

## 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 Prison Ministries  
Jesus Loves You!

A Newsletter For and By Saints of Christ in Prison

### ~~GOD'S WORD~~

## KNOWING IT, PERCEIVING IT, UNDERSTANDING IT

By Brother Rick



There is no easy way to be a Christian, especially for those of us living in a prison environment. Our walk with Christ requires a lot of effort, sacrifice and commitment. Christianity also involves knowing God's ways, seeing it at work in our lives and understanding its power to bring us to maturity in our spiritual lives. Solomon realized this thousands of years ago and recorded the Book of Proverbs "...to know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding." (Proverbs 1:1-2)

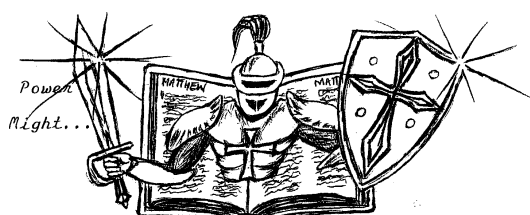
The heart of the Christian life is to live the way Christ taught and lived. Though it sounds simple, it is not. Often we face the temptation to throw up our hands and say, "I'm not Jesus! I can't do the things He did!" Still, Jesus Himself said that we should, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:48 KJV) Perfection? How can Jesus ask that of us? It's impossible! But wait. Let's look a little deeper into this word "perfect" and what Jesus was teaching.

The Greek word "teleias" is used in this scripture. It is a derivative of "telos" which means "to set out for a definite point or goal; a point aimed at, as in a limit; the conclusion; a result' a finish line' a purpose; to complete, as in labor, growth, mental and moral character." Does this remind you of another scripture?

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and to count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; If by any means I attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as thought I had already attained, **either were already perfect**; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:7-14 KJV)

Christ never for one minute thought that we would be as perfect as God is! But He knew we could make it our "goal" to have God's purpose and plan accomplished in our lives. He also knew how much God loves us and wants us to "grow up" in Him! With His help we can become spiritually mature and complete in our walk with God.

To assist us, God gave us His word. If we will be dedicated to reading the Bible and praying for His word to "perfect" us, God will give us knowledge, perception, and understanding to live the life He intends!



Drawing by Brother Anthony

## God Will Open Doors Part II

I was doing God's business, but there was one thing that was wrong. I was still in a gang. It did not seem that bad because after all they were letting me go to church and letting me serve my God. A lot of the guys said just stay with us and you can serve whomever you please.

But I figured that wouldn't do because everybody would see me going to gang meetings and doing wrong. That was not the way of the Lord. So I told God, "Look, I know that you have looked out for me before, but now I really need your help. Now Lord, you know I have done some very bad things and everyone called me the 'stuff starter.' You also know that I have violated many people (done them harm) and I know that they are waiting for me. I am going to trust you to protect me." Now I did not have to do this because everything seemed to be going smooth and no one was getting hurt, so why rock to boat? Well, the problem was that I was serving two Gods...the God of the gang and the God of All.



So as Elijah told the prophets, "...choose this day who you will serve," I had to make a decision. If God be God, serve Him, but if the gang be god, serve them. Well, it was not a hard decision to make. I knew that I was going to serve God. So I told God, "I am going to the gang and tell the chief that I don't want to be in the gang any more. I can get killed, but I'm trusting you (God) to be in Heaven and welcome me there. Please make it fast." So, I went to the cell of the chief, praying as I went. I told him that I was not going to be a part of the gang anymore; and he looked at me, held out his hand, and said, "God bless you brother," and let me go. I could not believe it. I was so happy and I praised God for that.

One thing that I have failed to mention was that there were a lot of guys that had it in for me for all the bad things that I had done to them. These guys were killers and I knew it. So at dinner time when I was getting ready to go to the Chow Hall, I looked down the gallery and saw these guys waiting for me to come out. Word had already spread that I was not in the gang anymore, so I was free game. As I got ready to go to dinner, I kept thinking that I could not stay in the cell, because that would make it seem that I was a coward. So I prayed as I walked out of my cell. When I got to the end of the gallery, I did not see them. I went on to the Chow Hall. When I got there, no one would sit with me. I was all alone at my table. I waited until everyone left before I got the courage to go back out. As I went out, there was no one out there. As I entered the gallery, I heard someone say, "We kill all chumps and tricks." I heard them and when I looked down on the bottom gallery, I saw them. They told me to go to protective custody or there would be a mess in the cell house.

I could not do it! The next day I was given a shank by one of the rival gang members that liked me and he said to take it with me. But I could not do that. Just as I was going out, a man from another gang told me that I was going to have to pay them a pack of cigarettes a week to live in their cell. I told him that if I was going to pay anyone, it would be my old gang. Then my cellmate told me that he would pay because he wanted me to stay in the cell with him because I was teaching him to be a keyboard player. I told him he was not going to pay anything for me. Now, I was really in a jam because when I told this guy that I would not pay, he said that was okay...he would see me on the yard.

As I was going to the Chapel, a man told me that my former gang wanted me on the yard. I saw the chief out there and many men with him. I thought that this was it...I was going to get killed now. So, I got the shank from another guy that was trying to help me and I went out on the yard.

As I got out there, the chief called the guys from the rival gang over. He told them that if they bothered me, it was going to be bad for their brothers that were not in their gang anymore. The same guys that wanted to kill me were the ones that stood by me when this happened. God had softened their hearts.

I praised the Lord for being there for me and I promised Him that I will never try Him again. I know now that God will do just what He said. He will "not forsake His own or have them begging for bread." Believe me, God is the real thing and I tell you to wait on Him and trust Him. I did and I have never regretted it for a minute! Praise God!!!



Minister of Music for God  
Your Deacon Brother Robert





## *Finding Answers Through Compatible Scriptures*

Many times, questions do arise that we have no apparent answers for. Regardless, we must search out the answers in the Bible, God's inspired words. Finding a verse or two to support a given view is done easily enough, but what of the Spirit the words were initially intended in? Our Lord tells us that with two or more witnesses (for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Mt. 18:20) he is with us. I have used that format to establish my use of scripture...two or more verses (even passages) that are in agreement – not to what I am saying wholly, but in line with God's Word.

A single verse can be disjointed to agree with a book of words, but it makes it no more true. In our soul (spirit), we can sense the truth of what we are saying and how we use any number of verses to support the matter...even when it shows the matter to be the opposite of the norm as a person sees things. We search out an answer, believing a truth will be at its end, in the hope that our lives will be that much better and that we are that much closer to our Lord.

As it is (was) pointed out, "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth, so do we actually question the concept of creation or just the timeline we perceive. Yes, we could quote Ps. 90:4 or II Peter 3:8, as they both share a timeline. It is at this point that a metaphysical/philosophical debate can be made on the concept of time. Let us not forget the repeated use of the phrase, "and the evening and the morning were the...(in Gen 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31)," as this too sets a framework of/for time. It is through such verses that we limit our perception of what God is doing. The point I am making is that we are limiting the value of what God did and continues to do. He wants us to draw closer to Him and continue to seek out knowledge and wisdom. While doing so, we are to impart what we have learned, thus learning more.

Consider this wisdom (a world of emanation) is the origin of all the worlds and the root of creation. The root is clothed by its branch, concealing it from the lesser branches, thus making them inferior to the root. On the whole, the root is truth and wisdom (our foundation: I Cor. 3:10-11; I Tim. 6:17-19; II Tim 2:19-21) is where we gain our sustenance and helps to keep us moving forward in the service of our Lord Christ Jesus.

As a branch, we are grafted (Ps. 11:17) and being thus, we now have a sure source for knowledge and wisdom. The Holy Spirit is a mediator going to us and to our Holy Father...the true source of all there is.

So, what I would like is for each of you to consider the following scriptures as you study God's Word as the terms "root" and "branch" is used: Pr 11:28; Jn 15: 2, 4-6; Rom 11:16-22; Eph 3:17-19; Col 2:7; Mal 4:1. Example: "The on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with job and these have no root, which for a while believe and in time of temptation fall away." Luke 8:13 – By having no knowledge or wisdom, the belief fades, so we share that which we have and it helps to strengthen the individual and reinforces what is in us. Therefore, in our giving to the other, we gain that much more within ourselves and making it better as we witness.

Jesus Christ (Jn 15:5 – our True Vine) wants us to be true witnesses of His love, might and power. Let us be prepared as He intended not what man's doctrine (I Cor 1:12) feeds us. Paul, with a warning, tells us this much. He instructed us all as he was able on the matter. We are the vessels (Acts 9:15-16; II Tim 2:21) to insure His message is heard by all who will listen.

*In Christ,  
Brother Clyde A*

## Message from Momm



It is just unreal how God is working in this ministry. I am so blessed to hear from so many of you and know that our Savior is moving in your heart and life as you witness to other inmates. I am also thrilled to welcome Executive Director Sister Bailey as she has some great ideas to move this ministry forward.

Great news this month! We applied for and received our not-for-profit mailing approval from the United States Postal Service. That will be an almost \$200 savings for each mailing. Also, this month we were thrilled to receive a sizable donation to the ministry. Also, when I was at the office supply store recently, they were selling out their stock of legal sized paper because they were changing vendors, so I bought all they had for .84 a ream. I bought enough paper for almost a year. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Get yourself and your heart ready as God is moving. If He 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? You are! ...And your articles are needed to minister to those in need of Christ's saving grace. Also, if you wish to share your testimony with others, please send it to me and it could be used as an article and added to the testimony page of the website.

If the newsletter has been given to you by someone else, 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. Tell your family to visit the website at: [www.fishersofmenprisonministries.com](http://www.fishersofmenprisonministries.com) for more information about the ministry. Love in Christ, Momm

*If you are looking for a Bible Correspondence Course, I recently received information that Pastor Steve has a Correspondence Course available for you. You can write him and request his study information at: Rev. Steve Holder, Think God Ministries, P.O. Box 211, Elizabethton, TN 37644 - They are not for pen pals, only a Bible Correspondence Course.*

### STARTING A REVIVAL OF THE SPIRIT!

Like the Prophet Jonah, I've been called to teach and preach the Word of God ...having not given this credit to myself...yet by many Christians, circumstances, providence, Holy Spirit confirmation and even unbelievers over a period of many years since my justification. Sadly, I have done just the same as Jonah and have run away from my calling, time and time again only to procure the disciplinary judgment of God into my own life and of those around me - yes -- our sin affects our loved ones, family, friends, children. Just as Jonah's disobedience affected him and all those on the ship with him. Jonah, Chapter 1, praise God for His goodness, mercy and longsuffering, that we may all proclaim with Habakkuk 3:2 that in His wrath to remember mercy... and in that He certainly has, because in His delivering the full measure of His wrath upon the body of sin, in Christ, it is at that very place we have received His richest and greatest mercy! The Bible says that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:29) We are most certainly living in perilous times, and it is high time to be more serious about the things of God and Holy affections as never before, a corporate, or large scale revival is long overdue in the assembly of God's children. For if the righteous will be scarcely saved, what does that say for the ungodly. Though revival must begin in the hearts of individual believers with a fervency to exhort, admonish and encourage our brothers along with self to examine his/her faith, to be continuously reminded that even of those things in which we are already established. As Peter says in 2 Peter 1:1-15, we are ever striving for that holiness in which we are called and we must shine as Moses did coming off the mountain. That is to say, when people behold us, they will say, "surely, he has been in and is in the presence of almighty God. We are challenged to shine to the point that our mere presence convicts the sin of those around us, as the Israelites couldn't even look upon Moses! Do people look at us - you - me - and say, God is truly working through him/her?" I challenge us all to be even more sold out for Christ than ever before!! **Jesus is my Soulmate! Brother Ray**

