



Christian Ambassadors, Inc.

My Brother's Keeper

Volume 12, Number 4, October-December, 2007

GROWING on the WORD

A scripture study

The Word of God is the source of light, truth, and power, for those who seek it's meaning and apply it to their life. Jesus Christ is the word made flesh, and we seek to follow him.

John 8:12 (NIV) – *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

Each issue of “My Brother’s Keeper” features a WORD study. This issue’s Word Study is from Roy Roberts, an inmate at ISCI in Boise, Idaho. Scripture references are from the King James Version.

Faith & Works

By Roy W. Roberts

Scripture: II Timothy 2:14-26

First of all we must find out what faith is.

Hebrews 11:1 puts it this way; *“Now faith is the substance of*

things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

If we can see something, or feel it, we don’t hope for it, we hope for the means to get it. Therefore, the way, the money or the means of getting some thing is what we hope for. It’s the unseen thing, or way, or substance we must hope for.

Therefore, our hope is the faith of attaining something. Let’s say you want to buy a car. You’ve picked out the car you want so therefore you no longer hope for it. You hope for the means of getting it; the money, or the financing to receive the money to buy the car.

So it is with God. Without the Lord Jesus Christ, and faith in Him (whom we see not, but know He is), we will not know God, or enter Heaven.

Romans 12:3b – *“...think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”*

We all have been given a measure of faith. But what will we do with it? We are to let our faith grow (**II Thesalonians 1:3; Ephesians 4:14-15; I Peter 2:1-2; II Peter 3:18**).

When we grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and *“...believe He is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6)*, we grow in faith.

Jesus tells us in **Mark 11:22**, *“Have faith in God.”* How can we, unless

we have faith in Jesus Christ first, and then let it grow?

Do you remember the parable of the talents in **Matthew 25:14-28**? Jesus tells us the story about a lord who was going on a trip. He gives one man five talents, another man two talents, and still another man one talent. As their faith grew, so did their talents...at least two of them anyway. When the Lord returned, the man with five talents said, *“Look I have yours plus five more.”* Then his lord told him, *“Well done, my good and faithful servant.”* The same was told to the second man, when he brought his two talents plus two more. But, oh the last man. The man who was given one talent went and hid his talent. Listen to what Jesus says about this man, (**verses 26-27**)

“...Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury [interest].”

But listen to **verses 28-29**,

“Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

Everyone has been given a measure of faith. If you do not let it grow, it shall be taken away! If you don't use that faith and let it grow, you will lose it, and it will be given to someone who will use it; a good and faithful person.

Jesus said in **Matthew 17:20b**,

"...If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

But **James 2:14-26** tells us something else to have, which is *faith and works*.

James 2:14-16 says; *"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"*

In other words, if a brother comes to you and says, *"I need prayer,"* and you tell him you'll pray for him, and then you forget because you don't do it then and there, what good is it? That is the same as someone saying, *"I'm hungry,"* and you say you will feed him, but you don't. If you don't even give them enough money for a meal, what does that profit?

James 2:17- *"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."*

Woe! Is that right? Tell me this, how many people have you heard say, *"I have faith,"* or *"I've got faith,"* and yet there is never a work to back it up. Nothing is ever done to show that they have faith. They never exercise their faith, so that so-

called faith never has a chance to grow. Be careful that your faith is not taken away. We must be faithful and let it grow. How? By doing works.

James 2:18 - *Yea, a man may say, "Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."*

See, you can do all types of works, but without faith those works are dead. Why? Because faith starts with Jesus Christ, and the works you do *in Christ* is what makes your faith grow. And likewise, *if you have faith and no works*, your faith is dead; and it just might be taken away from you, because you are not being faithful. There is no fruit coming out from your faith. Not only that, but any works done without faith is self-glory; you're taking all the glory for yourself.

Jesus is a teacher of faith and works! Look at **Matthew 14:15-21**. Here we see where Jesus took five loaves of barley bread, and two fishes, and fed five thousand men, plus women and children. Not only that, they took up twelve baskets full of leftovers. And again, in **Matthew 15:36-38**, where He fed four thousand men plus women and children and picked up seven baskets full. He prayed in faith, and then broke the bread, *believing and having faith* that it would be enough.

Chapter 11 in Hebrews has been deemed the *Faith Chapter of the Bible*. Here we see many people who have shown their faith by their works. You see Able, Abraham, Noah, Sara, Rahab, Enoch, and the list goes on.

But, I would like to tell you of another one. Ruth, was a Moabite woman who married one of Naomi's sons. Naomi, her husband and two

sons, left Judea to go to Moab during a drought. Both of Naomi's sons married, and as fate would happen, Naomi's husband and both sons died.

It was after this, that Naomi told both daughter-in-laws to go back to their families, because she did not have any more sons, and was too old to marry and produce any more. Plus, both the daughter-in-laws would be too old, as well, even if she could produce more sons. So, Orpah, one of the daughter-in-laws, went back to her family. But listen to what Ruth says;

Ruth 1:16-17 - *Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.*

You talk about a step out into faith, and then the works were in her, going back with Naomi. Do you know how her faith and works were blessed? She is in Jesus' *bloodline*!

So let's let our faith grow by doing the works that glorify the Lord God almighty. You never know how He will use us. Remember, it takes more than works or more than faith. It takes them both.

But you might ask this, *"What about all the people who have been good people all their lives? They have helped people, given to charities, just been all around good people all their lives."*

Let me reiterate, faith comes with believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our faith grows by doing the works that give Him the glory. Unless you've been born again, all the works done

are in vain, for they are self-glorifying. You have your reward.

Let your faith grow and do the works of God. Amen!



Know Who You Are In God

By David Kinlock

Even though we are saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, each one of us has the potential to have an attitude. God sometimes lets us go through difficult situations to let us see what's really inside us. When we see our helplessness, weakness, and despair, it causes us to cry out, "God I need you!"

You may have been good to someone who later used you. You may have gone the extra mile for someone who later betrayed you. You may have dealt with someone in gentleness who turned on you and abused you.

God works even in these hardships. As you cry out, God will take your inability to do what you know is right, and make it a platform for His opportunity. You can bear longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness. Within you lies the ability to become whatever you choose to be. Remember that you have a choice, and the choice does not come without a price.

God does His most excellent work when the odds are against Him. He waits until the boat is full of water before He walks on top of your storm. **(Luke 8:22-24)** He waits until the furnace of your trial is seven

times hotter than normal to show Himself as the fourth man. **(Daniel 3:19, 24-25)**

You've got to know that you are still impregnated with the Holy Ghost. It may feel like you had a miscarriage or that you have even aborted; but in the middle of the night you feel it kicking to let you know that Satan has not aborted your baby.

Maybe you felt that your ministry is dead. If you feel any kick at all, you need to be aroused and awakened, because the movement tells you it's still alive.

Within you are gifts, callings, and talents that have been weakened, pressed down, or held back. Your vision, dream, or desire may have been crushed. You may not have any control over the circumstances. Perhaps your disobedience grieved the Holy Spirit. But arise, my friend! Whatever the devil did to you, he didn't complete the job. He left some strength in you. So what you're still struggling.

Your strength is not enough, but if you will take what's left of it and just give it to God, who is more than enough, you will find Him to be sufficient. Arise my friend and seize what is left. So what your joy isn't what it used to be? Use what is left. So what your desire is dampened? Take hold of what is left and be what God said you would be. Don't let circumstances abort your dream.

Your miracle is not in what you lost. Your miracle is in what is left. God is not discouraged by your lack. He encourages you to rise and seize what is left.

God knows, which tells me He is not surprised. These two words may seem insignificant, but they are crucial for us to understand. You don't have to pretend. God knows every-

thing isn't all right. God know you aren't on top of the situation. God knows you are a 911 case. God knows you are in a critical condition. In spite of your dilemma, He says, "It's not over until I say it's over." So tell the devil, "*it ain't over yet!*"

In the midst of your trial, dilemma, or storm, do you still find a desire to overcome? Do you refuse to take "no" for an answer? God can and will take everything that you lost – your time, joy, and integrity – and bring you right up to date as though it never happened.

So brethren, I urge you to hold on until your change comes. And it's already here. Know that weeping may endure but for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Because you are more than a conqueror.

Psalm 30:5 (KJV) - For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Listen, God is fixing to turn your life around. I feel a turn around coming in your life. God is fixing to restore everything you lost. **(Joel 2:25)** But you must know who you are in God.

Know that He is able to do exceedingly and abundantly all things that you could ask or think of. Hallelujah!

Ephesians 3:20 (KJV) - Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

Know that the Bible says that if God be for you, who can be against you. **(Romans 8:31)** And David proclaims that the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. **(Psalm 23:1)**

You've been going through hell and it doesn't feel right. But God told me to tell you that it's gonna be alright. For the race is not given to the swift, or to the strong, but to him that endureth to the end. You see, when you know who you are in God, you hold on to the boat. Hold on! It just looks like you are about to fall off, but hold on! Cause I heard Him say, "It is I; be not afraid." (**John 6:20**)

You see Peter didn't really walk on the water; he walked on the Word! When you don't know what to do, walk on the Word! When folks don't like you, walk on the Word! I don't know about you, but I'm walking on the Word of God. Because I know who I am in God. Makes no difference what folk say about me, I know who I am in God. Know who you are in God!

David Kinlock is an inmate at Collins Correctional Facility, Collins, New York



Know Your Goals in Christ

by Gary Waskul

Our God is so righteously precious and His holiness radiates such great, pure love in His light. It is an honor to release in love what God has given my heart through His awesome love.

As we go about our daily lives, we must be diligent to stay on the path we have chosen through our Lord Jesus Christ. We should plan our objectives and stick to the plan as best as possible with what we have. We should check throughout the day to ensure that our objectives are being met.

Every time we are helping the needy, committing random acts of goodness, or being obedient to Christ in any way, there are forces at work to push these Christian acts to the bottom of our to-do list. Or stop us completely. I call these stolen moments of righteousness.

These forces against us are evil!

II Corinthians 11:13-15 (KJV) - *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

We must guard ourselves behind our armor of God and pay attention so we are not knocked off our path of Christ-like activities.

Ephesians 6:13 (KJV) - *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to with-*

stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

We are so easily tricked into putting off our good works because of little problems that seem so big at the time. Ask yourself; is this problem of the world? Would Jesus let this person take up His time and knock Him off His path? Will my goals for Christ be affected? What will happen if I help this person out in this new – all of a sudden situation?

Do I know what my goals in Christ are for today? Bingo! This is where we must be unwavering and make our choices wisely. I've been there so many times, knee deep from some evil form of distraction.

If we pay close attention to guard our paths and choose very wisely, the works of darkness cannot pester us as we complete our works of light. Our faith is strong! Our light is so very bright! We will continue to push on in acts of the brightest possible light. We are God's children and we have the victory.

Ephesians 5:8-10 (KJV) - *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.*

Gary Waskul is an inmate at Avenal State Prison, Avenal, California



**Two Wisdoms -
Two Plans -
Our Choice!**

By Sharon K. Griffiee

In my last Spiritual Growth Lesson, "Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?"; we learned that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of [divine] wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.

See: **Psalm 111:10a (KJV)**

The spiritual benefits we gain with the decision to depart from evil, is a treasure greater than all the gold in the world. Why does it hold such value? For the simple reason that as we depart [turn] from evil; not just part way, but *all the way*, we position ourselves to receive God's heavenly wisdom. This is exciting!

Psalm 111:10b (KJV) - "a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth forever."

We can't praise God enough for this good understanding, this heavenly wisdom, which is actually the *God-given skill* to live a holy life. Getting down to the nitty-gritty; how does His wisdom work in our daily lives? Specifically, the more we trust in and depend upon God's grace, the more His divine wisdom is available to help us in any situation we may encounter. Thus, a person flowing with God's wisdom will know what to do and when to do it; when to talk and when not to talk; when to act and when to wait. The end result of choosing God's wisdom will guarantee the abundant life that Jesus promises in John 10:10b.

John 10:10b (KJV) - *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

What Jesus promises in this verse of scripture, is eternal security with a heavenly quality of life. The *quality* of our life, right here and now, as well as through eternity, is of the utmost importance to Jesus. The only life Jesus came to offer is the eternal abundant life - life to the full. It is the only genuine life there is and highly to be sought after. The life Jesus promises is a life overflowing with joy.

Psalm 16:11 (KJV) - *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

Jesus warns us, however, in this same verse of scripture, of another one who comes to entice us to choose an entirely different life. Jesus refers to him as the *thief*, because his motives are not to give us life, but to destroy it instead.

John 10:10a (KJV) - *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.*

In this scripture Jesus alerts us to the fact that there is more than one wisdom vying for our allegiance. It is the counterfeit wisdom of the world and its source is the devil himself. (**I Corinthians 3:19-20**)

While it is true that we can freely receive divine skill through God's wisdom; it is also true that there is an ungodly skill within reach, through the devil's wisdom. We can choose to live a sacrificial life, working with Jesus to help others, or we can choose a way of life that puts our own selfish interests first. When selfish, instant gratification is the focus, we become easy prey to the devil. The devil is very skillful at

manipulating people into unrighteous activities. He will, with no regard whatsoever, use people at whim to live in open defiance against God. That is why Peter warns us to be sober of mind and cautious of his whereabouts.

I Peter 5:8 (KJV) - *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

Being aware of his strategy is the key, for God is not the only one who has a plan for our lives. The devil also has a plan laid out, eager for us to follow. To insure that his victims are snared into bondage, he is doubly deceptive. With cunning craftiness, he deceives people into sin, and then when they are steeped in sin, he condemns them for the very sin he enticed them into in the first place.

It was from this condition of bondage to the sins of the flesh, that caused Paul to cry out,

Romans 7:24-25 (KJV) - "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord...*"

Because we all live in flesh bodies, we have sufficient reason, along with our brother Paul, to thank God for Jesus Christ our deliverer! Why? Because God's wisdom, the wisdom that comes from above, is greater than the cunning of the devil - anytime, anywhere!

I John 4:4b (KJV) - "...because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

If you are of God, the great one who has already overcome the devil lives inside you! What does this mean to us in practical terms? By staying in fellowship with the great one, sin no longer has to dominate us - beat us

down. Through the grace of God, we can overcome sin and enjoy the freedom to live righteous lives.

A quick review: In this lesson, we have touched upon the subject of two wisdoms, both of which are vying for our attention. One is good and has our best interests at heart; the other one is evil and is out to destroy us. James helps us to further identify the differences between these two wisdoms, and how to recognize their influence in the Body of Christ. The question he poses is directed toward those who claim to be teachers of God's Word. James sets out to identify whether these teachers are actually living the life they are teaching. In other words, do they understand God's Word enough to apply God's teachings to their every day life situations?

James 3:13-18 (KJV) - *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

In these scriptures James challenges them to examine the two types of wisdom. The wisdom from above he says; is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

This is such good news! God's wisdom is pure - there is no phoniness or deception about it. Because His nature is holy, He will not lie to us. God's wisdom is easy to be entreated - meaning we can go to God at any time and find rest from what is troubling us.

Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV) - *Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

God's approach to us is merciful and full of good fruits. Because He loves us, He talks to us in a gentle, straightforward manner; in a way we can understand, regardless of our education or background. He doesn't make fun of us. He simply teaches us what we are lacking.

James 1:5 (NIV) - *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*

The second wisdom, which comes from below, James refers to as earthly, sensual, and devilish. This wisdom is really nothing more than a counterfeit to God's Wisdom. Teachers in the Body of Christ who follow this wisdom are very subtle. They may appear to be "witnessing to the truth" on the surface; but their actions in the corporate body, reveal their underlying rebellion against God's Spirit of peace and reconciliation. James shines the light on their actions. Those who follow this counterfeit wisdom are not easily entreated. On the contrary, endless arguments often break out over the "rightness" of their cause. Their harsh "striving for the truth" only leads to unrighteousness.

James 3:16 (KJV) - *For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.*

Envy, strife and confusion does not come from the wisdom from above. Remember what Jesus said:

John 10:10 (KJV) - *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

The sad truth, there is no life or opportunity to grow spiritually in an atmosphere that is absent of peace. Where did James learn about the peaceful approach to teaching the gospel? He learned it from **Jesus Himself**, who said;

Matthew 5:9 (KJV) - *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

James was so confident in this pure wisdom passed down to Jesus from above, that he could say with conviction;

James 3:18 (KJV) - *And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

The bottom line: The truly wise person is one who has chosen and received the Spirit of God.

I Corinthians 2:12 (KJV) - *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*



Sharing the Good News

"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

II Corinthians 5:20-21

From: William H. Rhodes
Plainfield Correctional,
Plainfield, Indiana

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I pray good health and blessings upon you all. I write to you with good news.

Thanks be to God, I will be going home on August 30th, 2007 to be reunited with my family and loved ones! And due to my release I need to make an address change for your records, as I would like to continue receiving the CA newsletter and Spiritual Growth Lessons at home, if I may.

The correspondence I receive from CA is a blessing and a tool of inspiration and guidance in my walk with Christ. In the short time I've been receiving it, I have been blessed and lifted up abundantly! Thank you...thanks to the Lord for you! May the Lord continue to bless you and the CA ministry. I will not cease to pray for you, and I ask that you continue in prayer for me. Be well my friends! May the Lord be

magnified, your brother in Christ, Bill.

From: Robbie Martin,
Lee Correctional
Bishopville, SC

Dear Sharon, I just wanted to let you know that I got your letter and that I was happy to hear from ya'll. They moved me to Lee Correctional to give me my treatment for cancer. I would like for ya'll to keep me in your prayers.

I want ya'll to know that my love, blessings, and prayers are always with ya'll. I don't know how long I will be down here, but I will write and let you know when they send me back to Perry.

I thank ya'll for the good reading you send me. It helps me out a lot. Sharon, I thank you for your letter and Lesson #38 [Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?] that you sent me. Ya'll take care and know that my love is with ya'll. Your brother in Christ, Robbie.

From: Carl Wiggins,
Former inmate,
Pensacola, Florida

Dear Alan and Sharon, Thanks for keeping me on your mailing list. I always enjoy hearing from you and reading your Christian Ambassador's literature.

Things are very well for my family and me. I am still in plumbing. Life is good and my relationship with Christ is ever growing!

I will never forget either one of you. You were both so kind to me when I was in prison and in the Denver area. I pray you will continue to be able to do for others in prison as you have done for me. Please use the enclosed money in your prison outreach program. Hope to see you again soon. Carl

From: Edward Trippe,
Metropolitan Correctional
New York, NY

Dear Sharon, First I would like to say thank you for responding; thank you for your encouraging letter. I am so appreciative to receive it. It is a blessing people like yourself care for inmates. I see not only caring through your paper, spreading the Word of our God, it is wonderful to know what you and your husband Alan are doing. Especially in prisons, where God sometimes is the last thing spoken about. Your paper comes from real inmates! I believe that's why many can relate – inmates and families and friends of such.

I wanted to start something similar here, but there is too much red tape. So I started a Bible study here several months ago with many Spanish and English speaking inmates. I believe your newsletters will be a tremendous inspiration to them.

May God continue to bless you and your husband for all you do. Thank you, Edward.

**From: Joseph Huff,
Centennial Correctional
Canon City, CO**

Dear Sharon, I received my Spiritual Growth Letter/Lesson ["Where Shall Wisdom Be Found"?]. I was very impressed. As you stated, there may be times when we overestimate the severity of our trials. Something I've done many times. What is needed at such times is to trust in God to show us how things really are.

God has a specific purpose for each of us; of this I am certain. When I find myself in tuff situations, it's easiest to blame God, but the hard truth is – God didn't make the decision that put me in the tuff situation; that baby was all mine. God doesn't make decisions for you. But if you are patient, He'll show you the way. I've got a long way to go, but I'll get there! Anyway, good Letter/Lesson! Your brother, Joe.

**From: Ernesto Flores
Calipatria State Prison
Calipatria, CA**

Dear Christian Ambassadors, Hello everyone. I'm here to bring you the latest news about Carla Angelica Elorza; remember her? I received a letter from her uncle telling me that according to the last Brain Tumor Study this month [August], she is free from any tumor activity.

Remember she was breathing by herself for two hours? Well now she's doing it for five long ones instead! She's getting better! God

is Good! We still got a long way to go, however. It's hard for her to move, eat, walk, but she's positive and with lots of faith. Please keep her in your prayers as well as her uncle Francisco, that his business will flourish.

Thank you for your prayers and God Bless you all always,
Ernesto.

**From: Christopher Morris
Miami Correctional
Bunker Hill, Indiana**

Dear Christian Ambassadors, I am writing to request my name be placed on your mailing list to receive your newsletter [My Brother's Keeper]. I am also interested in the [Spiritual Growth] Lessons you provide.

My testimony: Three years ago while I was at the Delaware County Jail, I asked Christ into my heart, because I realized that I had wasted my life to 25 years of the pursuit of drugs, alcohol, and sexual immorality.

My life felt empty and without purpose until I received the free grace of Jesus Christ. Ever since then I have faithfully attended all church services and Bible studies. I only listen to Christian music and read Christian books. I'm currently involved with several Bible study correspondence courses.

My goal when I'm released from prison is to get involved with a church dedicated to missionary outreach programs, because it is Jesus' commandment to go into all

the world preaching the gospel to all people.

Thanks and may God bless your ministry, Christopher.

**From: Lester D. Jones,
Idaho Dept. of Corrections
Boise, Idaho**

Dear Christian Ambassadors, I really appreciate the newsletters, please keep them coming! I find a lot of good messages in your Christian newsletter [My Brother's Keeper]. I would like to share one of my experiences with Christian Ambassadors.

In 1997 I was incarcerated for a shameful crime, and at that time I could not read or write. The first night in jail was so devastating for me, not knowing what was going to happen, or how I was going to stay in contact with my family and friends.

Two days later a minister from a church I had attended a couple of times, came to see me in jail. The thing he asked me was "*Have you been saved?*" Not knowing for sure what he was asking, because I had not read the Bible or attended church very much, I had him explain.

He said, "*Lester, do you want to change your way of life?*" I answered, "*Yes!*" Then he had me repeat some words after him. After that was done, he asked me if I believed Jesus was crucified on the cross for our sins and raised again in three days? My answer was "*Yes*". Before the minister left that day, he prayed for me and

left me a Bible, which I could not read.

By that night I was so stressed out with worry, I made a vow to God; if He would help me I would never forget it. Two days later something came to me. It was like a voice from heaven telling me what to do. God had reminded me of a Christian woman that was a school teacher, that I knew.

I had the guard bring me a phone book and with the help of another man we found her phone number. I waited until evening in hopes that she would be home before I made the call. When she answered the phone I told her my name, where I was, and my problem. In reply to my problem she said, *"I think I have just what you need, and I will see you tomorrow."*

The next day about noon, she came and gave me a teacher's phonic guidebook that would help me sound out words. Plus, [she gave me] twenty-five first grade reading books. I thanked her with all my heart before she left.

The next day I started studying; eight to ten hours a day for weeks on end. I remember the first time I opened the Bible to the first page and tried reading it. It took me all day to read one page. I struggled with the words, trying to sound them out.

Today I have read the complete Bible almost three times. I have sixteen Bible study certificates, and I give God all the glory for them. So my advise to people is,

"Never give up on God, because He never gives up on us."

Thank you for reading my testimony, Lester D. Jones.

**From: Granville Irby,
Kershaw Correctional,
Kershaw, SC**

Dear Sharon and Alan, Greetings my brother and sister. Bless the both of you in the name of Jesus. Things here at Kershaw are really different from where I came from. My faith has been tested and yet I am still standing fast. Thank you Jesus!

No, I didn't make parole, but I did graduate from the Spice Program and I still have my grant when I get out. I have thirteen months left before I max out.

I got baptized on May 19, a day after my birthday. It took 50 years for me to accept Jesus as my Savior and it feels so good!

One thing I can say, God's prom-

ises have been kept; that if I'm a child of His, He will never leave me nor forsake me. The 28th of July I had the walking pneumonia and was rushed to the ER with a temperature of 102° and collapsed lungs. I was on the borderline dead, but my God, and no other, took me out of ICU after eight days and brought me back to life. I praise Him all through the day and when I wake up in the middle of the night. I no longer fear, because I know where I'm at with God.

I'm still doing Bible studies seven days a week and we have a good group here. I pray that you will still send me "My Brother's Keeper", and like I said, no matter where I am at, I will always keep in touch. God bless you both for all you are doing for others. Your brother in Christ, Granville.

*O give thanks unto the
LORD; for He is good:
for His mercy
endureth for ever.*

Psalm 136:1