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).**

A Friend of God

What is a friend? We think of a friend as someone we can depend on, someone we can confide in, someone who will be there when we need them; and most of all someone who will accept us for who we are; or at least for where we are at. And hopefully encourage us in the right direction to become even better. Everybody wants and needs to have a friend. A friend can encourage us just by listening or reminding us of good things when we are too down and out to think of them ourselves. A friend can lend a helping hand. A true friend will not walk away when things get bad, but a true friend will always tell us the truth, even when we don’t want to hear it. This can sometimes be hard to understand, but the Bible says, **“Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful”** (Proverbs 27:6). An enemy will not care what happens to you. They will tell you what sounds good, but when you fall in a pit; they will not be there to help you out.

When the meaning of the word “faithful” is studied in the original Hebrew, there is a lot more than initially meets the eye. These are some of the definitions according to Strong’s Concordance: **“to build up or support; to foster as a parent or nurse; figuratively to be firm or faithful, to trust or believe, to be permanent or quiet; morally to be true or certain, go to the right hand”.** And these are few other definitions found as “faithful” is used in the King James Version, which is said to be closest to the original text because of the strictness of King James with the translators. The translators were said to be under the threat of death if any mistranslation was found: **“assurance, believe, bring up, establish, fail, be faithful (of long continuance, stedfast, sure, surely, trusty, (put), trust, turn to the right”.**

With this understanding of “faithfulness” as it relates to friendship; we see that the friendship of the world can be so superficial. But many times we do not like to be told we are doing something wrong; or when someone tells us not to do something that we know to be wrong, we may get offended. Especially when it is something we want to do at the time, which seems right to man; but its ways are the ways of death. A true friend will tell you that you are wrong, and try to turn you in the right direction. In both the above definitions the term “go the right” is used. The Bible uses the term “the right hand” to mean strength and righteousness. A true friend, while being honest, will not judge. Telling the truth is not judgment. The truth will liberate and make free. A true friend will build up, restore, believe in us, and trust us; even when they have no reason to. They will be steadfast, sometimes just standing quietly by to make their presence known. A friend will always be there to support, and do whatever it takes to bring us back to a healthy situation. A true friend will not pat us on the back, and tell us what we are doing is okay; even if that is what we want to hear at the time. There are people who have these qualities, but the truest friend we will ever have is Jesus. He is a friend that sticks closer than a brother. He is drawn to those who need restoration. He was a friend to a woman at a well in Samaria; where He told His disciples He needed to go. When He got there, He told her the truth, and a whole village of unlikely people were set free (see John 4:7-43). Jesus is a friend to us, but what kind of friend are we to Him or to others? Jesus said, **“Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you”** (John 15:14). Doing the right thing is easy if we love God. While nobody is perfect, and only God is truly good. We can all be a friend of God if we purpose in our hearts be honest; and do unto others as we would have done unto ourselves. 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

NEVER OUT OF REACH

Even though we are not perfect enough to reach God, His love has Him lift us up, making it possible. God knows us so well. He gives us nothing but chances, making it easy. All a person has to do is admit he is not perfect, and turn His or her life around, and become one who relies on Him. Like a child who needs to be picked up and carried by a parent; we must also lift up our arms to be picked up by our father (Isaiah 57:15). **William Moctezum**

God has ways of showing Himself to people. When I lost three people within four months, I said to myself, “There is no way possible that He (God) would let this happen to somebody.” My Dad told me, “Look at Job; he lost everything, and got blessed in the end.” But I didn’t’ pay attention to what he said. I got locked up, and lost everything. No letters, no phone calls, nothing. Then an inmate by the name of Martice Brown, told me to turn over all my worries and problems to God, but I said no. Then one day I went to the core to get a mop, and the officer asked me if I was right with God. I told him no, and he said, “God is calling on you to change your ways, and He will comfort you.” That night before I closed my eyes to go to sleep, I prayed to God asking for forgiveness of everything I did wrong, and I turned all my problems over to Him. The very next day, I received a letter from my brother and his wife, saying that they still loved me. And wanted me to find my way, to be in a sober mind, to keep my faith in God and that everything will fall into place. If that’s not a message from God, I don’t know what is! **Charles Moctezuma**

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LESSONS LEARNED THE HARD WAY

We learn a lot while being locked up, and deprived of those we love, and the things we take for granted. We learn to deal with everyday challenges, and tests that God puts us through. God protects us from our enemies while at the same time; He permits us to feel compassion for their souls (Matthew 5:44). He helps us to deal with our negative emotions of hate and bitterness. With prayer, we find love and kindness (I Corinthians 13). Even in a place full of darkness, evil, and loneliness; we can find comfort by just praying, and thanking Him for what we have (Psalms 34:15). “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry” (Psalm 100). I have found compassion for others through my art since I draw for people of all colors, race, and creed. My art knows no prejudice. I prayed to God to help me become a better artist, and He has helped me not only to become a superior portraitist, but also to feel compassion for the subjects of my art, and their families since that is who I draw. **Oscar Falcon**

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WHAT IT TAKES TO GAIN SPIRITUAL SUCCESS

Imagine trying to fill the shoes that Moses walked in. Joshua wondered, “Do I have what it takes?” Then God told him. (a) “I will give you every place where you set your foot” (Joshua 1:3). God promises success to those who have the faith to take the first step, and keep walking with Him regardless of what they encounter. That means showing up earlier, staying later, working harder, and doing time in prison. (b) “No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life” (Joshua 1:5). Expect the opposition; certain people will always “stand up against you.” In his book, *High Maintenance Relationships,* Les Parrott identifies the types of people who will do this. Critics: who will constantly complain or give unwanted advice. Martyrs: who are forever the victim, and wrapped up with self-pity. Wet blankets: who are pessimistic, and habitually negative. Steamrollers: who are blindly insensitive to others. Gossips: who spread rumors, and leak secrets. Control freaks: who are unable to let go, let things be. Back-stabbers: who are two-faced? Green-eyed monsters: who seethe with envy. Volcanoes: who build steam, and are always ready to erupt. Sponges: who are always needy, and never give anything back. Competitors: who always keep track of tit-for-tat. (c) “Be strong because you will lead these people to inherit the land” (Joshua 1:6). Successful people are not necessarily more gifted, they’re just more passionate. What do you pray about? Cry about? Dream about? What are you willing to risk everything for? That’s the well from which you’ll draw your strength and your strategies when you experience set-backs, when others disappoint you, when the job feels too big, and you feel too small. **Brandy Holmes**

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LET’S GET BACK ON TRACK

Many times I have set aside or put off the Word of God because of my mindset that I needed a rest. But I am here to tell you that my own way of thinking only led me away, causing me to do other things that were not Godlike or good. The choices we make shows a lot about how we think. We need God’s Word to remind us. Not having the reminder of God’s Word in us will only have us in worldly knowledge. Solomon tells us in Proverbs 3:5-6, “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” So that’s what we must do to keep our belief system right because there is no other way into the kingdom of God. I know at times it gets so hard to stay strong or things come across our paths, and attempt to block the way that is the only way to faith. When we feel God is not listening; that is when he will give us the power to push on if we stand on the Word of God, and not think on our own. The Bible tells us in John 16:33, “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.” God has won already. As children of God, we just have to stay on the right path that leads to righteousness.

**Patrick Douglas**

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Yesterday’s dream has gone somewhere. I didn’t foresee it. I must go somewhere. It’s like the past has gone somewhere. I had an idea of looking for you as I work the railroad. My work is ending, and I’m going to miss the days and the nights. Can I see myself living in the west?

**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.**