

## “Letter From M.O.M.”

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

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

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

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### “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 are also affiliated with International Prison Fellowship  
[www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon](http://www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon)

### Fellowship

Our mailing list has cleared over 560. The time required for designing the newsletters, printing, folding and stuffing the newsletters, applying postage and printing the envelopes has become great. We get behind on letter replies, and may occasionally miss one. Please write back if we do not answer, and write clearly so we can get the information correct. **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 (Resource List).

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 & Linda  
P.O. Box 6667  
Visalia, CA. 93290**

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

**Stephen "Fuzzy" Brown  
So Blessed Ministry  
P O Box 275  
Lake Isabella, CA 93240**

**Iglesia Puerta de Salvacion  
202 Lafayette Ave.  
Lindsay, CA 93247**

**Discover Bible School  
Attn, Robert  
P.O. Box 7175  
Visalia, CA 93290**

**Discover Bible School  
Attn, Paul  
229 Stormy St. NE  
Albany, OR 97322**

**Sister Denise  
Jesus Prayer Ministry  
P.O. Box 7925  
Chula Vista, CA 91912**

**Prison Pen Pals  
P. O. Box 120997  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33312**

**Andrea Shannon  
8405 Jalima Ave  
Norfolk, VA 23518**

## 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. We get mail returned for bad ID #'s, no cell #, and no bed #.

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## Letters that Express it All

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

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## Readily Available Printouts

For those of you that communicate with individuals that have computer access, we have added quite a bit to our web site. The "**Resource List**" (40 pages), the "**Pen Pal Friends**" (12 pages), ALL past newsletters ("**Letter From M.O.M.**"), inmate lookup links, and artwork are available to be viewed or downloaded.

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

Ask for a copy of our **40 page**  
**"Resource List"**

**SASE with Postage is needed but verified indigent envelopes will be mailed..**

\$ .46 for Pen pals

\$ .66 for Resources

\$ .46-\$1.30 for Newsletter

(Donations Welcome)

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## 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.

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. 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 it becomes the center of where God works from in our life.

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## MY PERSONAL TESTIMONY

By  
John Manor

I was born with a congenital hip disorder. So I felt a problem to everyone except my father's mother and my mother. On top of that my real dad was killed when I was just six years old. What little I learned about my step dad, my younger brother's father, came in beatings naked in the bath tub. Until my mother witnessed the abuse and then she sent me to live with her mother. The first couple of months were peaceful.

I was always different than the rest of the children. So even though there were eight of us, four from my mother and four from my uncle, I still played by myself. So me, my sister and second born brother were split up from my first born baby brother. We lived with my mother and step dad and were always at church and even as a kid, I liked going especially because of the fact that not only was my mom beautiful, but she had a voice like an angel.

My mother soon stopped being overly protective of my disability and

started letting me go and visit my real dad's mother, Rose L. Manor. You could feel God in her. The reason I am sharing this story is there are many children that are being abused today and they are looking for an escape. There are a lot of people influenced by the devil that are ready to deceive them through drugs, gang banging etc. I want them to know that God loves us so much and He bought us back from the devil through the precious blood of His son Jesus our Lord. John 3:10 says that is we call on Jesus He will show us the way to the Father and also John 14:6.

When I was 10 years old, I was raped twice by my mother's older nephew and once by my mother's niece and two of her friends. I was afraid of them and my cousin's brother. I didn't know any better so I went into my mother's niece's room and was feeling on her while she was asleep and she slapped me and so she told my grandmother. I was beaten so bad that I

would pee in bed. Then when my mother would find out I'd peed in bed, she would make me pee in a glass and then make me drink it. Even though I was abused a lot, I knew deep down inside God was watching over me.

After a while, I received a large sum of money from my father's death. Greed set in the hearts of my mother and my dream of starting a family business was destroyed. My dad's sister yelled at me asking why I did not give my grandmother any money. I was ashamed and that's why I started to lose my mind. I joined a street gang called the Crips. I started fighting and shooting and my mother would just say, "if you want to die, I have a grave ready for you."

Everything I dreamed of was always destroyed. I vowed no one would ever take anything from me again. In 1987 a man walked up to me and talked me into showing him where the pot house was but when I got into the car he took off with me in the car. We fought and I stabbed him. I ended up going to prison. I fought in prison a lot. When I got out I moved to Las Vegas with my mother's brother and sister and my son's mother. I worked hard but enough was never enough for my mother and son's mother. After getting on drugs again, I robbed someone and went back to prison. This happened a few more times in 2007.

I sat in a cell in the county jail in Las Vegas. I received a letter from my second wife saying it was over between us and she had been seeing someone else. I snapped and that did not help me at all. I was rushed to lockdown for mentally disabled people, stripped down and not even given a full blanket. With cold air blowing right on me, as the guard laughed at me. I soon got out of that unit.

Well, one night, I got on my knees and cried out to God. All the hate, anger and pain came out of me and I heard a soft voice say, "John, I love you, so let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, also believe in me." (John 14:1) I knew that God was talking to me through Jesus as I layed on that cold floor crying. I said, "God, no one loves a sinner like me and no one wants to help me." The father said, "All things are possible with me." (Luke 18:27) God said, "I love you" (John 3:16 & John 3:34) and what really changed my life was (Hebrews 2:1), that we must pay close attention to what we are taught lest we drift away.

Right then, I seemed to understand God that all the time I was focused on all the abuse and I should have been paying attention to the Word of God that was being preached to me by my grandmother. I started studying His word, praying that no matter how things looked. God said it is impossible to please Him without faith. His Word says those that come to Him must believe He exists and rewards those who seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6) I began to pray for forgiveness for those who had abused me in my family. I was ordained in 2008 as a minister.

I was moved to another prison and they put me right by death row inmates. I started seeing a lot of hate. I would cry and pray for peace for these men. In 2010, my sister and my mother died. The pain of that almost destroyed me. The devil once again knocked me down but not out. Scriptures tell us, "I did not give you a spirit of fear, but a spirit of my divine power, peace, love and a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7), "so cast all your cares upon me." (1 Peter 5:7) And as I embraced God I

could hear Satan laughing that he'll be back.

Well, 6 months after that I was walking in the hall at prison, where we were free to move around. I was caught in the middle of a race riot. I was blamed for being a shot caller of the South Central Crip family. I was shipped to a state maximum security prison. I lost everything, TV, CD player, shoes and cosmetics. I said, "Father, an you please help me as I have lost my grandparents, son, sister and my mother lay in the hospital. I need you God right now to take control of my life, because I'm tired." He said, "I will give

you rest for your weary soul." (Matthew 11:28-30) He said He would supply all our needs (Phil 4:19) and God will never leave nor forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5) I can always depend on my heavenly Father and Lord Jesus! He himself suffered and is able to help those who are being tempted. (Hebrews 2:18) God will in all things work for the good of those who love Him. (Romans 8:28) Thank you, Bob and Linda for listening to my story. I have held it in for so long and God said the truth will set us free. Amen.

In love and service,  
Written by **John Manor**

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**NOTES:**

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**Why We Are NOT a Pen Pal Organization**

A pen pal may be someone you never meet. They could look like any one. And yet we get individuals writing and requesting to find a pen pal of specific hair color, eye color and even dimensions. To require those specifications would be going against what we are to look for in Christian fellowship. We love the answer given by Andrea Shannon when she was requested to send a picture of herself. She simply sent a picture of 3 lamas and said "Guess which one?"

One of the restrictions volunteers of M.O.M. have is what is termed as "Familiarity" with the inmates. If we develop too friendly or close of a relationship with individuals, we are not allowed to do ministry in those facilities. We do send some information and answers to questions. Linda may also send a postcard when we are on a trip to share our travels with individuals. We love to help with spiritual concepts.

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**Birthday Cards**

Doing the birthday cards every month are Carol Ann, and her family. We get lots of complements on the personalization of the cards and we try to forward the complements to Carol Ann for sharing with her friends and family. Carol has had to back out of doing the 8 services each month she was doing. She is focusing more on article writing, helping with the M.O.M. typing and doing more pen pal writing. Carol is also focusing on more quality family time (as talked about in the "Ministry and Burnout" Article).

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## Mail Burnout



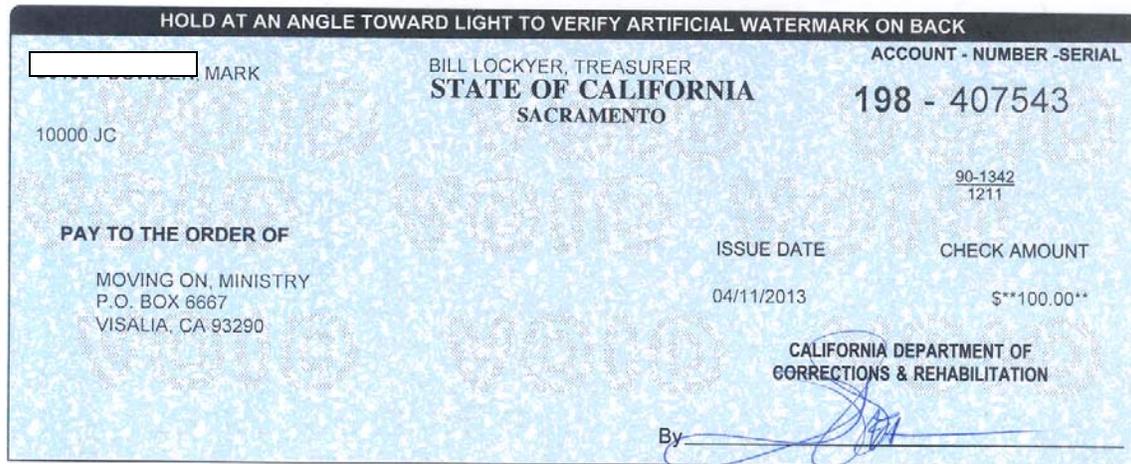
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Yes, we fall behind in mail responses. Linda is still dedicated with her postcards. Lately, we have not even had time to update the addresses, resources or pen pals. In the last 2 months we will have preached at **Avenal S.P. CA**; **Corcoran S.P. CA**; **Coffee Creek C.F. for Women in Oregon**, and the **(2) Federal Pens. In Tucson AZ**.

## Who Really has the Desire to Support M.O.M.



Autumn, one of the Lady inmates at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility sent us this \$30 check. Nearly brought tears to our eyes. Last year we also had Francisco, an inmate back east that sent us \$10 per month for 6 months. Ray (and his wife Alicia) an inmate released from Corcoran about 2 years ago, have been sending 80 stamps every time we are doing the newsletter mailing. Aleric, a California inmate, trades packages of “soups” for stamps and sends M.O.M. pre-stamped envelopes twice a month.



The above check for \$100.00 was received from Mark, an inmate at Corcoran State Prison. As Bob opened the envelope, all he could say was “Oh My God.” Linda went into tears as she opened the envelope. It never stops amazing us of how much the inmates believe in the ministry (more than those on the outside).

PLEASE Pray that the churches, friends and relatives of inmates would become supporters of this Jail/Prison ministry.

This newsletter gets mailed to about 750 individuals (\$.46 stamp X 750 = \$345.00), plus 750 envelopes (approx \$18) and paper to print approx 1000 copies (4000 sheets = \$42.00) plus toner and printer wear (\$471.00 +). Let those on the outside know of how much good M.O.M. does.

One of the MANY great blessings of doing jail/prison ministry: Working with the GREAT SAINTS of God.



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One of the Great Ventriloquists, David Pendleton with Chaplain Bob. This was during a meeting of the Bill Glass Champions For Life weekend.

We have been blessed to do ministry with others such as Jack “Murf the Surf” Murphy, Jerry Graham (Where Flies Don’t Land), “Big Al” Aceves (Mongol Motorcycle Nation), and a host of others.

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Speaking of mail, Please keep Andrea Shannon in prayer. She had kidney failure a ways back and was finally recovering from that when she had a stroke. Those of you that write to Andrea may realize she is not writing (by doctors orders) for a while. Please drop her a note of thanks and let her know to just take it easy.

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## How We Treat “One Another”

I concerns me how brothers and sisters in Christ treat one another. So churches today are divided along themselves for the simple reason they do not follow the teachings of Jesus or the apostles. Paul wrote to the Ephesians:

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are buildeth together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Ephesians 2:19-22)

If we are no longer strangers and foreigners, but of the household of God, then we are family? Now, if we are family, why then do we treat one another as strangers and foreigners? If is because we do not practice the basic principles of Christ or the apostles of our life. As a result, each built separately on different foundations; none of which can be fitly framed together. This is why there are so many different denominations today.

Assembled below is a list of things as Christians we should “do” or “not do” to one another. It is important that we learn how to treat one another. If we cannot get along here, then how will we spend eternity together? Christ is returning for one glorious church, not one broken into many. Let us first begin with the behaviors we are not to do to one another.

We are not to hate one another. (Matthew 24:10, Titus 3:3)

We are not to receive honor (glory) from one another. Everything we do, we do to God’s glory, not our own. God will give honor where honor is due. (John 5:44)

We are not to wrong one another. (Acts 7:26, Matthew 5:23-24)

We are not to judge one another. (Romans 14:13)

We are not to be puffed up towards one another; let us not think we are better than another. (1 Corinthians 4:6)

We are not to take to court one another. It is better to forgive and forget, then to be a poor witness to an unbeliever. (1 Corinthians 6:6-8)

We are not to bite and devour one another or be consumed by one another. (Galatians 5:15, James 3:2-13)

We are not to provoke one another or envy one another. Never should we be jealous of another Christian. If you are then you need to look inward. (Galatians 5:16)

We are not to lie to one another. (Colossians 3:9)

We are not to prefer one another, but to treat everyone the same. (1 Timothy 5:21)

We are not to speak evil of one another. (James 4:11)

We are not to hold a grudge towards one another. (James 5:9)

If you look closely at this list, you will discover that each of these characteristics is of the god of this world, the devil. Anyone who practices these behaviors is practicing as children of the devil, not of God. (1 John 3: 8-9) Therefore as children of God we

should take heed not to practice these things. Let us now consider the things that we should do.

We are to have peace with another. (Matthew 9:15, Colossians 3:15)

We are to wash one another's feet. In other words we are to submit and serve one another in humility. (John 13:14, Ephesians 5:21, 1 Peter 5:5 & 2:13-14)

We are to be aware of one another. Do not be quick to leave the church after service, but take the time to let others know how glad you are to see him or her. (Acts 21:6)

We are to be members of one another. We are one body. What affects one should affect another therefore we should be concerned for the whole body. (Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:25, 1 Corinthians, chapter 12)

We are to be kindly affectionate to one another, preferring one another. That is to prefer them over ourselves and giving others preference. (Romans 12:10, Philippians 2:3-4)

We are to have the same mind towards one another. We are not to think ourselves better than another. (Romans 12:16, Romans 15:5)

We are to edify one another; to build them up. (1Thessalonians 5:11, Romans 14:19)

We are to receive one another. We should always be happy to receive any believer in need and being a blessing to them. (Romans 15:7)

We are to admonish one another; to gently correct them when it is needed. (Roman 15:14, Colossians 3:16)

We are to greet one another. Whenever we see another Christian, we need to go out of our way to greet them and let them know they are appreciated. (Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Peter 5:14)

We are to wait for one another and never exclude any member from anything. If someone is late, wait for them as it will make them feel wanted. (1 Corinthians 12:12)

We are to serve one another, to minister to the needs of all saints. (Galatians 5:14, 1 Peter 4:10)

We are to bear one another's burdens, to help them bare their cross in their time of need. (Galatians 6:2)

We are to bear one another, be patient & kind. (Ephesians 4:2-3, Colossians 3:13)

We are to forgive one another. If we fail to forgive, God will not forgive us. (Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, Matthew 6:14-15)

We are to teach one another. (Colossians 3:10)

We are to comfort one another when they are suffering. (1Thessalonians 4:18)

We are to exhort one another. (Hebrews 3:13, 10:25)

We are to consider one another and provoke them to good works. Encourage believers to get involved in the church. (Hebrews 10:24)

We are to confess our faults and pray for one another. (James 5:16)

We are to have compassion for one another. (1 Peter 3:8-9)

We are to be hospitable to one another. (1 Peter 4:9)

We are to fellowship with one another. Let not a sheet stray but bring all into all church activities. (1 John 1:7, Hebrews 10:25)

There is one last behavior that must be mentioned. It is the most important, most mentioned and often times the least practiced. We are to love one another. At least fourteen times we read the words “love one another” in the New Testament. (John 13:34, 13:35, 15:2 & 17; Romans 13:10; 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11 & 23, 4:7, 11 & 12; 2 John 5. It is the second greatest commandment, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” (Matthew 22:39) Almost the entire book of 1 John has to do with love. It is the evidence of God in our life. Where there is no love, God is not present. 1 Corinthians, chapter 13 is often called the “love chapter” and it says, “If I have not love, I am nothing. (Verse 2) Therefore as Christians we must love one another.

If we as believers would implement these basic principles in the church, we would see such change in the church that it would lead to revival. Christians are to behave differently from that of the world. When an unbeliever sees us, they should notice a difference immediately. They should want and desire a life like ours. If they do not see us as being different, we are doing something terribly wrong. In conclusion, I want to refer to Matthew 25: 32-33:

“And before Him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left.”

The sheep and the goats were judged according to their works. I am not saying by works we are saved, but we are saved unto good works. The day will come when we all will stand before judgment and “every man’s work shall be made manifest (known).” In the end of the sheep did the “to do” list and the goats did the “not to do” list. For each of these points made in this study, we will be judged. If judgment begins in the household of God, then we should seriously consider how we treat one another.

Written by **“Buck” (Scott Sweeden)**

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## Keeping Your Hope Fixed On Jesus

Probably one of the hardest areas I've personally struggled with is how long it's taking me in my recovery and healing work with God. I've gotten so tired at times. It felt like one issue was done and then like that, another issue would hit me. These last years I've said more than once, "Again, Lord, can't I just have a break for a while," but God knew what I needed. His timing was not my timing. It seems like there were so many layers in my wounded self that God and I had to keep on working. It has been an absolute must that during these times, I kept my eyes fixed on Him. Every single time I felt despair, shame, guilt, discouragement, loneliness, fear, the feeling of being unacceptable, pride, selfishness and many other things, I had to cling to Him. All these things are human feelings and emotions, but they were and are counterproductive to my healing and my peace. I've had to face what I felt, not deny what was in me and confess and expose all parts of me so God could do all the healing that has been needed for my life. I have held to the truth that our Father gives us **all** the things that we need.

During this process of recovery, I've fallen a lot. I've said to myself, "Are you serious, you just did it again." As much as I wanted to do it right, I kept falling. It seems as much as I wanted to understand how to do certain things, I could not grasp certain concepts as fast as I wanted. I was sick of messing up but it seems taking recovery from head knowledge to the heart is an ongoing and very complex and hard process. God never told us this was going to be easy. He promised He'd never leave us. So, when I'd fall, I'd just get back up. Sometimes I've needed two worship services instead of one for the encouragement. When I didn't know what direction to go, I'd seek counsel, talk to someone, pray with someone or read a Psalm. For me, my mind races so the best times to hear God is when I'd take a long drive. So I've taken many long drives. No matter what I needed to do, I just kept pressing on, kept hoping and claimed complete healing in all parts of my life. I've held onto this basic hope that God meant for me to have it all. Some days my faith was like a mustard seed and I held on for that day, knowing that God promised that with HIM, **all** things were possible in my life. I kept claiming that promise.

Throughout this process, I've felt there was an issue from when I was a tiny girl and no therapist, no intellectual knowledge; none of **my** effort had yet penetrated to the depth of what was inside of me. I always knew it was only God who could get me through this core stuff. My earliest memories are of being afraid, like "crazy fright", like I was scared to "death". Throughout all my groups and personal work, I had this feeling that my core issue was connected to this "fright." My life patterns and chaos showed me that I did have many areas of much dysfunction in my life and it was hard to grasp the repair of some of it. I knew I had things inside of me that must have occurred when I was so young, it was prior to memory and it felt so buried and so deep and I had no idea how to reach it, so I prayed. It felt beyond me and it **was** beyond me. This particular prayer for help in this area of fear started over 15 years ago. I remember that prayer and how I felt that day. I didn't know what to do. I was so scared, lonely, hurting, isolated, shamed, disconnected from people, guilt was present, confused, often disoriented, felt so worthless and disgusting. I didn't even want to exist, so I surrendered the best I could for that day and told God I'd go through whatever I needed for answers. Life went on.

Years went on with many experiences. I was taught about so many pieces of my shattered self. I felt God healing and pulling these pieces together. But I still had this lingering, subtle fear and pain deep, deep inside.

Quite a few years ago, I went to a conference on attachment disorders and that information I learned rang true for me, that I had some form of an attachment disorder. This information was huge for me as I continued on my journey. I knew children needed to feel safe and I'd missed out on this very necessary and basic need. I knew I had learned a distorted way of how to attach to people from very early in my life. I could see my attachment was wrong and somehow sex equaled love. I knew what had occurred was wrong. I could see with my intellect how this had caused a lifetime of unhealthy attachments and addictions. I knew the attachment understanding I lived with so far in my life was distorted, but how in the world could a person rebuild the deep and primal need of being safe? How was I going to relearn how to attach in a healthy way? I could see what I needed in head, but had no ideas on how to move this into my heart and my life. I did not know how to do it so I continued to surrender this at His feet and cling to Him. I remember prayers of surrender, letting God know I wanted it all. I wanted to be completely healed, not just enough to exist, but I wanted it all. I was not going to quit fighting. I'd fall, get up. I'd fall again and get back up. That's what survivors do. Survivors fight for their lives, so I fought.

I continued my own recovery journey as the years went on. I led groups for women, helped as much as I could with other people in their own recovery journey and served. Nothing stopped me from continuing to work my own steps and encouraging others on their journey. We don't have to be perfect to serve and love. So I did my best with a heart of gratitude and love. Giving back is a very important part of anyone's healing work. During these last years, I've had all kinds of moments when I would trigger emotionally from things people would say to me or things I'd experience and those experiences would take me back to this deep core place of "fright". I had enough tools under my belt to get through that current crisis and I'd get through the fear and move forward. I'd pray, surrender that area of my life to God and continue on my journey. I continued to want it all and I'd claim that victory that God would indeed heal all of me.

About two years ago, I had an especially scary physical experience and I ended up in the hospital. After I got out of the hospital, I was struggling terribly with the feeling I was going to die. My mind was racing like crazy and it simply was not calming down. I knew from the years in groups and through therapy there were other forms of therapy I could try. In my spirit I felt I needed help, so I started my search for help. I could not understand why this hospital experience had triggered me so strongly. I was so blessed as the trauma specialist I found was the nicest Christian man and he helped me to understand a piece of me, I really did not understand. I was actually very normal for someone who'd experienced childhood trauma. I knew what Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder was but I'd never allowed myself to seek help for this specific piece to my healing. He tested me and re-confirmed my already existing diagnosis of PTSD, and reassured me I'd be alright. He told me a small piece of his life and actually has similar triggers in his own life, only his was from being in the war. Some of you reading this article could have something similar because your life has felt like a war zone too. Maybe your trauma was in your home like mine or on the streets. For me, I had this deep

seated reaction like I had to run from the fright and that is why my mind races. After the few sessions with him, it all made more sense. I could see how the pattern of running and “fright” in my life was a pattern of survival. Facing this and accepting myself exactly who I am has opened up a door to loving myself that was not present before. At times I thought I was crazy and actually I am quite normal for someone with a trauma history. Here was a loving Christian man with a PHD telling me so. Praise God and this was an essential piece of me that I needed to understand and accept. It felt like at least I don’t have to run from me anymore. It is a huge understanding, that we can love and accept ourselves exactly where we are. It allows us a foothold for me to move forward. I needed that and God knew I needed the affirmation.

This past year, I have been going to the prison with Moving On Ministry I felt completely inadequate and really scared but I just really wanted to go. I had this feeling inside of me that God desired that I learn to use my voice. That was all I knew, that He wanted me to move from writing to using my voice. As the year went on, God gave me such blessings. I really, really enjoyed the ministry. I had to stretch out of my comfort zone and started practicing using my voice. I’ve needed to learn to use my voice. I had no voice as a child. I’ve gone through a life where just to speak would make me cry. I remember once just having to call the gas company to talk about the bill and I had to hand to phone to my then husband as I could not even talk to the gas man without crying. I’ve needed a voice. God has given me a voice. God knew where I needed to be, who I needed to be with and in what manner I would be able to face this challenge. One of my greatest fears was to lead a song. Who knows why that scared me so? But over the holidays, I had the chance to lead a song and even that fear was faced. My vocals were all over the place, but I did it. I faced the challenge. With God holding us, we can do all things through Him. I can see today that God has been performing a very Holy Spirit filled, spiritual surgery and it has been so delicate, so intricate, so miraculous, and so precise for me and this process has taken years, but my Daddy knows what I have needed.

God’s timing in our lives is perfect. All these years of personal work have prepared me for what I most recently experienced. Through these last 10 years, I have experienced these triggers that would take me back to the place of “fright” but one of the **worst** recently hit me. What occurred took me to **that** place prior to memory and I was so scared. I was so frightened, I had several emotional reactions. First I was sickened, then I used my voice and strongly rejected what had come to me and then I ended up by freezing up like ice. God has spent so much time with me in preparation for this exact moment in my life. When I was aware that I had turned to ice, I started to process things. I now operate from a new foundation of God’s love for me and my love for self. I accept myself. I’ve learned awareness. I could see what had happened. I now have a voice. So, I reacted differently than ever before. I allowed myself to feel all that I needed to feel. I no longer was operating from the place of my wounded child. I did not have to run; I could stand strong and protect myself. God gave me the most miraculous experience. God actually was able to use that current trigger in my life. In about a 2-3 day period, God was able to take me back emotionally to what I felt from my pre-memory years. I felt all the pain, the nausea and sickness, I felt the coldness, a fear that I must have felt when so young, only now I took all the tools with me to that emotional place and re-parented myself through the experience. My inner core felt healing. My

inner core felt a new degree of wholeness. I had an adult voice to use. I basically was able to relive that original experience emotions and protect myself. No one helped me as a child to be safe, but now God had brought me to a place where I was able to do for myself what my parents did not. This current trigger was not even the issue, but God **used it** to help me access that old core issue of pain and fear. God knew what would work for me. God knew how to prepare me for just this moment. I did not need the place of frozen and “fright” anymore. I was safe now.

The next morning, on Sunday morning, 1/27/2013, I was writing and feeling like I’d just woken up from a dream. I felt as though the hit of this experience literally took me by the shoulders and shook me free. I felt this rush of the love of God, the warmth of God’s healing and I noticed the subtle and lingering residue of pain was gone. A feeling of wholeness washed over me. God had used every mess of my life to grow me up for this exact moment in my life. Things I could not conceive of, He did. I felt the chains of the deepest bondage just fall as God’s love poured over me. I felt as if I’d been released from solitary confinement. I am so aware that I have never been alone in this. He has carried me all along. I praised Him for His strength to help me never give up. I thank him for people around me and the spirit of courage, so I could keep my eyes on Him.

What I have learned is this core issue of dysfunctional attachment and the healing of my “fright” **was** beyond me, but **NOT** beyond Him. All these classes I’ve been taking, groups I’ve been a part of, therapy sessions I have gone through, every single experience has moved me and blessed me to this new and deeper inner healing. Only the God of all creation could do this work with such precision. By the power of the Holy Spirit, this healing has been done. His love never failed me. I have failed me, but not Him. When I did fall, I just kept getting up. When I felt weak, I knew He is strong. When I felt confused, I’d read the Proverbs. When I felt extremely low, I’d read a Psalm. When I felt at the end of the hope, I just held on. When I was so tired and weary, I’d go to Him for rest. I’m telling you this was real. God has been so busy doing the most gentle, tender and intricate surgery on me, going to the center of me in order to clear out what was needed.

This healing and work of the Holy Spirit is for all of God’s children. Some of you reading this article are not even sure of what you believe. It’s OK as God knows your heart. You can trust Him to bring whatever you need to strengthen your faith. He will bring those you need into your life. There will be teaching experienced for you to learn. It’s our job to learn it. We have to apply what God has taught us. We have a role in this journey. But whatever we need, He will provide. So often on this journey, we choose other things to comfort us besides God because this life gets so, so hard. We often choose to turn away from Him and try and do things our way, the way that makes sense to us. That only delays what He desires to do in us. He’ll bring that issue back. We can trust He’ll never give up on us. His love is like that.

Sometimes people feel they’ve just gone too far, done too much and you haven’t, I hadn’t. We just need to humble ourselves and work to surrender ourselves 100%. He needs that level of surrender in our lives to do His work. Our Father is at work in our lives in every way that we need. This process of healing is fluid and moving and some of the work will be so deep, literally, only God and the working of the Holy Spirit can do it such as what I’ve just experienced. Being patient and still as He works is so hard, but it’s what we need to do. We have to trust His timing in all of this. He is our strength and our

shield and there is no limit to His love, no borders to hold it in. I've been pretty goofy at times; so torn and mixed up inside. I have not done this perfectly, nor will you. God Bless the people God put in my life that have endured this journey with me and never left. They can testify how hard I can be. They themselves have their own story about their journey in recovery. When looking back on my journey, it really all comes down to a very simple and yet complex phrase, "keeping our hope and eyes always fixed on Jesus." What an interesting journey we have with our Jesus. God is so, so good to us and it's all going to be alright. God loves us so, so much!

By **Carol Ann**

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### **THE Leaf**

One leaf said to another leaf on a huge TREE "I'm going to leave!" Others leaves around the leaf said, "Why, where are you going, that's stupid, you can't do that, get-a-grip, what's wrong, let's talk, you like it here then leave, PLEASE don't leave!!!"

All these remarks sparked more remarks from the surrounding branches, "What's going on?" said another branch. A few other braches whispered, "there's something going on further up the TREE....a leaf is planning on leaving"....."What"....exclaimed voices of other leaves on nearby trees.

Finally the dissatisfied leaf said...."I'm leaving, that's final....I'm tired of not being appreciated, no one lets me do what I want to do and I can do just as much as all these other leaves. I'm tired of staying in one place." The TREE said, "No, stay where you are".....The First leaf would not listen, causing a huge concern among all the leaves and surrounding leaves. The Leaf left shouting behind him to the other leaves and trees, "I'm going to start my own tree, all I have to do is get some water and it willGrow and I can pick where I want to be."

Time passed, summer came and went, fall came and as the other leaves turned their breathtaking beautiful colors, they looked down and saw "many dried up leaves that had fallen too soon. There laid the angry leaf, dried and dead and many others who follow him to go their own way.

The Huge Tree shook once more and the rest of the ones who were not satisfied fell to the same fate as the "first one who left The TREE. The leaves were shocked and asked The TREE, "what about us, when we fall before winter, will we be the same as those who left and those you separated from us?"

The TREE said, "You will be raised for you are the fertilizer that gives life to the Roots.....all others will be gathered up and cast into the Fire!" All have a purpose.....but not all will stay till the end!

By [Andrea Shannon](#)