:
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Prison Ministries

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