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).**

Promises Kept

God is a promise keeper. If we believe His word and stand on it, we will see the promises in it come to pass. We know God cannot lie, and we learn about His character initially by reading His word, by finding His word applicable to our lives, and then by seeing these applications come to life in a personal way as He speaks to us through our situations. In this way we come to know God, come to some understanding of who He is, how He thinks, and how He relates to His people. It would be impossible to second guess God or come to a complete understanding of who He is, but if we seek God out, He will be found by us in and at our point of need. One thing we can conclude from all God’s actions towards His people is that He is the full example and embodiment of love. There is no one like unto Him when it comes to compassion, and faithfulness. This is why David said He was a strong tower, a fortress, and an ever present help in time of need. These are only a few descriptions of God that let us know He can be counted on. It is apparent from reading both the Old and New Testament scriptures that God is drawn to mankind in spite of his failings. And also to destruction, sickness, death, need, and even drama.

This leads us to the realization that when we don’t want to be bothered with problems, becoming impatient, wanting to give up on people and situations; we are not acting in love. And we most certainly are not acting like God. While there are times when in helping someone too much we become enablers; meaning we help them continue on in a destructive behavior…there is a time to hold on and a time to let go…a time for every purpose under heaven. These decisions must be prayerfully considered because even God stepped back at times from His people with the intent of steering them in the right direction in the end. This does not mean we make ourselves gods over anyone’s situation, including our own. But we are meant to be His hands, feet, and voice in this world. Through God’s actions towards us, we understand the depth and magnitude of His love, and what love really is. Love is continually demonstrated throughout scripture, and is akin to faith as faith works by love (see Galatians 5:6).

If we move forward on this premise, understanding that love is the motivating factor in our faith, we know that those who believed God; having their faith counted as righteousness, also demonstrated their love by obeying God’s commandments. Hence, we understand that unbelief is akin to disobedience, and not only a stumbling block in obtaining God’s promises, but a wall. While this certainly applied to Old Testament believers, the Apostle Paul warns the church in Hebrews 3:12 saying, **“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God”.** Strong’s Concordance gives the following similar definitions for the word “unbelief” used throughout the New Testament, which are “unfaithfulness, disobedience, and rebellious”. So we see that not believing in God’s eyes is worse than might have been thought by some, and will be evident in anyone’s actions more than anyone’s words since people say a lot of things for many different reasons. Behavior is the clearest indicator of where someone’s heart is at, and what is most important to them.

Unbelief will keep God from acting on our behalf. Matthew 13:58 says that Jesus did not do many miracles because of the people’s unbelief, and this occurred in His hometown. Unfortunately, it is in man’s sin nature to put his/her faith in other things. This is why we often don’t see great deliverance in lives that could otherwise be transformed by the power of God. Also, we tend to be creatures of habit, lazy, preferring the comfort of the known rather than stepping out by faith into the unknown. If Abraham, the father of us all, had made the decision to stay where he was instead of leaving his home and kindred as God asked him; things would have been much different. Because of his obedience many were, and to this day are, saved by his obedience. In order to be delivered and stay delivered, we must separate ourselves from the things that brought us into bondage in the first place. This can mean separating from things, places, and people that lead us to a broad path of destruction. This is why God forbade His people to associate with other nations, whose practices were evil. He even instructed them to drive out the inhabitants of the land that He wanted to give them. If we are to take spiritual land in our lives, and live with authority over the things that held us bound, we must separate ourselves from the same old crowd. We cannot, as it were; return to Egypt and its ways, expecting to remain free. BMLR

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THINGS THAT NEVER DIE

By Charles Dickens

The pure, the bright, the beautiful

That stirred our hearts in youth,

The impulses to wordless prayer,

The streams of love and truth,

The longing after something lost,

The spirits yearning cry,

The striving after better hopes---

These things can never die.

The timid hand stretched forth to aid

A brother in his need;

A kindly word in grief’s dark hour

That proves a friend indeed;

The plea for mercy softly breathed,

When justice threatens high,

The sorrow of a contrite heart---

These things shall never die.

Let nothing pass, for every hand

Must find some work to do,

Lose not a chance to waken love---

Be firm and just and true.

So shall a light that cannot fade

Beam on thee from on high,

And angel voices say to thee---

“These things shall never die.”

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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/). The site is still under construction, and will soon have all copies of the newsletter since the column **Words from Behind the Wall** was started in 2007.

WORDS FROM BEHIND THE WALL

REASON FOR SHOWING JOY

When we first hear the message it makes us fear the coming suffering, which would be faced. As we learn about His grace, our faith grows strong. We boast about our faith because it showed us great hope. Through our faith we are willing to deal with much hardship and distress with a positive attitude; and we are built up so we can endure difficulties. With this hope we can realize God’s love. Yes, we then understand God sent Jesus even so someone like me, and everyone else can be saved (Romans 5:1-5).

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WHEN HELP IS NEEDED

We must place our trust in the Lord. The help we seek is from God. When I needed a way to do my time, He was there. When I searched for friendship, He gave, when I asked for forgiveness, He gave. When I wanted protection, He covered me. Once I caught sight of my Shepherd, my job was to remain near Him so I may be under His care and protection. Who else, but the creator can keep an eye on me. To keep me firm in the word, I must ask Him to put an end to my laziness. Even after I die, He would set me free by His grace (Psalm 121). **William Moctezuma**

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WHAT ABOUT GRACE?

Grace? Luke 1:37 says with God nothing will be impossible. You might ask, “What does this have to do with grace? I’m blessed to be the one who can tell you that I pray every night that God will forgive me of anything, and that grace is the Church’s greatest defining characteristic given by God. If grace is God’s love for the undeserving, then as Christians, we must not doubt what is written. God’s word is the very best book, and we must realize that this world needs grace to be in hope and in much needed transformation. It starts with us Christians demonstrating grace by living with an example of forgiveness from the heart to show the world how it’s done when we embrace God’s grace. Understand that grace does not excuse sin. True grace allows God to draw close to us to show us favor by touching us (as sinners), with mercy and hope. It forgives the unfaithful, no matter who it is. God challenges us to become living testimonies to a world that desperately wants to know, what about grace? I was taught that the gospel of grace begins and ends with forgiveness. And people write songs with titles like “Amazing Grace” for one reason; grace is the only force in the universe powerful enough to break the chains that enslave generations. So now you know; what about grace. Amen.  **Patrick Douglas**

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HOMECOMING!

The book of Revelation is like God’s book of Homecoming. John paints a detailed picture of what heaven will be like. He says, “I saw the Holy city…like a beautiful bride prepared for her husband. There will be no more death, sorrow, crying or pain. The old world and its evils are gone…the One on the throne said…”I am making all things new! Ministers who perform weddings will tell you they rarely, if ever see an ugly bride, (although sometimes the bridegrooms could use a little help). A bride represents the purest form of beauty the world has to offer. She embodies love, faithfulness, and hope for a new beginning. The world we live in is a far cry from that! Daily we are bombarded with news of corporate scams, tragedy, terrorism, abuse, and fear. That’s why some of the most hopeful words in scripture are found in God’s promise, “I am making all things new”. God doesn’t just camouflage the old, He remakes it. He doesn’t just reform, He renews. He pulls out the blueprints and rebuilds the house to the original specifications. What would you give up to have a home like that? Isn’t it worth sacrificing all the lesser things you prize and cling to? Today you can be assured of a home in heaven by accepting Christ as your savior, and having your name “written in the Lambs book of life” (Revelation 21:27). How about it? Are you ready for a homecoming? If not, you can be today! **Brandy Holmes**

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