

9/10/12

# Dealing with the Loneliness of Prison.

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1-24

It is my hope that by sharing my soul and exploring the pain that loneliness has caused me - and the ways that I have managed to deal with it - perhaps, through my writing and reflections, one day others may be guided through the emotional minefield that 'loneliness' can become.

I pray that these words "... may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted by God." / Cor. 1:14

Loneliness can strip our hearts of song, quench the spirit, and cripple our ability to praise God - loneliness can bring you to your knees ... but as it turns out, that's a great place to start. ☺

It is "on our knees" that we can find "... the oil of gladness instead of mourning, a garment of praise instead of despair." ISA. 61:1-3

Loneliness can't be denied, brushed aside or 'wished away' - I know, because I've tried those things... Of course there is no 'quick fix' and there are no clever solutions - rather, it is a process.

2-24

The PAIN of Loneliness CAN RUN SO DEEP, THAT FINDING ANY SOLUTIONS OUTSIDE of the word of God is like PUTTING A BAND-AID ON A BROKEN BONE... JUST NOT VERY EFFECTIVE.

So - I INVITE YOU TO TAKE A JOURNEY WITH ME. A JOURNEY THROUGH THE DARKNESS, AND INTO THE LIGHT of God's LOVE.

THE ISSUE of Loneliness is DISCUSSED THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE - BEGINNING WAY BACK IN GEN. 2:18. "AND THE LORD SAID, IT IS NOT GOOD FOR MAN TO BE ALONE."

HOWEVER, THERE ARE MANY, MANY DIFFERENT KINDS of Loneliness (AND CAUSES). IT'S POSSIBLE TO BE IN A ROOM FULL of PEOPLE AND STILL FEEL TERRIBLY ALONE.

ALBERT EINSTEIN ONCE SAID: "OH TO BE SO UNIVERSALLY KNOWN AND STILL BE LONELY."

THERE'S THE Loneliness of JACOB AS EXPERIENCED IN GENESIS 32:24; of ELIJAH IN 1st Kings 19:3-4, 10 AND 12; of ENOCH IN JUDE 14-15, JONAH IN 2:2-6 - THERE'S THE Loneliness of LEADERSHIP AS EXPERIENCED BY MOSES IN EXODUS 18:14-18; JOHN THE BAPTIST IN MT. 11:7-11, PAUL IN 2 COR 1:8-9, 11:23-28, 2 TIM 1:15; AND DAVID IN ZIKLAG

3-24

I could, of course, go on - but my only point is that, as stated in 1 COR 10:13, "THERE IS NO TEMPTATION TAKEN YOU BUT SUCH AS IS COMMON TO MAN: BUT GOD IS FAITHFUL, WHO WILL NOT SUFFER YOU TO BE TEMPTED ABOVE WHAT YOU ARE ABLE; BUT WILL WITH THE TEMPTATION ALSO MAKE A WAY TO ESCAPE, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO BEAR IT."

(I don't want to get ahead of myself, but I call loneliness a "temptation"; because - what is it, if not the temptation to, like ELIJAH, sit beneath the JUNIPER TREE and request for himself that he might die." 1 Kings 19:4)

NOT LONG AGO I READ ABOUT A FAMOUS "ROCK STAR" WHO, THOUGH IT APPEARED HE HAD EVERYTHING TO LIVE FOR (I.E., FAME AND FORTUNE) COMMITTED SUICIDE. - IN A NOTE LEFT BEHIND, HE WROTE IN FRENCH, "J'AI UNE AME SOLITAIRE" (I AM A LONELY SOUL) HOW SAD IS THAT?

Loneliness has been described as a feeling of RESTLESSNESS, or BEING INCOMPLETE; the feeling that SOMETHING IS MISSING - AN EXCEMA OF THE SPIRIT THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SCRATCH.

4-24

SINCE MAN WAS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD, WE WILL EXPERIENCE A RESTLESSNESS OF THE SPIRIT, UNTIL WE FIND THAT REST IN HIM!

IN EXPLORING THE 'CAUSES' AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS, (IN MY CASE) I'D LIKE TO BEGIN WITH A LITTLE STORY - ☺

THERE WAS A MAN RUNNING THROUGH THE FOREST WHEN, SUDDENLY, HE WENT OVER A CLIFF... AT THE LAST MOMENT HE MANAGED TO GRAB ONTO A BRANCH BEFORE PLUMMETING TO THE VALLEY FLOOR BELOW.

AFTER YELLING HIMSELF HOARSE CALLING FOR HELP - HE BEGAN TO CRY OUT TO GOD.

"OH GOD... PLEASE HELP ME! I KNOW THAT I'VE LET YOU DOWN IN THE PAST... BUT, PLEASE GOD - JUST GET ME OUT OF THIS ONE, AND I PROMISE, I'LL DO THE RIGHT THINGS." ON AND ON HE WENT, UNTIL HE HEARD A VOICE.

"MY CHILD"

"GOD?" SAID THE MAN, "IS THAT YOU?"

"YES MY CHILD"

"OH PLEASE - GET ME OUT OF THIS. I PROMISE I'LL..."

5-24

"We can discuss that later," said God, "first, let's get you down from there."

"Oh thank you God," said the grateful man.

"O.K. my child, I've got you... ready?"

"Oh yes God!"

"O.K. - let go."

After a few moments of silence, the man began to yell out. "Help! Help! Is there anyone else up there?"

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I love that story... and though it's meant to be ~~humorous~~, it has a serious point - the right thing to do, of course, would be to "let go" - to "let go, and let God!" However, while in so many ways, and for so many reasons, it may seem like the logical thing to do - too often, in leaning upon our own understanding we may "cling" to things as tightly as that man clung to that branch.

"Is there anybody else up there?" - "Is there another way?" - Faith sounds great in a sermon, but how readily do we apply it to our own lives? To our own situations?

6-24

Now, of course, the loneliness of imprisonment is a unique situation - but Self is the only prison that can hold the soul!!

In my case, I found that the only way that I would be able to move forward toward the peace of mind that I so desperately needed - I had to "let go" of a few things to which I, stubbornly, tried to cling - people, places, things, the past, and most importantly, Self.

I say "people" for what may seem, in most cases, obvious reasons. Often, putting ones faith in people is like trying to carry red hot coal in a brown paper bag. "NOR, I HAVE LEARNED, IS IT FAIR TO THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES WHEN OUR FAITH IS DEPENDENT UPON THEIR ACTIONS.

With very few exceptions, it turns out that the very people upon whom I'd grown most "attached" were the ones who caused me the most pain.

Once again, I have to be clear, it never should have been their responsibility in the first place to live up to my expectations

7-24

THERE'S NO POINT IN GETTING INTO A "NAME GAME"; SUFFICE IT TO SAY, "... THAT MY OWN FAMILIAR FRIEND, IN WHOM I DID TRUST, WHICH DID EAT OF MY BREAD, HAS LIFTED HIS HEEL AGAINST ME." PS. 41:9

"A FRIEND LOVETH AT ALL TIMES, AND A BROTHER WARS BORN FOR ADVERSITY." PROV. 17:17 - NOW THAT'S A BEAUTIFUL SENTIMENT... BUT IT HASN'T NECESSARILY BEEN MY EXPERIENCE. I COULD MUCH MORE REALISTICALLY SAY THAT "SUCCESS HAS MANY FATHERS, AND FAILURE IS AN ORPHAN."

"IT IS BETTER TO TRUST IN THE LORD THAN TO PUT CONFIDENCE IN MAN." PS 118:8

MANY TIMES IT CAN BE SAID THAT LONELINESS IS NOT SO MUCH A MATTER OF BEING ALONE, AS MUCH AS IT IS A FEELING THAT NO ONE REALLY SEEMS TO CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU - THANK GOD, "I HAVE A FRIEND THAT STICKETH CLOSER THAN A BROTHER."

ONCE, WHEN I'D JUST BEGUN SERVING TIME, I GOT A FEW LINES ON A POST CARD FROM A CHURCH SISTER - IT WAS JUST A FEW LINES ON A POST CARD, BUT IT TOUCHED MY HEART AND LIFTED MY SPIRITS - IT WAS LIKE A GIFT FROM GOD.

8-24

I OFTEN SAY TO MYSELF, "SELF."  
I SAY TO MYSELF - "IF PEOPLE  
ONLY REALIZED WHAT A SIMPLE WORD  
OF ENCOURAGEMENT CAN ACCOMPLISH  
IN THE HEARTS OF SOMEONE GOING  
THROUGH SOME KIND OF TRIAL OR  
TRIBULATION ... IT'S LIKE A COOL  
GLASS OF WATER TO A THIRSTY MAN.

"AND WHETHER ONE MEMBER SUFFERS, ALL  
THE MEMBERS SUFFER WITH IT ... " 1 COR. 12:26  
AS "CHRISTIANS" ARE WE NOT ALL  
MEMBERS OF THE SAME FAMILY? THE  
SAME BODY? FOR ONE CHRISTIAN TO  
SAY THAT HIS FATE IS NOT SOMEHOW  
TIED TO THE FATE OF HIS BROTHER IS  
LIKE SAYING "YOUR END OF THE BOAT  
IS SINKING."

ALTHOUGH I STILL PRAY THAT THE  
HOLY SPIRIT REACHES OUT TO TOUCH  
THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO I HAD  
LOVED AND MISSED SO MUCH - AND  
THAT IN TOUCHING, MIGHT PLANT A  
SEED FROM WHICH MIGHT GROW THE  
FRUIT OF COMPASSION - I HAVE  
LEARNED TO "LET GO" ... TO LET GO  
OF THE EXPECTATIONS, AND HOLD ON  
TO THE MEMORIES.

WHEN I SAY "PLACES" ARE ONE  
OF THE THINGS THAT I MUST "LET GO"  
OF, IT MIGHT SEEM ODD - BUT THE  
REALITY IS, (AT LEAST IN MY CASE)  
A BIG PART OF "DEALING" WITH LONELINESS



9-24

BEGINS WITH "ACCEPTING" THE FACT THAT, FOR THE TIME BEING, THOSE "PLACES" THAT I ONCE CONSIDERED MY "COMFORT ZONES" HAVE BEEN BLOWN AWAY BY THE WINDS OF ADVERSITY THAT HIT MY LIFE LIKE A VIOLENT STORM - I GUESS THAT KIND OF HONELINESS CAN BE COMPARED TO A FEELING OF "HOMESICKNESS."

FROM A 2 1/2 ACRE RANCH TO A 2 MAN CELL - LIKE A LEAF IN A WINDSTORM, THOSE PLACES HAVE BEEN BLOWN AWAY.

SINCE PEACE OF MIND COMES THROUGH "ACCEPTANCE," I HAVE TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT, ALTHOUGH I DIDN'T CHOOSE TO BE HERE ... AS THE COMMERCIAL SAYS, I MIGHT AS WELL HAVE A SNICKERS BAR, BECAUSE I WON'T BE GOING ANYWHERE FOR AWHILE. "J"

IT SHOULD BE PRETTY EASY TO SEE HOW "LETTING GO" OF THINGS IS IMPORTANT - THE SAME WAY THAT I MISSED "WHO" I WAS IN RELATION TO OTHER PEOPLE, AND "WHERE" I WAS IN TERMS OF PLACES ... WHAT I "HAD" ALSO SEEMED TO PLAY A BIG PART OF WHAT I ONCE CONSIDERED MY REALITY.

DESIGNER SUITS HAVE BEEN REPLACED WITH "PRISON BLUES" - A GOLD MOUNTAIN WITH A PLASTIC QUARTZ, A MONT BLANC PEN WITH A BIC, AND BALLY'S WITH BOBOS. "J"

10-24

BUT - "... A man's life consists not in the abundance of things that he possesses" - I had to learn, like Paul, that "... everywhere and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

IN A VERY REAL SENSE, I HAVE LEARNED THAT, (IN MANY WAYS) - IT WAS THOSE VERY "THINGS" THAT I HAD IN SUCH ABUNDANCE THAT HAD SEPARATED ME FROM THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THAT I NOW TREASURE. (DON'T GET ME WRONG - PART OF THE BLESSING OF GOD IS, THAT A PERSON MAY ENJOY THE COMFORT OF A GODLY HOME, AND THE PROSPERITY WITH WHICH GOD HIMSELF MAY HAVE BLESSED THEM)

IT'S JUST THAT (ONCE AGAIN, I SPEAK TO MY OWN SITUATION) WHEN THE "FRIENDS" ARE GONE, AND THE "PLACES" AND "THINGS" ARE GONE - TRYING TO "HOLD ON" TO THEM IS LIKE ONE WHO "BEATETH THE WIND" AS PAUL WOULD SAY. (REF. 1 COR 9:26)

I HAVE FOUND THAT A MUCH GREATER FRUSTRATION COMES FROM EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL DEPRIVATION RATHER THAN ANY FINANCIAL LACK - ECONOMIC ISSUES CAN BE REMEDIATED, BUT A BANKRUPT SOUL CAN BE CATASTROPHIC.

11-24

Another thing that I discovered was that, in order for me to get to that place where I would no longer be 'tossed to and fro' upon the waves of loneliness, I needed to "let go of the PAST".

There's a very good reason that we have such a large front windshield and a small rearview mirror. 😊 Not only can we NOT see the future when we "cling" to the past, but we can't even begin to appreciate the present.

To hug our sorrows is to fuel our grief, and so past disappointments, yesterday's failures as well as its accomplishments belong in the past. Let them be reviewed periodically, but let us NOT be blinded by the reflection!

I've had an incredible life those are - I've reached heights that many men only dream of... yet I also have memories of desperate times spent bobbing along on the waves of grief. I've done some things of which I'm proud, and things that I strive to remember.

For example, the tragic chain of events that led to my arrest may represent a series of snapshots in

12-24

IN THE PHOTO ALBUM OF MY LIFE -  
BUT PAST DOES NOT DEFINE WHO  
OR WHAT I AM, NOR DOES IT  
LIMIT WHO I STILL MAY BECOME...  
GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH ME YET,  
AND WHEN THIS "SENTENCE" COMES  
TO AN END, A NEW CHAPTER WILL  
BEGIN.

"FOR GODLY SORROW WORKETH  
REPENTANCE TO SALVATION PAST IS  
NOT TO BE REPENTED OF: ..."  
11 COR 7:10 - God DOESN'T SAY  
PAST HE WILL "FORGET" OUR SINS,  
WHATEVER THEY MAY BE - BECAUSE,  
IF HE SIMPLY "FORGOT THEM", PERHAPS  
ONE DAY HE MIGHT "REMEMBER THEM."  
BUT NO, HIS WORD SAYS, "... FOR  
I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SIN NO MORE."  
JER. 31:34 HALLELUJAH!

THANK GOD PAST MY REDEMPTION  
COMES FROM THE BLOOD OF CHRIST  
AND NOT THROUGH THE OPINION OF MAN.  
AND SO - "... FORGETTING THOSE THINGS  
WHICH ARE BEHIND, AND REACHING FORTH  
UNTO THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE BEFORE,  
I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE  
PRIZE OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN  
CHRIST JESUS" PHIL 3:14

ADVERSITY IS LIKE A STRONG WIND,  
IT DOESN'T JUST HOLD YOU BACK FROM  
PLACES YOU MIGHT OTHERWISE GO - IT ALSO

13-24

FEARS AWAY FROM US ALL BUT THE THINGS THAT CANNOT BE TORN AWAY - SO THAT, AFTER, WE SEE OURSELVES AS WE REALLY ARE, AND NOT AS WE MIGHT LIKE TO BE.

ONCE STRIPPED OF THE "THINGS" THAT USED TO DEFINE US ... WHAT'S LEFT IS WHAT WE HAVE TO WORK WITH - WHICH LEADS ME TO THE LAST THING THAT I REALIZED I HAD TO "LET GO OF" - SELF. SELF-WILL, SELF-DOUBT, SELF-CENTEREDNESS, SELF-ABSORPTION ... SELF!

"HE MUST INCREASE AND I MUST DECREASE ..." THE SIMPLICITY OF THE GOSPEL IS THAT CHRIST DIED, WAS BURIED AND ROSE AGAIN ON THE 3RD DAY ... AND PAID FOR OUR SALVATION. TO DIE TO SELF IS TO GAIN CHRIST! "THEREFORE IF ~~ANY~~ ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATURE: OLD THINGS ARE BECOME NEW." 11 COR. 5:17

AS LONG AS I TRIED HOLDING ON TO THE OLD MAN, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD. - IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY, "NOT MY WILL, BUT YOUR WILL BE DONE." - FAR TOO MANY CHRISTIANS, AND I ONCE COUNTED MYSELF CHIEF AMONG THEM, SAY "OUR FATHER" ON SUNDAY, AND THEN SPEND THE REST OF THE WEEK ACTING LIKE ORPHANS.

WE MUST DIE TO SELF; THAT WE MAY LIVE FOR CHRIST. "THEREFORE WE ARE BURIED WITH HIM BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH."

14-24

Just like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life. "Ro. 6:4  
Is not that the heart, the very essence of the Gospel?"

Uh Oh, I feel a 'story' coming on ... ☺

One day, there was a farmer who needed to clear some trees from his property to extend his crop-planting. Needing a new saw, he headed into town to buy one. When he got to a hardware store, he was convinced by a salesman to try the latest in power chain saws.

"With this beauty here," said the salesman, "you can cut down 10 to 15 trees in the time it would normally take to cut down only one with your old hand saw."

Convinced, the old farmer bought the chainsaw and headed back to the farm.

A few days later he was back at the store and he was hot! "You lied to me!" He told the salesman. "You said I'd be able to cut down 10 to 15 ~~trees~~ trees with this thing - why, it took me all day just to cut down one!"

15-24

Puzzled, The Salesman took  
The Saw - looked it over - Then  
Pulled The Cord ... BZ-BZ-BZZZ.  
The chainsaw roared to life.  
'What's that noise?' said The  
Farmer. ☺ L.O.L.

Now, of course, that too is meant  
to be a humorous story - but isn't  
that also how we, as Christians,  
can limit the power of God in our  
lives by trying to do things "Our way"?  
So - I've learned, through Scripture,  
that I must "let go" of self, or  
I would risk making the "... The  
word of God of no effect." MARK 7:13  
I can only "tap into" that power  
source (pull the cord ☺) by first  
putting off the "Old man" and letting  
go of self. - / John 4:15 is clear:  
"Whoever shall confess that Jesus is  
the Son of God, God dwelleth in him,  
and he in God." - It is through the  
power of the Holy Spirit that we  
are able to "... walk in the newness  
of life."

### A New Path

"A new path - Not a crossroad, for in  
truth there is no other  
way than a just a  
reasonable man could go  
A new path - Not a destination - for  
there is no stopping."

16-24

A NEW PATH - NOT A DETOUR, FOR THE PATH I WAS ON HAD TAKEN ME AS FAR AS I WOULD GO.  
A NEW PATH - NOT A DEAD END -  
FOR THERE CAN BE NO TURNING BACK!

I CAME ACROSS THAT BIT OF WRITING, "A NEW PATH"; DURING A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT PERIOD IN MY JOURNEY THROUGH THIS "FURNACE OF AFFLICTION" KNOWN AS THE FLORIDA DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS - DURING A TIME WHEN I REALIZED THAT THE PATH I HAD BEEN ON HAD LED TO A BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS.

BUT - HALLELUJAH! I PRAISE GOD FOR HIS GRACE AND MERCIES TOWARDS ME... I MAY NOT BE WHERE I WANT TO BE, BUT AT LEAST I'M NOT WHERE I WAS. AND ISN'T THAT ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS ABOUT GOD'S GRACE? IT ALWAYS TAKES US AS WE ARE, BUT NEVER LEAVES US AS WE WERE.

IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR THE STRENGTH AND GUIDANCE THAT I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND WITHIN THE WORD OF GOD, TRYING TO DEAL WITH THE PAIN AND LONELINESS THAT PRISON CAN PRODUCE WOULD HAVE BEEN UNBEARABLE.



17-24

It would have been like trying to fight the lightning with a slingshot. Each flash would have only revealed how hopeless the battle - And in the darkness between the flashes, doubts would have echoed like rolling thunder, and the tears fallen down like rain.

Do I still struggle with Loneliness? Yes! Do I still fight to overcome these emotions? Yes! - The difference is, when all you have in your toolbox is a hammer, every problem seems like a nail. However, by studying the Word of God it provides me with the "tools" to deal with whatever trials may come my way. His word has become as a lamp unto my feet (showing me where I stand) and a light unto my path. (This is the way, walk ye in it!)

Earlier, I mentioned that adversity is like a mighty wind - but it is the tree that has to withstand the fiercest winds that has roots which grow the deepest. - The Word of God is the soil in which I have planted my roots, and I continue to look to Christ who strengthens me - I tap into that power source by "pulling the cord" and calling upon the name of Jesus.

18-24

Over The years I have earned over 40 certificates from various Bible Correspondence courses. - I have been blessed to have earned a Graduate of Theology and a Bachelors of Bible Studies - By the Grace of God, I have finished the course work and (if it may be God's will) will soon complete my thesis for a Masters in Biblical Studies from Gulf Coast Bible College, and continue work on a Masters in Theology from Covenants Bible College and Seminary in Tallahassee, FL.

If I were to spread those certificates and diplomas out on a table, each one would represent a leaf from that deeply rooted tree... The fiercer the winds of adversity blow, the deeper I'd bury myself within the word of God.

At one point, between Bible College, prayer, and those correspondence courses, there were days when I would spend 8 hours or more absorbed in the study of God's word - Paul tells us in 2 Tim 2:15 "Study to show (ourselves) approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I would pray, constantly, not to become "puffed up" by the knowledge, but rather, humbled by the word.

19-24

IT CONTINUES TO DRILL ME TO NO  
END TO REALIZE THAT, IN SPENDING  
TIME IN THE WORD, I'M SPENDING  
TIME WITH JESUS! "... AND THE  
WORD WAS GOD." JOHN 1:1

WHEN I EXAMINED LONELINESS  
THROUGH THE LENS OF SCRIPTURE, I  
FOUND COMFORT AND INSPIRATION -  
FOR EXAMPLE, JESUS SAYS IN JOHN 16:32,  
"... EVERY MAN TO HIS OWN, AND  
SHALL LEAVE ME ALONE: AND YET I  
AM NOT ALONE, FOR THE FATHER IS  
WITH ME." I KNOW HE WILL NEVER  
LEAVE NOR FORSAKE ME.

TRIALS WILL COME  
AND RAINCLOUDS WILL FORM;  
AND LIGHTNING WILL STRIKE  
'ROUND THE EYE OF THE STORM.

BUT AS SURELY AS DAWN,  
WILL FOLLOW THE NIGHT -  
WE WILL PERSEVERE  
IF WE KEEP HIM IN SIGHT.

Glory be to God.

A FEW POINTS BEFORE CLOSING -  
A MAN CAN CARRY MORE DEGREES THAN  
A THERMOMETER - BUT IT IS THE DEGREE  
TO WHICH HE APPLIES THE WORD OF GOD  
TO HIS LIFE THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE.

20-24

IT IS VITAL THAT WE LEARN TO USE THE WORD OF GOD EFFECTIVELY IN THE SPIRITUAL BATTLES THAT WE WILL FACE - LONELINESS IS JUST ONE OF THOSE BATTLES. - WHAT GREATER EXAMPLE CAN WE FIND THAN OUR SAVIOR HIMSELF, WHO, WHEN CONFRONTED BY THE WICKED ONE IN THE WILDERNESS QUOTED DIRECTLY FROM SCRIPTURE!

IT IS WRITTEN ... DEUT 6:13,  
DEUT 6:3, DEUT 6:16

HERE ARE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF HOW WE CAN USE THE WORD OF GOD TO COMBAT SATAN'S "LIES" (HIS FIERY DARTS)

SATAN'S LIES

PEOPLE HURT ME

NO GOOD WILL COME OF THIS.

GOD IS PUNISHING ME

I AM WEAK

GOD'S WORD

WE WRESTLE NOT AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD.  
EPH 6:12

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THOSE THAT LOVE GOD.  
RO. 8:28

WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE CHASTENS.  
HEB. 12:6

MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS  
2 COR. 12:9

21-24

## STARK'S LIES

God has left me

## God's word

I WILL NEVER LEAVE  
THEE, NOR FORSAKE  
THEE.

HEB. 13:5

I'LL NEVER MAKE IT!

I CAN DO ALL THINGS  
THROUGH CHRIST WHO  
STRENGTHENS ME  
PHIL. 4:13

"HEAVEN AND EARTH SHALL PASS AWAY:  
BUT MY WORDS SHALL NOT PASS AWAY."  
LUKE 21:33

Hallelujah!! Let God be true and  
every man a liar.

SOMETIMES WE CRY OUT TO GOD  
WHEN OUR FOUNDATIONS ARE BEING  
SHAKEN, ONLY TO FIND THAT IT IS  
GOD WHO IS SHAKING THEM.

"BETTER IS THE END OF A PAINING  
THAN THE BEGINNING OF A PAINING."  
AFTER ELIJAH WAS THROWN HIMSELF  
A LITTLE "PITY PARTY" BENEATH THE  
JUNIPER TREE AND ... REQUESTED  
THAT HE MIGHT DIE.  
(1st Kings 19:4) VERSE 11 OF 1st Kings IS  
CONTINUES, "... AND BEHOLD, THE LORD  
PASSED BY, AND A GREAT STRONG WIND  
RENT THE MOUNTAINS (HE WAS SHAKING  
THE FOUNDATIONS), AND BROKE IN PIECES  
THE ROCKS BEFORE THE LORD; BUT

22-24

The Lord was not in the wind:  
And after, the wind an earthquake:  
<sup>12</sup> And after the earthquake a fire;  
but the Lord was not in the fire:  
And after the fire a still small  
voice:

The Voice of God - After  
The foundations had been shaken,  
came in a whisper... If we  
spend our time dwelling on the  
results of the storms in our  
lives, we run the risk of missing  
that "still small voice" - "Come  
unto me, all ye that labor and  
are heavy laden, and I will  
give you rest." Mt. 12:28

My Brothers and Sisters in  
Christ - I've been written of  
by some family and friends  
as if a ship  
that went down in a storm

But that's not the way  
that my story ends -  
cause I've been praying  
here in echo term

During those days of "so-called"  
success - I had friends galore...  
but, with my "fall from grace"; those  
friends (with few exceptions) turned  
out to be like "wells without water"

23-24

or clouds without RAIN!

One of the things that I am most grateful to God for, is that He has not allowed this experience to harden my heart! The word of God has enabled me to cultivate a garden within my soul - part of that cultivation process has been to remain vigilant that no seed of bitterness is allowed to take root - Only then will I be able to hear the still small voice of God walking in that garden in the cool of the day.

Before learning to 'let go' - I approached the word of God while holding on to my little cup of "worldly knowledge"... As I approached the Ocean of God's word, I was awed by its majesty - my hand trembled and my little cup fell... with a shout of Hallelujah! I ran and plunged into the Ocean of God's Love. - I bashed my soul in the healing waters - into the depths of His mercy I went only to be lifted up by His Grace and carried along upon the waves of Glory -

24-24

Whatever may be the causes for our loneliness - God "has an app. for that." Unfortunately, life does NOT come with a REWIND button - WE CAN'T GO BACK AND CHANGE THINGS while hoping for different results. NOR CAN WE HIT A "FAST FORWARD" button and hurry past whatever might be the NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES of poor choices or past mistakes... BUT WE CAN "PAUSE" - WE CAN PAUSE AND DRINK DEEPLY FROM THAT FOUNTAIN of LIVING WATER.

AS WE STRUGGLE THROUGH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS, or TRY TO RISE ABOVE PERSONAL PROBLEMS - FAR TOO OFTEN WE MAY FEEL ALONE... WE MAY LOOK BACK AND SEE A SINGLE TRACK of FOOTSTEPS, LEFT PURE IN THE SAND - PERHAPS UNAWARE, AS WE LOOK BACK, THAT THE MASTER HAD BEEN HOLDING OUT HIS HAND.

IN CLOSING, I PRAY THAT WHOEVER YOU ARE, WHEREVER YOU ARE, AND WHATEVER YOU MAY BE GOING THROUGH, YOU TAKE COMFORT FROM THE FACT HE WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU FORSAKE YOU - AND YOU WILL NEVER WALK ALONE WHEN YOU CALL UPON THE NAME of JESUS... NOT JUST OUR SAVIOR, BUT A FRIEND WHO STICKS CLOSER THAN A BROTHER!

BETWEEN THE BARS.ORG

IN HIS CUSTODY - GARY  
GARY FIED