

5-26-14

No Doubt!  
He Is My Brother

It's been a long time since I've released any of my feelings to the world. It seems as if the trials of life have held my thoughts hostage for over a year now; preventing me from freely expressing anything outside of unadulterated anguish. Therefore my voice has remained silent as I've endured the constant agonizing screams within my spirit. The last time you heard from me my frustration was on display in my post "The Way It Is". Since then I've had much to say, but the ability to convey my thoughts in an intelligent manner has escaped me. I wanted to write a sister piece to The Way It Is titled "The Way It Should Be", but while thinking about the contents I was overcome with questions that weren't directly related to the subject matter. Questions like... Why is it called rehabilitation when the lives of many were dysfunctional from the start? If prison isn't a rational solution or response to crime, what should an intelligent society be doing to correct Corrections? Would I care so much about what happens in prison if I was never incarcerated? If we still lived in an "Eye for an Eye" society as in the days of King Solomon, how many of us would be alive without visible scars? Even after spending a great deal of time trying to process those questions, I realized that there are few that have a genuine desire to answer them; and even fewer that are willing to execute the much needed, well thought out plans that could potentially produce positive changes. Please forgive the lack of continuity in this piece. I'm simply writing from the core of my soul. Making an earnest attempt at unclogging my mind. On Saturday, May 10th 2014 I was standing at the altar in the chapel here at W.C.I. directing the choir to sing a song we call "No Doubt!" William Rogers was playing the drums; Shain King was on lead guitar; Eddie Malave played the congas; Tyrone Munson sang lead, and last but certainly not least, Joseph Walker was playing the organ. None of us realized while in the middle of praising God the changes that were coming shortly after that service. Later on that day my beloved brother Joseph Walker had a stroke on the Rec. Field. I won't address the shameful response to his medical emergency by the staff here as well as the E.M.T.'s because I refuse to give place to anger. Besides, I've already described their tactics or the lack thereof in a previous post titled "How Can A Man?"; and I can wholeheartedly say, NOTHING HAS CHANGED!!! The following morning when the choir arrived at the chapel we were told that Joe was on Life Support, and his chances for survival were slim at best; and if he did pull through he'd be a vegetable for the duration of his life. Instantly we were all flooded with grief. Anyone that knows me can attest to the fact that I'm a sensitive man. Therefore it wouldn't be hard for them to imagine the emotional state I was in. However, I A.M. the choir director, and I knew that our present pain didn't relieve us of our responsibility as ministers of music; so I gathered myself, and got everyone to focus on the task of singing for that service. As we sang I couldn't help looking over at the organ, and seeing that my brother wasn't there. With each glance I felt a blow to my heart. That night almost 12 years worth of memories replayed in my mind's eye as I sat alone in this cage crying like a wounded animal. I couldn't say how many times Joe has been there for me over the years; But I know without question that in one way or another he has made his presence felt in a positive fashion through every test & trial I've endured since I was blessed with the pleasure of meeting him. I will never forget the love & support that was constantly expressed by him when I suffered my greatest loss, the passing of my son. What made his actions so significant to me is how genuine and swift his response to my pain was, (Someone who'd be seen by society as no more than a fellow convict); and how after almost

3 years later I haven't received a card, letter, visit or one kind word regarding the passing of my son from any of those society would call brothers due to our biological ties. That truth left me struggling with mixed emotions. On top of what I was already feeling, I had hurt & anger to deal with. During that time I found myself wondering, Who is my brother? Thankfully I was reminded by the Holy Spirit of the story in Luke 10:25-37. So I got my Bible and reread Luke's account of Jesus' interaction with a "Certain Lawyer", and I received relief in my spirit concerning those that are called my brothers, and confirmation about who truly are My Brothers. I've been blessed in my suffering to reach a space where I can sincerely say, I apologize to all of my brothers. For failing to be a better example; For making choices that were contrary to my purpose in life; For leaving you all to glean information on the principles of operating in true manhood from societies' perverted versions of what it really means to be a man; For being the source of any pain or discomfort in your lives, I apologize from the very depth of my soul. I only hope that as bad as my examples have been, you've all learned something beneficial from them. Even if I never see or hear from any of you again, I forgive & love you all! Life is too precious, and too short to be held captive by hard feelings. For years the men that are apart of the Body Of Christ here have been the only family I've had direct contact with. We've laughed & smiled, cried & prayed together through some of if not the most difficult periods of our lives. Although we come from different places, have cultural & ethnic differences, none of that alters the fact that we share the same spiritual D.N.A.. I haven't asked God to heal Joe. My prayer is that His will in done, and that we receive the grace to handle whatever He does. In Genesis 4:9 Cain asked God, "Am I my brother's keeper?" after he had killed his brother Abel. The last memory I was blessed to create with Joe is something I'll forever cherish. We were singing these lyrics, "No one, or nothing, can make me, make me doubt thee. No one can make me doubt thee, Jesus Christ is the who saved me, I'm going to run on until He takes me, and the devil can't even faze me." I believe with all that I A.M. and ever hope to be that nothing can separate us from the love of God, and I know Joe believed that too. His action showed me that I was indeed his brother. If anyone wants to know, No Doubt, He Is My Brother! I pray that if I'm ever asked, I can give a resounding yes to the question AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?

This piece is dedicated to all of the men that have been apart of the choir here at W.C.I.. Special thanks to Alonzo McDade, Emmanuel Page, Tito Long, Herbert Johnson, Richard Lindsey, Robert Patterson, Lawrence Williams, Freddie Nash, Leonard Sanders, William James 3rd, Melvin & Robert Tucker, Derryle McDowell, Darrell Griffin, Yuseph Williams, David Lewis, Tyles Jackson Kenneth Hare, Jeffery White, Dwight Campbell, Marshal Jones, Chaplain Sam, and Pastor Daniel Longsine. Each of these men have played an important role in helping me sustain over the past 13 years. I truly thank God for each of them!

Fire Tested  
Christ Approved  
A.M.

If you can feel this, hit me at  
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May God Rest  
Your Soul Joe!  
See you in the  
Kingdom of Heaven!  
Your Brother  
Twon