

Freedom



**Freedom,
God's Temporal Gift To Man**



**Freedom,
God's Eternal Gift To Man**

The Holy Spirit and His work in prisons.

Jesus said, “I was in prison and you
came to Me” (Matthew 25:36).

Index

Preface

My Beginning

1. The inmate escape
2. The honest young man
3. The young Pentecostal man who received Jesus
4. The Jewish atheist
5. George's experience
6. The man who was arrested 43 times
7. A Pentecostal man who turned to Satanism
8. A gang member who faced death for following Jesus
9. The inmate who read the bookmark *The Sinner's Friend*
10. The Christian bank robber
11. The young man who was angry at God
12. The Jehovah's Witness who believed on the Lord Jesus
13. The inmate who jumped straight up out of his chair
14. The police officer who was sentenced to 93 years
15. An inmate, a new believer who would not go to chapel at the State Prison
16. The sinless inmate
17. The man who asked to be delivered of a demon
18. The young man who no longer believed in Islam

19. The Christian man's prison sentence
 20. A young man being tried for murder, and the Catholic Priest
 21. The Pentecostal young man who went to a Satanist meeting
 22. The young man and the old woman
 23. The inmate who figured it out
 24. The Mormon who received the Biblical Jesus
 25. The inmate who attended a Mennonite Church
 26. The inheritance of all Christians revealed to 5 inmates
 27. The man who read a Christian booklet *Putting Feet to Faith* and got saved
 28. The Pentecostal Church which threw and caught poisonous snakes in church
 29. The Christian man who was pressured into painting the church building
 30. The preacher who was above the Holy Spirit
 31. Inmates with spiritual hunger
 32. Responsibilities of prison work
- Prologue

Preface

The time that I have spent ministering in prison, to make Jesus Christ and His truths known, (as revealed in the New Testament), has been very profitable for many of the inmates.

Within the recovered truths in the New Testament that I learned from so-called Plymouth brethren, of 150 years ago, I found a place where the Holy Spirit could open hearts. C. I. Scofield wrote in his booklet, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, that the Law of Moses, being practiced in many of the churches today, has done more damage to the church than any other thing. This starts with repression of the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures, yet passes itself off as of God.

Church people are, for the most part, unaware of the doctrine of Christ and that it is not being taught in the church today. This lack of teaching causes much damage to church people. Only by studying the truths that are found in the New Testament Scriptures, will a person find grace and truth in Jesus Christ (John 1:14).

This booklet relates to incidents that I witnessed while laboring in Christ, to the many hungry souls in prison. Some came to faith in Jesus Christ our Savior and received the gospel, others did not.

The names of all persons in this booklet have been changed. These incidents were only a few of the events that took place over the last 25 years. I made it a practice from the beginning not to ask inmates about the crime they were accused of or their religious affiliation. If I have given information on either of these topics, it is because they have volunteered it.

My Beginning

My time at the jail started with a security check on my person. When that cleared, I was taken to be fingerprinted, and then I was given instructions on jail procedures. I was also told if there was any damage to my person while inside the jail, the county would not be responsible. I signed a paper releasing the county from any responsibility for any personal injury.

The weekly session in the prison started when I went into a room with about 20 inmates, who came for gospel singing and Bible study. I first went there with another man who was leaving the Bible study after this session. He had an excellent singing voice, and used it to quiet the inmates when they became unsettled. We spent about an hour with them. This man kept the inmates in order and handled them well.

Next week when I came back to the class, it was my turn, but without this man. I had no training for

this work, nor could I sing. I had only two things to bring to these men, the gospel of Jesus Christ, and faith that the Spirit of truth would touch them, and feed their hungry hearts. I cannot say at this point (30 years later) exactly what happened, except that it went well, with much learning on my part. And there was reception to the Spirit of Jesus. All the fears of my own incompleteness went away with time, and I could see the desire of many to receive the gospel.

The most important thing I learned was that the Spirit of Jesus can bring forth fruit into His kingdom, even with weak vessels. When faith, truth and a willing heart are exercised, the Holy Spirit is free to do His work.

1. The inmate escape

After teaching this class for a period of time, I was transferred to teach in the mental health area. In this part of the prison both men and women came to the classes. Some showed real affections for the Scriptures, others did not. One night after working there for some time, an inmate asked me if he could go back to his cell. He may have said he did not feel well. I told him he could leave the class, and he left.

Only later did I find out the truth of his intentions. When he left the class, he went into the bathroom and

opened up the suspended ceiling, by removing a ceiling tile. He then climbed up above the tile, and made his way to different areas above the cell area. He was not detected so he was free to move inside the concrete box of the jail. He was up there for 1 1/2 days. After some time he figured out that he was not going anywhere. So he opened up a ceiling tile, found he was above the intake area, and dropped down. He was found by officers and put back in his cell. After that, the Bible studies were moved out into the center of a common area where officers could observe what everyone was doing.

Two or three years later in another part of the jail, an inmate spoke to me before the Bible study class started. He said, "Remember me?" I said that I was sorry, but I did not. He then told me he was the inmate who had tried to escape. He said he had been transferred to another prison in the northern part of the state. At his new location he escaped and went back east for 1 1/2 years. The authorities finally found him, and he was brought back here, where he had started. How much more time was added to his sentence I do not know.

"Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law"
(Proverbs 29:18).

2. The honest young man

One night after the Bible study, we talked about the change in a person's life when they believe on Jesus and begin to follow Him; and how the gospel of Jesus Christ brings about this change. Inmates shared their testimonies and their desire to follow Jesus, and spoke of the difficulties in this change-of-life pursuit. After listening for awhile to the others speak, one inmate said "I am going to be honest with you. When I get out of here, I am going to the bar and drink!" This, of course, invoked some discussion among the group. This young man, however, was not going to change his life style.

I think this man is like many church people today, only they are not honest enough to say why they cannot follow Jesus. Christ has told us how to follow Him.

"If any man come to Me, and shall not hate his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yea and his own life too, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:26).

3. The young Pentecostal man who received Jesus

One evening a young man came in by himself to speak with me. He seemed easy to talk with and open about his life. After a while I asked him if he was a

Christian. He said “Oh, yes,” he was a Pentecostal. He then told me that both his mother and father were Pentecostal preachers. We continued to speak and then I said to him, “I want to read something from the New Testament, and then I will ask you a question.” He said “Okay, that would be fine.” I turned to Galatians 5:19 and read the three passages that show the works of the flesh. After reading this, I said “Did you understand what this passage is saying?” He said he did. I then turned to Galatians 5:22-23 and read those passages that show the fruit of God’s Spirit in a Christian. I asked if he understood this? He said “Yes.” I then asked him, of the two different passages that I read, which passage defined his life, or the way he had lived his life. He thought about it for a moment, and then he said, “The works of the flesh is how I have been living!”

I then read verse 21 where it says “...*Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*” After this, I asked him “Do you believe now that you are a Christian?” He paused for a moment and then he said, “No, I don’t believe so.” I then asked him if he wanted to change his life to receive Jesus Christ? He said “Yes!” I showed him the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, and we read it. He then received the Lord Jesus into his spirit. After this

I told him he should tell his parents what he had done, and that he should continue to follow Him whom he had received from the word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

“The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and a good report makes the bones healthy” (Proverbs 15:30).

4. The Jewish atheist

One night a man in his 20's came into the room for the Bible study. He told me he was Jewish and that he was enrolled in the University in music classes. As we talked further, he said he had perfect pitch. It didn't take long to see the man was a very intelligent person.

I inquired if he practiced Judaism and went to the synagogue. He said no, that he did not believe in any God. He then told me that he went to a large Lutheran Church where he sang in the choir. I thought that quite strange. Then he said that the church paid him \$500 a month to come every week and sing in the middle of the choir to keep everyone on key. I asked if this was hard to do when so many may sing off key. He explained that he had no problem doing it.

I carried with me, in my satchel, a number of booklets and some sheet music. At this time I pulled

out a hymn that I could not sing properly, because of the difficult note arrangement and key changes. I gave it to him and asked him to sing it. He did so - perfectly!

We talked, and before his time was up, I gave him some booklets to read. Next week he came back again. We spoke for awhile, and I then asked him if he had read the booklets. He said that he had, and he began to be upset. I asked him what had upset him. He said, "You have stated in one of the booklets that God is over Christ, who is over man, who is over women." I told him that is what Scripture teaches for the order of man on the earth. This made him angry. He said "No one has any right to tell someone else what to do." As I listened to him vent about this, I finally said "Are you married?" He said, "No." I said, "if you were, and you had a son, and you asked him to do something, and he said, one person does not have any right to tell another person what to do; what would you say?" At this point he could not answer. He did not come to the study anymore.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9).

5. George's experience

There were about 15 to 20 inmates in the study that night and a believer named George, had come with me. George had not lived a straight life. In fact, he was about age 35 when he was just getting his schooling. He had spent a lot of time in prison; however, after he believed, he had zeal for the Lord. After he received the Lord, he started going to the prison to speak of Christ and His glory, while giving out the gospel.

On this night, half way through the study, George asked me if he could speak to the men. I said "yes," and George began telling of his time in prison and the violence he had been involved in. He told what had happened to him through the years while in prison. He related how one day he and another inmate knew they were going to have to fight another group of inmates, as they were coming after them. George and his friend went into the library and (in his terms) armored up by putting magazines under their clothing so a knife would not penetrate into their body. They then went out into the main yard where all inmates congregated. At this point, everyone in the Bible study group was intently listening. They both went to a wall and put their backs to it. George said "Sure

enough, here the other inmates came after them.” They prepared for the violent fight to come.

When their enemies got there, the fight started. They were swinging fists and the knives were flashing. Then George said that one of them got through to him and stuck him with a knife. George explained that he went down, bleeding very badly for awhile. Then he DIED! When hearing this, the men were totally quiet.

At that point George said he woke up. He realized the episode had been a dream (or a vision because it was so real to him). He was home in bed. Then the Lord spoke to him: “George, you just saw the day you would have died which is today, if you had not turned your life over to me.”

The inmates were moved and were quietly listening; no one was talking or asking questions. They had heard something greater than themselves to contemplate. George’s experience was a good testimony to the grace and work of God to avert disaster, and make a person new in Christ. All who were there were pricked in their hearts, and awed by the power of God.

“I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches” (Psalms 119:14).

6. The man who was arrested 43 times

A man who came to the Bible study was spiritually hungry. After a period of time, he confessed the Lord Jesus as his Savior, and he believed the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). We got along well, and he was good to have in the class.

After some time, he got out of jail. Later he desired to come back to the jail and do some Bible studies with the inmates. After a period of time he assisted with the studies; and he got along well with the inmates. Then he was given a study himself. In between the Bible study rooms, there were glass partitions so a person could see from one room to the other. Several times, while we were in our Bible study, an inmate would look into the room and say “Hey, that’s Dave over in the next room. What is he doing over there?” I would tell them that he was doing a Bible study with the inmates. Sometimes they would say “What! Him?”

As this happened many times, I finally said to Dave, “All the inmates in this jail know you. How many times have you been arrested? Dave said, “Oh, about 43 times,” with a smile on his face.

Dave worked full time for a large contracting and construction firm. He was very faithful all the years he gave his labor for the Lord’s service. After some

time, he took over the outreach to the forest work camp. He had a good sense of humor and related well with inmates.

“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to your word” (Psalms 119:9).

7. A Pentecostal man who turned to Satanism

One young man named Frank showed up for Bible study. His hair was cut like a Mohawk Indian and dyed an unusual color. He had a Bible with him which had Nazi swastikas drawn on it. He was quiet, and hardly said a word during the study.

In the course of time, he began to enter into the discussion more and more. He had some knowledge of the Bible and related it from time to time. As the days went on, his trial for murder was being held and went on for many weeks. During that time, his participation in the study was regular.

After many weeks of trial, Frank was found guilty of murder. The newspaper and other news sources had kept a full account every day of his trial, making top news. During that final week he had not shown up for the Bible study. After the study had ended and the inmates had returned to their cells, I was about to leave. A deputy came and asked me if I would stay because Frank wanted to talk with me. I told him I would stay and talk with Frank.

Frank came in and we talked for awhile. He then asked me if I had read the newspaper accounts of his trial. I told him I had not read them. Frank said “Then I feel I can trust you.” He told me he had been raised in a Pentecostal church, and his step father had read the Bible to him, as well as some other good books (Pilgrim’s Progress and others). He went on to tell me of his Satanic direction. He related to me how he had killed the young woman. I have left out the details. He began to weep, and I was moved by how this man had been used by Satan. I began to weep with, and for him. At that point he began to say, “I am not going to listen to them anymore!” After he had said this the second time, it was obvious who he had been listening to. So I said, “Frank, are you talking about demonic spirits?” He said, “Yes, I am” and then repeated the same thing. “I am not going to listen to them any more!” I then told him “Frank, you do not have the power to turn off these demonic spirits. You cannot get free from them unless you have in you the power of God through receiving Jesus Christ by believing the gospel.” We discussed this for some time, and then he said he would have to think about it.

After this I knew he was set to leave the jail for prison, and I would not see him again. I asked a chaplain, who was at the jail, (as I would not be there)

to talk with him before he left. This chaplain talked with him, but Frank said he would only talk to Dennis. I did not get to talk with him again, but I heard other reports that he did not believe on the Lord Jesus before he left for prison.

Frank had heard the gospel, and had not received it; and a report from years later was that he still had not received the Lord.

There was a rich young ruler that sadly rejected becoming a disciple of Jesus. (*Jesus had asked him to give away his riches to the poor and follow Him*) “*But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*” (Mark 10:22).

8. A gang member who faced death for following Jesus

A man, who was a fine looking person, came into the study area. He was handsome with clear-cut features. He had the tattoos of a gang member. As the study began, he did not hold back, but took part in a very good way. As the evening worn on, it became apparent that this man had a zeal for the Lord. And I thought, this man appears to be a valuable servant of Christ.

Later, he told us his story, how he got into street life and eventually became a member of a gang; and

why a person could not get out of the gang, except by death. Other members of the gang, as well as the gang boss, were housed in the same prison with him. Then came the day that he heard the gospel. He did not say how long he was in prison before this happened, but when he heard the gospel, he became a disciple of Jesus Christ.

He knew that this meant death for him. The other gang members became aware of his decision, and the word was out that he was to be put down, even in prison. To him it was obvious. It was only a question of time when he would be in the wrong place at the wrong time, and then they would kill him. Realizing his time was short, he decided to face the issue straight on and talk to the gang boss. The meeting was eventually set up, and the time came for him to meet with the boss. When he did, he told the gang boss of his decision to believe the gospel, to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. He also told him he would not change his mind. Then he said "I have come to you to save you the trouble of hunting me down. Go ahead and kill me!" The gang leader, upon hearing this from his former gang member, looked at him and studied him, and then said "You are free! We will not kill you. You do not have to worry." This former gang member had a power in his life, and in his testimony.

I've Found A Friend

I've found a Friend oh, such a Friend
He Loved me ere I knew Him
He drew me with the cords of love,
And thus He bound me to Him;
And round my heart still closely twine
Those ties which nought can sever
For I am His, and He is mine,
For ever and for ever.

I've found a Friend oh such a Friend
He bled, He died to save me
And not alone the gift of life,
But His own self He gave me
Nought that I have my own I call
I hold it for the Giver
My heart, my strength, my life my all,
Are His, and His for ever.

Spiritual Songs 313

9. The inmate who read the bookmark, *The Sinner's Friend*

The young man named Michael had come in to talk. After talking for a bit, I asked him if he was a Christian. He said "Yes I am!" I then asked him if someone had helped him with his decision. He said "No," I then asked, "When did you make this decision?" He told me it happened two days ago. I thought that was somewhat unusual that no one else had helped him come to his decision, so I asked, "How did that happen?" He said, "I found this bookmark in here called The Sinner's Friend, and I read it. I thought **That's me in that bookmark**. He then said, I made a decision, then and there, to follow Jesus Christ!"

The Sinner's Friend

Oh God, thy ways Jesus made clear,
But are seen by few,
Thy mercy, grace and truth
We have not desired,
Thy love, is higher
Than dark hearts could know.
Jesus, the sinner's friend.

Purposes of God are seen
In the Son of His affection.
He was despised by man,
As fury displayed its work,
The world brought forth
Judgment, its penalty full,
Upon the Lamb of God.
Jesus, the sinner's friend.

Kindly intentions of God,
Declared, in the Son of Man
False witnesses found.
He was taken to Pilate's Hall,
How low He was brought,
In judgment, the cross, and
The grave, so He could be,
Jesus, the sinner's friend

The Father's love concealed,
In the Son of God revealed,
Man's un-righteousness exposed,
In the spilling of His blood.
Love rejected, the sentenced done,
The law fulfilled.
His all was given to set us free.
Jesus, the sinner's friend.

The Father's love was strange to me,
As I listened to the Saviour's plea.
His crown was real,
From its thorns came blood and pain.
Sitting there at His feet,
Revealed my life was vain.
Jesus, the sinner's friend.

The Father's light seemed obscure,
But was revealed in Him as pure.
Saviour, friend who died for me.
My heart was black, it did not care,
Till Jesus, the Day Star shined His
Light on me, and then I could see,
Jesus, the sinner's friend.

D. Neely - Aug 2002

*Believe on the lord Jesus
and you will be saved
Acts 16:31*

I believe Jesus suffered the
Judgment of God for my sin,
While on the cross at Calvary.
He died in the condemnation
That was mine. Romans 5:6-9

I have put my hope in the lord
Jesus, through the power of
His shed blood. Acts 20:28

I believe Jesus rose from the
Dead as prophesied in Scripture.
And attested to by many
Witnesses. Psalms 16:10;
45:15; 1 Corinthians 15:4-8

My hope is in the completed
Work of the Lord Jesus alone,
As the Spirit of God creates
His new life in me.
2 Corinthians 3:17

I believe the Scriptures, which
Show me that Jesus is now my
Saviour, Advocate and Friend.
Titus 2:13; 1 John 2:1;
John 15:15

I have believed

Day Month Year

Name

*I live by the faith of the Son
of God, who loved me, and
gave Himself for me.
Galatians 2:20*

10. The Christian bank robber

The Bible study was going well that evening, with many participating. The discussion was uplifting. Then they starting sharing the difficulties of living the Christian life. This type of discussion always brought out many different ideas from the men.

On this night, when it got around to this particular man, he spoke of his professed Christian life in different terms. He did not say how long he professed to be a Christian. What he did say was that he was a Christian, and he had held up four banks. Whether or not he thought what he said sounded funny, he did not say. He went on to tell how he robbed the banks and gave some of the details.

If he was trying to be funny, the next 15 to 20 years of his life will be anything but. Depending on the judge, 15-20 would be a normal sentence. He saw himself as a “Christian bank robber!”

“When the scoffer is punished, the simple is made wise; but when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge” (Proverbs 21:11).

11. The young man who was angry at God

As we were going through the Scripture and discussing its meaning, a young man began to show disgust. After some time of listening to his anger, I

began to question him about his being upset. He let loose with how following the Christian life does not work. He had tried to do all that they told him to do, and had failed. He blamed the God of the Bible for his failure. The other inmates were all intently listening to the frustration of this young man.

I asked him if we could go through the things that did not work, one by one. He said okay. I was interested to find out what part of the Scripture had failed him, as were the other inmates.

He began by pointing out, one at a time, the things the church people had told him, and led him to do. I believe he said it was in an Evangelical Church where they were going through an evangelism program. As we looked at point one that had not worked, I asked him where that was found in the Bible. He said he did not know. I told him it was not in the Bible. With the second point he mentioned, it was the same, and all other points he brought up. Even though none of these points were in the Bible, they would make him conform to their church. I then asked him if the Holy Spirit told him to do any of these things? He said, "No." He did not understand that a Christian is to be lead by the Holy Spirit, not people and programs (Romans 8:14).

I explained to him that church people who try to conform new members to their church may have good

intentions; however, it was not God who told him to do what he failed at. I went on to explain what it means to walk in faith to what God has told us for new believers, and old believers as well. As he listened to the gospel and the simplicity found in Christ, he became very receptive. At the end of our talk, he broke down and began to cry, as the love of Christ and what Jesus said in the Scriptures was told to him. I explained a part of what Jesus said.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

This man left the class with great relief and a freedom of spirit.

“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock” (Acts 20:29).

12. The Jehovah’s Witness who believed on the Lord Jesus

The Bible study had started and inmates were giving their views about the subject when Harry, one of the inmates, said “I am a Jehovah Witness.” No one

had asked anything about the Jehovah Witnesses. He had just volunteered the information. I told him it did not make any difference, he was welcome.

We went through the study on the person of Jesus Christ, His preexistence (John 17:5), His deity in human form on this earth (John 1:1, 14), and that He came to this world to die for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2). I also explained that whoever would put their faith in Him would be saved (John 3:16), and be taken to heaven to live with the Lord forever on that day (1 Thessalonians 4:17). With discussion and verification of each one of these, through the Scripture, inmates who were believers expressed hope and joy at receiving these words from the Scripture.

When we were done, Harry, the one who was a Jehovah's Witness, said, "I want to talk to you." I told him we could do that. He said, "I receive what you have shown us from the Scriptures, and I want to receive this Jesus Christ, and follow Him." So I said to him, "This is not the same Jesus Christ that the Jehovah Witnesses believe in and follow." In my previous discussion with one of the Jehovah's Witness' teachers, he made it clear to me when he said "We Jehovah Witnesses do not follow the same Jesus Christ as you do." When I told this to Harry, he said "I know that is true." I told him if you turn your life

over to the Jesus in the Bible and follow Him, the people at Kingdom Hall (the name of their church building) and your own family (who were all Jehovah's Witness members) will dis-fellowship you. They will have no further communication with you. He said, "I know what you are saying is true; they will do that!"

I then went though the gospel with him (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). I asked him if he was willing to put his faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. He said "Yes, I am." I then asked him if he rejected the gospel of the Jehovah Witnesses (Galatians 1:6-9). He said "Yes, I do." (Jehovah Witnesses believe Michael the arch angel is their Jesus).

I also explained that he needed to be in a Christian gathering and continue to read the Scriptures, to build up his most holy faith. His time was up, and he left receiving the testimony of Jesus Christ.

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out" (John 6:37).

13. The inmate who jumped straight up out of his chair

I thought, as this thin man came into the room to talk with me, that he must be about 30 years of age.

He sat down and we were alone. He was easy to talk with, and we talked for sometime about natural things. I wondered many times, while talking with him, why is this person in prison? However, I have learned over a period of time that all the rules that I agreed to in order to work in the jail have sound reasons for being put in place.

Finally I asked this man about his fellowship with Jesus Christ. He did not know what that meant. So I asked him if he knew what the gospel of Jesus Christ is. He said he did not. I asked if he would like to hear the gospel. He said “Yes!,” so I started by quoting some Old Testament prophecies to him. Then I explained why Jesus Christ came into the world. I explained the miracles He did, how He healed the sick, made the lame to walk, made the blind to see, and even cured leprosy.

Then I went on to show how He came to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, where He had many enemies. I told him how they had Him arrested and brought before the authorities who condemned Him to be crucified, how he was taken and crucified on a wooden cross, and that He died the same day. He was then put into a tomb, and was there for three days and three nights; but on Sunday morning, He arose from among dead alive!

At this point, this man jumped straight up out of his chair! I did not understand what happened, why he had done this; it startled me. I asked why he jumped out of his chair like that. He said, “Are you telling me that a man was dead for three days and three nights, and then came back to life again?” I said, “That’s exactly what happened, as recorded in Scripture!” I told him, “The Holy Scriptures prophesied that this Jesus, the Messiah, would arise after three days; and the Messiah fulfilled that prophecy, because God raised Him from among the dead.”

He was still bewildered. I then asked if he knew why some people celebrate the Easter holiday? He stated he did not know anything about it.

As I have looked back on the incident, this man is one person who did not just hear Biblical words, but he heard the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Matthew 13:9).

14. The police officer who was sentenced to 93 years

In the business I have been involved with in the past, we would sometimes have different items that were stolen from our business property. Each time this would happen, we would call the police, and an

officer would come to our business location. Because of this, I got to know this particular officer over a period of time, because this was his area.

Sometime later, the newspaper began to report stories of this officer going on police calls, taking advantage of his authority, getting sexual favors from young women and molesting them. This would happen when he was called out regarding a problem between a man and a young woman, as well as other calls. According to reports, to get her story, he would take the woman to a place away from the man; then he would attempt to sexually molest her. As the report went, he sometimes would tell the woman he might arrest her if she did not cooperate. Later, it was found that there had been a number of women who came forth with the same story of harassment, and the need to cooperate with this officer.

After he was arrested and was awaiting trial, he came to my room where we talked, and discussed his crime and his future life. I started out by asking him if he was a Christian. He said he was. He told me he was a Pentecostal and had been part of one of the largest Pentecostal churches in town. He had a family who had been involved with that church as well. But, after some time of attending there, he slowly stopped going to that church because he was working more

overtime on his job. For whatever reason, he sent his wife to another church. With the overtime he was working, he did not have time to attend.

He went on to say that the importance of his authority had gone to his head, and his pride blinded him to what he was actually doing. Even as we talked, I was not sure that he understood that the devil had worked through his pride to destroy his life.

I put before him a course for the future repentance and faith in Christ. For his offense he was sentenced to 93 years in prison, and the city police have paid out thousands of dollars in restitutions for his crimes.

“A man’s pride will bring him low...” (Proverbs 29:23).

15. An inmate, a new believer who would not go to chapel at the state prison

It was my practice, when I had inmates who said they were Christian, to step back at these times and let the inmate exercise his faith (as the Holy Spirit led). By this practice, they would develop their faith and be helped into Christian maturity. (Sitting on pews or chairs every Sunday for 60 years does not allow the freedom of the Holy Spirit to work in the believer to exercise his faith).

This man, Steve, had responded well to the word of God and was spiritually hungry. As the class was also responsive, it was one of the classes that I drew back and allowed the Spirit to work, so the men could exercise their faith. This had worked well week after week. Steve was taking hold and using, spiritually, what he had learned; and he was speaking out with faith. In this setting, where the Holy Spirit is free to work, believers who exercise the truth in Christ develop in ways that are not possible in the church setting.

However, Steve's time was up in the jail, and he was then sent to the state prison. After many months, Steve came back to the jail; (this happens when an inmate had to face other charges, or to testify in a trial). It was good to see Steve again and talk to him. I wanted to know how he was doing and how he was progressing in his faith. In the course of our conversation, I asked about his meetings in the chapel. At first he did not answer. When I pressed him for an answer, he looked at me, and then said that he had not been going. He made a very simple statement to explain himself. He said, "Up there it is not like it is here." What did he mean? What he meant to convey is evident. Any Christian who has met with other Christians who gather unto the Lord Jesus alone,

where the Holy Spirit is in charge, without clergy, hierarchy, or leaders, is the type of Christian meeting that brings freedom of the Holy Spirit and allows believers to have freedom in their human spirit.

He was somewhat hardened from his chapel or church experience. However, he learned what the church system is, by going from a gathering where the grace of God is permitted, to a law system, where the Holy Spirit is stifled.

Steve learned by this experience, and I trust he will not waver till he again finds a meeting of believers where the Holy Spirit is in control. This spiritual reality Steve experienced will not stop the Lord of all grace from working in Steve.

“For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

16. The sinless inmate

Many times in the Bible class, the issue of sin would come up. One night, to clarify the foundation of our nature, I said, “We know we are all sinners.” All agreed except one man. He spoke up and said, “I am not a sinner!” He meant he did not have any sin in

his person. The other inmates did not accept his answer and tried to get him to be honest. However, he thought he was being honest and “true to himself.” He opened up a discussion in the group that led to inmates saying his statement was not honest, nor true. These accusations against his doctrine did not move him.

In my experience I have listened to several church people tell me they were sinless, without sin. No amount of Scriptural truths were able to move them because their doctrine is that God wants only sinless people, and they have arrived. Some said they were holy sanctified, others said they did not do as other people did.

This man had a different doctrine to come to his own conclusion that he was without sin. His doctrine was that he had examined himself and according to his own standards, he had not and did not, live a sinful life. He said he smoked pot, and did other things that Scripture calls sin. When he was confronted with the Biblical definition of sin, he did not accept it. I thought at the time that when some church people are confronted with the definition of sin in themselves, their lives, or church practices, they have the same doctrine as this man and for the most part cannot be

moved by the doctrine of Christ (New Testament truth).

With this man, the discussion went on for some time. He did not change his mind, but he may have been softened.

“All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes...Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established” (Proverbs 16:2-3).

17. The man who asked to be delivered of a demon

In this study group was a man named Kevin who was having problems. He did not say what they were exactly, but he was open to talk and seemed to want to be free. He had not been to a church for quite sometime. What he was back in jail for I did not know.

Kevin said he was a believer. Toward the end of the study he asked if I would do something for him. I said, “Yes, if I can.” He then said he thought he had a demon inside of him. (Scripture does not teach that a Christian can be indwelt by a demon, but a believer can give place in his life to the devil and be harassed and suffer many bad consequences by spirits). He asked if I would cast it out.

Speaking with Kevin reminded me of a conversation I had previously had with a man named

Phil, in an assembly meeting in Scio, Oregon. Phil talked to me about his experiences. At the end of our conversation he told me he believed he had demons inside his body. He had been with women in Asia and thought he received them there. He did not ask for any help. As I got to know him better, he appeared to have a religious spirit. After leaving Oregon, he went back to Alaska where he lived with three men. After being there a short while, he became upset with them, and killed all three with a hammer.

Kevin and I spoke more about his past activities. At this point I said we will pray. I gently touched him and asked the Lord Jesus to deliver this man from any spirits who might be troubling him. When I finished He said, "I felt it!" He said he had felt the demon spirits leave him. I talked further with him about the pathway of faith and his need to put away the spirit of darkness that had led him astray from following the voice of the Chief Shepherd.

How good it is to have a Shepherd who cares for His own, even if we have wandered away.

Come, Thou Fount Of Every Blessing

Come, Thou fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy never ceasing
Call for cease - less songs of praise

Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wandering from the way of God:
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrain'd to be!
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to grieve the One I love:
Yet Thou, Lord, hast deigned to seal it
With Thy Spirit from above

Rescued thus from sin and danger,
Purchased by the Saviour's blood,
May I walk on earth a stranger,
As a son and heir of God.

Spiritual Songs 354

18. The young man who no longer believed in Islam

This young man named Sorek was different from the time he came to the first study. He was not unruly, but he spoke up and made himself known. He came to the study for a number of weeks. When he heard something he thought was wrong, he did not hold back from saying so. Sorek told me he had been to the Mosque and they had taught him Islam. He made it clear that was what he believed. He shared what he learned with his mother, and it appeared she also believed in Islam.

We were studying the various Old Testament Scriptures to see the prophecies of the Messiah, and their fulfillment: when He would be born in Israel, where He would be born, who His generational father would have been, why He would come to earth and who He would be. With each Scripture's fulfillment, the New Testament revealed that Jesus was the Messiah because He fulfilled all of the prophecies. When it came to Jesus being the Son of God (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:26-38) and God Himself (Micah 5:2; John 1:1), as Scripture shows, Sorek spoke up and said, "Jesus is not God!" He began to expound on his statement and say he did not believe this, and it could not be true. The resistance to Scripture in him was

strong, but we were able to have communication. Everything we talked about, he shared with his mother.

Over the next few weeks, we continued to look at the Scriptures concerning the Messiah. Sometimes he joined in and sometimes he got very quiet. As these studies on Messiah went on, he was easier to communicate with. Finally, several weeks after the study on the Messiah, I gave him two booklets to take back to his cell and study, which he did. One was *Jesus is God*, author unknown, and *Jesus is Jehovah* by C. H. Brown.

I did not see Sorek for some time; then he was back in the study group. He was not one to hold back, so he spoke up. He told me he had studied the booklets and then gave them to his mother to read. His next statement was, "I now believe Jesus is God." He said he looked up the Scriptures and was convinced. He talked with his mother about the decision he had come to. From what Sorek said, I believe his mother also came to the same decision.

The conclusion of our time together is that the word of God has power to convert the soul of any honest seeker.

Jesus asked His disciples, "*Who do men say that I, the son of Man, am?*" So they said, "*Some say*

John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the Prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar- Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 16:13-17).

19. The Christian man’s prison sentence

One evening, with about 15 or more inmates in the study, there was good attention by everyone that was there. About half way through, one of the inmates (we’ll call him Larry) asked if he could speak to the group because he had something he would like all to hear. He had been a quiet person, so I thought he had something worthwhile to say.

He started out by telling us that he had been raised in a Christian family, and that their values were very good. I understood that their family was close to one another. Also it was clear that he knew the right pathway in life for a Christian.

He told us that somewhere along in his young life, he started to take the wrong path. He did not say what pathway it was, except that it was a life of flesh and sin. He had followed on this pathway until he was

caught in a crime or crimes. At that point, like the “Prodigal Son” (Luke 15:11-32), he began to take account of his life, which was apart from God, family and on a road to nowhere. He told, without details, how low he was and at that state he called on the name of the Lord in repentance. At that time, the Lord spoke to him and told him he was going to be put in prison, and for how long.

He told us his fellowship with his family was then renewed and his fellowship with Christ had also been renewed. He then related what happened when he went to court. He was with his lawyer in court, and his parents and family were sitting right behind him. His plea was “guilty,” and the only thing left for the judge to do was to talk to this man and sentence him.

When the sentence time came, his lawyer told him to stand with him and face the judge. He said, “My lawyer stood, and I stood beside him.” The judge then addressed him, spoke to him, and then came the sentence. The judge said, “I am going to sentence you to 15 years in the state penitentiary.”

He said, “I turned to my lawyer and said, that is the wrong amount of time for my sentence.” (The Lord had told him a different number of years). As the judge was still talking, my lawyer told me to be quiet and listen. I did not stay quiet, but continued to tell

my lawyer that was not the right length of time. Then the judge looked at his papers again and said, “I made a mistake, your sentence is not 15 years, but 10 years.” Larry said to the lawyer as they were still standing, facing the judge, “This is still the wrong amount of time.” I began to speak louder to my lawyer, again saying that this still was the wrong amount of time. My lawyer was upset with me and told me to shut up but I did not. Again the judge looked at his papers and said, “This is still not right. Your sentence is 7 ½ years.” Then I shut up, for that is exactly the amount of time the Lord told me I would get in prison. I turned around to my family and tears were running down my cheeks. My family and I rejoiced together. Everyone was moved by his experiential story.

“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ our Lord”
(Romans 8:38-39).

20. A young man being tried for murder, and the Catholic Priest

This man, called John, had been in the newspaper for some time when he came to our study group. He

originally had a Roman Catholic priest coming to see him in jail. However, the District Attorney's office had been, unbeknownst to John or the priest, taping their conversations. They were trying to get information on John for crimes he was accused of. This was discovered by the priest, and it was reported to the Vatican in Rome. This caused much trouble for the jail authorities and the D. A.'s office.

About this time, John began coming to our study group. He was receptive and was always there for the study after that. His murder trial was going on at this time at the courthouse. In the beginning of his coming, I began to show him the gospel through the doctrine of the grace of God. I showed him that he could be saved by the work of Christ and the spilling of His blood on the cross at Calvary. He finally said, "They would not agree with what you are teaching." I said, "Who are you referring to?" "The Vatican and the Roman Priest," he replied. I said to him "You need to study Scripture for yourself." This he began to do, and in fact, as time went on, he studied diligently and confessed Jesus as his Savior. Because of his studies, he believed in the "Gospel of the grace of God." He no longer thought that works were a part of his salvation.

His trial was winding down at the Court House,

and at the end of it, he was convicted of murder. He did not show remorse, and that I remember, troubled me while working with him. He certainly applied himself to study and knew the Bible well before he was sent to the state penitentiary. I was always troubled by his Biblical knowledge, wondering whether it was of the heart, as well as the head.

So that your trust may be in the Lord, I have instructed you today, even you. ... of counsels and knowledge, that I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth...” (Proverbs 22:19-21).

21. The Pentecostal young man who went to a Satanist meeting

One evening the inmates were sharing their experiences. Each one was taking time to say what his spiritual experience had been. When it came around to William, he told us he was Pentecostal. He explained that his girl friend was a Satanist. He apparently liked her a lot. One day she invited him to go to her Satanist meeting. William accepted her invitation.

The meeting was somewhere in lower California, close to the ocean. What happened in the beginning of their meeting he did not describe, only what happened at the close of the meeting. He saw a table

in the center of the room, it was used for their sacrifices to Satan. There a young woman went to the table and took off all her clothes. He did not elaborate on the rituals that led up to this, or what happened afterward. William only stuck to the actual facts as they happened before him. When everything was set, the young woman got up on the table naked and laid on her back. Sometime after this, a man (I presume) came to the table with a knife. There may have been a prayer ritual at this point. Again, he did not go into much detail. William then said that the man plunged the knife into her body right below her breast bone and pulled it down to her pelvic. Everyone in our Bible Study was listening intently. The question was asked at this point, “What happened to the young woman?” He said she laid there until she died (apparently with no emotion). Then her body was taken out in a field where a hole had been dug, and they buried her.

I asked William if he ever went back to the Satanist meeting. He said “No,” that he liked the Pentecostal church better than the Satanist meeting.

I have heard many stories from inmates, and some of them were supernatural. I have learned not to doubt these experiences because the kingdom of darkness is supernatural, just as the kingdom of God is spiritual.

William told the story with little emotion and did not show fear at being at the Satanic meeting. People who spend time around demonic spirits, and receive them, show no fear of them. In fact they are influenced by them in ways they are not even aware.

“Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Timothy 4:1).

22. The young man and the old woman

After a study one evening, all the inmates had gone back to their cells. I was getting ready to leave when a deputy guard came in and asked me if I would stay longer and talk to an inmate. I told him I would. The deputy then brought in a young man of about 19 or 20, and he sat down. I will call him Charlie.

As I began to talk with this man, it was clear that he was experiencing high anxiety. He looked very depressed and downcast. I spoke with him for a little while to see if he would calm down, but he did not; so I began to ask him about his life. He then told me his story.

He had grown up in a small town 40 miles away from his present location. There was an old woman who I understood had known him since he was a small

boy. When he was older, he would sometimes work for her, and she would pay him for it. They were friends. She obviously liked him and he got spending money by working for her.

Then one day he decided to change the relationship. In fact, he killed her. He did this by taking a hammer and striking her head until she was dead. This happened in her home where she lived alone. He then took her money and her car keys and left in her car. The old woman was left on the floor of her home. He made no attempt to move her body.

He then picked up his girl friend and drove around for two or three days, doing whatever they wanted. After two or three days, a family member of the old woman came to her house and discovered her body. It did not take long for the police to figure out who did this, and they found this man still driving around in her car. The family was in disbelief that this woman's friend had done this.

Charlie had made a plea bargain with the D. A.'s office, and he would not get the death penalty but he would never get out of prison. As I listened to him, his anxiety had not subsided, but increased, for the next day he was to be sentenced.

All of the woman's family would be there to face him. He was totally aware of what he had done, and

now he would face everyone who condemned him. There was no way out for him.

In looking at him in his highly emotional state, I said, “So you are condemned of God, and you are condemned of all men. He said, “Yes,” and he was severely depressed. I said let me tell you about another man who was condemned of God and condemned of man. I then began to tell how Jesus had come into this world to die for the evil and sins of us all; how God had put every evil deed that man has ever done, on Jesus Christ as He was nailed to the cross. I went on to show how men and authorities had condemned Him to death on a cross, for us. I explained how God loved all men, including him. “Jesus was without sin Himself but took your sin upon Himself, and paid the penalty for your sin against God.” I went over the gospel with him until I was sure he understood. I then asked him if he wanted to receive total forgiveness through the blood of Christ being spilled for him. He said, “Yes!” He received the gospel, and when he did, a thousand pounds was lifted off of his person.

We continued to talk about the love of God and the new life in Christ. When he left the room, the depression was gone and his countenance was lifted up. He now had a joy and a hope.

“And one of the criminals hung on the cross next to Jesus and said, “And we indeed justly, (condemned) for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man (Jesus) has done nothing wrong.” Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:39-43).

23. The inmate who figured it out

In the last few years of this labor in Christ, I had written many Christian booklets. When the Bible study was over, I would leave these booklets (which had a lot of Scriptures in them) with the inmates so they could study the subject of the evening, or other New Testament subjects. One middle-aged man who had been in the study for sometime, began to be very helpful in keeping the class, chairs, and booklets in order. This man, Bob, had read Christian books by good authors (John Piper), and had benefited from them.

As the weeks went by, Bob became more and more involved. He was a good help. He was facing a charge that would put him in prison for a long time. He spoke out in the study group and helped other inmates receive the truths in Scripture.

One evening I came in and was getting ready for class when Bob came in with a sack of booklets that had been handed out to inmates over past weeks, or months. He said he had gone to the different rooms and gathered these up. The clean-up trustees were going to throw them away because the inmates had read them, but they were still good and usable. I took them and over time, gave them out again.

His time was now short with us, as he was about to be sentenced. He asked me if I would speak to the judge for him. I said I would. When I went to the court room and waited to speak to the judge, another man was there for the same reason. He explained to me how much help Bob had been to him in his walk of faith. Bob had helped him make the decision to get back into Christian fellowship, and he was extremely grateful. When the time was given, this man and I both spoke to the judge on Bob's behalf.

Before Bob left for his prison sentence, he came to me and said "I know why you chaplains come into the jail and do what you do!" He said, "It's the joy, it's the joy that brings you here, and keeps bringing you back."

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat

down at the right hand of the throne of God”
(Hebrews 12:2).

24. The Mormon who received the Biblical Jesus

The class was about to start, and all eight men sat down. There was some talk among them about Christ. At that point, two of the men announced they were Mormons. Few paid any attention, or seemed to care.

I told the class we were going to do a study on Jesus the Christ from Nazareth. As the class got started, we began in the Old Testament on exactly who the prophecies predicted the Christ would be. We started the study in Genesis 3:15, showing He would come to destroy Satan; then Genesis 22:18, where we are shown that he would come from the genealogy of Abraham. Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-34 would show He would be a king through the lineage of Jacob (Israel) (Numbers 24:17; John 18:37); and that His throne would be forever (2 Samuel 7:15-17; John 18:36) and He would be a prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-18; John 4:25-26). The Christ would be the son of David and a Priest forever (Psalms 110: 1-4; Zachariah 6:12-13; Hebrews 8:1; 9:11-12).

We read how the Christ would be born of a virgin (who was impregnated by the Spirit of God (Luke 1:34-35) from the lineage of the house of King David (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-38). We also read how the servant of Jehovah would be a sacrificial lamb for the sins of mankind (Isaiah 52:13-15; chapter 53; John 1:29; 1 John 2:2). He would be killed by crucifixion (Psalms 22:1-20; Isaiah 52:12-15; chapter 53) and put in the grave, then rise from the dead on the third day (Psalms 16:9-10; 49:15; 71:20; Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20).

After going through these Scriptures, many could see Jesus Christ in truth. This was a fruitful time for all who came and had an ear to hear. After some discussion, the deputy called the inmates back to their cells. However, one of the two Mormon men did not go. Instead he asked me, "How do you become a Christian?" I said to him, "Do you believe in this Jesus Christ that we have studied in the Old Testament tonight?" He said, "Yes, I do!" I said, "Do you believe He died on the cross for your sins?" He said "Yes, I do." "Do you believe He went into the grave, died and rose again on the third day?" He said, "Yes, I do!" I told him that the Mormons teach that the Mormon Jesus is Satan's spiritual brother (World Magazine carried a story on the Mormon Church. In it

was an interview with the former Mormon president, Gordon B. Hinckley, who was quoted as saying “The traditional Christ of other churches is not the Christ of whom I speak.” The Mormon Christ and the churches’ Christ is not the same Christ). I said, “Do you reject the Mormon Jesus?” He said, “Yes I do!” “Do you reject Joseph Smith and all his doctrines?” “Yes, I do!” “And do you reject the Mormon Church and their doctrines?” He said, “Yes, I do.”

I then told Him if you follow the Jesus in the Scriptures, you are and will be saved. The hunger in him wanted to feast on the word of God more, but the deputy was calling him. I gave some booklets to him and told him to read them and to study the Scriptures. He then left for his cell.

Peter Cartwright, the well-known Christian Evangelist, wrote in his autobiography, as recorded in the Christian History Magazine #45, about an encounter he had with the Mormon Joseph Smith. This encounter occurred close to the mid 1800s at a camp meeting that Peter Cartwright was holding. Joseph Smith came to this meeting, and Peter Cartwright’s auto biography recorded his conversation with Joseph Smith. “My friend, Joe Smith, became very restless before I got done with my narrative (teaching). When I closed, his wrath boiled over, and

he cursed me in the name of his God and said, "I will show you, Sir, that I will raise up a government in these United States which will overturn the present government, and I will raise up a new religion that will overturn every other form of religion in this country!" "Yes," said I. "Uncle Joe, but my Bible tells me that the bloody and deceitful man shall not live out half his days. I expect the Lord will send the devil after you one of these days and take you out of the way." Then Peter told Joe to stop his stealing and his whoredoms!

Toward the end of his autobiography, Peter Cartwright wrote regarding Joseph Smith "...in a few years after this, an outraged and deeply injured people took the law into their own hands and killed him (Joseph) , and drove the Mormons out of the state of Illinois."

25. The inmate who attended a Mennonite Church

We had many inmates for the study that evening, and they were interested in the subject being discussed. Before we had gone far, a young man wanted to talk about his experience while attending a Mennonite meeting. I told him he was free to do that. He said someone had invited him to attend the meeting, and so he did.

He started by saying that the brothers sat on one side and the sisters on the other side of their church. This intrigued the other inmates and provoked some discussion. He described the a-cappella singing, and the beauty of singing without any instruments. He had the attention of the entire class; for few, if any, had ever attended a fellowship of Christians like this. He went on to say how orderly everything was. He obviously had found great pleasure in the fact he had been invited to go to the meeting.

Then he described that the children there were in order in a way he may never have seen before. Another thing he described was how the men showed leadership that was different than in other churches. Then he talked about how the sisters were veiled; and this too, he had never seen. None of the women wore men's clothes, no pants or Levis, only modest dresses. The women's Christian order really intrigued him, as well as the inmates listening. They asked many questions about this experience he had, and they seemed to have greatly enjoyed hearing of his experience.

As things quieted down, we looked up the Scriptures to show what God had ordained for the man's place: which is God first, then Christ, then man and then woman (1 Corinthians 11:3). The women's

place is for women to be veiled when praying or prophesying (1 Corinthians 11:4-6), and to dress modestly (1 Timothy 2:9-10). We also discussed how the children are to obey their parents. Many of the inmates expressed desire for a meeting like this.

There is a reason why Jesus had a good following among the people of low and humble estate; they listened to him and believed what He taught them! The religious people of Jesus' day paid little attention to Him. Likewise, the church today pays little attention to what Christ taught us through His apostles (the apostles' doctrine).

“For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones (Isaiah 57:15).

26. The inheritance of all Christians revealed to five inmates

There were five inmates who had come to the study. We had talked a little before starting the meeting. Then as we started, I asked them a question. “How many of you have believed on the Lord Jesus?” All five said they were Christians. I began explaining

that poverty in this world comes from lack of money. The same is true in the kingdom of Christ (2 Corinthians 8:9; Colossians 1:12). The believer, not understanding and following the riches of his inheritance in Christ, lives in spiritual poverty. I said, we will embark on a study to show the riches that the believer possesses.

We started with 1 Peter 2:5, 9, and The Revelation chapter 1:6, which shows that every Christian is a priest unto God, **a royal priesthood**. The priesthood for Israel was practiced primarily in the tabernacle, and later in the temple. Today, God's temple on the earth is the church, which is made up of every believer who has come to faith in Jesus Christ the Lord (Ephesians 2:21). The priests came out of the tribe of Levi. They were responsible for worship, sacrifices, washings, order in the temple, and other activities. With the Christian, it is the same in the church. In Scripture the New Testament **worship** is not one person leading church people, but each believer, led by the Holy Spirit, bringing what he has to give in **worship**, exercising his priesthood. As the Scripture declares "*...whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, a teaching, a tongue, a revelation, an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification*" (1 Corinthians 14:26). Most church systems function

under the Law of Moses, which is the clergy/laity system.

New Testament **worship** is the Holy Spirit leading the **worship** in the remembrance of Jesus, in giving of His body and His blood. The men had never heard of this God-given Scriptural freedom in His temple (the church). We discussed the practical life of assembling as a brotherhood of priests. I explained the Biblical pattern of gathering together. The joy of Christ expressed in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, prayers and **worship** (breaking of bread in remembering Jesus in His death) is explained in Acts 2:42 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

I went on to explain from Scripture that every Christian has been gifted by God and this gift is to be used in the church (Romans 12:6-8). The practice of the believer, using his gift, given by the Holy Spirit, is to be orderly and used to bring honor and glory to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Nicolaitan system (clergy/laity) (The Revelation 2:6, 15), is nothing more than the Law of Moses. I further explained that this is seen most clearly in one man, or several, ruling over the laity. Jesus instructed his apostles and the church against practicing this elevation of man (Matthew 23:8-12 and seen as violated in 3 John 9-10).

After discussing this, we went to 1 Corinthians, chapters 1-4. These chapters reveal the Holy Spirit's prohibition of sectarianism, independence, and gathering to carnality (to men) rather than Christ. We looked at these four chapters in light of the Biblical truth of the one body in Christ. We compared Christ, as followed through Scripture, with the leading of the Holy Spirit versus the law of Moses which was fulfilled by Jesus (Romans 10:4). Carnality (1 Corinthians 3:1-4) and sectarianism (1 Corinthians 1:10-15) complete the comparison. We went on to look at the one body that every Christian has been baptized into (1 Corinthians 12:13). We then showed that the works of carnality have no place in the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21). We discussed how the church is spiritual in nature, but its physical form is Scriptural and spiritual. We then looked up in Scripture the God given assembly order and instructions.

This study lasted for 1 ½ to 2 hours. After that time the questions had been answered and the men had become aware of what many around the world had been taught, and practiced for 200 years, gathering only to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The class was about finished when the man on my right began to weep out loud. This puzzled me and

another inmate said “I never would have left the church if I had practiced what we have been shown tonight.” The other men showed the same sentiments.

I said to them that the Holy Spirit is above to lead them if they will seek the Lord, for He spoke “...cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength...” (Jeremiah 17:5).

With that, I encouraged them to seek out those who meet unto the Lord Jesus alone, and who do not seek the carnality of man’s religion.

“For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking (carnality), but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17).

27. The man who read a Christian booklet *Putting Feet to Faith* and got saved

This story was told to me by a brother named Dan who attends a local church. He said a young man, Wilber, had come to this church after being released from the local jail. Wilber told people he had a friend in jail who told him, “You need to read this booklet, *Putting Feet to Faith*.”

Wilber read the booklet and the Holy Spirit touched his spirit, and he believed on the Lord Jesus. He was then talking to groups of people in the church on how he got saved, and about his new life in Christ.

But Wilber remembered the booklet that the Lord used to bring him to Himself, and he wanted that booklet for his own. The jail does not allow the booklets to leave with inmates upon their exit.

Dan, my friend, then called and asked if I had the booklet, *Putting Feet to Faith*. Dan had a printing shop and had printed many copies of the booklet for me. I said, "Yes, I do." He then asked if I had one in a red cover. I looked, and yes I did. He come over and got it, and the next week he gave it to Wilber. Dan said Wilber had much appreciation for finally getting the booklet, as he never expected to see it again. He said Wilber was a very zealous believer and an outgoing testimony of Jesus.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

28. The Pentecostal Church which threw and caught poisonous snakes in Church

One time before the Bible Study had started; the inmates were talking about their own church experiences. When it got to the turn of one man, he said he was a Pentecostal. Because of his accent, I asked if he was from the southeast. He said he was. I then asked him if the people in his church played

catch with poisonous snakes. He said, “Yes, they did.” (This has been a standard practice with Pentecostal churches in the southeast part of the country. In fact almost all states in the southeast have made laws prohibiting this practice, except West Virginia). I then asked him if he also practiced throwing the snakes back and forth. He said that he did not enter into that practice but he watched it being practiced in his church.

I then explained to him that Pentecostals, doing this, are not of God and they get snake bites, and some of the people die from it.

When Jesus was leaving this earth, he said to His apostles, “*They will take up serpents and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them...*” (Mark 16:18).

We understand that these sign gifts are primarily for the Apostolic Age. This was to establish the authority of the gospel through the apostles. They did many signs and wonders. However, the Holy Spirit’s power is no less now than at the beginning. However, to tempt the Lord is evil, and this Pentecostal practice is most certainly evil.

Jesus said to the devil, “It is written again, *You shall not tempt the Lord your God*” (Matthew 4:7).

29. The Christian man who was pressured into painting the church building

During the study, there had been a lot of participation by the inmates. As various ones shared their experiences, one man named Harry wanted to tell his story. He said that he had not led a very good life. In fact, he had been in jail before. He explained that some time earlier he had gone to work for a painting contractor. This contractor, which would be his boss, said he was a Christian. After some time, his boss talked to him about Christianity. He listened to what his boss told him about becoming a Christian, and he decided to go that way in his life. His boss attended a small country church.

Harry indicated that he liked what was happening to his life, and joined in with the activities of the church. After a while, his boss began to talk to him about his part in following the Christian life, and his responsibilities in the church. It went something like this, “We have done a lot for you here. It is only right and fair for you to do something for the church.” He listened to his boss, and did not disagree. So his boss said, “I think it is only right that you paint the church building without pay.” He probably thought that was a big job, but he agreed to do it.

So he started on the work and found it to be a big

job by himself. However, he continued on with it till he was done. He did not say how long it took, but he did say that he was getting upset with the church's decision to put this on him, and that he had to finish the job by himself.

He finished the job, and he was worn out. He decided he was finished with the church as well. Although he did not say so, it appeared that this heavy burden put on him was enough to crush the fire and light in a weak and new believer. I spoke with him about this. The people he trusted were hard taskmasters and he may have thought this represented the gospel.

How different is God's way from man's religious ways. For God said of Himself:

"A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth (Isaiah 42:3).

30. The preacher who was above the Holy Spirit

I first met this man, Jim, when he came to work at our company. He was a service man with experience in the position he was hired for. He worked for the business for three years. We had other members of his family that worked for our company as well; however, they highly questioned his honesty. After 3 years he

quit his job with our company and started his own business.

Jim stated that he was a Pentecostal preacher. He could speak with his hands for the deaf and was the preacher at the deaf church, and also preached in at least one other church.

The men came in for the study that evening, and I was somewhat surprised to see Jim among them. I found out later that he had been accused of molesting children. He took part in the study and did not seem at all downtrodden. As I learned in future studies, he did not show any remorse. Inmates accused of molesting children do not want the other inmates to know why they are in custody. I did not bring up or discuss with him his accused crimes (Inmates who molest children are in physical danger from other inmates).

I knew enough from his family members and others that Jim was not an honest man (another one of his family members said he molested both of his own children). Jim's trial ended and the evidence brought a conviction. It was reported that the judge, after hearing the evidence, said he believed he had molested a very high number of children. The judge sentenced him to 10 years in prison. I did not see any change of heart in Jim while he was in custody.

Jesus answered, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”* (John 3:3).

31. Inmates with spiritual hunger

Unlike most church people, the inmates, after a Bible study, would ask sometimes in a vehement way, “Will you please come back next week?” Anyone who labors in Christ, in the faith, wants to hear such words. A hungry soul for the person of Jesus Christ is almost a rare thing in the church of this day. There may be many people in the church who do not like the evil in the professing church, but do little about it. If they had hunger at one time for truths in Christ, the complacency overcomes it.

Jesus said to the Laodicean church, *“I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see”* (The Revelation 3:18).

“He that has an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches” (The Revelation 3: 22).

32. Responsibilities of prison work

All people who work in the prison facilities are schooled in many aspects of what could happen while working there. This training is mandatory. On a certain day all workers are required to sit in a room while the different authorities teach what could affect anyone working in the prison. Health could be a major problem for anyone inside the prison, workers or inmates. The various things that relate to this are taught to all workers, as well as the laws that govern the rights of the inmates.

On this day the last speaker to come into the room was the prison psychiatrist. She related the aspects of her field of practice and how this related to the inmates and all who work in the prison. At the end of her talk she finished by saying, “You who come to give the knowledge of God (Christ) to the inmates are able to help these inmates and to make a change in their life.” She went on to say that the medical side cannot help these inmates in the way that what you have to offer them can.

Prologue

Because of the open hearts in many inmates to learn and receive the truths in Christ, and the lack of my study time with them to open up these truths, I began writing

booklets on New Testament truths. I have seen a little of what Jesus saw in completeness; that is, that the fields are white unto harvest (John 4:35). These booklets were left with the inmates every week after the study time. Most of these booklets have many Scriptures in them, so the reader is able to pick up a Bible to study the Apostles Doctrine (2 John 9).

Today, and for many years, these booklets have been sent into prisons: to chaplains, inmates, individuals, churches, pastors and evangelists. Some of these people are in other countries. Because of the cost of shipping, we changed our web site so anyone in the world who is on the internet, can download these booklets without cost. The web site is: SearchouttheScriptures.com.

With the many Spanish speaking inmates in prison, these booklets have also been translated into Spanish.

The Lord has blessed this labor and increased it to bring forth the light of Christ in many dark places. This work has not gone on without opposition from the kingdom of darkness.

Today there are brothers and sisters in the faith helping in this work. Our small assembly also decided to help financially with the expenses, with prayer, proof reading, mailing and shipping. Two Christian brothers that own a printing business have helped with cutting, pressing (when needed), technical problems and are

continuing to correspond with inmates. A friend who owned a print shop helped educate the author on how to set up a print shop and has used his knowledge to set up the whole printing and publishing operation. His counsel when problems arise is invaluable. Many other people have offered their help when needed. Inmates have written to say they are praying for this work.

We are thankful for many chaplains who work with those incarcerated, having a true shepherd's heart, and having a desire to see the gospel instilled in the hearts of the inmates.

We thank and praise God our Father for using small numbers of people to bring forth great and large truths of His Grace, which bring all who believe into His Kingdom.

D. Neely

5-02-16

Other booklets by this author

The Eternal Word of God
Putting feet to faith
Dependence or Independence?
Jerusalem or Bethel?
Covering
Are you a Priest?
Are you a Disciple? And of What or Whom?
Is God for us? Or against us?
Spirit and Truth Worship, is it Yours?
The Apostles Doctrine on the place of Faith for Christian Women
Simplicity
Remarriage for the Christian, will God Sanction it?
The Gifts of Ephesians 4:11, are They for Today?
Should a Christian Major in Minors?
Did the Apostles of Christ Teach and Practice Legalism?
A Comparison Chart Between the Law of Moses and the Church of God
Religion, What is it?
Will you Know and be Known by Friends and Family in Heaven?
As the Shepherd takes from the Lion
A debate between Evolution and Creation
Legalism in the House of God
Failure: Opportunity for the hungry
Relationship with God, Temporal or Eternal
Spirit, Soul, Body
Led by the Ministry, or led by the Spirit
Christian Men, Producers of Godly Seed or Earthly Tares?
The Faith of Abraham and the Christian
The Grace of God or The License of Man?
Dead men can't sin
Worship, what God has established
Unless you are converted and become as a little child
Does God hold the Christian accountable to keep the Saturday Sabbath?

Dressing for my glory or for the glory of God
The Commandments
Are you a Christian or just religious?
God's pathway to Himself
Believe not every spirit
The works of man or the work of God through Christ Jesus
This world, a life without justice
Should the veiling of Christian women be practiced all the time?
The will, work, word and Spirit of God
The eternal Shepherd
The Bible, the work of man or a divine revelation
The Church as presented in Scripture
Baptism by the Spirit
Are you Cast Down? You can find Joy

Books

Christ, the Golden Thread that Binds
An Outline of the Book of The Revelation

These booklets are available upon request

Write to: Search out the Scriptures
P. O. Box 727
Junction City, Or 97448
TheDisciplesPath@aol.com
SearchouttheScriptures.com