


Breaking the Chains



Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them... Hebrews 13:3

Our hope is that as you read through the articles and exercises, you will follow along in your own Bible learning God's truth and how it applies to you and your life.



Help In Times Of Trouble

We want you to be able to see beyond your past, and look to the future - to what God has in store for you - as you come to a better understanding of the hope that is within your reach and the love that has been offered to all.

Since this is a monthly news letter being sent to as many inmates and their families as possible, we will be going over various topics. If you would like to have a more personalized study or even if you have questions about something you have been studying, please feel free to write to us. It would be our pleasure to study with you.

Thank you for your love for God, your search for truth and your hope of better things to come!

Living for the world and loving the things that it has to offer causes us to look for pleasure and happiness in the moment. Those feelings of immediate but temporary peace can easily become our god as Satan does his best to lure us away from the eternal peace.

Satan's favorite trick is getting us to lose focus on what's truly important - and he is good at it. He hurls temptations at us daily trying to get us to pay attention to anything but the One True God. Through Paul, the Lord tells us to remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it. (1 Cor. 10:13) The only catch is that it is up to us to constantly search for the way out, knowing that there is one there if we will just look.

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. Only through Him can we find the pathway that can lead us away from temptation and take us home.

Even when it seems as if your sun is sinking and the storm clouds are closing in, remember that you have One walking with you who can protect you through those times. "Since He himself has gone through suffering and temptation, He is able to help us when we are being tempted." (Hebrews 2:18)

Can you imagine?

Can you imagine being alive when Jesus Christ started His ministry and watching all of the excitement that followed Him?

Imagine for a minute that you are living in the Galilee area when His ministry began, and day after day you hear of the wonderful things that He is doing. You hear of the miracles that He is performing and that He speaks with such authority that unclean spirits obey His commands. Because of these things, Jesus' popularity grows to such an extent that he has to leave villages to keep from getting mobbed by people that want to be healed or to have a demon cast out (Mark 1:38).

One day He comes to your village and you see the crowd that has gathered to watch the miracles that He is performing and to hear His words. You want to see what this "Prophet" has to say, but then you look down at yourself and remember that you are a leper and wonder if He will heal you like He has the rest.

You know that by being a leper, you are unclean and that according to the Mosaic law (Lev. 5:2, Lev. Ch.13) no one should touch you or they may become defiled.

But you also know that if you do not make a petition to Jesus, you will not be healed.

So you come to Him and fall on your knees and look up at Him and say, "If you are willing, You can make me clean."

Then He looks down at you and stretches out His hand and touches you and says, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the uncleanliness is removed, and you are healed!

You are clean! You are ready to run and tell everyone what just happened, and Jesus looks at you and warns you, He says, "See that you say nothing to anyone...(Mark 1:44)

Isn't it interesting how Jesus tells the leper to not say anything to anyone and the man goes and tells everyone. Jesus has told us to go tell everyone and we rarely open our mouths.

Do you remember when Jesus Christ cleansed you from your sins? Did you have the same amount of excitement as the leper did? Do you now? Are you still telling others what Christ has done for you? More importantly, are you telling others of what Jesus has done for them?

You see, not only did He cleanse you from your sins, but He gave you a responsibility.

Are you keeping your end of the deal?

Jaime Harper, Mt. Juliet, TN



Forgiveness

Sometimes, the hardest thing to do is to forgive someone when you have been wronged. As human beings we tend to want to pay the people back for what they have done to us. But Christ commanded us to forgive and pray for our enemies. In Matthew 5:43-45 Jesus reminds us: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy'. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven..." In Matthew 6:14-15 He talks about forgiveness again saying, "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions".

Even on the cross, as He was being crucified for our sins, Jesus prayed for those who were responsible for putting Him up there (Luke 23:34). This is a perfect example of forgiveness. Think about it, if Jesus could forgive them after all He had been through, shouldn't we be able to forgive others when they have sinned against us.

In Colossians 3:12-14, Paul wrote about the way that Christians should be: "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity."

All throughout the Bible, God has had a plan for mankind's forgiveness. Whether it be through sacrifice and rules under the Old Covenant, or through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ now, God has made provisions for us to be forgiven.

Just as God has forgiven us, let us forgive so that we may be found perfect in Jesus.

David Henry, Norene, Tennessee

Test Your Bible Knowledge

Jesus said it, but who did He say it to?

1. Peace!, be still!
2. The only power you have over me is the power given to you by God.
3. Let the dead bury the dead.
4. How many loaves do you have?
5. Come out of the man, you unclean spirit.
6. Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat.
7. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.
8. What you do, do quickly.
9. He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life,
10. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

Answers on last page

True or False

1. ___ Moses and Abraham appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.
2. ___ There is nothing that Jesus does not know.
3. ___ It is possible to be angry and not sin.
4. ___ Saul (Paul) held the coats of the people who stoned Stephen.
5. ___ Bad company corrupts good morals.
6. ___ God tempts us ever now and then.
7. ___ If you are able to work but choose not to, then you should not be able to eat.
8. ___ As a Christian, we are able to live how we want to.
9. ___ God has given us everything we need for life and godliness.
10. ___ No matter how bad a man's name or reputation is, with God's help he can change it.

Answers on last page

Who is this Jesus?

(Fill in the blank. Verses are in NKJV)

1 Tim. 1:15 This is a _____ saying and worthy of all acceptance, that _____ came into the world to save _____, of whom I am chief.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own _____ toward us, in that while we were still _____, Christ _____ for us.

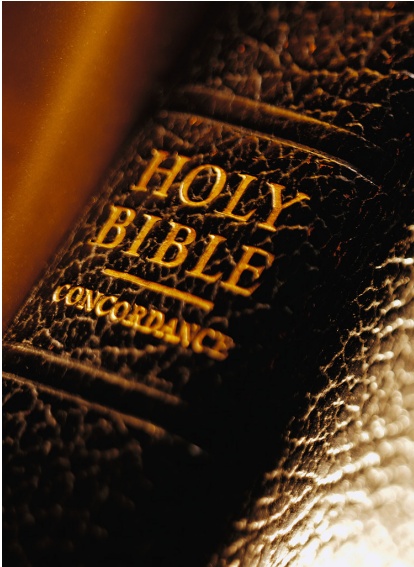
Isaiah 53:5 But He was _____ for our _____, He was _____ for our _____; The chastisement for our _____ was upon Him, And by His _____ we are healed.

Acts 4:12 Nor is there _____ in any other, for there is no other _____ under heaven given among men by which we must be _____."

Ephes. 1:7 In Him we have _____ through His blood, the _____ of sins, according to the riches of His _____.

2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if _____ is in Christ, he is a _____; old things have _____ away; behold, all things have become _____.

Ephes. 4:1 I, therefore, the _____ of the Lord, beseech you to walk _____ of the calling with which you were _____.



Breaking the Chains is a publication whose sole purpose is to encourage men and women who have made some bad choices in life, to break the chains that are holding you back from eternal peace.

Romans 3:23 tells us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Because of that, we all are in need of salvation which only comes through Jesus Christ and His Blood. No one is beyond it's saving power. No one is so good that they don't need it and no one has sinned so bad that New Life can't be breathed into their soul.

Hopefully, as you read the articles you will be encouraged to study your Bible and either come closer to God, or maybe even to come to know Him for the first time.

This publication is free through the churches of Christ and is available upon request. The only thing we ask in return is for you to write us and tell us what topics you would like to read about and even submit your own articles. Who knows, you might open the pages and see your name.

Write to:

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Answers: **Section 1** 1. Wind and waves-Mark 4:39 2. Pilate -John 19:11 3. A follower-Matthew 8:22 4. Disciples-Mark 8:5 5. Legion-Mark 5:8 6. Simon-Luke 22:31 7. Jews-John 8:36 8. Judas-John 13:27 9. Angel of the church in Sardis-Revelation 3:5 10. Crowd-Luke 14:27 **Section 2** 1. False-Matthew 17:3 2. False-Matthew 24:36 3. True-Ephesians 4:26 4. False-Acts 7:57 5. True-1 Corinthians 15:33 6. False-James 1:13 7. True-2 Thessalonians 3:10 8. False-Titus 2:12-14 9. True-2 Peter 1:3 10. True-Matthew 11:28