

Overcomers for Christ

April 2014



PAID IN FULL

Only The Word of God Can do this ...

November 2013



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God's Perspective on Suffering

By D.G.

In times past, God caused people to be kept subject to His Law so they would learn the more excellent way of faith. For it was through the law that they would see God's holy standard and thereby realize their own utter helplessness. Then they would gladly learn His way of faith. (**Galatians 3:23**) God still causes us to be "locked up until faith" is learned. Our own nature, circumstances, trials and disappointments all serve to keep us submissive and "locked up" until we see that the only way out is His way of faith.

Moses attempted the deliverance of his people by using self-effort, his personal influence, and even violence. So God "locked him up" for 40 years in the wilderness, before he was prepared for his work.

Paul and Silas were called of God to preach the Gospel in Europe. In Phillipi they were severely flogged, they were thrown into prison and the jailer ... fastened their feet in the stocks. (**Acts 16:23-24**) They were "locked up" to faith. They trusted God and sang praises to Him in their darkest hour and God brought deliverance and salvation.

The Apostle John was also "locked up" to faith when he was banished to the Isle of Patmos. If he had never been sent there, he would have never seen such glorious visions of God.

Jonah, after rebelling against God, when asked to preach in Nineveh, became "locked up" in the belly of a big fish for three days. God had to get Jonah right in order to get other people right. And through Jonah there was a stunning revival where thousands of lives were saved.

Every person has a destiny from God and sometimes God has to "lock us up" for a spell, so that our character will support that destiny. When we find ourselves in this position, know that it's an opportunity for growth and introspection. We then need to look at what brought us to this position. What did we contribute to being in these circumstances? Are we still trying to blame someone else for our plight? A lot of times it's our reaction to life that puts us in the pits we find ourselves in. Sometimes it's pride or arrogance that needs to be dealt with in order for us to move into our destiny. We need to take a good look at what God is trying to say to us through the crucible of suffering, remembering that what we lose through disobedience we can gain back through repentance.

We have to look at God's perspective on everything. For instance, "What is the purpose of this pit I find myself in?" The purpose of every pit is to get us to cry out to God! I don't know about you but in times past I would find myself getting out of a little pit and then say to God, "Okay God, never mind I didn't need You after all." But then the big pit comes and then the story changes to, "Okay God, I guess I need You after all." (**Jonah 2:2**) There is always something in every pit that will change your life. The purpose of every pit is to bring us back to the Father.

Remember that "saved by grace" doesn't mean you will never have any storms, trials or problems, but when we walk with God and obey His commands He will take us through the storms. With God is a steal umbrella, one that keeps the hail storms from hitting us. Even though our lives are scarred with mistakes we must refuse to rummage through the trash of our failures. We must admit them, correct them and press on. So, being tested by God reminds us that our function and task is to be about His business. That's why He made us in the first place.

We all have found ourselves in some terrible trouble. We all have experienced some distressing disappointments, sorrow inexpressible and devastating loses. We remain in a difficult situation even as I write these very things. But **CHEER-UP!** We have been "locked up to faith". We have to accept our troubles in the proper way and commit them to God. Praise Him, that in all things God works for the good of all those that love Him (**Romans 8:28**) and that He acts on behalf of those that wait for Him. (**Isaiah 64:4**) God will send you blessings and help, and will reveal truth that you otherwise would never have come your way. Many others will receive great insights and blessings because you were "locked up" to learn the way of faith.

"Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress." (**Psalm 4:1**) In my opinion, this verse is one of the greatest testimonies ever written regarding the effectiveness of God's work on our behalf during times of crisis. It is a statement of thanksgiving for having been set free not from suffering but rather through suffering. In stating, **"Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress"** the psalmist is declaring that the sorrows of life have themselves been the source of life's enlargement.

Haven't each of us experienced this a thousand times and every time found it to be true? Someone once said of Joseph that when he was in the dungeon, "iron entered his soul". The strength of iron is exactly what he needed, for earlier in his life he had experienced the glitter of gold being dad's (Jacob) favorite.

We all need the iron in life to enlarge our character. The gold is simply a passing vision whereas the iron is the true experience of life. The chain that is the common bond uniting us to others must be one of iron. Joseph's dungeon was the very road to his throne, if Joseph had never been Egypt's prisoner he would have never been Egypt's governor. The iron chain that bound his feet brought about the golden chain around his neck.

Your life and character will be enlarged in proportion to the amount of iron you have endured, for it is in the shadows of your life that you will find the actual fulfillment of your dreams of glory. So, do not complain about the shadows of darkness – in reality, they are better than your dreams could ever be. Do not say that the darkness of prison has shackled you, for your shackles are wings – wings of flight into the heart and soul of humanity. The gate of your prison is the gate into the heart of the universe, the hearts of men and women who have suffered just like you have and how through your darkest hours God has enlarged you through the suffering of sorrow's chain.

Sign Post Ministry #88

By K.G.



"I beseech you therefore holy and acceptable

brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your body a living sacrifice, unto God." (Romans 12:1) Read Romans 12:1-21

Without the presence of power to create new lives if I can explain this in a

God in our lives all the knowledge in the world and it's still just knowledge. The from broken lives lies in the Source of all power, the Heavenly Father! Let me see simpler form.

Most everyone has somewhat of an understanding of how a flashlight works, right? It has a battery which is the power source. It has an on and off switch, there is a light bulb, a lens that focuses the light and a steel or plastic housing that holds it all together. Most people know how to take the flashlight apart put it together and have an understanding how it works. Now I'm going to ask God to give you His understanding to a truth that I believe will forever change the way you come to Him.

Imagine you are in a large church where there are about 7,000 people in attendance. All of a sudden the lights go out. Its pitch black and nobody can see anything. These 7,000 people know all the components that make up a flashlight and how it works. All of that knowledge and not one of them can bring light to the inside of the church! Why? Because no one has a flashlight!

The church is full of the knowledge of God's Word and they have an understanding of how the true church should work. I believe that most of the time it (church) has the same problem the 7,000 people had sitting in the dark without a flashlight, the presence of the Holy God (flashlight) is not there. I believe that God is missing from so many churches, the church He wants to establish right here on earth. Millions of men, women and children attend thousands of churches across this world every week and the sad part about that is they leave the very same way they entered! It is IMPOSSIBLE to come in to the presence of the Holy God and not be changed forever! The Bible tells us that God does not change.

Take a look over in **Deuteronomy 23:12-14**. In **verse 13** (KJV) God is saying to the host of His army's, ***"And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon; and it shalt be, that when thy wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee."*** You may ask, "What in the world does all that mean?" Let's look at the same verse in the Amplified Version before we move on to the answer why this was not to happen. ***"And you shall have a paddle or shovel among your weapons, and when you sit down outside (to relieve yourself), you shall dig a hole with it and turn back and cover up what has come from you."*** God was telling them there was even a certain way to go to the bathroom in order for Him to come into their presence. And this is the why. ***"For the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to give up your enemies before you. Therefore shall your camp be holy, that He may see nothing indecent among you and turn away from you."*** (Deuteronomy 23:14) Therefore, our camp needs to be holy that God see no unclean thing in us and walk away. God didn't call us to be only knowledgeable and in fact He told Adam and Eve not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God has called His sons and daughters, us, to holiness so that He can walk around in our camp and live in us.

God wants us to have His presence (the flashlight). The presence of God is much better than just the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God cannot cast out sickness or disease nor can it give LIFE! Knowledge is good for the fact that it points us to the presence of the One that can do ALL things, God the Father, the Giver of ALL good gifts! The presence of God can abundantly do all that is needed to heal, protect and enhance your life for good!

Knowing how a flashlight works can never produce light. But having God in you can produce whatever is needed to glorify the Love of your life if we would just ask God to help us bury our "crap"! Then God can come into our camp and deliver every enemy into our hands. So let me ask you, "Is your life full of knowledge or is your life holy, full of God? Do you have the source of all good things living in you?"

Let me close with this. In **Hebrews 12:14** we read, ***"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."*** Jesus tells us in **Matthew 5:8**, ***"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."*** Just knowing these scriptures can never give us a pure heart or a holy walk just like the 7,000 people couldn't light up the dark church without a flashlight. The Holy Ghost is given to the church to create a new pure heart and holy walk (**Acts 19:2**).

Have you received the Holy Ghost since you've believed? Ask for the Holy Ghost and turn on your flashlight!

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Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank Him for all He has done **Philippians 4:6 (NLT)**

Prayer Requests

Wade and I have agreed that all of you are our greatest prayer warriors so we are asking you to pray for Wade. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer and already had his prostate removed and now he will undergo radiation treatment beginning in May or June. In **Matthew 18:19**, it says, **"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven."** I am asking that you all come into agreement with Wade and I that he has a speedy recovery from radiation treatment. We know that God's Word says he has been healed, it has already been done and that Jesus died on the Cross and took all of our sicknesses and diseases on Himself, so we know by faith that he is healed ... **Michelle Anderson**

Please keep my cousin's daughter, Haley, in your prayers as she is approaching her 3rd mission field in Nicaragua. She received this calling at a young age and is walking in obedience. Haley is comfortable and blessed as she presses in and follows God's lead. Please pray for her safety and that she continues to touch the lives of the children she ministers to with God's love because the greatest of these is love. **"And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"** – **Romans 10:15 ... Wade Anderson**

I have been praying a lot about my broken relationship with my mother and will continue to do so until my mother's heart softens. I can say I do see a major change in myself. I pray for my enemies and those who hurt me. I don't feed into the drama around me. My heart used to be so cold, now it isn't. God has worked to soften my own heart! Some of my favorite verses are, **Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."** Also, **Romans 8:38-39, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."** Those are my two favorites! I have a prayer request also, will you pray that God watches over my mother and my two children? Also, to bless me financially - I need help! Also, pray for my grandparents' health and all those who are lost and need to be found. Also, can I please put in a prayer request for my friends Rene and Maria's families as well as mine? Also, I want to pray for all my enemies ... **J.H.**

I ask for you to pray for my older brother, Tony, and his son, Thomas, because they have no stable place to live. They seem to be on the run. Also, for my boys, Jesus, Jaires, and Eduardo. I've been trying to call home and no answer whatsoever. I also ask for prayers for all the inmates in the world, for their families and for the ones who haven't received Christ in their hearts. Christ is love, Christ is faithful, we need Him and we just have to accept His love ... **M.V.**

Praise Reports

It's a busy time of the year for me, getting two bands ready for our Christmas concerts with around 70 songs between the two bands. I praise God for the musical talents and the awesome opportunities He has granted me to enjoy the music ... **C.L.**

I've gotten moved to another yard ... God has done amazing things since my arrival here. Within four days of moving in, He brought on a chain of events that still have me baffled. I am now preaching from the pulpit every 3rd Sunday and I'm singing for the praise and worship band. If you would have told me that this is what I'd be doing in this forum, even one short year ago, I would have said, "You've got the wrong guy." I'm not a singer or a preacher, but that's exactly what God has me doing, and I still am amazed at how it all took place, and there is little doubt as to Who's Hand opened those doors that no man could shut, especially considering my innate fear of public speaking, much less singing ... **D.G.**

I want to thank you for putting my prayer request in the newsletter. I feel confident knowing my brothers and sisters have my back. In the November issue there was an article titled "I Am a Soldier in the Army of My God" by W.R., it was exactly what I needed! Praise God!! I'm not someone who needs to be coddled; I am a warrior, amen!! I've got this with God all things are possible ... **T.M.**

My dad, Joe, is doing real good, thank you for your prayers. He is back to working a little, his new motto is ... busy living, not busy dying ... **J.W.**

My mom is still fighting the good fight of faith ... thank you Lord ... and I shall see her again as a free man ... **J.S.**

I received your Christmas card, thank you. It really means a lot to me. When I read what you wrote in the card, I smiled and thanked God because He just answered another one of my prayers. Since December 23, 2013, I've been really into my Bible and putting Him first above all. I never knew what people meant when they'd say, "God's been speaking to me." But as I was doing my Emmaus Bible studies I'd come across certain verses that would answer some questions concerning faith, enemies, assurance, and salvation. I would get a certain feeling inside of my chest and think, "What a coincidence." No, it was not a coincidence! What I felt was Him, the Holy Spirit. Well, I made a prayer list for laborers to be sent into His harvest. And there is where He answered my prayer because He allowed you to come into my life personally by corresponding. Amen!! God is so beautiful and amazing. You are truly a blessing in my life ... **R.T.**

I've been reunited with my dad after 40 years and with that came a lot of aunts, uncles, two brothers, one sister, and several nieces and nephews. God has been good to me ... **R.F.**

Overcomers for Christ

From the Inside

Saved ... How Do You Know?

By J.C.

This is a message that the Lord has given me. I did draw from study notes from the Lindsell Study Bible.

Here are the study notes from the Lindsell Study Bible:

And even trusting is not of yourselves or "Salvation is not of yourselves." It is secured in trusting by faith alone. This excludes any and all works of righteousness. True faith has in it three elements: 1) Knowledge - for no one is saved without knowing something. (**Romans 10:17**) 2) Mental consent to the knowledge - one is convinced in his mind that the Gospel is true. **Mark 1:24** is where demons acknowledge that Jesus is God but they still are not saved because the third element is missing. 3) A volitional act of personal appropriation or laying hold of Christ, receiving Jesus Christ as one's Savior. (**John 1:12**) The absence of any one of the three elements means that whatever it may be it is not true faith. Moreover, true faith is never alone, it is always accompanied by good works, which are the fruit of faith. The absence of good works subsequent to salvation leaves open the question whether one has truly been regenerated. True faith is believing and acting upon anything God says, simply because God says it.

To trust Him to save them, literally ... to believe on His name. At least four benefits come to those who are regenerated: 1) They become children of God (**John 1:12**). 2) They become brand new persons inside. (**2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15**) 3) They are given God's own character, they are partakers of the Divine nature. (**2 Peter 1:4**) 4) They share Christ's triumph and power over sin and the world. (**1 John 3:9, 5:4, 5:18**)

The three elements or steps to becoming saved are 1) You must hear the Gospel. 2) You must believe the Gospel. 3) You must take hold of Christ as your Lord and Savior.

I want to go into what happens in the second element ... the moment of belief.

How many of you remember the first time you heard the Gospel? Or more importantly, how many of you remember when the story of Jesus Christ came to life inside of you? Because in that moment everything changed ... but what was it?

To answer that question let's look into our Bible. First, we will look at **Ephesians 1:13**, in this passage we, Gentiles, are told that upon hearing the Gospel, and believing in God to save us, we are given the Holy Spirit. Also, upon receiving the Holy Spirit we are identified as belonging to God.

However, I will take this one step further, belief in the Gospel happens only because we become touched by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit there would be no moment of wonder and awakening. To back this statement, I will call to you **Ephesians 2:8**, "**God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you cannot take credit for this, it is a gift from God.**" And there it is! By grace we are saved, saved upon believing in a belief that is itself a gift from God. Or, no gift, no belief ... no belief, no salvation. And no salvation means hell forever. God forbid, I pray!

But we do get the grace and in that moment of wonder when the story of Christ stirs to life inside of you, it is the Holy Spirit giving you the gift of belief, or ability to believe in ... no Spirit, no belief. In that moment, that supernatural minute of awakening, you are chosen by God. Yes, you and me, we were chosen by God. (**2 Corinthians 1:21-22**) Chosen by God to stand firm for Christ. Commissioned by the mark of the Holy Spirit placed within us. It is also this marking which guarantees us all that God has promised.

So, what has God promised us? Well, to start with ... everything that is good! But in the first part of this article, I said that there were four benefits to being saved. These benefits are: 1) You become a child of God. 2) You become a brand new person. 3) You get God's own character. 4) You share in the power and triumph of Christ over sin. To show you how this is done, I call you to **1 Corinthians 2:10-14** all is revealed by the Spirit of the Lord. What is more is that even the words which were used to reveal this message have been given by God through the Holy Spirit.

Now let us take one more look at those four benefits. I will count them back from four to one. 4) Power and triumph over sin. **Romans 8:13** says that there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ. And in belonging to Him you have been set free from sin through the triumph of our Lord. 3) God's own character. **Romans 8:9-11** tells us that now we are no longer controlled by sin because we are under the control and direction of the Spirit living inside of us. 2) A brand new person. **Romans 6:1-4** says reborn from death with Christ the Savior through baptism of the Holy Spirit. With that we may

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From the Inside

live a new life. 1) A child of God. Reborn from the life of sin, the worldly womb of death. Reborn through the power of the Holy Spirit and set apart or sanctified as one of God's own.

I will leave you with these last two Scriptures ... *Ezekiel 36:25-27*.

How Can I Change My Path?

By A.L.

I am very blessed to receive your newsletter every month and it was awesome getting a birthday card from you all down that way. I still read the Bible every day and pray at least twice daily. I have been attending church regularly. I have been in six years and two months and have just ten months left. I am trying to surround myself with a positive church and relocate, I was thinking Teen Challenge maybe, down your way. I believe that structure is good and I need that after doing almost a decade behind bars. I would like to start a fresh new beginning. As you know and have seen many, many times people tend to return to prison.

I ask myself every day how can I change my path, how can I make a difference to stop this revolving door? I believe the answer is through Jesus Christ and there will be many, many changes out there. I look at technology and how far advanced it has become since 2007, I will be lost. I am strong spiritually, mentally, and physically.

It's really something to know that you all send me birthday cards and letters and monthly newsletters and the Good Word. I am really quite taken by that love and support and the thought. In the March 2013 newsletter, I really enjoyed it and so there's much truth in *Psalm 28:7*, "**The Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to Him in song.**" This gives me a sense of protection against satan's traps and lies. See the way I see it is like this, satan sits back with a tackle box of sins and lies that are attractive to us humans, he knows what other one to use if one doesn't work; satan has had years and years of practice and no matter what temptation he throws or casts our way we should avoid the "easy way" or wrong path in order to get ahead.

It has taken me quite awhile to realize this, but years and years of ponder has opened my eyes. The way I see it is being surrounded by a positive environment as well as people, is a good start to a foundation.

Praise to Jesus

By J.H.

I was on a path of destruction, so like a great Father, He sat me down, and gave me a time out. What I love most is His free will, it's the only way to have true love, by your own choice! I've been writing poems about the change in my thinking, about how things that used to drive me, no longer appeal to me. How even when I was trying to kill myself, God thought I was worthy to save, ex-gang banger, ex-drug addict, all that is done. All praise to Jesus!

I'm 33, I no longer feel comfortable talking about the things I used to love, praise Jesus!! I know being in jail, I can only talk about it to my loved ones, kid's friends, but my walk in here is proof. God knows and I know so I talk with confidence about the Lord. I am as bold as a lion because I know God knows the motives of our hearts, thank You Jesus.

I'm also taking a regular college class, transforming of my mind has begun. I have to feed it new things, so, I can start to think differently. I'm aware that it's a war every day between demons, so I got to stay prayed up. Yes, it's easier in here I believe, my Christian brothers keep an eye on me, and yes there is temptation, I don't partake, that in itself shows growth. I must stay focused on Jesus ... God knows best. He knows my needs, I thank Him for the drive to get better.

I sing songs of praise, more love, more power, thank You Jesus! I really, really enjoyed your card, it's confirmation that I'm on the right path. I have a passion to bring the message and its power to gangbangers. I like to tell them about Paul, there is so much misconception about the Word, thank You Jesus. Our mission is to save souls to share the message and I'm actually in a good/great place to do that. I just pray God keeps my motives pure, and He keeps putting people like yourself in my path. Rooted in the Word, I believe I cannot go wrong. *James 1:2* – "**Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds.**" *Proverbs 27:6* – "**Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.**" A real friend tells you the truth even when it hurts. I taped your card on my wall, it's motivation to my walk.

Foot's Bible Study Notes

1 Samuel 16:1-18:4

Sometimes our plans - even the ones we think God has approved - have to be put on hold indefinitely. Like David, we can use this waiting time profitably. We can choose to learn and grow in our present circumstances, whatever they may be. (16:19-21)

Viewing impossible situations from God's point of view helps us put giant problems in perspective. Once we see clearly, we can fight more effectively. (17:26)

People may try to discourage you with negative comments or mockery, but continue to do what you know is right, you will be pleasing God, Whose opinion matters most. (17:28-32)

John 8:1-30

When others are caught in sin, are you quick to pass judgment? To do so is to act as though you have never sinned. It is God's role to judge, not ours. Our role is to show forgiveness and compassion. (8:7)

What does it mean to follow Christ? As a soldier follows his captain so we should follow Christ, our Commander. As a slave follows his master, so we should follow Christ, our Lord. As we follow the advice of a trusted counselor, so we should follow Jesus' commands to us in Scripture. As we follow the laws of our nation, so we should follow the laws of the Kingdom of Heaven. (8:12)

People will die in their sin if they reject Christ, because they are rejecting the only way to be rescued from sin. Sadly, many are so taken up with the values of this world that they are blind to the priceless gift Christ offers. Where are you looking? Don't focus on this world's values and miss what is most valuable – eternal life with God. (8:24)

Psalms 110:1-111:10

You can't straddle the fence, calling Jesus, "Just a good Teacher," because the Bible clearly calls Him Lord. (110:1-7)

Christ will never abuse His divine position, and His reign will be forever. (110:4)

All people were being held in slavery by sin until Jesus paid the price to free us – giving His life as a perfect sacrifice. Before Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin, people were not permitted into God's presence (the most Holy place). Now, all believers can freely approach God's throne through prayer and have God in their lives through the Holy Spirit. (111:9)

Proverbs 15:5-10

Sooner or later the earnings from the sinful will bring trouble. If it's your outlaw lifestyle, most of us have already experienced that flash in the pain of ill-gotten success. Sure we may think we have it going on but for how long? It's always been a short amount of time for me before God has acted and taken everything from me. The only way to a lasting success is through and with God. Bottom line work for and earn your stuff honestly and legally and then no one can take it from you. Do things the right way ... God's way.

As we grow and travel through life, we are offered many different options of paths to travel, and many of us, myself included travelled the wrong paths for many years. Thankfully, through turning our lives to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we can freely travel the right path ... God's path. Once we realize this option, we are also made aware of the fact that if we should abandon the right path we will receive severe consequences if we refuse to hear and obey the Spirit's guidance.

“Foot” Notes

Hello to all you Overcomers, just thought I'd give you an update. Due to the grace of God and D.O.C., my gypsy spirit got a surprise ride and relocation to a new abode. At 4:00 a.m. on February 6th, the ever elusive "Big Foot" was rolling down the highway to parts unknown. Kind of a flashback to my long since dead lifestyle of overnight travels and travails. So, we end up in my new abode with lots of positives, back to two man cells, washers and dryers, but the best is the new chaplain for he's been down similar roads as many of us, he's a survivor. This was my first service attended since 2008, I had quit going because of all the "religious" folks attending. You can image my joy when testing the waters of the new service/yard when all that showed were Christian men – Praise God! Amen! So, it's been three weeks since I've been here (as of writing this) and I've easily counted the obvious blessings but still digging the pearls out of the negative stuff that's happened – trust me I will find them. Long story short God's still handing out blessings upon blessings. Love to you all short and tall. Don't ride faster than your angels can fly, mi amigos ... Vaya con Dios

I Was That Soldier

By W.R.

You took off Your robe
Your crowns of gold,
To fulfill the prophecies
That were foretold.

You came into the world
That You created,
Where You would be crucified
Accused and hated.

You exchanged Your throne
For a wooden cross,
So You could save
Those who were lost.

You exchanged Your crown
For a crown of thorns,
And discarded all the glory
That You had worn.

You exchanged Your robe
For a robe of flesh,
To live amongst us
And to conquer death.

You walked amongst us
A carpenter by trade,
And at night You would pray
Under the stars You made.

You came down from heaven
To die for our sins,
And we betrayed You
At the end.

You brought us the truth
But we rejected that too,
We chose the darkness
Over You.

You came to our world
And the people You created,
To show us love
But we still hated.

We had You arrested
For committing the crime,
Claiming to be God's Son
And being Devine.

You claimed to be the Messiah
Who had come in the flesh,
And I cried out to crucify You
Like all the rest.

I was there in the garden
The night You were arrested,
And Your disciples deserted You
When their faith was tested.

I heard Peter deny You
Not once but three times,
When You were being judged
Though innocent of any crime.

I saw them mock You
And spit on Your face,
Place a robe upon You
In shame and disgrace.

I saw them bow before You
You claimed to be a King,
But we did not understand
The peace that You would bring.

I saw You walk by
Carrying Your cross,
On Your way to Calvary
To save the lost.

I saw You stumble
And fall to the ground
And I cursed You
Like all the others around.

You tried to get up
But You could not rise,
So I kicked You
In the side.

I gave Your cross to Simon
He was a strong lad,
To carry for You
And he looked kind of sad.

Then I spit upon You
With hatred and scorn,
I even gambled for the clothes
That You had worn.

I was that soldier
Who cast lots for Your robe,
I took it back to Rome
Where it was sold.

I was that soldier
Who tore off Your clothes.
I was that soldier
Who struck the first blow.

I was that soldier
Who ripped open Your flesh,
The law required forty lashes
But I gave You one less.

I was that soldier
Who ripped out Your beard,
You looked like a sheep
That had gone under the shears.

I was that soldier
Who gave You a crown
From the thorns You had created
Before man was around

I was at Calvary
The day You died.
I was that soldier
Who pierced Your side.

I was that soldier
Who nailed You to the Cross.
And You said, "Father, forgive them,
For they are lost."

I was that soldier
Who guarded Your grave.
I was that soldier
THAT YOU CAME TO SAVE!

Jesus

What Others Are Saying...

"I just wanted to write and say thanks. You've been here through your words and story, insightful and inspirational to me. You have truly been blessed by our Father to write and see what you see and share with us. Thank you for the birthday card and please thank the others for me, maybe I can come by and do it myself upon my release." - J.S.

"I send strong prayers over that way for the continued great newsletter. I love the whole thing, and my favorite parts are the great testimonies on the great things that God is doing in those lives. It brings me closer to the Lord more and more by the love God gives to those I read about in your newsletter. I also love the art and poems. Thank you so much for your hard work in serving the Lord." - P.G.

"I wanted to write to you and the rest who signed my birthday card. It is a little late for me to write but as they say ... better late than never. The card came as a surprise and was a blessing. I think it is a testament to how God is working through your ministry team that God's love flows through you all to remember or observe the birthday of a fellow brother that you don't know at all. I just want to lift you all up and say good job!! I know God is well pleased with you all and may God bless you all continually in every endeavor in your ministry." - B.R.

Overcomer's Testimonies

I want to share a brief testimony and what has been laid on my heart by the Holy Spirit about my smoking cigarettes.

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." (Romans 8:28-29) And we all know that the Holy Spirit is in us as well.

I want to give praise to God now for His mighty power in taking those cigarettes out of my life! I had such a hard time turning my will over to Him. I fought back and forth against the Holy Spirit. I was standing against it all, not trusting Him in faith which opened an even bigger gap for satan and as a result I was sifted. In **Luke 22:31-32**, Jesus predicts Peter's denial, ***"Simon, Simon, behold, satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren."***

I hope and pray that the body of Christ will receive this message about leaving defiled things alone.

The Overcomers for Christ have been faithful in sending all of us encouraging words for seasons. Now I want to share with you all some big news in my life. On July 22nd I'm going home! After serving my sentence of 11.25 years in here it's starting to sink in. I took my release photo yesterday ... WOW! That had my head spinning a little.

So, at 3:00a.m. this morning, the Lord kept kicking my bed to get up to write to you all and thank you. It really does bring me joy hearing from you all there but also seeing God's kids at work.

It's important that we, believers, not the world and all of its garbage, encourage each other with our testimonies and the Word of God. So, I'm going to cover a few Scriptures that most of us have read many times before but God's Word is powerful, right? In **Hebrews 4:12-13** not only is God's Word living and powerful it says everything is uncovered and laid bare before God. Yes, it sounds a bit scary. Why? The old you, all of the plotting and screaming we used to do or still do lays exposed and the flesh doesn't like that, right? Now take a look at **John 3:18-21** but specifically **verse 20**, ***"Whoever does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed."*** Right there it tells us that our sin doesn't like to be exposed BUT God says that everything is laid before Him. That should actually take a big load off of our shoulders, it did for me.

I want to tell you briefly, back in 2003 I was at the end of my rope. I was strung out, depressed and very lonely. I dug a hole so deep for myself that the walls were caving in. Does anyone out there remember or still relate to that torment? I lost everything ... AGAIN! I really felt like I couldn't go on anymore. My wife was gone, my kids were gone ... everything except the very breath and heartbeat in my chest was gone. I thought I was looking at the rest of my life in prison with no family support at all because so many times before I let them down. I was broken. Little did I know that it was at that very moment God finally had me where He wanted me, right where He could begin to make changes in my life. No not me being in prison, but at the end of myself. The past ten years has been a challenge with some bumps in the road. God IS faithful though ... **Philippians 1:6** - ***"Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."*** You see, even though your redeemed and bought with the Blood of Jesus we ALL have brought some baggage with us and the process of sanctification can be long and painful BUT God loves you so trust and believe! I want to close by encouraging you all to please read, meditate and live God's Word from **Colossians 3:1-17**. - R.N.

Easter Word Search

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Altar
Ascension
Ash Wednesday
Baptism
Bible
Calvary
Christ
Church
Communion
Crucifixion
Easter
Faithful

Holy
Hymns
Joy
Nativity
Palm
Peace
Prayer
Rejoice
Resurrection
Sunday
Trinity
Worship

Ministry Tithes & Offerings

It takes the body of Christ working together to create, print, assemble, and mail this newsletter every month. We thank each and every one of you who have sown a seed into this ministry. None of this would be possible without the generous financial support from people who believe in this ministry. By sowing your financial seed into this ministry, you are helping us reach out to those incarcerated by offering them hope, love, and encouragement. You are investing in reaching lost souls, encouraging new believers, and spreading the Word of God. ***"A man's harvest in life will depend entirely on what he sows."* – Galatians 6:7**

Any tithes or offerings that you would like to make to the **Overcomers for Christ** ministry, please make your checks or money orders payable to Living Word Bible Church, in the memo section put 'For Overcomers for Christ'. Mail them to Overcomers for Christ P.O. Box 42023, Phoenix, AZ 85080. Your donation does qualify as charitable contribution on your taxes. If you have any questions, please call or write Wade Anderson.

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Green Thumb

By J.H.

I can only plant the seeds
The growths on Him
Tend the soil,
Let my light discourage the weeds,
My actions way louder than words,
Let the conduct of my walk,
Discourage the worms.

Bring the water myself,
Don't wait for the rain,
Let the Father Himself take the pain,
When a plant dies and withers away,
Planted on good soil,
Living water runs beneath me,
Studied up with God inside me,
Satan's tactics cannot defeat me!

Survivor

By A.D.

Lost in the night, out of mind out of sight,
Haunted from my past, looking for a path to lead me right.

Stuck in a nightmare that's reality not a dream,
Another dead on arrival livin' a life as a dope fiend.

Lookin' in every direction, searchin' for love and affection,
Judges laying us down on election,

And now I'm filled with depression,
Except of the suicide tendencies as my obsession.

Getting down on my knees I pray,
Lord grant me the privilege to survive another day.

Catch my tears in Your hand, turning them to glass before they hit the ground,
Giving up is not an option so I guess I'll stick around.

Quoteworthy

"When you blame others, you give up your power to change." - Robert Anthony - author

Help us be better stewards by sending your change of address when you move to help reduce unnecessary waste and expense

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