



FISHERS OF MEN

"And he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." - Matthew 4:19

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Fishers of Men Ministries
Jesus Loves You!

A Newsletter For and By Saints of Christ in Prison

GOD WILL OPEN DOORS

The Testimony of Brother Robert -- Minister of Music

I was brought up in a house that was everything a child could want. I was the seventh child of my parents and I was brought up in church all of my life. When I was on the streets, I enjoyed being a Dee Jay. However, I was led astray by something we all think must have (friends).



After the trial and being sentenced to life in prison, I had nowhere to turn. I was in a gang and I would tell guys all kinds of things to do and to say. I would go in the chow hall and take food off people's trays. I did not care if I was killed. I wanted to die. I was just too much of a coward to kill myself. Then one day I was busted with shanks in my cell and I was sent to segregation. While I was there, I was having trouble dealing with why I was in prison. So the devil took that opportunity to come to me and say this. "Where is your God? Well, Well,

Well! Here we are in prison, in jail, where is your God now? Your mother just had a heart attack and your father is hurt from going to work to get money to send to you. Your brothers and sisters don't hang out with each other anymore. Your kids have been taken and you have a life sentence. You should just go on and kill yourself and save everyone a lot of trouble."

You know that the devil picks the perfect time to come to you and make everything sound logical. And I was going to kill myself. To put the icing on the cake, he said, "You are a Christian, so you will be with God anyway." That was a lie and I recognized it. If I kill myself, I was going to Hell and that thought made me get up and start crying right there in the cell all by myself. I got up and I turned on the TV and there was a church service on. The preacher said that he had a lady that he wanted to speak and that she had spent over six years in prison and there was a man that had done three years in prison. Just as he said that, the lady came running down the aisle and she came up to the podium and started to testify and she was praising and glorifying God. The guy was so overcome that he could not even get up. He just started shouting right from his chair. This told me that no matter what the problem is, God can work it out. So I got on my knees and I asked God, "What do you want me to do. I was raised in church and I think that you are real, but not many people in here believe in you. I am all mixed up and I have no life. I am in this gang. God tell me what I am to do. I just don't know."

After I had prayed and committed my life to God, I started to write music. I just took it as doing something to keep going. A few months after I had gotten out of seg, I was in the basement at Stateville when we used the basement as a place of worship. I was down there waiting for a service to start and I got on my knees and started to pray and I cried to God and said, "Look, I am still in the same position and I am not going anywhere. I am praying and I have not heard from you. What's up? I love you and I need to know that you have heard me." And as I cried, I felt so lost. Then I heard someone coming. I got up and as I was walking around, this guy I knew came to me and said, "Do you want to learn to play the keyboard?" I said yes I did. Then he said that on one condition, he would teach me. He said that if someone else wanted to learn, I could not charge anyone who wanted to learn. So he started to teach me and I learned fast and the music filled my soul. I started to play for church and in a band.

One day God told me in a dream that I was going to be one of the greatest gospel artists in the world. I was kind of perplexed because I am in jail with a life sentence. But as I read Joel 2:25 that states, "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten," I knew that it was possible. So I started to train so I could become the best musician that I could be. I read every book on the subject that I could get my hands on and looked at every magazine and went to the library to read more.

Now I am one of the best in the world and I know that even though I am still in prison, I will be one of the best in the world and because I listened to God. I am now also a great song writer. I sing and I have not changed my heart toward God. I am too close to Heaven to turn around. One thing that I learned is that when things look the worst, that's when God is getting ready to bless you. So don't give up when things are rough. Just know that when you have lost your case and the judge has turned you down, when your appeals are over, and there's no where to turn, just know that it had to happen so God can bless you. Depend on God and hold on, your blessing is on the way! ***In Christ's Love, Brother Robert***



Changes

By: Brother Larry H.

**Made some changes in my life.
I promise to do things right this time.
I mean it for good and forget about the bad
I'm sick and tired of this game you play with fire**

**You'll get burnt by the flame.
I hope the Lord forgives me for my sins
And helps me break these chains.
I'm going to start a new life again.**

THE LAST DAYS CHURCH AND GOD'S MESSAGE TO HER **REVELATION 3:14-20 -- By: Chaplain Allen**

The Church of Laodicea is commonly thought of as the Last Days Church. I want to draw your attention to three (3) things which show us that the Laodicean Church is (prophetically speaking) the Church of the end times which will experience the Rapture.



- 1) The Return of Jesus Christ -- It is a prophetic pointer when the Lord introduces himself to this church as, "the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev 3:14) . This verse points to the return of Jesus Christ in great power and glory when he will come with His church (Rev. 19:11-15). All those who belong to Him are part of this coming again.
- 2) His Judgment Seat – The second prophetic pointer to the end times character of Laodicean Church is when the Lord counsels this church to: "buy of me gold tried in the fire, that though mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." (Rev. 3:18)

When are we in danger of being put to shame? When will the moment come when everything will be revealed?

We can count on this happening directly after the Rapture, but before the judgment seat of Christ! That is where your secret life will be revealed – a place where you will either earn rewards or suffer loss.

Apostle Paul tells us in 1 John 2:28, "And now, little children, abide in Him (Jesus) that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him in His coming."

- 3) A Reference to Riches: The final prophetic pointer comes as a warning to the Church at Laodicea: "Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." Revelation 3:17

This is definitely a sign of the last days! It reveals the Babylonian character as found in Revelation 18:17. As you look around today, this very character has partly infiltrated the church. Although people in the church know that the Lord will appear very soon for the Rapture, many Christians are not seeking Him, but rather are pursuing earthly materialism. They insist on financial security, savings accounts, retirement funds, vacation homes, etc....laying up for themselves riches instead of treasure in Heaven.

Consider what the Spirit of God said through James about riches: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." James 5:1-3

What message can we learn from these passages? Who will the Lord spue out? "So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold or hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Revelation 3:16

Here it would seem that there are only two possibilities: 1) He is speaking to born again, Spirit filled believers or 2) He is speaking to nominal Christians who merely attend a local church, but do not live for the Lord.

One could take either position and make a case for who the Lord is speaking to, but I believe that the Lord is speaking to both:

A Warning to Nominal Christians

Although these people appear to be God's flock, their actions speak something different. Although they are very near to the promise of eternal life through the preaching of God's Word and the faithful Lord is present in their midst (see Matthew 18:20), they persevere in their unbelief. They have not taken any decisive step to receive Christ or serve Him. One can see why the Lord would call such people lukewarm. The warning here is NOT everyone who names the name of Jesus will inherit eternal life and God's Kingdom *see Luke 13:23 and Matthew 7:21)

What do they lose when the Lord spues them out?

- They lose the name of God over their life (Revelation 3:12)
- They lose the Garment of Righteousness (Romans 5:17)
- They lose the Bread of Life (Revelation 2:17)
- They lose Eternal Life (Revelation 21:8)
- They lose the Tree of Life (Revelation 2:7)

A Warning to Born-Again/Spirit Filled Christians

It is altogether possible for these people to become lukewarm in their faith, their beliefs and their walk with the Lord.

What happens to Lukewarm People?

- They lose God's Power: "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power." (Revelation 2:26) Without God's Spirit, we can do nothing.
- They lose God's Light: "Or else I will come to thee quickly and remove thy candlestick out of its place." (Revelation 2:5) Without God's Light, we will be unable to find our way.

(Continued on the next page)

Where are you today in relationship to the Living Savior?

Will you be among the ones who are lukewarm and will the Lord have to spue you out of his presence on the Day of Judgment?

We are living in the time when the enemy is doing everything possible to deceive church going folks. He is wanting them to become comfortable and useless in God's kingdom here on Earth. He wants them to think they have all the time in the world to get things right with God.

Where are you today? God tells us to examine ourselves. 1 Corinthians 11: 28 & 31

If you are not right with God today, I urge you to make things right while you can. Jesus is coming soon to your door...what will you tell Him? Revelations 3:20-22

Just a Thought



"And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone." 1 Thessalonians 5:14 --

It has been sometime since I have written a "Just a Thought" article. However, as I received the February/March edition of the newsletter, I had been gently and lovingly reminded of the above scripture. See, within this last edition, a brother lovingly made me realize that I was being idle. I am grateful that God had allowed him and his article to jerk me back to attention.

As I read this article, I was extremely touched for this brother admitting that he was not much of a writer; chose to write and he wrote about how the newsletter helped, encouraged and gave him hope when he seemed to have none. He acknowledges the editor who seems to glow with the light of Christ, never giving up on us and making it a priority to see that we all receive this newsletter. And the brothers who share their testimonies, studies and revelations with us, then I notice the line wrote to his sister in Christ and how he felt Just A Thought was powerful. Perhaps it was, but it was God inspired and God directed. Just as I believe this one is inspired, directed and (somewhat) impressed by God. See, I say somewhat impressed, for I've been out of sorts for sometime; struggling and doing my very best to persevere in God's ways and with His guidance. So as I read and re-read the brother's article, I heard God tell me, "See, I haven't left you and encourage you to share with your brothers and sisters, confess your fears. Haven't I promised you comfort so that you can comfort others in their time of need?" (Reference 2 Corinthians 1:4-7)

My greatest struggle thus far began with one of the greatest blessings God has allowed me to have. After almost five years of incarceration, God opened the door for me to participate in a work release program. Although I was discouraged from applying because my conviction was for reckless homicide and I was listed as a violent convicted felon (car accident or not). Five weeks after applying for the program, I was approved. Then, the enemy got busy. He used others to push me on all sides, yet I stood on God's word, "He can open doors no man can close," I read and studied every scripture on God's grace and I prayed for those that the enemy was trying to work through...realizing that it wasn't the people, it was the enemy. Finally, I was transferred to serve my last 31 months in work release.

At first, it was no different than the previous institution, with the exception that I could wear my own clothes and a staff member took me on a shopping trip once a week to purchase personal items. Because of the length of time I had left to serve, I worked in the kitchen. Once in a while it would get a little depressing watching others go out on passes, go to work and take 48 hour passes home, but I still had time to read my Bible, study and lead a Praise Dance group that performed dances to songs like "I can Only Imagine, This Man, Shackles, etc.

Then the time flew by, soon I was scheduled to get my state ID, I was sick, I was so nervous and anxious that I wasn't sure I wanted to go. Then came the time I was allowed to take two (2) three-hour passes a week and go home for 48 hours. This brought all new anxiousness. I questioned if I could ever relate to anyone, there are things I won't be able to share with anyone, the man God put in my life deserves this far more than I and I was afraid he would think I was bragging, etc. Just one fear and anxiety after another. Responsibilities came, working a full-time job, chairperson of meetings, attending outside meetings, helping fix things in the building and recently being placed on Residential Council...All these things brought on changes and I had never been too good with change. It was alright if it was my decision, however, with not wanting the change and relying upon myself to handle them, cover them, challenge them, I found myself getting completely off balance; less time reading God's Word, praying as I drifted off to sleep, never really listening, not having quite time.

I definitely couldn't admit this to anyone...I would be weak. So those who have always been my encouragers, spiritual helpers, my loved ones, brothers, sisters, family in Christ, only heard I was struggling, never really any details. Because first of all, if I admitted that I was struggling to the point I felt off balance, then I have to admit it to me. Weakness has never been very acceptable to me. How could I possibly be the encourager if I was weak.

Lately, however, I've been reaching out to God more. He has allowed me to see every little blessing that I was rushing by and failed to see. He's been impressing upon me that He has never left me (as His word states – reference Joshua 1:5b). Then today as I received the newsletter and read the article making mention of Just a Thought, this brother showed me I was being idle and God has work for me to do. My fears of change and what others may think are not nearly as frightening as God's wrath and disappointment of me. So, just read Joshua 1, as I am remembering now to do. Thank you Brother Larry for being God's instrument in getting me to notice my idleness.

Just a Thought...Being willing to accept reprimand/rebuke, being willing to look within and listen carefully if your spirit tugs and always know that you're never alone in what you may face. Take it from me, weakness is not being too weak to admit you are weak and that you need help...It is written, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." 2 Cor. 12:9

With love and prayers, Your sister in Christ, Missi

TO MY SPIRITUAL FAMILY IN CHRIST



I was lost for a long time before I dedicated my heart to Christ. I stole from my family, disrespected my elders, sold drugs, gang banged and that turbulent existence eventually led me to being shot. Instead of realizing how blessed I was, I glamorized the "war wounds" as if I cheated death. I actually cheated myself out of life because less than two years later, I was arrested for murder and subsequently sentenced to two consecutive life terms without parole.

I was hurting badly, lonely and terrified about my options: Do Time or Die. I toiled with that long and hard, and the pain only got worse. I went to church service on January 1, 2005, and it changed my heart forever. I realized the way I thought, behaved and loved were all wrong and the tears fell. I used to be so worried about how people perceived me and here I was crying tears in front of complete strangers. I started finding my way back to Christ slowly, but the "old me" kept resurfacing and I kept backsliding. The poem I wrote, "Spiritual Warfare," explains the struggle between flesh and spirit.

This is 2008 and the struggle is still present, but the change in me is now evident and I thank God for saving me. I can't say that I'm sinless, but I can say that I do sin less. Change takes time and believe me it's time well spent. The only advice I will offer is this: Trust in God, accept His will for your life and get out of His way. Believe me, it will restore order to your life.

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33. Be encouraged and may God bless you tremendously. *Your Brother in Christ, Marshall*

A Message from Momm

I am so thankful for each of you every day. God has given you a gift to share with others. So, if God is urging you to share your experiences or minister to others through this newsletter, please answer the call. That is what Fishers of Men Prison Ministries is all about...inmates ministering to other inmates. Did you ever in your wildest imagination dream that you would one day be a minister? In addition, if you wish to share your testimony with others, please send it to me and it will be used as an article and added to the testimony page of the website for all the world to see. Good News: This month, Missi is coming by on her weekend home to help prepare the newsletter...another joy of this ministry.

If the newsletter has been given to you by someone else, please write Fishers of Men Prison Ministries, c/o Bethany Church, 5403 North Second Street, Loves Park, IL 61111. Include your name, number and address, and you will be added to the FOM mailing list. Our request is that when you finish reading your newsletter, please pass it on to someone else for their enjoyment and spiritual food. If your family wants to learn more about this ministry, tell them to visit our website at: www.fishersofmenprisonministries.com



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5403 North Second Street

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