



# Into the Light

*All things are possible with God*  
July—August 2017

## Why Shouldn't There Be Hope

By Bob Van Domelen

*This year marks 20 years of this newsletter and it seemed appropriate to share with you the very first main article (May 1997). Please note that some connections/organizations are no longer in existence – I have marked them with an \*.*

It was Thursday morning, December 12, 1988, and I was walking out with my family from the halfway house where I had spent the final months of confinement. My feelings at the time are no easier to describe now than they were then. Free. On parole for ten years but physically free.

Too much has happened in the past nine years to describe here yet some feelings remain—feelings begun even before my time of confinement. Those specific feelings are the underlying reason for this newsletter, *Into the Light*. I am going to share a few of them with you now as a means of introduction and definition.

Early one morning I was conscious of the fact that the dream I was having was more real than previous dreams. In that dream I could see a man walking toward me. As he got closer it became apparent that I was that man.

Around my neck hung a cardboard sign with two words boldly printed on its surface—*CHILD MOLESTER*. For some reason, I knew that the words were not meant as condemning but almost an announcement or advertisement. And in an instant I saw the words to mean being available as a sign of hope to others who had become sex offenders.

A voice within me immediately cried out to God, “Why me?” The response was almost as brief. “Who better knows the pain than one who has been there?” This was not exactly a message I cared to hear. My idea was to do whatever was needed to satisfy society and then put the past in a deep drawer and lock it. God was not only suggesting the drawer be opened but that the contents be on display.

I knew that I did have a choice in the matter. I could have said no. A few heartbeats later, I was surprised by the answer coming from my reluctant lips. “If you truly want this, you will have to prepare me and protect not only me but my family as well.” There was a silence to my request—not the silence one might have associated with rejection but of agreement.

In 1993 Regeneration Books \* asked if I would be interested in writing a booklet on child molestation from the point of view of an offender. It took over two years for *Darkness Now Light* to be written and produced, but the

small work continues to find its way into the hands of those in prisons or others interested in ministering in this area. The booklet doesn't pretend to offer all the answers. However, what it does offer is critical. It offers hope.

There are few weeks that go by without a contact from someone dealing with child molestation. These are from parents and friends concerned about someone they love who has been arrested. Some hope Broken Yoke provides a residential treatment center as an acceptable alternative to incarceration. But all are seeking a way to help the offender find the most important kind of freedom and healing, the freedom from the darkness that dwells within.

As the mailing list of inmates to *Into the Light* increased, God reminded me of the importance of personal witness. He also reminded me that my own healing process truly began when I stopped isolating myself from people I genuinely cared about. Others could not do what I needed to do for myself but they were critical to the process. I was not alone. Others were making the same journey and that reminded me of the wonderful conversations shared while walking the prison grounds. No one consistently led nor did the same people always follow. We walked alongside one another lending support and encouragement.

*Into the Light* is meant to be a link of that same kind of support and encouragement. Ours is a society which holds no hope for the child molester. If there is to be hope, then we ourselves must accept this gift from God and hold on to it.

Ours is a society more inclined to give stiff and even life sentences (and some of you are under such sentences). The majority, however, will return home. It will not be a welcoming world but I have learned that with time the healing process I am experiencing does touch those around me. We can share those things with one another and learn to look beyond. We will not survive if our goal is to be what other people expect us to be because that would mean becoming a repeat offender. Our goal is to become what God called us to be on the day we took our first breath. No easy task but no one's life is easy if it has value.

I won't attempt to offer you a finished, glossy product with this first issue because I am far from finished myself. The words I offer in this portion of *Into the Light* will be as honest as I can make them. You will need to pray about what you read, asking God to show you what is yours. Trust God to do that because He wants all of us, offenders, friends and family, ministers, and therapists alike to listen for Him in all things. The hope we seek is the gift He gives. □

20  
YEARS

*In the early editions of this newsletter, a question was posed and answered by readers of Into the Light. The first question was:*

## ***“How do you find peace despite your surroundings?”***

When I am consumed with self and being busy, it is very hard to find peace. But when I open myself up to God and abide in His will, not mine, I can really experience peace. (Tom)

*God is in control of my life and if I stay in the Word I will be in complete safety. No one can threaten my life in Jesus. I also know He has promised restoration to me (Joel 2:24-32) and I thank Him every day for that restoration and keep His praises on my lips night and day and meditate on His words day and night. (Bob)*

What God has shown me is that peace is not an emotion, it is a decision to take God's word as the final authority on every situation we encounter. Once I choose to do that, I can be confident that no matter what I face or where I may be, God is certainly capable of coming through for me. See Col.3:15 (Rick)

*For me the answer is found in our Lord Jesus Christ as I make up my mind to stop trying to run from my problems. As a minister said on one of his tapes, "You can run from Our Lord, but when you do, you will be running right into Him." (Ray)*

It is in light of all that God is doing in my life that I find peace despite my surroundings. I know that this is my time for healing. I desperately needed this time alone with God to handle these complex problems in my mind and emotions. (Kevin)

*I recently asked my bunkie if he ever has fun and his comment was "We're in prison." That does not mean we can't have fun. I don't like being in prison, but I know some wonderful people here in prison. Having fun is part of peace and inner contentment. (Jim)*

I must praise the Lord even in the time of hurt and pain. I still glorify the Lord in the face of the shame of my past and stand firm in knowing that Christ has indeed forgiven me and will bring overcoming victory as I walk humbly and faithfully with Him. (K)

*I find peace as I commune with God in prayer while watching the sun rise on a cool Spring morning. It shows that God is in control and by His Holy Spirit I can overcome another day for Him. (Jim)*

It's hard to find peace in here. It is hard but that is why it is good to know Christ. Because when you are down and have no one to turn to, Jesus is always there to help you. So during the day I talk to Him and He helps me find the peace I

need to do this time. I also listen to some good Christian music on my radio every night. This gives me a lot of peace. If you let Him into your life, you will have an inner peace with you all the time, so ask Him in today. (William)

*Although I do not "enjoy" my surroundings, because of a growing ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ I am experiencing His peace. See John 14:26-27. Peace only comes as I continue to be open to the healing which God brings to my life and as I allow Him to continue to probe my heart and I respond. I am privileged to have a small Christian group here to deal with issues of child molestation. It is not always easy, but I have no peace if I do not continue to deal with the issues with which I am confronted. (Dan)*

A way I find peace in my surroundings is I have written our little church at \_\_\_\_\_ for a list of intercessory needs with which to pray for and in praying for them, I am built up daily. My peace and strength keep building—I wonder just how much further it will go. Is there a limit? (Bob)

*The love of Jesus Christ and God helps get me through the day. I try to keep them on my mind all the time. I do a lot of Christian reading and studying. I also write a lot of other people. Writing helps me deal with the day's boring activities, especially if it is fictional writing. (Larry)*

Life is full of difficulties but the Lord showed me something about them not too long ago. I learned that the primary cause of my emotional suffering was not environmental but instead due to a lack of patience. The Bible teaches that patience allows one to go through such difficulties without this kind of unhappiness. See James 1:2-4. For me, part of being patient includes turning my cares and worries over to a loving God and trusting Him for a good outcome despite the circumstances. The Scriptures tell me how to do this in Philippians.4:6-7; 2Timothy 1:7; 1Peter 5:6-7; Isaiah 26:3; and Proverbs 3:5. I find that when I follow this advice, I receive "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." (Harvey)

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## **Your Support Matters**

**Please consider financially supporting this ministry. *Into the Light*, a newsletter unlike any other, is made possible solely by your donations. Send contributions to**

**Broken Yoke Ministries  
PO Box 5824  
De Pere, WI, 54115-5824.**

**All donations are tax deductible and will be acknowledged. If you are unable to support this effort financially, please support it with your prayers.**

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*All things are possible with God!*

# Our Prayer Corner

Prayer is an incredible gift we can give one another, for there is no better thing than to lift our lives, hopes, and dreams to the altar of the Lord.

## Let us pray . . .

- First and always foremost, for our victims, that each day for them is a new day, a day without fear, and a day of healing.
- For each of us, that we remember to give thanks to the Lord for all that He has done for us – for His love, mercy, forgiveness, and protection.
- For those who feel God has abandoned them, that they experience the presence of God in those around them willing to give witness.
- For those facing the uncertainties of reentry, that each day reminds them of God's love – especially when things seem desperate.
- For those in reentry like Dave, that the witness they share gives hope, understanding, and motivation.
- For all who have supported *Into the Light*, that this newsletter continues to be blest with their prayer support.
- For chaplains and chapel staff, that they continue to serve as a gateway for those seeking God.
- For victims, that they might regain power over their lives and walk in freedom.
- For treatment personnel, that they never forget that their success is based on the manner in which they encourage and shepherd those in their charge.
- For this ministry, that Broken Yoke Ministries continues to be blessed with the financial support needed to meet basic expenses like this newsletter.
- Finally, for those who are still abusing and are reading this newsletter because God made that possible, that they will do whatever it takes to stop the cycle of abuse and harm caused to their victims.

## A Prayer for Hope

Heavenly father, I am your humble servant, I come before you today in need of hope. There are times when I feel helpless. There are times when I feel weak. I pray for hope. I need hope for a better future. I need hope for a better life. I need hope for love and kindness. Some say that the sky is at its darkest just before the light. I pray that this is true, for all seems dark. I need your light, Lord, in every way.

I pray to be filled with your light from head to toe, to bask in your glory, and to know that all is right in the world, as you have planned and as you want it to be.

Help me to walk in your light,  
and live my life in faith and glory.

In your name I pray, Amen.

## Beyond Step One

By David

I have been told that getting out of prison is Step One in the right direction. But as one who is now out of prison, I can tell you that it's not going to be easy out there. You will find as I did, that very few people believe in second chances for a convicted felon. You will also see that background checks are instantaneous and are used for everything. If you are blessed with support, relish whatever support system you have in place and work to cultivate it. For some, once you are identified as being a sex offender, you will be identified with the worst of offenders no matter what your offense.

Over time, I learned to do the following: Be positive and never believe yourself to be the kind of person the hypocrites of the world will believe you to be. Remember that Jesus was hated, and then scorned even by his friends. Learn to return positive for negative, because that is the only thing that will pay off, and then not even right away. But cultivate it.

I was able to find a few in prison whose values were stronger than many of the people I knew in the free world. These people took the Bible seriously, especially the parts about the value of forgiveness and of not judging 'lest you be judged.' The prayer groups I attended saved my life. I also attended AA because I saw my choices as part of a sexual addiction. Although that group did not know my charges, I substituted sex for alcohol when giving otherwise non-risky testimony. Some of the inmates I met in prison were serious about their recovery and were also some of the best people I have known in my life.

I took stock of material in *Into the Light* and firmly believe in the power of prayer. God was always with me but when I did not take the time to be with Him, I sometimes felt Him to be absent. God has proven over the years to be my only true source of security, especially during times of trial. For me, trials are often like being in a cauldron resting on flames with God refining me, making me better; stronger.

I believe it is true that every person you know will eventually fail you in some way. Recognize during those times of feeling alone that Jesus is carrying you in His arms so trust Him completely. Remember that despair is of the devil. The world we live in seems one day to be filled with despair and the next day with hope. Become a force of hope because it will do the most good coming from those of us who are least expected to provide it.

For I know the

*Plans*

I have for you,

declares the *Lord*

Plans to *Prosper* you

and not to harm you

Plans to give you

*Hope* and a *Future*

-Jeremiah 29:11

**Broken Yoke Ministries, Inc.**

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***A Little Humor . . .***

Every year, Smitty and his wife Martha went to the State Fair. And every year, Smitty would say, "Martha, I'd like to ride in that there airplane." And every year, Martha would reply, "I know, Smitty, but that airplane ride costs ten dollars, and ten dollars is ten dollars."

This one year Smitty and Martha went to the fair and Smitty said, "Martha, I'm 71 years old. If I don't ride that airplane this year I may never get another chance. "

Martha replied, "Smitty, that there airplane ride costs ten dollars, and ten dollars is ten dollars."

The pilot overheard them and said, "Folks, I'll make you a deal. I'll take you both up for a ride. If you can stay quiet for the entire ride and not say one word, I won't charge you, but if you say one word it's ten dollars." Smitty and Martha agreed, and up they went.

The pilot performed all kinds of twists and turns, rolls and dives, but not a word is heard. He even does a nose dive, pulling up 15 feet above the ground, but still not a word. They land and the pilot turns to Smitty, "By golly, I did everything I could think of to get you to yell out, but you didn't."

Smitty replied, "Well, I was gonna say something when Martha fell out, ...but ten dollars is ten dollars!"

