
FULL PARDON

Issue 3

September 2009

**Written By the Inmates for the Inmates in the
Lake County Detention Center**



“Faith” by David H.

Before this time when I was free,
Living for the world.
The troubles that I struggled with,
Led me close to hell.
And all the times I wondered,
For when no answer came.
I stood alone with direction,
Living with my sin.
Lost to where I was to be,
That now I have been found.
Of this one thing you've given me,
That I'm no longer bound.

So as I sit, my Bible open,
pray in Jesus name.
My heart and soul are joined with Thee,
My Father, Lord, Amen

“A Letter From the Father” by Drew

Hello my son, I've been thinking about you, a lot! My thoughts are love and peace, not hate or anger, for I have a plan for your future, for a life of success and hope.

I realize it's hard for you to see that right now, but have faith, trust Me, everything will work out for the best, because you are My son and I love you.

I allowed you to come to this place because I couldn't get your attention any other way, believe Me I tried. Didn't you hear Me calling your name? I sent My people with a message to where you were staying, but you never answered the door. I just wanted to help you son, to help you find your way back home, to spend time with you.

When you're ready son, please call. I sent Jesus to pay the bill so the phone lines are always open, 24/7, I'll be there. Don't wait too long please, I've got so much to talk about, I love you and am ready to forgive you, just waiting on you, son.

While you're there, I want you to read the book I sent. It includes lots of instruction for you to get into shape. And after you have followed those instructions and you're ready and willing to work with Me, not against Me, I'll bring you back home and we'll walk together into a future of hope and success in this thing called life.

P.S. I want to adopt some more children son, to give them a better future. So while you're there please tell the others about Me.

Love, Your Father

Eugene's Testimony

In 2003 a police officer came to the house where I was staying, the home of my mother. I was given a subpoena to show up in court. On that day going to court I remembered that my mother always kept a Bible in her car, so I asked her for it knowing in my heart that God was my only help. But the problem was that I didn't know where to start looking for answers. You see even though I could read the Bible, I still

could not understand the Bible. So all I could do was just pray hoping that God would hear me and answer my prayers.

When I got to the courthouse and stood before the judge, he then told me that there was no evidence found against me, so I was let go but given another date to appear back in court. A whole month went by and now it was time to appear back in court again and when I stood before the judge for the second time, it was just as before—there had been no evidence found against me. So I was released to go home again but was given another date to show up in court. That meant it would be another month before I would have to show up in court. This was the third time now that I would stand before the judge and even though again there was no evidence found against me, I still was given a warrant for my arrest and taken to jail.

In 2003 in the Lake County Jail I then became a Christian. I gave my life to Jesus Christ. As time went on I began to grow in the Lord and in His Word. I was also waiting to have my first trial in court, I was scared! (Romans 8:28). As

I stood in front of the judge this time my faith now was stronger. I was not scared but trusted in the Lord for victory. As I waited for the final answer all I could do was pray and hope for the best knowing that God was going to give it. My heart rejoiced when I heard the outcome of the jury—it was declared a mistrial. It wasn't over yet and another trial date was set. This time I was found guilty with only circumstantial evidence.

I couldn't understand what had happened. I was confused and angry but nevertheless I still kept my faith in Jesus (Isaiah 61:1-2). When God spoke to me and revealed through the Bible that He was calling me to preach the Gospel in prison it was hard for me to accept and believe. But I had already made up my mind to trust in the Lord (Jeremiah 29:11-14). In prison God really started teaching me how to preach and teach the Gospel. I thank God for allowing me to take courses and to learn Spanish, but most of all I thank God for calling me to minister on this mission field. I also had the chance to meet some wonderful brothers in Christ—may the Lord bless them. I know now that God brought me here not just to save my life but to work through me to save others as well (Genesis 50:19-20).

Gregory's Story

I'm not only a confessed sinner, but more importantly I'm a new creature by the grace of my Savior Jesus Christ. I grew up in a good family that went to church every week. I knew who

Jesus was and what He did for me on the Cross. But I never showed Him the love and respect He deserved. As I became an adult I'd visit His House when it was convenient or if the relationship I was in warranted it.

In 2002 I moved to Florida in hopes of starting over. But just like a cooking recipe, if you don't change the ingredients you end up with the same dish over and over again. In July 2005 somebody changed it for me. I was arrested. I had never been in jail before so this was a new recipe. I would cry all night over the shame I'd brought upon myself. On my third day in jail, in our pod's multi-purpose room I met an "old country boy" as he called himself. This man helped me dedicate my life to Christ, after which I came to realize that it wasn't the police that knocked on my door, but angels sent to rescue me. After that night I would cry over the joy I found in Jesus.

Since my incarceration I have found the redemption Christ paid for me. I have now been in a state correctional facility for 3 ½ years. In that time I've been delivered from smoking and have been baptized in the prison chapel. When I first arrived in prison I met Al Paquette who was ministering by helping inmates write, direct, and act in plays that were based on Bible stories, especially the parables taught by Jesus. I soon joined the "Palanka Players" and along with Al and my fellow Christian "actors" helped almost 1,000 inmates down the path of life to Jesus Christ.

In the past year state budget cuts have reduced or closed some of DOC's chaplain programs, but the one constant thing here has always been the presence of the Holy Spirit. God's presence here led to the start of the "Men of Faith" choir. Although we already had a band this ministry of praise and worship did not really start until by the Holy Spirit's leading we studied what the heart of worship really means to us individually and as a fellowship of believers.

God allowed me to contribute my talents to His glory although I don't play an instrument or sing well. In God's eyes my role as the soundman is just as important as the guitarist and piano player. Likewise you as a member of a church congregation are equally important for we are all parts of the "One Body" as it says in 1 Corinthians 12:14-20. So it doesn't matter that I'm incarcerated because with Jesus I'm as free to live for Him as you are.

As my release date approaches and I prepare to leave this "gated community" my faith has grown stronger, my path straighter thanks to my brothers in Christ and the chaplain volunteers I met there in the Lake County Jail. God bless you all.

Gustavo's Testimony

I praise and glorify our Lord Jesus always. When in prayer I remember Chaplain, volunteers, and brothers in Christ. I also pray for the Jail Ministry. I wish for you to know that in these trying circumstances—being in prison—I keep my trust in the Lord. It is not at all easy but with our Lord it is not impossible to keep on the right path. I have by no means reached all that I could be in Him, but I try daily to do what is right. I continue to study the Bible, read *Our Daily Bread*, and pray. I am not perfect, I have my ups and downs, but one thing is certain, I will not look back. How beautiful it is to be in the Hands of the Almighty!

Thoughts Shared by Eddie

This past week I had an experience that most of my brothers and sisters in Christ here in LCJ will experience at some point. Being incarcerated we are tempted to look to God with the wrong mind-set. We can easily stray from the true focus we should have our sights set on—His will, His glory, His eternal best for us. I did without even knowing it.

The Lord requires total abandonment of personal pursuits that do not glorify Him and fulfill His plan for your life. I can quote a bunch of Scripture on this but if you are truly a child of God seeking to be obedient to His will you'll know that I'm telling the truth. And if you are not a born again Christian I hope this compels you to read the Bible and find the truth.

In my pursuit of Jesus Christ's presence in my life I always had accepted that prison was a possibility, jail time probable, and probation almost very likely all because this was not my first time in trouble with the law. While today I eat, sleep, and breath my Lord Jesus, I was once an atheist and criminal in every sense of the word. Well, Chaplain came to see me and we had a great conversation then he asked what I thought about the Men's Mission at First Baptist Leesburg. I had to pray about it because I have a son I love deeply and had been struggling spiritually in respect to totally serving God. Meaning God first, family second, others third, and of course me last. I didn't sleep well or like what thoughts I was entertaining but I concluded, yes I want that program, I need that program. It all fits in with the direction my life is going because I know that without Christ deeply implanted in me in every facet of my existence I am not strong enough to prevail over Satan. But with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in front of me at all times and working for me in all things I can make it.

So naturally I prayed for the program, focused on the program, and what it would do for me only now unknown to me, however slightly I had begun to taken by eyes (mind & heart) off of the prize. When my PD came to see me he was still talking about 4 years in prison. God's holy hand reached down and brought me to my knees because I was so upset that I couldn't get into the "program!" When all along it has been God who has held me, comforted me, and made me know that this is the last time I'd step over the line. When I realized I had taken my eyes away from Him I went to my knees in prayer crying out and pleading, "Lord please come back don't leave me." The first thing the next morning in *Our Daily Bread* He spoke to me when I read Isaiah 6:5. Each day in my daily study of the Bible I read a chapter from Proverbs (known for wisdom) this day chapter 3. I then read 5 psalms which were Psalms 11 thru 15. God's message was clear—when we put our minds on God, Satan is furious and goes into overtime to trick us just as God moves heaven and earth to hold us (you check it out).

Be watchful of what you are doing because even your desire for freedom can become an "idol." What are you really seeking in your heart and soul? God is not our spiritual "sugar daddy" and we need to discern our true intentions before it's too late. Just because Satan is able to deceive us it doesn't mean we are able to deceive God. We are losing precious minutes, hours, weeks, years, and sometimes like I have decades of quality time with our Lord. Satan has powers also and will use them to make you believe that you are godly as long as "you" don't find out that God knows, Satan is happy. God sees all. He misses nothing. Paul put it best when writing about false teachers fooling even believers who didn't stay in God's Word. As long as a sinner comes to Jesus Christ God will take it from there. But take heed lest you fall (1 Corinthians 10:12). Be watchful (Colossians 3:22-25). Keep your eyes on the true prize and not a "desired" prize. Keep your eyes on Jesus!

Submitted on Behalf

I was starting a new group of inmates in "Seeking Him", Nine men sat in a half circle facing me, we discussed the purpose of the course, how to utilize the book, the purpose for revival, and the expected homework to be done. In the remaining minutes I asked for someone to share their testimony of how they invited Jesus Christ into their life. One young man, 21 years of age, began to share that this was his first and hopefully last visit to "big boy jail". He had been in and out of Juvenile over 100 times since the age of 6. A fellow inmate

shared his faith and this young man asked Jesus into his heart. At prayer call for the next couple of nights, his prayer request was that God would someday allow him to meet his father who he had not seen since the age of 3.

Each night for several days he shared that same prayer request. He wanted the opportunity to meet his dad and tell him about Jesus. After prayer call one night, a Christian Brother was talking to him about his unique prayer request and asked his father's name. The friend disappeared momentarily, then returned and motioned for him to follow. He took him over to a man sitting at a table and this young man met his father, after an emotional reunion, they began to compare histories.

Dad has been in and out of jail but had asked Jesus into his heart back in February, upon being challenged to be a Christians Dad and Husband he was released but had no idea how to find his son. He wanted to take his son to church so they could spiritually grow together, due to minor violations for both men; they were united in the Lake County Jail. Now both are able to attend church services together on Sunday evening, but both are also "seeking Him" together on Saturday morning.

God works in mysterious ways!!!

Editor

Thanks to you who sent in testimonies, poems, and stories. We hope more of you will write for the next issue of **Full Pardon**. Send them to Chaplain Pete along with a request form. Remember to try to keep it to 200-250 words. If you would like to share **Full Pardon** with family and friends on the outside they can go to www.trinityfree.com/fullpardon on the Internet. Trust God, He **is** on your side!

