

2nd Chance Christian Newsletter

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

Redeem Your Time

October 2003

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I have been receiving many letters from guys getting out after spending many years in Prison. So far these letters indicate that no one has prepared themselves for their return to the free world.

Many of the men writing me are claiming to be Christians but yet they seem to lack the understanding of what it means to redeem the time you've been blessed with. Yes I said blessed with. If you don't look at your situation as a blessing from God and look for the blessings in your life then you don't have the necessary understanding to give your will over to the will of God.

If you truly believe that God is in charge of your life then you need to be willing to go through what ever you need to and be led by Him to get you through it. You need to understand that God does know best and won't allow us to suffer needlessly. The reason I say needlessly is because sometimes we need to suffer so we look to God for His wisdom and

guidance. We need to suffer so He can get our attention. Most of us wouldn't have ever given our lives over to God in the first place if we didn't experience pain and misery in the beginning.

Look, if we knew how to live on our own we wouldn't have sought out God in the first place. If your getting this letter for free it means you're in Jail or Prison and what your doing isn't working for you either. The Lord uses pain and misery to reveal to us our need of Him. This is both physical and emotional pain. In His infinite wisdom He knows what will be just the right amount of pressure to do the job. It's kind of like the life of a diamond. First there's all kinds of pressure coming from many different directions. Too much pressure and the stone gets destroyed not enough and the stone isn't of very good quality. Then someone polishes it and examines it to see the best way to cut it to get the most value out of it. The process is long and tedious

but the experienced stone cutter has a vision of the finished product from his years of experience with other precious stones. He knows what it takes to end up with any thing of value and what will cause it to crack and break thus making it useless. He knows when it's time to cut away useless material or when to polish and buff it into a finished piece to get the most value out of it.

We are the diamond and the pressure on the diamond to form us are the situations and circumstances in life. God is the stone cutter. We want God to change us, but we don't want to go through the cutting and polishing stages in our life. As a result we rebel and try to cling on to our old familiar life (the outside that God needs to remove). Sometimes we don't understand what God is trying to do in our life. We may not see why certain things need to go.

I know I tried to cling on to certain relationships because I didn't see how destructive they were. I

still failed to completely give my will over to God. I would ask the Lord to come into my life, but still wanted to tell Him what was best for me. I didn't understand and sometimes didn't want to. It is very painful to give up people and things in our lives especially if we haven't got much left to loose. The faith I demonstrated when I asked Christ to come into my life I also needed to grow or

allow God to cut and shape me in the ways He knew best. I would describe it as a blind faith but faith is not blind. **Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**

God in His infinite wisdom must be allowed to work in our life to move us to the next place He has for us to learn another lesson. During these lessons God is both

revealing Himself to us and building up a relationship with us so we can become stronger in our faith. We need to know to rely on God for all our needs.


One of the problems that inmates have after they are released is they don't want to let go of things that are not of God therefore God is not allowed to take control of the individuals life. A lot of people don't understand

Contents:	
Redeem Your Time	1
Monthly Prayer	4

Special points of interest:

- Free: English & Spanish John & Romans
- Free: Blessed Promises Booklets (English Only)
- Free: ABC Salvation Booklet
- Free: The Destructive Power of Secrets Booklet.
- I have a few English Gift & Award and Spanish Bibles for free. Just write and I will mail out what I have and put any extra names on a list and mail others out as I get them in.


Even though this material is primary free for inmates and rehab patients we will try to fill any request to send material to any lost or backslidden soul as God provides



that when a child of God won't let go of something God has to first reveal to that individual the destructiveness of that particular sin before God can go back to leading them the way He would prefer.

We must keep in mind that God wants us to give up all areas of sin not just the ones we don't want anymore. We can't pick and choose our sin. I wanted to give up drugs, but still wanted to whore around. Even when I had periods of sobriety in my life I still had turmoil because of the sin in other areas of my life. I covered a little of this in one of the other Newsletters but I want to be more specific about what the Word of God says.

1 Corinthians 10:21 *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.*



ous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit*

Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear

We cannot be a child of God and live like the Devil and have peace with God. It is not possible.

Matthew 6:24 *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

God will not bless things that are not of Him. This change we all talk about happening in our lives after we get arrested won't come without the hands of God grinding and polishing the rough edges away to reveal the precious stone underneath.

What helped me the most in jail this last time was the fact that I really wanted it to be my last time. I didn't really know what to do but believed the Bible {Holy Word of God} held the answers. That meant not playing cards,

of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest

of God.

2) Obey the Word when something is revealed to us. The above verses can be applied to the life of the believer in Prison. Don't just not get involved in things that aren't Christ like, but don't have anything to do with people that do. The Bible says come out from

watching T.V. or what ever other distraction the world threw at me. when there was a Church service or Bible study. I had to go whether I felt like it or not. I had to go through the polishing and grinding the Lord had in store for me. This is done several ways

1) Getting into the Word: **Ephesians 5:1-21** *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covet-*

is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the

the world and be separate from the unfruitful works of darkness.

2 Corinthians 6:14 *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*

We are accountable now that we

know better. By the way, the Bible says we're accountable even if we don't know all the things of God. We won't be able to claim ignorance when we stand before the Lord. We have the Bible, the very Word of God so there is no excuse not to know what He expects from us. Once we accept Jesus Christ we have access to the truth and the truth shall be in us. Following the world is not what

Christ has in mind for us.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

This means we need to separate from the vain conversations of the jail life. This means we don't need to partake with the conversa-

tions of who has the best junk or get phone numbers and names of dealers in case we need them when we get out. This kind of life style in jail does not redeem the time for when you get out.

There is no God given reason for inmates who have accepted Jesus Christ as there Lord and Saviour to be talking about their old life style unless it can be used by God to help lead another soul to Christ.

If it is part of your testimony of how you were brought to your knees and to your spiritual breaking point then it glorifies the Lord. Just boasting about what you got away with only glorifies sin in your life and God won't bless you for that. If your old sinful life style is so fun why do you keep trying to quit. People try to minimize their situations, but yet when they're in front of a judge they have to lie to convince the judge or parole they don't have any problems. If your life is so good stay where your at. Let the rest of us move on. The Lord will respond to a broken spirit: **Psalms 34:18** The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. The Lord does not like a proud spirit: **Psalms 101:1-8** <<A Psalm of David.>> I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. A forward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

If we decide to find out what is pleasing to the Lord and then do it we can experience those changes that we all desire in our hearts. Once we have the power of God doing what we can't do He will be able to accomplish the things required to get rid of those rough edges, scars, and flaws in the diamond in the rough.

The belief that we can some how get away with something is against the Bible: **Luke 12:2-5** For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no

more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

We didn't get away with any thing before we got saved why would God let us get away with something afterwards?

Another thing to better prepare ourselves for being released is to practice these principles of separation before we get out with family and friends on the outside. Don't plan on getting back together with people that are part of the reason why you're there in the first place. Don't even let yourself be put in a position to need a ride

or a place for a couple days. Hook up with a Church or a Christian organization long before your release date. Don't wait until the last minute to make plans. Don't let discouragement win out. Satan knows how to trigger depression and other mental illnesses.

We can't forget that the temptations we run across when we get

released are spiritual. Preparing one's self for the spiritual warfare that takes place when your released is also part of redeeming your time. When I said you were blessed with being incarcerated I mean you have been given a break from the rat race to build up a relationship with the Lord and come to a greater understanding of what He has in mind for you to serve Him. I know a lot of you think you could do that if you were released. I have a question? Did you do that the last time you were free? I didn't think so. I know God had to put me behind bars a few times to get me to take Him serious. Consider it a time out period like parents do with their children when they make them sit in a chair for a while for misbehaving.

I know that the last time I got locked up I really needed the time to get my head on straight. To let my system clear itself of the drugs in it and get on my knees and genuinely turn to the Lord and seek Him out in my life. The desire to place the Lord first was there but I

still needed time to build up my faith in Him doing what the scriptures say He will do. The Bible tells us He will meet all our needs. Not necessarily what we think we need but what The Lord with His omniscience knows what is best in our life to bring us closer to the image of Christ: **2 Corinthians 3:18** *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Not what we were before we come to the Lord: **1 Corinthians 2:14** *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

This spiritual discernment can only come from the Lord through the Word of God: **Matthew 4:4** *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

Luke 11:28 *But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*

Romans 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

2 Corinthians 6:7 *By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,*

Ephesians 6:17 *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*

Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

If you are released in the same spiritual state as when you were locked up it is not God's fault.

Monthly Prayer

Dear Lord, I pray for the needs of the men behind the steel and concrete that they will allow you to come into their lives with the conviction necessary to bring about the spiritual changes that will cause them to come to repentance and thus salvation. Ultimately yielding the authority in their lives to your will for the child of God. Lord I ask that these men would recognize the need in their life for a Saviour to guide and lead them with Divine guidance. I also pray for the Holy Spirit to work in ways to prepare them to be used by God to lead others to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Lord in all your omnipotence you can use any soul in any place to bring you glory. Thus giving hope to the souls in Prison to be used to bring others to salvation giving honor and glory to the Lord. I ask this in Jesus precious name Amen.

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