

A SPIRITUAL STORY

In April of 1987, after I was released from a minimum security prison in Solano, California, at the checkout window I was greeted by an older lady who might be found bagging French fries at McDonalds. She handed me an envelope containing \$200. and said, "A freind of yours is waiting for you in the parking lot."

Lisa, one of the people from Golden Valley Christian Center, drove me to the Center where I was warmly greeted by Pastor Ken Birks, who had agreed to help me get established in the community. Pastor Ken generously offered me a room in a building across the street from the Center.

I was told the building that was now being used for storage for the church supplies had once been used as a church. Since people coming to the Christian Center were often in need of temporary lodging, Pastor Ken had converted one of the rooms into living quarters. When I entered the room I sensed a lonely atmosphere, much the same feeling I had in my prison cell. I looked around, saw a rollaway bed, a stereo, roll-up blinds, storage shelf for school supplies and a portable refrigerator.

After Pastor Ken left me I decided to go to bed. I stretched out and was just starting to feel at ease in my new surroundings when without warning the 'ON' indicator light came on the stereo, but no sound came from the machine. Then there was a shuffle on the carpet, something encircled my bed stopping briefly to lightly touch the quilt covering my feet. Shivers riveted up and down my spine, but I was unable to move.

Suddenly six fun pak potato chips were thrown out from one of the storage shelves. Some of the packs landed on the bed and others were thrown around the floor. I quickly drew the blanket up to my chin, frightened because I knew I wasn't alone, and I knew it wasn't a mouse, because one couldn't have mustered such events.

The shuffling continued, then stopped by my head. I yelled, jumped out of bed and switched on the light. I commanded, "In the name and power of Jesus, I command you to depart from this room." I didn't know if this thing was a good or bad spirit, all I knew was I wanted to be rid of it. Then I waited and listened. I was alone. I began to thank God for being there to help me. I sang the first hymn that I had ever learned as a boy. After I sang Amazing Grace and praised God I lay back down and was glad the strange events had stopped and there was a peace about the room. I closed my eyes and slept.

The next morning I shared my experience of the night before with Pastor Ken. I learned I wasn't the first to have had contact with the entity. Pastor Ken went on to explain how the former pastor was shot to death in that very room. The room once used as a pastorial office had been the scene of molestation of a nine year old girl by the former pastor. It was there that the girl's father shot him one morning shortly after Sunday services. Pastor Ken felt it was the pastor who was still inhabiting the room.

Pastor Ken believed the violence came because the spirit was being punished for the evil he committed. There are many conclusions one could draw from the events in the room; mine is, life is far too precious to throw away by doing evil.

This story is real and the site can be visited if permission is attained from Pastor Ken Birks at 201 Bonia Ave., Roseville, CA 95678 (Golden Valley Chrisitian Center)

TO LIKE OR NOT TO LIKE

**I DISLIKE THE WORD HATE
AND I HATE THE WORD DISLIKE
YET I FIND THEM AROUSING
WAKING ME AT ODD HOURS AT NIGHT**

**THE WORD ATTACHES ITSELF TEMPORARILY
WHILE LOVE ENDURES COLD NIGHTS
HATE LIVES AMONG THE IGNORANT
AND DISLIKE IS CHAINED TO CONFUSION**

**LIKE IS A CHANGING OF ONES MIND
WHILE LOVE SEEKS THE HAND OF JUSTICE
TO HATE IS TO DIE BITTER
BUT TO LIKE
IS A STARTING POINT OF LOVE
EACH AN EMOTIONAL MARRIAGE**

-James Collins

TIMES IN NEED

WHERE WAS MOTHER WHEN I NEEDED HER
IN THE KITCHEN PREPARING DINNER
WHERE WAS MOTHER WHEN I NEEDED MONEY
AT THE STORE BUYING ME CLOTHES
WHERE WAS MOTHER WHEN I HAD NIGHTMARES
AT THE HEAD OF MY BED
WHERE WAS MOTHER WHEN I GOT SICK
SPOON FEEDING ME WITH COUGH SYRUP
WHERE WAS MOTHER WHEN I WAS LONELY
IN HER ARMS BEING COMFORTED
WHERE WAS I WHEN MOTHER WAS DYING
IN THE BOSOM OF JESUS WEEPING

-- James Collins

TOO KIND

I AM KIND AND GENTLE
UNDESERVING OF YOUR VIEWS
YOU WARM YOURSELF WITH PROVERBS
UNTIL THE CHILL OF LONLINESS
TINKERS WITH YOUR SOUL

YOU SAY ALL MEN ARE DOGS
YOUR WORDS ARE LIKE FLEAS
IRRITABLE TO MY SOUL
A TESTAMENT TO YOURSELF

YOU LAY OUT A MAT
EXPECTING ME TO LAY UPON IT
I AM TOO KIND TO SHED THERE

James Collins

STAY STRONG

I AM A MAN
TATTERED WITH HUMAN EMOTION
BUT I WILL STAY STRONG

WHEN THE WEIGHT OF SIN
COMES CRASHING DOWN
AND WHEN I'VE BEEN BEATEN
WITH ONLY MY CROSS TO BEAR
I WILL STAY STRONG

WHEN THE PRISON DOORS ARE LEFT AJAR
THE PAINT WILL PEEL
BEFORE I WEAKEN
FOR JESUS' WORD MAKES ME STRONG

-James Collins