SOUND THE TRUMPET IN PRAYER

**And if you go to war in your land against the enemy that opresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies (Numbers 10:9).**

Products of Grace

Where would we be without the grace of God? God’s grace is the unmerited favor of God. Currently our world is under a “dispensation of Grace”; known by theologians as “the church age”. We should all be very thankful for the grace of God. If we ever got a full revelation of God’s grace, it should produce thankfulness, and depression would not exist in our society. This is easier said than done; it is a daily battle to remain content in every situation, but this is true nonetheless. Paul, a servant of God, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost wrote these words to the Church: **“For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth” (Colossians 1:5-6).** First of all we are promised hope, something better than what we see at the moment. A promise of a better day, a reason to keep fighting, a promise of victory, a light at the end of the tunnel, and a reassurance that our faith is not in vain.

“Grace”, in its literal meaning, alludes to expectation. While we are all undeserving, and made worthy by a power beyond our own; grace has its requirements. Romans 5:21 says that as sin reigned unto death; so might grace reign unto righteousness. Therefore, considering that “reign” means to rule over, we see that grace is directly connected to righteousness. Without righteousness on some level or a desire for it, grace will not produce its desired end. In essence, the grace of God should produce righteousness. Comparing the Old Testament meanings in the Hebrew to the Greek in the New Testament, we learn that under Moses’ law “grace” as translated by Strong’s Concordance meant: “graciousness, i.e. subjective (kindness, favor) or objective (beauty)”. In the Greek “grace” means much more, and requires some action on the part of its beneficiaries. According to Strong’s “grace” is the following: “graciousness (as gratifying), of manner or act (abstract or concrete; literal, figurative or spiritual; especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude)”.

The grace of God, and our awareness of it, should produce a life of gratitude that is acted out, not just talked about. Grace should produce “God consciousness”. Someone who is God conscious will not steal, murder, take advantage of, or deliberately mistreat their fellowman in any way. God consciousness will prevent those who abuse themselves with drugs and alcohol to consider their maker, and go to Him for help. Not try to drown out problems with a substance that will destroy them or be covetous for things, which lead to jealousy, greed, and hatred. God conscious people realize that they must forgive, letting go of past hurts, being thankful for the hope God has given them, and for the truth of the gospel that leads to salvation. God conscious people strive to be thankful in all situations, and reflect upon the goodness of God in their life more than they reflect on the negative. Most importantly, the divine influence in their lives should show a change of heart that will cause a transformation of their lives for the better; causing them to turn away from the destructive path they were on.

While it is no easy task, if a “garment of praise” is worn daily; depression will have to flee. Focusing on every bad thing that has happened, is happening, or might happen is very destructive, and leads to hopelessness. This type of thinking is sadly evident in so many lives, and produces many sorrowful and evil situations. We are warned against being unthankful in the following scripture**:”Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened (Romans 1:21)”.** There is a long list of evil behaviors that the Bible tells us are a result of being unthankful, including being turned over to a reprobate mind (see Romans 1:22-32). It is written that Godliness with contentment is great gain. This is something we should all strive for in the evil day we are living in. To be content regardless of where we find ourselves is victory in itself, and will empower us to be living epistles as we walk in a dark world; shining more and more until the day is perfected. Resting assured that God’s grace will bring about a perfect day. BMLR

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Inmates, family members, and those who are interested can now access the monthly newsletter. Please visit [**http://www.inspirationalwordsforinmatesandtheirfamilies.yolasite.com/**](http://www.inspirationalwordsforinmatesandtheirfamilies.yolasite.com/)to be added to the monthly email list or obtain copies. .The site is still under construction, and will in time have all copies of the newsletter since the column **Words from Behind the Wall** was started in 2007.

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AS IT IS

Edgar A. Guest

I might wish the world were better,

I might sit around and sigh

For a water that it wetter

And a bluer sort of sky.

There are times I think the weather

Could be much improved upon,

But when taken altogether

It’s a good old world were on.

I might tell how I would make it,

But when I have had my say

It is still my job to take it

As it is, from day to day.

I might wish that men were kinder,

And less eager after gold;

I might wish that they were blinder

To the faults they now behold.

And I’d try to make them gentle,

And more tolerant in strife

And a bit more sentimental

O’er the finer things of life.

But I am not here to make them,

Or to work in human clay;

It is just my work to take them

As they are from day to day.

Here’s a world that suffers sorrow,

Here are bitterness and pain,

And the joy we plan tomorrow

May be ruined by the rain.

Here are hate and greed and badness,

Here are love and friendship too,

But most of it is gladness

When at last we’ve run it through.

Could we only understand it

As we shall some distant day,

We should see that He who planned it

Knew our needs along the way.

WORDS FROM BEHIND THE WALL

BEST FRIEND

Jesus is the best friend I could ever have. I’ve considered all my allies combined to do everything, I consider those unfriendly who lie so much as to throw me into confusion, refuse to repay my kindness when I am now in need, cheated me out of the love I give them. How perfect can I really be? I am just as bad, and don’t deserve who I’ve got left. My Lord never fails, always forgives me, and even makes me a better person. His endless love for me and His devotion to keep me is what binds us together. No other relationship can compare. **William Moctezuma**

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TAKE HEED

Satan is powerless, but brethren let us take back our young generation, and be proved for them in action of need. Harden not your hearts, but let us exhort one another daily. We must fight with God’s word, and with confidence; showing the young ones that they won’t be looked at as hypocrites for all glory is for God alone. For we all fall short, and knowing that allows them to open up. The word says in Matthew 5:3-19: blessed are the poor in spirit. As you read more, you’ll find that God tells us also to open our mouths. Tell the young children not to think that Jesus Christ came to destroy, but to fulfill. God wants to fill our hearts with love. I Peter 4:8 says that love will cover a multitude of sin. Brethren, we must let them know in many ways about God. God tells us to “suffer according to the will of God, and to commit our souls to Him; doing good as to a faithful creator.” I can go on with the word of God, but I only speak with great swelling words that are empty if the younger generation won’t heed them. Still, I now write to you for support to save our young people who need us. God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love, which you have shown towards His name; in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister (Hebrews 6:10). So take heed.

 **Patrick Douglas**

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LOST YOUR FOCUS?

I Kings 19:14

I paced my cell all day feeling sorry for myself, when one of the officers said to me; Brandy, why are you walking in there like you’re a caged tiger? You think you’re the only one with problems here? You’re usually in there lifting all of us out here, your ability is special and valuable to all who meet you. This officer’s humor was just the medicine I needed that day! You know God’s work can be very demanding; sometimes you give it your best, and end up drained. It happened to Elijah. After God had used him to call down fire from heaven, his excitement was immediately quenched by Jezebel’s death threats. Fleeing for his life, drained and depressed, he complained; “I’ve been very zealous for the Lord, yet I am left alone, and they seek to take my life.” I sure know that feeling. The state of Louisiana wants my life too. The minute Elijah’s focus shifted off God, and onto the enemy, he became overwhelmed. So God spoke to him again. This time it wasn’t in a spectacular display. Instead, He came in a “still small voice”, and drew Elijah aside to rest and spend time with Him. The next time the nation saw Elijah, he was spiritually on top again, restored, and refocused, as I am now. So has your focus shifted off God, and onto everything you have to do? If so, you need time out; time alone with God. When He calls you aside to rest, be obedient. And one more thought, God sent Elisha along to assist Elijah, and He can send the right person to help you too. He knows exactly what to do today to get you moving again. **Brandy Holmes**

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DESERT NIGHT

Rain began to fall. Unknown to us, the drop is showing something. The desert drop seems bright. The night feels warm like the drop. It is not right to see ourselves. The desert rain began to talk to me. It feels lonely for a while, but that’s okay. I like it. I feel like dancing with the desert--- Oh well, oh well. I ate dinner with the desert. Desert, desert, where are you? It feels lonely during long light hours, miles of sand at its best. The high of 50, low of 110, it smiles for a moment. I walk with the desert wind. In the wind we were in last place for a reason or two. We began to watch TV with soda, chips; whatever fills our hunger. Desert drop, cry for us. Night time, day time, come and gone. I sing for the desert, and cry too. The desert is so lonely for me. Oh, how lonely we can be. We stop to take pictures. I am lonely for the desert. Was I here? **Joseph Williams**

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**Inmates, please submit your inspirational thoughts for Words from Behind the Wall to Beth Marie Laccone- Rexford, C/O International Christian Fellowship, 9146 Lincoln Ave, Brookfield IL 60513. Office Phone: 708-387-9009. Thank you.**