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).**

Grace

Where would we be without the Grace of God? In spite of the hardships we face in this world, there is a light that shines in the darkness, giving hope to all…even to those who don’t believe. Grace can be defined as the unmerited favor of God. In other words, we receive a reprieve that we don’t deserve. Jesus reassures us in John 16:33 by saying**, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”** These words let us know that by Him, we can also overcome. Jesus knew before He went to Calvary that He would overcome. He spoke these words as truth even though He had not yet risen from the dead or been to Calvary. It is possible for us to have this hope because He went before us to overcome our greatest tribulation, and the cause of suffering in this world…He overcame sin. In doing so, He made it possible for us to overcome. By the power of His Spirit and the shedding of His blood; we can overcome our fallen nature. This is one of the greatest benefits of Grace. No matter what is going on around us or what we face in the future, we can have peace in knowing that we can overcome by the word of our testimony, and the blood of the Lamb (see Revelation 12:11).

While we live in this world, we will see the scourge of sin all around us. And we will have to live with the consequences of the poor choices of we have made. However, we can learn from these, and we can get beyond them. God will give us the Grace to live in peace with our past. He will also use us to encourage others, especially those who have similar situations, if we allow Him to by taking advantage of Grace. Another definition of Grace, according to Strong’s is “a divine influence upon the heart, and its refection in the life, including gratitude.” If we recognize and accept the Grace of God in our lives, it should cause us to want to change what we do, the way we think, and above all…it should cause us to be thankful. An individual who has the Grace of God at work in their life will not only be thankful, but will desire to change their behavior and way of life. They will have a desire to strive towards righteous acts. A change will be evident to all. Not in words only, but in actions.

The Bible tells us in Romans 5:21 **“That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”** This scripture tells us that Grace reigns or gets its authority through righteousness. Think about it. It took a righteous God to shed His blood to overcome sin for the whole world. This righteous act is what caused Grace to be. So it is righteousness that abolished the death sentence caused by sin so that we might get a reprieve…a stay of execution. A hunger and thirst for righteousness will cause Grace to have authority in our lives. Righteousness will enable us to overcome death, which is the end result of sin, as Jesus did.

Paul, who was speaking to church people, asked this question in Romans 6:1. **“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?”** His answer was “God forbid”. When considering the context of Romans chapter 6, we learn that Paul is speaking to those who have already been baptized. He was asking them, how can we continue in sin when we have been buried with Him in baptism, which is the likeness of His death. Therefore, we must rise up in newness of life, mortifying the body of sin. Of course we cannot do this alone, we need the Spirit of God to help us, teach us, guide us, and convict us. But we must do our part by staying connected with His Spirit through prayer and the word. Only then can Grace abound in our lives. BMLR

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**THE ROSE MEMORIAL FUND**

Rose Golden believed that every inmate should receive a card or newsletter. Upon learning of her passing, an inmate requested a memorial in her honor. All funds go to mailing the monthly newsletter or sending a card to an inmate who has lost a loved one. Please make funds payable to International Christian Fellowship. Thank you.

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**International Christian Fellowship extends thanks to Johnny Plass, and Oscar Falcon for their sacrificial, monetary gifts to the Rose Memorial Fund.**

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For more information about the Rose Memorial Fund, The Illinois Prison System, Life Catalyst, Hospitality House; or if you would like to receive the newsletter by email please visit

[**http://www.inspirationalwordsforinmatesandtheirfamilies.yolasite.com/**](http://www.inspirationalwordsforinmatesandtheirfamilies.yolasite.com/)

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WORDS FROM BEHIND THE WALL

SLOW TO READ

The Lord sent me a message, and I did not pick up on it until almost the last minute. In one week I had my job assignment, which was a lot of fun and beneficial taken for no good reason. Then an issue with guys wanting to stay up late; not allowing me to fall asleep added to my growing temper. My mood caused me to fall behind on my correspondence. One day I remembered a letter from my friend’s Aunt and Uncle that suggested I take time to pray or something. But when I finally re-read the letter, which was in my box for two weeks, I realized the mistake I had made. She told me the Lord put me in her heart for us to go on a spiritual journey. On that journey I was to keep from arguments, anger, and other negative stuff. That same night the stress was getting to me, so my mind went back to the letter, and I began praying and reading scripture. What helped was John 14:14-27. Then Psalm 40:13-17 and Psalm 23. A calm came over me, and since then I’ve been able to sleep much better. My advice is not to overlook a message from God because He wants to help. **William Moctezuma**

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Today I swallowed all my hate, and all my bitterness. It was so nice to be rid of it after carrying it around for six years and eleven months. It felt good, and I thanked God for being able to let it all go. I could feel the burden being lifted off my shoulders. I could feel the tension in my neck being released. I sincerely hope that those of you who carry the same burden are able to do the same. Please God, release these people from the burdens that infested me. Amen.

**Oscar Falcon**

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IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS

I Thessalonians 5:18

This article is deeply rooted from my soul because I understand what Moses went through before he changed his life, and started walking with God and for God. I was accused of being a murderer of the worst kind, a disgrace to the public, my family, and all who knew me. I’m labeled as a monster a criminal, the black sheep of the family. For the last nine and a half years, Louisiana death row is the pit stop where I stand today. But take my story of Moses today, and add it to your own. So don’t just read it, feel it! Consider Moses, the lawgiver and liberator to whom God gave the Ten Commandments. His name is still known all over the earth 4,000 years after his death. Do you remember this same Moses was a murderer? He was listed in Egypt as public enemy number one. He was a fugitive from justice who fled to the wilderness where he lived 40 years as a shepherd. Yet with the chisel of adversity, God was shaping Moses to stand in Pharaoh’s majestic palace, and announce, “Let my people go!” A nation was born because this man refused to stop struggling to achieve his divine destiny. Don’t’ be paralyzed by your past. If God used Moses, he’ll use you, as He is using me. Everyone goes through adversity. The phrase to remember when things go wrong is, “Get over it!” Have you been betrayed? Who hasn’t, I sure have, and more than once too. Have you failed? I did this too, but each time I was told, “Get over it.” Paul writes, “In everything give thanks.” In adversity, give thanks. In heartache, give thanks. In poverty and prosperity, even while incarcerated, give thanks. You see, God is greater than the criticism you’re getting. He’s greater than the giants you’re facing. He’s greater than the mountain you’re climbing. He’s greater than the burdens you’re carrying. Look at the Bible record of men and women who chose to focus on the silver lining, not the dark cloud. These people didn’t curse the darkness. They shined a light, and scattered it. They chose the right attitude, an attitude of faith. So stop hiding from success because you’re afraid to fail. Failure means you’re a learner, NOT a loser. Stop fearing risk! Take God’s hand, step out, and fulfill His purpose for your life.

**Brandy Holmes**

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JUST TRUST ME

Trust is what God asks of us. I have come to understand that when times are good, we are quick to thank God. But what about when things come that are bad? God still wants you and I to give Him thanks in our troubled times. We may not understand it, but God wants you and me to thank Him in all things. Not just when things are good, but He says in all things. Sometimes when we begin to praise God for the problems that you and I face from time to time, we find that satan increases his attacks, and the situation appears worse than better. Many times we start to praise Him; but when things don’t go our way we become discouraged, and are unable to hold on to the belief that God is in charge. If we can only believe that God is really in charge. And is working out the things we bring daily, and every other detail of our lives for the best; then all we have to do is trust in Him for all things, regardless of what the situation looks like. And please, by the grace of God, and the blood of Jesus Christ, don’t worry how grim it seems. Believe me, just yesterday I took my eyes off God, and put them on the problem that I gave Him. It all came to tears, and asking “Why God, are you letting this happen to me?” Then I wanted to give up, but I can’t. Yes, I’m still faced with this situation, and at the moment it’s grim and dark. No, it’s not because of where I’m at. It’s because I took my eyes off of God, and didn’t trust Him as He asked me to. **James Maxwell**

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THE SMALL TOWN PICTURE

Unaware of my feelings; something began to touch me. A small little thing handed me a smile. This time I got you, must be Bobby? He’s my friend. But I knew it was not him. It was a picture of me. We fought for hours. Hours at a time while eating a hotdog; must be that #2 pencil.

**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.**