

## SEEING IS NOT BELIEVING

As I sit in the cage the State of Wisconsin has assigned to me, I realize that another calendar year has come to an end. The monotony of prison existence causes days to meld together; So in a sense there is no genuine concept of time here outside of the fact that it's being lost by those in my current situation. Being constantly reminded of that truth, I continue to struggle with weary fingers to hold on to my hope of being completely free in spite of what I see daily. I'm tired, but I refuse to release myself into the hopeless, oneness of this sadistic subculture of society. When I look in the mirror I can only smile at the lie that appears to be an accurate reflection of me. No longer is there a fresh faced young man with the light of hope in his eyes and a bright smile to greet me. Now I'm met by a grim looking figure in a suit made of numbers; Numbers that signify the years Satan has stolen and plans to steal from myself and others. Looking back at me is a nameless character that I know only as "LENGTHY PRISON SENTENCE", that's literally clothed in the time of our lives. He's a being that I've come to know is unashamedly void of compassion or regard for anyone's pain; Whether it be the pain of a man or woman left in his charge, or that of their families and friends outside the boundaries of prisons that grieve their absence. I can recall with an unexplained clarity, trembling as I stood face to face with this being and tried in my own strength to look into his gaze. It was a stare so empty of love that it could turn a heart glacier cold and igneous hard, and warm blood into Freon. One's innocence isn't a concern of his. The only thing that matters to him is that those subject to him must serve him without question. For 11 years the part of me that is The Natural Man has been forced to serve this unworthy master; All while knowing I A.M. not guilty of the crimes that caused me to be introduced to him. But my true self, The Spirit Man refuses to submit to the reality that I see that is contrary to what God has spoke into my heart. God's Spirit within me won't allow me to accept belonging to anyone, anything, or any being other than Jesus no matter how long I A.M. physically a captive. My refusal to yield my soul over to The Enemy or any being subject to him has caused me to experience a great deal of heart ache. Since being sentenced to prison both of my grandmothers, Bernice Harris & Essie Sago have both gone on to Glory. Two aunts, Clotheria & Lovie, and three uncles, Thomas, Bennie, and Willie have all passed away. Gloria Toomer, Sellus Sago, Paul (Bean) Williams, Christine & Willie (Big Yank) Barfield, and Raymond Ross are my cousins that have left this world since I got here. I can't even name all of the friends that have passed away, but it would be remiss of me if I didn't mention two very dear family friends, Mr. Leonard (Lent) Clark & Mr. Melvin (Big Man) Bell that have gone on to be with the Lord. Dealing with losing so many love ones would be difficult for anyone. Even with immediate access to family & friends for support during such painful periods in life, facing death is still a very tedious road to travel. Now if only for a moment, try to imagine dealing with all of that loss while isolated in a cage. I know those feelings intimately. Just when it seemed that I couldn't be broken any more than I already was, my namesake, my son, my seed had to answer God's call to return home after experiencing only 16 years of life. One would think that after so much pain that I would at least receive a brief reprieve from this harsh, isolated existence, but that wasn't and isn't the case. Each event that has been ordered by Satan to destroy me, God has kept & sustained me through them all. I use to complain about all that was happening to me. I always asked myself, Why Me? Until one day during a pity party my mother asked me, Why not you Antwiane, and if not you then who would you rather those things happen to? Those questions forced me to think about the homeless & hungry across the world; the babies & children facing terminal illnesses along with the countless terrible things people are being subject to

daily, and was a violent slap to my face. In reflection I came to realize that it is a blessing to be able to display God's strength during the most vulnerable times of our lives. Now, I A.M. thankful that I've been entrusted by God to go on this journey. I know that every demonic assault was designed to steal the fruit of the Spirit that Christ is producing in me; to kill the faith that allows me to accept the true source of life as my personal Savior; and to destroy my understanding of my God ordained purpose so that I would abuse my gifts and rob God of His glory. When I would look back over my life I would become consumed by all that I saw that I had endured. The weight of the painful memories almost crushed the hope within me. It wasn't until I began to understand the things that had been revealed to my spirit that I started walking in faith towards my destiny without regret. I was shown pieces of Eternity past & future in a vision. Things that had been and why they were, and things that would be once time reached those events. That experience gave me an understanding as well as an appreciation for each and every struggle in my life. Those rough patches were literally shaping & molding me into who I was created to be. Hammers, chisels, saws, pruning shears, and sandpaper, breaking off, cutting, shaping, and polishing me into a vessel fit for use. No longer do I see test and hardships. They are no more than the road leading to my next overcoming testimony. Trials are the vehicles used to carry me to triumph. The mirror tries to convince me that my reflection is that of a victim. I know that I A.M. a victor in all that is set before me! So now I stand in front of the mirror with eyes wide shut so that I can walk in the Spirit. That's the only way that I can see Eternity, and operate in a realm beyond what my eyes show me. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2nd Cor. 5:7) When I open my eyes I can still see the character in the suit made of numbers trying to lie to me. But I A.M. no longer trying to meet his gaze in my own strength. I now overpower his gaze with "Dunamis" from on high. Then just as Jesus spoke to Satan in the wilderness, (Matt. 4:1-11) in my wilderness I speak the truth of God's Word to this perverted version of my reflection. I say, "You're trying to steal from me, but your efforts are in vain because if God said that I have it there's nothing you can do to change that; "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. 55:11) You're trying to kill me & my faith, but I continue, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:2) Therefore contrary to where I A.M. I still believe that I A.M. who God says I A.M. and that I will not leave this realm before my faith is fulfilled. You're trying to destroy my purpose, but I can't help, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ;" (Phil. 1:6) You're trying to discourage me by reminding me of all that I've lost, and the many years that have gone by while I sat in this cage. To that I speak life, "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be ashamed." (Joel 2:25-26) To all reading this it's my prayer that you all would never allow what you see with your eyes to cancel out the vision that's been revealed in your spirits. Don't allow events from the past to hold you captive by dwelling on what self lost. Lose yourself in surrender to the one who has made us free indeed. If you can see it with your eyes it's temporary. True vision is a God given gift from Eternity. May your New Year Be blessed & full of revelations. A.M. out!

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*Gift by A  
Flawless World  
Antwiane Sago Sr.*

*P.S. I apologize for the mistakes.  
Hit me if you felt these words.*