SOUND THE TRUMPET IN PRAYER

**And if you go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth 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).**

The Scapegoat

The word of God tells us that Jesus is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world (see Revelation 13:8). A lamb or sheep are often used to symbolize those who are God’s, while goats are used to symbolize those who are not (see Matthew 25:32-33). The Encarta English Dictionary defines the word “scapegoat” as one who is forced to or made to take the blame for others. While goats are often cast in a bad light, God gave the ultimate sacrifice when He became our scapegoat---manifesting Himself in flesh to come to this earth to take the blame for us. Most people would not be able or want to be this kind of friend. There may a few who might “take the rap” for us, but it is not likely many would be willing to die. However, this was the sacrifice that God made because He loved us, and desired to give us a chance in spite of our many faults and iniquities, with the hope that we would love Him in return.

In the Old Testament, God’s people were required to come before the appointed priest, and one goat was designated by lot to be the scapegoat. The scapegoat was to carry the sins of the people into the wilderness. Leviticus 16:10 says, *“But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness”.* The phrase “let him go” has many applications in Hebrew; a few are to “put away, forsake, or let depart”. This symbolized the putting away of the sin, which God cannot tolerate, from the people.

New Testament scripture tells us that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin (see Hebrews 10:4). Therefore, God Himself provided a more perfect sacrifice, an eternal lasting sacrifice. Isaiah 53:4 says, “*Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted”.*  The word “borne” in Hebrew also has many applications and meanings, but those most pertinent to what is written here are to carry away, pardon, and forgive. When we think about it, we see the analogy. Jesus carried away our sin. To say it more plainly; God Himself loved us enough---that even though we do things that go against His righteousness---He put on flesh to become our scapegoat. If that doesn’t make us want to do right---nothing will. BME

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WORDS FROM BEHIND THE WALL

MAKE IT A HABIT

One time I let this guy use my bowl because he was in a meal, and didn’t’ have a bowl yet. When he brought it back, the feel of it was wrong. I turned on my light to inspect, and sure enough, it wasn’t mine. When I got it back, I could tell right away by how the lid closed. It wasn’t mine. I then realized that I’d used it so many times over the years, that another felt weird. In this same way, we can put behaving as Christians into practice. We do this until acting any other way does not feel right. Continue praying (see I Thessalonians 5:17), and be more like the Lord (see Romans 12:9-21). **William Moctezuma**

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INSPIRATIONAL SAYINGS

There are a lot of good sayings that I’ve heard over the last year, and there are some I like the most. Pick out some to remember. “The garden of our hearts needs constant weeding and care, to those who are willing to listen, the seeds we sow today will determine the kind of fruit we will reap tomorrow. The closer we walk with God; He will show His guidance to us. Obedience is faith in action. We can leave all our cares with God because God cares. If you are true to God, then you won’t be false to others. When we turn down the volume of the world, we will hear God’s voice clearer. Christ’s forgiveness is the door to a new beginning. God’s love stands when all else fails. God is greater than our greatest problem. When we love Christ, we love others. The more we dig into God’s word, the more we grow. Contentment is not getting what we want, but being satisfied with what we have. We can stop forgiving others when Christ stops forgiving us. God is looking for ordinary people to do extraordinary work. God’s whisper of comfort quiets the noise of our trials. God’s forgiveness is the door to new beginnings. Life is short so live for God---Much prayer, much power; little prayer, little power; no prayer, no power---whatever does not begin with God will end in failure. No matter what is in front of us, God is always behind us. Our faith is stretched by exchanging our weakness for God’s strength. The lessons of life are best learned when Christ is your teacher. God provides the armor to withstand temptation, but we must put it on. And lastly, the lessons of your life are best learned when Christ is your teacher”.

**Charles Moctezuma**

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HE’S A GOD OF ABUNDANCE

Paul writes, “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20). Our God is a God of abundance! In scripture, the over- flowing cup is a powerful symbol. As long as your cup was kept full, you were welcome. But if it sat empty, the host was hinting that it was time for you to go. If he really enjoyed your company, he kept filling it until it ran over the edge, and down onto the table. Is your cup overflowing today? Mine is! That means you are welcome at God’s table. Your seat is guaranteed. Nobody can take your place, and your needs will be abundantly supplied. Someone once wrote; “whatever the blessing in your cup, it’s sure to run over. With God, the calf is always the fatted calf. The robe is always the best robe, the joy is unspeakable, the peace passeth understanding. God’s way is always characterized by overflowing bounty. So the last thing we need to worry about on earth is making ends meet”. Our cup overflows. Take grace for example: “The more we see our sinfulness, the more we see God’s abounding grace forgiving us” (Romans 5:20). To abound is to have a surplus! The cup God gives overflows with mercy. Are you afraid it will run dry? That your warranty will expire? That your mistakes are too great? No way! Before Paul became a Christian, he went around persecuting, imprisoning, and killing Christians. God changed his heart and mind. He can change you and me too! He wrote, “Grace was poured out on me abundantly” (see I Timothy 1:14). Whatever you need today, God has in abundance. So ask, and believe Him for it! **Brandy Holmes**

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LONELY INMATE

When you look into my eyes, what do you see? Do you see a prisoner or a person that is set free? Do you see a gangster or a gentleman, someone you look at, and say I want to stand next to him or do you see someone you’d run from? Someone you’d call a friend or a brother or son? When I look in the mirror, all I see is pain---pain through snow, sleet, and rain. Others see me as a heartless thug, just waiting to be blessed by an angel of love. All I do is pray for a second and last chance in my life. They say love will heal the soul, but without it; you feel broken and old. I’m hoping to see a loving hand to embrace a long lost friend by mail, a phone call, or a friend. I count the days until I reach 2055. If by chance I go home, I hope to feel the love one day. I do not have the special woman that I hurt so much. So look into my eyes, and tell me what you see in me. Do you see love or what? I guess time will tell. As I sit here in Pontiac Segregation, I want to send out my deepest sympathy to Sister Brandy Holmes. Stay strong forever Ms. Brandy Holmes. Keep your head up! Stay forever true my Sister. Always remember they could bind our hands, and shackle our feet with chains, but they can never enslave our minds. For they are free…R.I.P. Mom. **Manual Malave**

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THE TIMING

I’ve heard it said, now and again, that to know where we are, we must know where we’ve been. Remembering each time God brought us through, when we ourselves, knew not what to do. Today I remembered those places I’ve known, when I was so tempted to choose my own. Things have not happened as I thought they should, I cried, “Lord God help me please”, believing He would. My spirit was moved as a vision appeared, in silence I watched as God’s message came clear. I saw myself wandering on dry, barren ground; searching for beauty when none could be found. I screamed for someone to be my best friend, someone to love me, and be true to the end. I searched through the wilderness to no avail, broken in spirit; asking “God have I failed”? Then in an instant, God whispered to me. “It is not in yourself, but in me you receive”. As God spoke these words, the wilderness changed. Beauty appeared in the time God arranged. I thank God for the vision He gave me today, assured by His Spirit, knowing this is His way. As you face life’s mountains, you’ll never fear the climb. For all things become beautiful when God says its time. **Ro’sean Newson**

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HOW TO BECOME A DISCIPLE

A disciple of Christ may now be defined as one who believes His doctrine, rests upon His sacrifice, imbibes His Spirit, imitates His example, and lives to do His work (American Tract Society Dictionary). Luke 14:27 reads “If any man hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple”; verse 14:27 reads, “he that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple”. Bottom line is, do you really want to be a disciple of Christ? Or do you just want to project the image to your church or society? Or maybe you only attend church to socialize with your home boys. Don’t use God as your excuse to do wickedness. **Miles Ward**

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**FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR**

Greetings in Jesus name. First of all, I offer apologies for the tardiness of the March newsletter. Hopefully, we can get back on track in April. To be sure, the newsletter will be written every month as long as you are submitting your inspirational thoughts. Thank you for all submissions received. And **Happy Birthday** to those with January, February, and March birthdays! And **Special Thanks** to Martin Cabrera for his donation to the Rose Memorial Fund, which honors the memory of our dear and sorely missed Sister Rose. And helps ensure the monthly mailing of the newsletter to almost 100 Inmates. **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.**