

# “Letter From M.O.M.”

The **Monthly** newsletter of **Moving On Ministry**

[WWW.MovingOnMinistry.com](http://WWW.MovingOnMinistry.com)

[www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon](http://www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon)

**Volume 59** – July, 2010 (Published since Oct. 2003)

## “I Can Only Imagine”

As you receive this volume of **Letter From M.O.M.**, we are continuing with more of the testimonies of “How God Changes Lives” as well as some more of our own written articles. We can truly say that the “high” that many of our inmates have been trying to get through the wrong methods, is being surpassed by those putting God in control of their lives.

Watch our website

[www.MovingOnMinistry.com](http://www.MovingOnMinistry.com)

We have also become affiliated with International Prison Fellowship

[www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon](http://www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon)

## Fellowship

We have now communicated with about 80% of the prisons in California, as well as writing to Africa, Egypt, India, Nepal, Ireland, Tennessee, Minnesota, Idaho, Texas, Arizona, Washington, S. Carolina, Florida, New York, and Michigan. We have also had communication thru email as a result of our web sites. **We would like to know of the impact we are having and also cherish letters from inmates or relatives to the churches to let us know how we are doing**

## Intentions & Wishes

The intentions of this newsletter are to allow an understanding of jail & prison ministries. It is our intentions to get input from those incarcerated as well as those “free” to visit. Life experiences of the faith and fellowship from those locked up in the facilities are always desired to let others know of the value of “visitation”. I am certain that each of us have many stories of the miracles God has done in our lives.

Our wishes are that we would have a list of supportive churches that individuals might look forward to attending, once released.

A list of services, such as housing, employment, and counseling services, as well as some individuals available for friendly fellowship are also much needed items.

God’s Word says if a man stumbles, how can he continue lest there be another to help him up. **Ecc. 4:10** “For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him [that is] alone when he falleth; for [he hath] not another to help him up.” **Proverbs 24:17** “Rejoice not when thy enemy falleth, and let not thy heart be glad when he stumbleth:” **John 11:10** “But if a man walketh in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.”

Please help us with input for this newsletter as we strive to serve God. We appreciate any articles or input.

## Addresses to contact our Ministry Volunteers

Moving On Ministry  
Chaplain Bob  
P.O. Box 6667  
Visalia, CA. 93290

Moving On Ministry  
Spanish Ministry  
P.O. Box 6667  
Visalia, CA. 93290

Moving On Ministry  
Women's Ministry  
P.O. Box 6667  
Visalia, CA. 93290

Ask for a copy of our complete  
"Resource Supplemental Letter"

**Volunteer Work:** I do it like I am paid great and dearly for it. For surely, the price Christ paid, was dearly and great!

### Replenishing

God's Word promises to restore the years of the locust, or more simply the years previously lost.

**Joel 2:25** And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

### Letters that Express it All

We like to post real life situation, because God works in real lives and He is the one that gives "Eternal Life."

## Missing M.O.M. ?

We must constantly remind individuals that we need to be notified of changes of address or facilities. If we get returned mail (about 20 each month), we remove that individual from the files. If you have, or you are going to be moved, please drop us a note to keep your file active.

### Attitude

We get a lot of letters, and requests from inmates. A lot write to request pen-pals (usually of the opposite gender). We are not a pen-pal service (and definitely not a dating service) but do have a Resource List of pen-pals. The individuals write the pen-pal to ask what they look like, often requesting a picture. We love Andrea's answer; "What difference does it make, we are pen-pals." Some write to request Study Bibles and Bible study courses. We do get some of them to respond with 'Thanks' if/when we send the Resource List or current newsletter. For the most part, we just get individuals asking for things. The gratitude is often not there after the fact.

We also have those that we have established close relationships. These are the individuals that are 'sold out' to God. These are the individuals that put God first above everything. We are expressing our thanks at this time to these individuals that are truly extension volunteers of M.O.M.

## How We Look at Things

I was talking to an individual the other day and asked how they would feel if someone killed one of their children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren. She replied to me, "I would want to kill them." I said, "What about if they were not born yet?" She asked "What do you mean?" I said, "suppose that child was not born yet, but was aborted?" She just stood in silence. Now she had a different reality of what she had just said, and realized the one doing the killing would be one of her children or grandchildren.

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## Our life should reflect what fills it – Jesus Christ

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### Changing Paths

First and foremost, allow me to send out my trust respects in full. I've been writing to **Moving On Ministry** for 4 years now. And for the most part it made me a better individual, at least I think it has. I still remember the first time I met you (Bob) in unit 41 (BWDF). It was in 2006 at the time I thought I was much too "hard" to talk to you. But to all of your readers, take heed to this message. I've been educated on both sides of these walls. I've spent over ten years in prison. And 5 terms the first 4 on my own, without "Christ." And if I knew then what I know now, life would have been much better. For you individuals that really want to have a more positive life, and a legitimate chance to walk with the "Lord Jesus Christ," I encourage all of you to write to **Moving On Ministry**. Chaplain Bob and the very insightful Sister Linda, can really help all that want to better ones self.

And keep in mind this doesn't happen over night and your faith has to come from ones inner self. And never give up on Christ, because Christ has always been there for us. Trust and believe that. Just allow His Word to enter your heart, and always remember John 3:16 and Psalms 118-8. just for starters. No one told me these things. I had to live there. I was a Northern gang member for 27 years, and in April 6, 2007, I paroled and moved from my hood. But, I was still an active member of the movement. But shortly after that Chaplain Bob and Sister Linda came to visit me at the mission and as I promised them in my letters, I gave Christ a chance and after 2 months of going to church, I made the choice of my life. Moving On Ministry helped me make that choice. Always keep an open mind. And trust in the Lord and He will help you build your integrity values. And for sure He will give you faith in His word. . . with this said I will excuse myself for now. I would like to thank all the readers that took the time to read this letter.

Art B.

Just a footnote: I will walk out of here in just under 60 days a 'free man.' My struggles will continue, but that is all part of life.

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## Recommended Reading

For the new Christian, or the individual desiring to know God, we would like to recommend the following reading:

**The Gospel of John** – This is a great introduction of Christ’s walk on Earth.

**The Book of Romans** – This gives an introduction of many of the Bible stories shared and helps build familiarity of Christ’s plan for our lives.

**The Purpose Driven Life** by Rick Warren – 40 chapters will change your life in 40 days

**Book of Proverbs** – Read one chapter a day with the chapter read being the day of the month. This will allow the book to be read almost 12 times thru the year.

**Ephesians 4 – 6** – This gives the pattern for life that we should live. All 7 S’s are displayed in these 3 chapters. We are given the purpose of the gifts, changing our character, husband/wife/family relationships, and the type of life we are to live and display.

**Men’s Relational Toolbox** – Another fine work by Gary Smalley with both of his sons adding to this book. This book avoids “male bashing” but rather teaches men to use and modify the inner tools they have to improve their relationships.

**Prayer of Jabez** – A truly fine first book from Bruce Wilkerson. This short book will change your mind about being disobedient to God by not taking care of people in need

## Sharing Your Testimony

There are 4 parts to an individual’s testimony;

1. What my life was like before I met Jesus
2. How I realized I needed Jesus
3. How I committed my life to Jesus
4. The difference Jesus has made in my life.

But in reality, those who believe in Jesus have the testimony of God in them; each of us needs to periodically share our testimony with others. The importance is not what you have done, but what God is doing.

1. Your testimony;
2. Your life lessons
3. Your godly passions
4. The Good News

I would like to add that we have shared many wonderful testimonies. Many individuals are afraid to share their testimony because they are not sure what to write or feel inadequate in their writing ability. I think all will agree, that the testimonies that move people are not the ones written from great minds, but are actually the ones written from a great heart.

God’s Word says in **Jeremiah 17:9** that **“the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”** When the heart is changed by Christ (salvation – separation – sanctification), it becomes the center of where God works from in our life. The testimony written from the heart is truly God inspired, as compared to the one that is a work of the mind. These are the ones that change others lives also, when shared.

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## Lighter But Serious Side

### 26 Beautiful One-liners

1. Give God what's right -- not what's left.
2. Man's way leads to a hopeless end -- God's way leads to an endless hope.
3. A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.
4. He who kneels before God can stand before anyone.
5. In the sentence of life, the devil may be a comma--but never let him be the period.
6. Don't put a question mark where God puts a period.
7. Are you wrinkled with burden? Come to the church for a faith-lift.
8. When praying, don't give God instructions - just report for duty.
9. Don't wait for six strong men to take you to church.
10. We don't change God's message -- His message changes us.
11. The church is prayer-conditioned.
12. When God ordains, He sustains.
13. **WARNING:** Exposure to the Son may prevent burning.
14. Plan ahead -- It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
15. Most people want to serve God, but only in an advisory position.
16. Suffering from truth decay? Brush up on your Bible.
17. Exercise daily -- walk with the Lord.
18. Never give the devil a ride -- he will always want to drive.
19. Nothing else ruins the truth like stretching it.
20. Compassion is difficult to give away because it keeps coming back.
21. He who angers you controls you.
22. Worry is the darkroom in which negatives can develop.
23. Give Satan an inch & he'll be a ruler.
24. Be ye fishers of men -- you catch them & He'll clean them.
25. God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.
26. Read the Bible -- It will scare the hell out of you.

## Lighter Side

Read out loud the text inside the triangle below.



More than likely you said, 'A bird in the bush,'! and. .

if this IS what YOU said, then you failed to see that the word THE is repeated twice! Sorry, look again.

Next, let's play with some words.

What do you see?

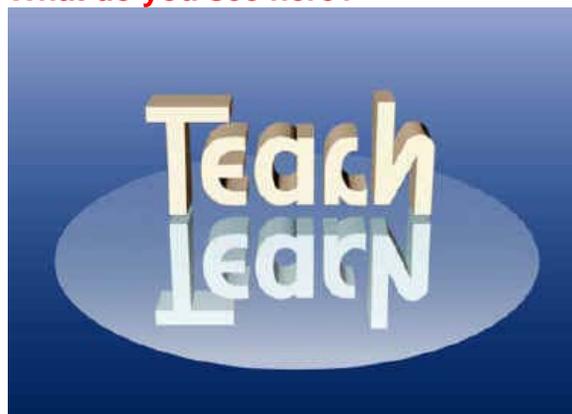


In black you can read the word GOOD, in white the word EVIL (inside each black letter is a white letter). It's all very physiological too, because it visualizes the concept that good can't exist without evil (or the absence of good is evil). Now, what do you see?



You may not see it at first, but the white spaces read the word optical, the blue landscape reads the word illusion. Look again! Can you see why this painting is called an optical illusion?

What do you see here?

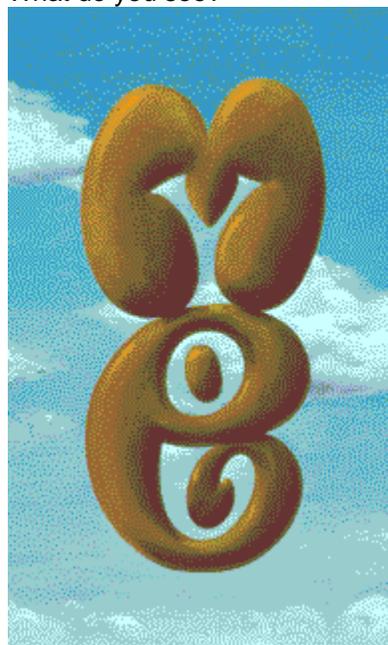


This one is quite tricky!

The word TEACH reflects as LEARN.

Last one.

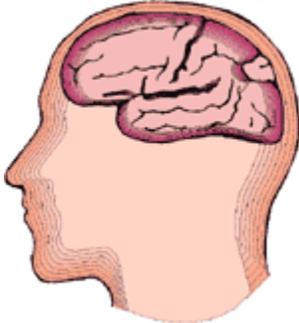
What do you see?



You probably read the word **ME** in brown, but.....  
when you look through **ME** you will see **YOU!**

Do you need to look again? *Test Your Brain*

This is really cool. The second one is amazing so please read all the way though.



### ALZHEIMERS' EYE TEST

Count every ' F ' in the following text:

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS...

(SEE BELOW)

HOW MANY ?

WRONG, THERE ARE **6** -- no joke.

READ IT AGAIN !

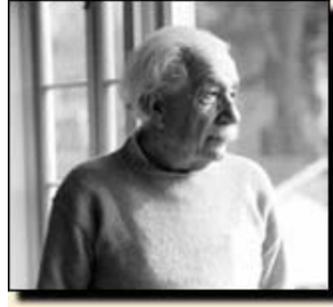
Really, go Back and Try to find the 6 F's before you scroll down.

The reasoning behind is further down.

The brain cannot process 'OF'.

Incredible or what? Go back and look again!!

Anyone who counts all 6 'F's' on the first go is a genius



Three is normal, four is quite rare.

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More Brain Stuff . . From Cambridge University

Olly srmatt poelpe can raed tihs. I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulaclyt uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid, aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the only iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh? yaeh and I awlyas tghuhot slpeling was ipmorantt! if you can raed tihs psas it on !!

## Chaplain Bob's Life

Many of those receiving this newsletter have asked for another printout of the testimony of Bob from past life to volunteer chaplain with jail and prison ministry and evangelism for church commitment.

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I would like to share a story of the seeds planted in my life and the insight as I look back.

The greatest influence in my life I would have to say was my earthly father. This man would do what ever he could to provide for his family. The greatest reference of his nature was my mothers dearly love always for him.

When I was probably 8 to 12 years old, I had a Sunday school teacher named Malcolm that worked on planting Godly seed in my life. As I look back, I am sure there was the appearance of the seed going dormant, or even dying. As I entered middle school years, I bounced through a variety of churches because of going with friends and relatives. Still, any seed that may have been planted was basically "dead."

As I was finishing my high school years, I started a job in a restaurant where I met a black man, Otis, that was the dishwasher. He let me know that he was an ordained pastor. I thought I want nothing to do with this man. Otis would take the garbage out to the room to empty and would stay a little longer as he pulled his New Testament out of his pocket and read for his break. Then (the nerve of him) he would come back in and share with me about God's love for me and God's purpose for my life. I would tell Otis that I did not want to hear about it. I explained that my relatives would use the Bible and religion to tear apart and slay one another. I further explained that my

feelings were that he read the Bible in the garbage room and that was where it belonged. God should have taken my life for a statement like that. I now am thankful that God did not remove my life on earth, because I would not have been going to be in His Heavenly presence. But God had another plan and had not given up on me. I was accepted to California State University Humboldt and moved to Eureka, CA. I have to admit that this was really God's country, but I still did not have a personal relationship with Him. As I looked for work, I found an opening in the service department of Sears. I was hired to do television and stereo repairs. The manager of the shop came to me and let me know that he was a pastor of a local church. Again I thought "*I'll stay away from him*" but that was not God's plan. I began to think "*either this man has something real or he is totally nuts.*" I decided that I would ask some questions, and so we would spend lunch together in his Volkswagen and discuss Bible reality.

In January 1971, at the age of 23, I finally told Him, **God I accept you as Lord and Savior and want you in control of my life but (1) do not expect me to go to some God forsaken country like Africa as a missionary, (2) don't expect me to work with youth, and (3) never expect me to be involved with inmates, jail or prison ministry.**

As I went on in life, thinking I had cut the best deal I could with God, he started to reveal to me that he wanted me to release some of those things "I" was holding on to and fully submit my life to Him. This happened over an extended period of time and it seems God knew just the right timing and speed for me to grow (you might realize

because He is the creator/builder). As I released those fears I had and let God have control of those objects, there continually were burdens being lifted. I now tell people that while people were getting high on weed in Humboldt County, I was getting high on the Spirit.

I became involved in teaching youth and running a youth group. While dealing with the youth, I noticed one principle that can be applied with our relationship with God. I took a group of youth out gold panning. All day long I watched the young men panning the gold. At the end of the day, I noticed the young ladies had the bottles of gold going home with them. When I asked how that happens, the ladies said that the men did it because of love and labored for the ladies. We actually get to take home the “Gold” at the end of “our day” while God was the one laboring for us all those days.

I had a friend that invited me to do jail ministry with him. I told him that I had told God “no” and he said that was probably a good reason to do it. I have been involved in jail/prison ministry for about 3 ½ years now and can truly say it is my greatest blessing that was almost missed because of “trying” to say NO to God. Later in life, God revealed His progression pattern for me to follow;

1. **Sin**
2. **Salvation**
3. **Separation**
4. **Sanctification**
5. **Soul Winning**
6. **Stewardship**
7. **Service**

Many people try to separate from the temptations of the world before receiving salvation. Others try to receive all God’s blessings (sanctification) before they have separated from the sin of the world.

Read Ephesians 4 thru 6 and see if you can see this pattern revealed. Notice that 1 John displays the same progression, as does Colossians.

Now to get back to the “*but*” three exceptions I *had* to turning my life over to God. “*But #3*” was not doing Jail/prison ministry. Well, I have been blessed with 3 1/2 years of involvement as a volunteer with what God has called me to do. “*But #2*” was to not be involved with youth ministry. I have volunteered as Sunday School teacher, Youth director, AWANA Club boys director at 2 different churches, and organizer for youth outings. The final one, “*But #1*” was to not go to some God forsaken country like Africa as a missionary. I had made this known to those around me and one Wednesday afternoon, I had a pastor tell me that he thought I would have my passport by then. I said “Oh, you read my testimony in the newsletter.” That evening at our church we had a guest speaker from Cameroon Africa. He then told of being involved with jail ministry too. As I went to talk with him after the service, he said he did not know why, but God told him to give me something – a snakeskin checkbook cover. Those that know me, know my snakeskin boots are a trademark. Four incidents in one day? “*OK, God, I will go.*” I said.

We then met **Bruce Wilkinson** in Tulare, CA, who had quit his ministry of **Walk Thru the Bible** and moved to Africa to start a ministry called **Dream For Africa**. We decided it was time to sign up

As you can see in the **Swaziland Special Edition**, we gave that “*but*” to God also, and were truly blessed by the experience. **Ask for the Swaziland Special Edition newsletter.**

## Linda's Life



What a great God we serve!!

When my husband asked me to share my testimony I had a picture of my mother and father and the small towns of Fowler and Selma California in my mind. We lived in a three room house with only a light bulb hanging from the middle of the ceiling. There was no plumbing, no bathroom but we did have a woodstove. The outhouse was a distance from the house. We drew water from a well until we graduated to a pump. Years later my "daddy" and "mama" added pipes for a sink and we thought we were rich. We grew all of our own vegetables, had to go out to the henhouse to collect the eggs daily and took care of the Coolidge Ranch consisting of irrigating, pruning, picking grapes, driving tractor etc.... It was the neatest experience. It was survival.

We did not get into town very often so when we did it was a treat. We would visit my dad's family in Tulare and my mom's in Visalia California. If we went to church it was for a wedding, funeral, Easter or Christmas that I could remember.

The earliest experience of any prayer that I could remember was an elderly lady by the name of Nellie Metzler and her husband Henry. When the Wizard of Oz would come out on TV every year they would pick up all of us

kids and take us to their house. Nellie would pray for our delicious chocolate cake and glass of milk while we sat to watch the movie on this big blanket that was laid out for us in front of the "color" tv. Color TV! Wow! To see color for the first time and listen to Judy Garland sing "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." There is just something about that song that stayed with me. I could picture myself singing, seeking for answers that would lead to a beautiful new world where there was no tears and everyone was filled with a joy and love for each other.

I did not realize that "Nellie" was put in my path to pray for me until 1992. Thank God that she was a prayer warrior. She was also the person that gave me this book called "All About Trees" and told me to read and I could travel all over the world anytime. Yes, I do love to read and write and encourage others to do so.

My father was a very hardworking man. He was also an alcoholic which led to the abuse of my beautiful mother. In my teens, during their divorce I started hanging around with people who were eight to ten years older than me. WRONG!!

Selma When I was 12 or 13 years old I was brutally and violently raped by a relative whom I trusted. Being dragged down a dirt field by the hair is like those cartoons shown of cavemen dragging the female. With a can opener to my throat and after fighting for my life I finally stopped when I felt this calm over me as if I was not to move anymore. (I am still alive. Thank you Lord!)

My heart was shattered, my mind was confused and the silent rage filled my being. Every person was a target of my fury. The twig of anger turned into a bush of bitterness. Finding myself "alone" in all of this ugliness I chose to "survive". I vowed that on one was ever going to hurt me again. I delved in new age not knowing that it

was leading to a nightmare of hell. I did not know any other way until the day I accepted Jesus Christ into my life in 1992. Praise the Lord!!

I did not care about anyone but myself. I wanted to belong somewhere so like a magnet all my friends were about in the same boat. I was living a wild and very dangerous and promiscuous lifestyle. Misery loves company. That is so sad that some people live life through a tunnel vision. They cannot see the whole picture.

I had my first child at 16, married at 18, had my second child, divorced by 22 and lived (not married) with my third child's father for another 7 years. During my first marriage I usually ended up by myself with my children. My husband at that time was a heroin addict of which I would go visit him in prisons all over dragging my children along with me.

I was at death's door at least 6 times either by being almost strangled, beatings, knifed, or shot, well, you name it. We lived in a little cabin in back of my in-laws. Actually it was my then husband's grandparents who raised him. Whenever Grandma would hear any screams he would try to cover my mouth so he did not have to confront any of them and yell back to her...."Nothing is going on. We are okay." [Liar, Liar pants on fire :-)]. I would get slapped across my face, onto the bed, his knees would be on my shoulders and I would get called every name in the book as he slapped me back and forth until I would get away which would land me next to the little frig, get slapped toward the stove then slapped to the floor. It was a never ending story. Usually happening on Friday or Saturday nights after he would come home and I would find matchbooks with from the Rainbow Ballroom or he would smell of perfume. It was always something. (That is if anyone remembers those "OLDIES DANCES".) There were always other

women in his life. I was no naive in what was going on all around me. One day I had just about enough and in self defense I grabbed the scissors where I had them up to neck and until I heard "Grandma's" voice then I pulled back and I was safe.....for one day.

Being in and out of prison is no life for children and thinking there was no way out I felt lost and hopeless. I did not go to church besides visit and never got connected. I finally chose to get divorced leading to dead end relationships that were like a revolving door, over and over again.

The relationship I had for seven years was a roller coaster of emotions. I carried all the excess baggage with me everywhere. This relationship was full of arguments, no trust and insecurity. I had one child from that relationship. My son was loved by everyone and was tragically killed with his best friends in a fiery auto accident. He was a marine and home for several weeks when this happened. It involved alcohol. The enemy never sleeps.  
Kings James 1 Peter 5:8,  
NIV version 1 Peter 5:8

If I had not known the Lord then, even the little that I knew at that time during my life, I shudder to think where I would have been now. I had two more children without their fathers in their lives.

During 1990 I moved to Visalia. The doors were opening in all areas of my life. I started working with the developmentally challenged, office, auto dismantlers and as a merchandiser working all over the valley. God sent several people in my path to encourage me. I was married in 1994, very involved in my church so when I was served with divorce papers it was as if I was going through the grieving stages of another death. I was devastated. In James 1:2-8 the scriptures speak of "when you face trials" not "if", for they will surely come. The only thing you have to rely on is to have faith and trust

in God. Like Jeremiah 29:11 and also Colossians 4:17 where Paul writes; Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

Well we have been given gifts, yes...You! You and I and we have to use them. It is like a nugget of gold. You use it to share the gospel and it increases in value everyday as you go out in obedience for His glory. It could be singing, using an instrument, reading to others, writing, sewing, painting, art, math, woodworking, ironwork, gardening...etc, etc, etc. Those skills are perfected and the giver of gifts will be well pleased..."he that is faithful in little will be faithful in much" What I am getting at is for you to look back at your childhood. What are your skills and gifts and how have you used them? What did you want to be when you grew up? Did you lose your dream? It has been said that the richest place in the world is the graveyard where people's hopes and dreams are buried along with them. The time is now! Do not wait a second longer. Pray for guidance in whatever you do. Maybe you will end up in Africa as my husband and I did. You do not know but I suggest you start getting prepared for this great adventure. If that train pulls up at your station I suggest you get on. Don't let that enemy put doubts in your head or allow him to set these words in your mind and heart like "I'll wait for the right time", "Maybe later", "I don't believe I am ready yet", or the classic:

"Look at you! Who is going to believe you, after what you have done!?" That dirty devil is the author of lies, deceit, confusion and the lord of the flies.

I am here today to write this because I know that we serve a great God and God loves me. As a young child I was robbed of my youth, joy and hope. When I realized that Jesus took it all for me I asked Him into my heart. He had to be the Lord of my life for the rest of my life. I asked for forgiveness and

gave up trying to carry that heavy load of guilt, anger, sadness and the pity parties that I was the host of and was the guest of honor. Like I said misery loves company. If you want to be a winner you have to hang around with winners. Think back at your life and ask God to guide you from this day forward. Allow your life to be filled with a joy that is so overwhelming that you cannot contain it and share it with everyone. You can have it now. Just ask Jesus in complete submission. (search your heart)

Lord, I am here today because I am a sinner. I repent of my sins and ask for forgiveness of \_\_\_\_\_ (tell Him now) I accept Jesus Christ as my savior and into my heart. I trust in you from this moment on. Give me a hunger for your word. Guide me in the gifts that you have given me so I may serve and share of You daily and whatever I do and say will be glorifying to You. Less of me, and more of You. I am a new creature in God's kingdom. I am royalty and will act upon it accordingly. May the words of my mouth encourage others, give me the wisdom to turn away from wrong and the strength to run the race and follow you all the days of my life.

AMEN. (There, was that so hard?)

### **December 15, 1992**

Woodland Drive Baptist Church Office  
Pastor Ernie and Margie Martinez

When I accepted Jesus Christ in my heart was the day that I said, "Lord, please take away this ugliness in my heart. I want to have joy and peace in my heart. I am sick and tired of being sick and tired. Then all of a sudden I said; (I was truly tired and desperate so I wanted to God to know that I meant business) " Lord if I ever see the person who hurt me I will tell him I forgive him and tell him of Your love." Then I said and if I ever see Nicky Cruz I will thank him thanks for his book "Devil on the

Run". Margie gave that to me. The Bible is the living Word. It made this hard headed woman see the light. I got to see Nicky in Fresno and he prayed for me.

Years went by as I noticed so many changes in my life and saw how I viewed "things". My pastor Isidro and Cleo Carrasco said to get rid of things in my house that were not godly and if in doubt get rid of it. I did as instructed. My eyes were open to all of the stuff that I was allowing into my children's lives. I had to ask for forgiveness from my children. I then got rid of all kinds of items and broke them up ( gods, idols) thousands of dollars of books and tore them up so no one would pick them up. If we give them to others or set them where another would pick them up and use then or read them, it is opening up the window to the darkness for them and we will be accountable.

Well, one day it happened. I was singing at a funeral and low and behold there he was right across from me. There was the man that had shredded my life into pieces. The first thought that came to me was "Okay Linda, finish singing and get out of here." I did get to see tears stream down his face under his sunglasses as I sang "Go Rest High Upon That Mountain" I started to leave when I heard a very clear voice tell me "What happened? I thought you were going to tell him about my love?"

???? Wow! I immediately asked for forgiveness and followed this person home and went up to him in front of all of his friends to ask him if I could speak to him

When he saw me it was as if he seen a giant with a facial expression that I will never forget. He walked around away from everyone and kept saying "please, don't look at me. I'm not worth the ground you spit on." I told him

that I thought about many ways to get revenge but that on December 15, 1992 when I asked Jesus into my life there was a heart change. I told him that I was there to tell him that I forgave him and wanted to be sure that I did not go to my grave or he did not go to his grave before I told him that I had repented of all anger and bitterness against him and wanted to be sure he knew Jesus too. He cried and said please don't tell me that. It burns like hot coals. He was like a crumpled, broken doll on his knees. I gently helped him up, hugged him and told him "I love you and now the ball is on your court. I serve an amazing God and I want you to know Him and let him be the Lord of your life too. Proverbs 25:22, Romans 12:20, NIV.

Romans 12:9-21

Asking for forgiveness does wonders and heals our heart wounds. It had to be real. It was life changing and the newness and the joy I knew at that moment I could not even describe. Psalm 18, Ephesians 6:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19

My present husband, Bob and I are growing closer.....The truth is ....At first it was a bit of a struggle for me. I would think "forget this" at times. When you are a Christian it doesn't mean that everything is "live happily ever after". It just means that we rely on God to guide us in our decisions especially when we "humans" get to a low point. When the storms come we are not alone, especially in blended families. There is so much more. I could go on and on about God's miracles in my life and the lives of others that I would love to share. You may write me. God Bless you all.

God is good all the time....All the time God is good.

In Christ Jesus, Linda.

## Shared by a doctor

A couple of days ago I was running (I use that term very loosely) on my treadmill, watching a DVD sermon by Louie Giglio... And I was BLOWN AWAY! I want to share what I learned... But I fear not being able to convey it as well as I want. I will share anyway.

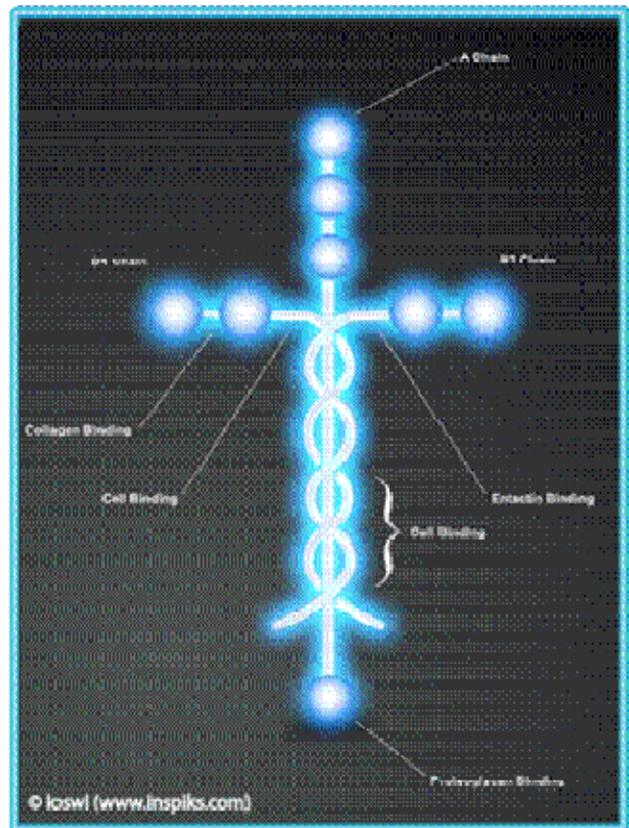
He (Louie) was talking about how inconceivably BIG our God is... How He spoke the universe into being.... Then He went on to speak of how this universe creating God ALSO knitted our human bodies together with amazing detail and wonder. At this point I am LOVING it (fascinating from a medical standpoint, you know)... And I was remembering how I was constantly amazed during medical school as I learned more and more about God's handiwork. I remember so many times thinking.. 'How can ANYONE deny that a Creator did all of this???'

Louie went on to talk about how we can trust that the God who created all this, also has the power to hold it all together when things seem to be falling apart, how our loving Creator is also our sustainer.

And then I lost my breath. And it wasn't because I was running my treadmill, either!!! It was because he started talking about laminin. I knew about laminin. Here is how Wikipedia describes them: *'Laminins are a family of proteins that are an integral part of the structural scaffolding of basement*

*membranes in almost every animal tissue.'* You see... Laminins are what hold us together.. LITERALLY. They are cell adhesion molecules. They are what holds one cell of our bodies to the next cell. Without them, we would literally fall apart. And I knew all this already. But what I didn't know is what they LOOKED LIKE.

But now I do. And I have thought about it a thousand times since (already).. Here is what the structure of laminin looks like... AND THIS IS NOT a 'Christian portrayal' of it... If you look up laminin in any scientific/medical piece of literature, this is what you will see..



Now tell me that our God is not the coolest!!! Amazing. The glue that holds us together..... ALL of us.... Is in the shape of the cross. Immediately Colossians 1:15-17 comes to mind.

*'He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible And invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in Him all things HOLD TOGETHER.'* (Colossians 1:15-17)

Call me crazy. I just think that is very, very, very cool.

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**Since the Pledge of Allegiance and The Lord's Prayer are not allowed in most public schools anymore because the Word 'God' is mentioned.....**

**> A Kid in Arizona wrote the attached**

**NEW School prayer :**

Now I sit me down in school  
Where praying is against the rule  
For this great nation under God  
Finds mention of Him very odd.

If Scripture now the class recites,  
It violates the Bill of Rights.  
And anytime my head I bow  
Becomes a Federal matter now.

>

Our hair can be purple, orange or green,  
That's no offense; it's a freedom scene.  
The law is specific, the law is precise.  
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.

Thousands of years before the world knew anything about laminin, Paul penned those words. And now we see that from a very LITERAL standpoint, we are held together... One cell to another... By the cross. You would never in a quadrillion years convince me that is anything Other than the mark of a Creator who knew EXACTLY what laminin 'glue' would look like long before Adam breathed his first breath!!

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"All things are possible for those who believe."  
-Mark 9:23

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For praying in a public hall  
Might offend someone with no faith at all.  
In silence alone we must meditate,  
God's name is prohibited by the state.

We're allowed to cuss and dress like freaks,  
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks..  
They've outlawed guns, but FIRST the Bible.  
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.

We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,  
And the 'unwed daddy,' our Senior King.  
It's 'inappropriate' to teach right from wrong,  
We're taught that such 'judgments' do not belong..

We can get our condoms and birth controls,  
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles.  
But the Ten Commandments are not allowed,  
No word of God must reach this crowd.

It's scary here I must confess,  
When chaos reigns the school's a mess.  
So, Lord, this silent plea I make:  
Should I be shot; My soul please take!  
Amen

## A PERSPECTIVE ON PAROLE

As the recently paroled (June 11) News Editor of one of the nation's few, and California's only, prison newspaper – The San Quentin News, Chaplain Bob has asked me to contribute a monthly column on parole issues. And being as the parole of today, as we know it, has plenty of issues, many of which I am even now dealing with on a daily basis, I find there is clearly a need for just such a column!

So in the months ahead you can expect to read about, in the M.O.M. Newsletter, the problems that I encounter, the answers to the questions that I will ask at the parole office, and how to go about finding and obtaining what few benefits are out there for parolees.

About me: I am 54, and homeless for the first time in my life, so I am dealing with many of the same issues that so many of you will be faced with at some point in time. Currently I live in a homeless shelter in Visalia, CA. And though it has been quite an eye opening experience these first few weeks of my freedom, I am truly grateful that through the good graces of our God, such a place exists for me to both lay my head and to eat my meals.

I am highly motivated to find a job and to rise above my present circumstances, but that path is a difficult one for anyone fresh out of prison. I was, by the way, paroled from San Quentin after doing nine years with half-time for a variety of drug possession/sales related charges. And for anyone locked away for such a stretch, a great deal of this is all so new to me, and more than just a bit confusing. And yes, at times, even scary.

Through the benevolence and love of my God and savior, and my own continued and determined efforts, I will get through this, just as you one day will. through attitude and effort. In spite of the roadblocks that parole seems quite determined to put in our way, I fully expect that in thirteen months I will earn my early release from parole, and give them back this number. You can, too!

There are still an abundance of live-in drug programs beyond the prison and jail walls, both faith-based and otherwise. But they do not fit into my own personal plans. I would advise those of you who are interested in a program to plan ahead and write to the programs in your area. For those of you who will parole to my area, write to me in care of Chap. Bob, and I'd be more than happy to supply some addresses.

Parole is not easy, and for some it can be quite difficult. My own parole agent is no sweetheart, but he will not be the one to determine my success or failure. I will do that! Just as you, too, will!

For me, being homeless, means traveling all the way across town twice each week to check in at the parole office. No, I don't like it at all, but then no one said that I would. I put myself in this difficult position, and through my faith and determination, I will, in time, rise above it. In the coming months, I hope to provide you with some very useful and vital information that will help to ease the journey once you, too, parole.

David Marsh