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).**

Stand

Where would we be without the Grace of God? Modern theology teaches us that we are currently in the dispensation of Grace. With this in mind, if we believe what the Bible says, we must seek God while He can be found---even in the midst of trials and tragedy. God is no respecter of persons. He will be found by whoever seeks Him with all their heart. Jesus will draw near to those who are broken-hearted, and those who are in trials and tribulations. Unfortunately, not everybody knows this, and even those that do sometimes forget when times are good and bad. It is very important for Christians to be vigilant in their faith regardless of circumstances. In his instruction to the church, Paul said to put on the whole armor of God. Grace alone is not enough to win the battle; we must do our part to stand. Ephesians 6:13-14says, **“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness”...**

We are further instructed to take the message of the gospel of peace where we go. To wear a helmet of the knowledge of our salvation, this will result in a behavioral change for the better. To renew our minds with a new way of thinking, to bring hope to others, and to be armed with the Sword of the Spirit---which is the Word of God. We do all these things so that we can withstand the devil’s fiery darts, stand in the face of temptation---and if need be, persecution. If we are able to stand, our testimony will speak volumes to others. There is a need today for those who will stand for the Kingdom of God, regardless of past or present situations. There is no greater testimony than one who can stand for what is right in the face of adversity. This demonstrates the power of God to the world, and casts light on the devil for who he truly is. The word “stand” in the Greek has various words attached to it when translated. Here are a few: abide, continue, and covenant. When we abide in our faith, believing God will do right by us, we show those who are lost or distraught that there is hope. We give them reason to go on. When Jesus asked His disciples if they would leave Him as others did who were offended by His words; “**Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life**” (John 6:68). When going through something devastating, or if we don’t agree with what is happening, or even when things are going great, we must keep our eyes on eternity because “this life is but a vapor”, and continue to stand.

**“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”** (John 8:31-32). We must be consistent in our daily lives; we cannot be unbalanced and double mined as one who wavers. James says, “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways”. This brings confusion to our lives, and the lives of those around us. Finally, let’s remember our covenant with God, and if we don’t have one, let the reader think about making one. It is a true saying that the things of this world will soon pass away. In spite of the difficulties, let’s hold fast the word of truth, and stand. BME

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WORDS FROM BEHIND THE WALL

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

We can find out a lot about God within the Bible. In Isaiah 42:5-9, the Lord tell us all about Himself with a few short verses. He first opens up by taking credit for being the creator of us all, and of everything we see. Then because of our imperfection, God tells us how He offers us righteousness. Holding our hands during rough times, and offers a better understanding of His word. For all God has done to help us, no others shall share in His glory. We are not to worry about the past anymore because He is going to reveal a new life, which will come.  **William Moctezuma**

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SEASONS GREETINGS

It’s supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year, but we don’t feel it is because we are locked up. Everybody should be happy and grateful just for being alive because there are thousands who didn’t make it to see this day. Maybe we needed to be away from our loved ones to open our eyes, and give Jesus authority over our flesh (see John 17:2) so we would offer ours as a sacrifice to God (see Romans 12:1), while giving thanks to Him (see Hebrews 13:15). And fear not because God is with us; for He is our God, and He will strengthen and help us (see Isaiah 41:10). Jeremiah 17:7 says, “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord”. Know that you can do can do all things trough Christ who strengthens you (Philippians 4:13).

 **Happy Holidays from Charles Moctezuma**

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THE RECIPE FOR BEING HAPPY

I’ve found the recipe for being happy (Philippians 4:2). Paul says, whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it because of my relationship with Christ. Happiness isn’t about being on an emotional high all the time, and never feeling down. And it doesn’t change with circumstances. Paul says, in essence, “I can make it---because I have a life-giving relationship with one who gives me courage, love, and fulfillment I need each day”. In the book, *What Happy People Know*, Dr. Dan Baker writes; “The man in front of me seemed to have it all; money, freedom, friends, and family. But he didn’t have the one thing he wanted most---happiness. His home life would horrify most people; alienated kids, a wife who resented his passion for work, no time to kick back”. His biggest concern was keeping what he had. Sound familiar? Maybe you’re reading this thinking, “Yeah, but that doesn’t apply to me. In his situation, I know I could be happy”. But it does apply to you---and me too! The road to happiness is filled with potholes, and one of the biggest of them is---the very things we think will feed our souls---end up feeding our fears, stressing us out, and making happiness elude us. Happiness also involves: (a) Taking responsibility for our own actions. (b) Realizing that life is precious, and maximizing every minute of it. Over the next couple months, “I will examine some happiness of my own”. You should do the same. Each one is uniquely seductive, and has been capturing people for thousands of years.  **Brandy Holmes**

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CLOUDY DAZE

Clouds kiss the mountains, and grasses blow in the breeze. The rain brings the snow, and cold shuffles in the freeze. All these elements, I truly love (so much), are outside my window so far out of my touch. I would look in wonder at the beauty, in awe of God’s creative grace. I would look and hug the earth, and feel the soil slip through my fingers. Painting pictures, soul and mind forever, (there) to linger. I thank God that unlike many others, one day I will truly be free to climb that mountain, feel the grass, and gaze up at the heavens from the shade of a tree. **Sandro Thomassin**

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PUT AWAY FALSE GOD’S

*“Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments”.*

Read Genesis 35:1-5, 32-33; Matthew 8:1-17. I can imagine you sitting there, reading this devotion title, and thinking I can skip this one. I’d never worship an idol! But read on…God demands that we worship only Him. When Jacob instructed his family to get rid of false gods, he was likely referring to wood, gold, or stone images. It is possible that you worship a false god? Instead of a stone or gold or wood figurine, your false god may be or look like a laptop or television set. You may worship something made of paper or flesh or pigskin. A Christian might innocently begin to worship sports, work, lust, or prestige. Is your money, family, hobby, more important to you than God? We can appreciate God’s gifts and enjoy His blessings, but our worship must be reserved for only Him. There’s room for one God in your life (see Deuteronomy 4:35-39; 6:4). Like Jacob, will you dispose of every false god, and lead your family to worship only Him? “Father, open my eyes to false gods in my life. You are my priority. You are my God”.

 **Jamie Alexander**

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REFLECTIONS

Lord please set me free from these chains, and relieve my loved ones from all the grief and pain. I say prayers for my friends, and the ones kin to me. Before I say amen! I pray for my enemies. I’m headed on the right track, praying they’ll convert like Saul did in the Acts of the Apostles. Now when I look in the mirror, I see a God fearing man that’s been touched by the healer.  **Emanuel Fair**

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**FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR**

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, and the best in the coming year. I am praying that all will take the opportunity to know Him better in the coming year, through His word and prayer. This is something that one’s past, and prison walls cannot prevent. Also, those of you with “time” may be at a disadvantage, but you do have one advantage, which is time to pray. Your prayers cannot be hindered. You have the ability to pray for this world, and for God’s will to be done through all the chaos that is going on. This can be a powerful way to repay any debt to our society. This world is in desperate need of prayer from a heart that is repentant, and will pray the will of God. I John 5:14 tells us this. **“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us”.** The Bible also tells us that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

* Amongst other things you may pray for, pray that through all the terrible things that have happened, and that will happen, that God will move upon hearts, and draw the lost to Him by His Spirit.
* Pray that people will be drawn to God by tragedy and not away from Him, and that God’s promise to Abraham will be fulfilled through great revival. And that all families on the earth will be blessed.

I can only imagine the sadness of being separated from one’s family during this time of the year, but hope that in spite of this, the God of peace will reign in your hearts. Remember that He is, according to the prophet, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Rest assured, all signs point to the fact that His coming is soon. So look for His return, and toward a brighter future, in the coming year. Prayerfully, **Beth Marie Evans**

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