



# The Work Around



Overcoming Adversity  
Through Faith

Michael LeMay

# Cover Art Work Title: Enlightenment



**A depiction of one becoming spiritually awakened and self-aware. Through prayer, meditation, and through the study of God's word. The light breaks through the mental chains and curses that bind our hearts and our minds.**



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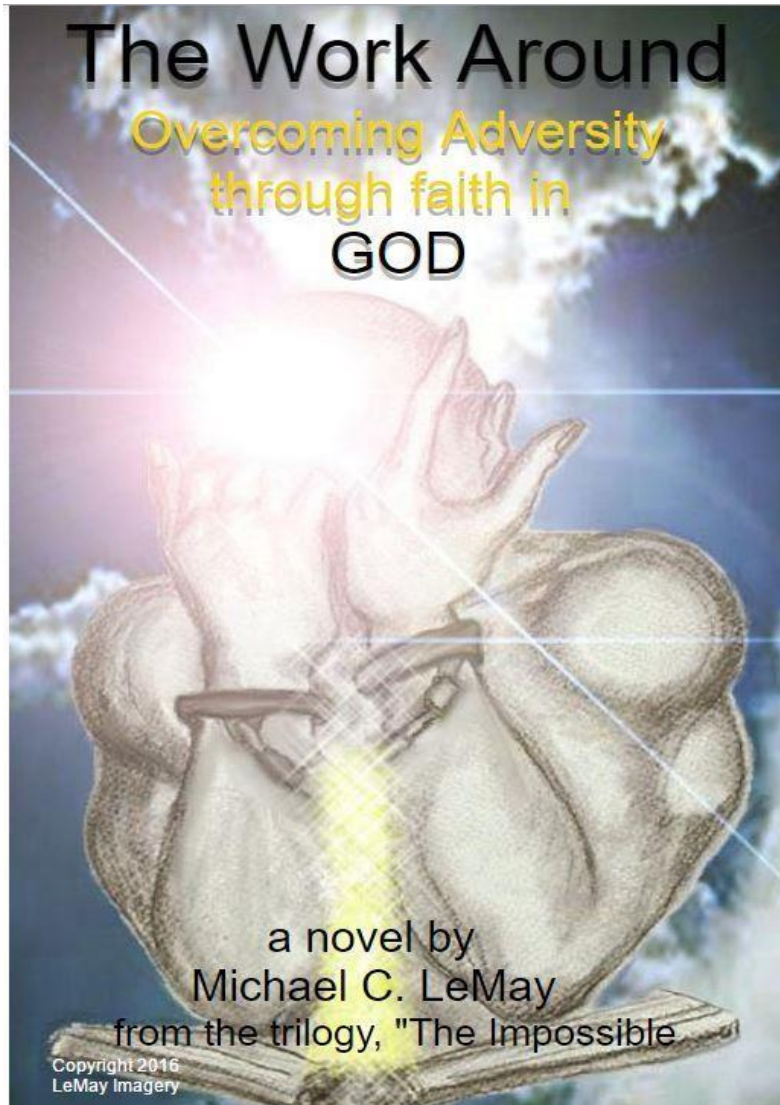
**Michael C. LeMay**



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## **The Work Around**

**is The first installment of**  
**The Impossible Trilogy**  
**The Work Around**  
**7 Days After**  
**Beauty for Ashes**

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## **Preface**

“The Work Around is an inspirational novel that offers some practical guidelines as a blueprint for Men to avoid a divorce. It is intended to be a reference material for men to use to know, “what not to do in an intimate relationship. So that he will be able to cultivate and to flourish in his marriage. “The Work Around also examines the extreme and harsh measures that a





woman is potentially capable of when she doesn't receive the love and attention she desires and deserves.

“The Work Around also offers some skills for managing day to day after experiencing a major emotional and painful experience. Such as an unexpected occupational change, a life threatening or physically debilitating ailment, or even the loss of a loved one.

“The Work Around also offers insight into and takes a close look at a real person's experience with handling an extremely difficult challenge, such as divorce. We all go through difficult seasons in life from time to time. “The Work Around is a self-help resource that can be used to illustrate to any one that as a season changes the situation will change also in time.


In my opinion, the responsibility for understanding the reasons for the failures in my marriage is ultimately the responsibility of mine. I believe it is ultimately the responsibility of the man to have maintained the love pulse in the relationship and in the family at large. The responsibility for the love and care of the family ends with the male, the father in the family.

He is the leader and should ensure that the family members all feel safe and valued. When this breaks down the father, husband, priest, needs to make every effort to understand the root causes of the change in the feelings of all the family members. Then he needs to begin to try to improve the relationship based upon the information gathered. Executing a plan of correction is impossible without spending the time to gather as much information about the origin of the problems.

However, resentment needs to be handled differently than a normal problem. Such as leading a young son into developing sound leadership characteristics. Most of these need to be fostered by example and over time. Underlying anger and pain need to be allowed to pass with time and effort on the father's part.

One of the greatest challenges of trying to repair a marriage is that the spouses have already typically decided to part, and so the challenges to mend the relationship is even greater for the man, as he usually doesn't have a clue as to what is about to happen, before it is too late.

A man needs to make every effort to restore the love pulse, while recognizing and taking responsibility for the negative things that have happened because of him. But a man that makes reformations only to change the current situation doesn't solve the problem but only puts a band aid on the problems in the relationship.



The wife needs to feel as though whatever changes her husband is attempting is genuinely for the long haul and not just a temporary fix. Which has only been implemented just to get past the current relational hurdle in the relationship. The wife needs to know that her husband is working on himself and that her husband is not just working on the relationship. Consequently, the husband, father needs to focus on reestablishing whatever made the marriage spark in the beginning. While figuring out how to reinvent himself.

Jumping through the hoops for the love of his wife is worth the work. The difficulty in reestablishing a love between the partners can be very difficult but not impossible. The leader of the marriage, the man needs to figure out how to first get the wife to be able to trust him again and to try to understand where the deterioration started is necessary to accomplish this.


Conversely, the wife needs to exercise the patience that only comes with the love she has for her husband. Often wives throw in the towel too soon without exploring every avenue that could remedy or at least identify their lapses.

“The Work Around explores some of the methods that the gods of this world use to entice families to separate, ultimately leading to divorce. Which further transcends into problems that exist within our schools and churches. Many of the destructive powers of the rulers of darkness are exposed in, “The Work Around.

“The Work Around also gives the reader a look at an average American family, and the failures of a spouse, in this case, the husband, and the impatience and relentless and ruthless behavior of the wife responding to the mistreatment and neglect she has been experiencing. The will be able to relate to the real-life challenges that can arise when there is neglect in a marital relationship as well as the observance of what a spouse or family member can give the opportunity to hurt the other partner.

“The backdrop for the book is a prison. The lack of freedom to the main character, Mitch May’s current surroundings triggers great introspection and self-assessment. During this period Mitch realizes that he needs to make some changes in his behavior and in his perspective of people.

He also realizes that the process will take time, but he begins to look forward to a new day, every day, and expects God to walk with him daily. As he goes through this very public metamorphosis, he learns that he can be used as an instrument to promote healing for others, as he himself begins to experience healing.




‘The Work Around is an inspirational reference material for those who find themselves in an incredibly challenging situation or a tragedy, such as the loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, or a great disappointment. Through the main character, the author outlines six principles for surviving a personal storm, recovering from it, and capitalizing on the adversity.

**“The Work Around also seeks to accomplish several goals:**

1. To apologize to my wife for the terrible behavior that she experienced from me during our marriage.
2. To understand the reasons for the failure of my marriages.
3. To provide a real-life example of a man’s experience and to possibly circumvent the pitfalls that other males may encounter.
4. To warn individuals in a marriage of the dangers of not communicating with each other.
5. To offer suggestions on a way to manage a traumatic situation.
6. To ultimately lead the reader into the path of peace and strength during their valley experience.

## **About the Author**

The author, Michael C. LeMay having grown up in the great city of Chicago, LeMay spent a lot of time as a teenager on Michigan Avenue. The energy that LeMay drew from the



environment was very beneficial to LeMay. LeMay spent many days at the Art Institute of Chicago taking in the vibes. The Art Institute had student job boards in those days.

Most summers LeMay spent his time working for various Art Galleries along Michigan Avenue when he wasn't busy listening to Frankie Knuckles House music. It was great exposure for a kid from the South Side of Chicago.

These experiences helped to shape the author's psyche and helped me to crystallize his perceptions about life and developed a personal plan for life, with the understanding that we are essentially all products of the environments we have been exposed to and that we form our values based largely upon our experiences in life.


The author, LeMay has worked in the sciences and the arts and consequently has developed an eye for fine art as well as attained professional certifications in Enterprise Computer Systems Engineering and design. Culminated over eighteen years of experience in the technology sector. But the author's interest and love for the arts was sparked by his grandmother and mother and consequently the author, throughout his life always tried to find a way to balance his love for God his family and work.

Very often as a young child, Michael LeMay was frequently very sick with asthma, and as a tool to keep him preoccupied, his mother would give him pencils and paper to draw with, while he was in the oxygen tents in those days. His mother introduced him to fine arts by bringing coffee table books into the home, which introduced the author to artists like Raphael, Michelangelo, and Da Vinci.

While serving in the United States Navy, LeMay was able to explore the world of photography as a naval photographer. While trying to maintain a constant momentum and a footprint in the art world, and later learning to balance a family life, and then later embarking on a professional career in information technology.

Upon completing his enlistment and being honorably discharged from the Navy, LeMay began to focus on flourishing in the arts, studying and working as a freelance wedding photographer during off-duty hours, then later stepping away from the art world due to family commitments.

But now, all but having been forced to return to his creative roots and to his first love which is Jesus Christ and the arts. But then later the life as he knew fell apart, initiated by the terrible separation between his second wives. The situation presented the opportunity for LeMay to



refocus on the arts and find a measure of healing and now ultimately offer advice to those who may find themselves in the precarious situation that the main character, “Mitch May does in the “The Work Around.

The tragedy of the life of Michael LeMay is the unfortunate and hostile ceasing of his marital relationship with his second wife and two children which triggered extreme stress and depression. As his second wife had inflicted significant pain on LeMay with the forcing of a divorce while he was incarcerated. Ultimately the traumatic situation and other extenuating circumstances prompted the writing of “The Work Around.

To restore peace to his soul and answer the questions as to why his marriage ended so terribly and having been forced out of the family home by his wife of 13 years, and then subsequently becoming homeless. Then consequently having to face the hardships of separation from family, homelessness, poverty, illness, chronic depression, thoughts of suicide, and unemployment.


But by the Grace of God and his own internal strength and determination, LeMay survived the test and trails of the intense valley that he found himself in. Having no reference to manage this new norm, he turned to the one thing he knew that he could find real and lasting help he turned his face to God in the person of Jesus Christ. Now he has received “Beauty for Ashes,” and through the process he learned that the events that had transpired were necessary for his growth and for God to fulfill the purposes the he had in store for his life.

The author composed and wrote the entire novel while blind in one eye, while suffering from an aggressive cataract in his left eye. All the while the author believed in faith that his work was divinely inspired and that it should and would be published. The author’s vision for the publishing of “The Work Around is that the work will be beneficial to the readers who may find themselves in a traumatically impacting situation in life, such as our main character, “Mitch May.

**“The Work Around was typed entirely on Microsoft Surface RT tablet.**

## **About the Book**






“The Work Around offers some practical methods for managing grief, depression, and anxiety by providing a window into a real-life experience of a man who has experienced unbelievable hardship at the hand of a loved one. The reader will identify with the main character and hopefully be able learn from the mistakes of Mitch May. The book gives the reader tangible methods for getting through the challenge, and insight into how to move forward afterward by taking ownership of one’s bad behavioral tendencies, acknowledging them, and dealing with them.

“The Work Around is a work that encompasses the tragedies that engulfed a family and the courageous unfailing love of a Husband, to contend for his wife and family before the face of God Almighty. Upon receiving a spiritual awakening. His understanding of the success of his life and rejuvenation of his marriage was dependent upon his devotion to God and forgiving those who wronged him. The novel takes the reader on a supernatural journey. “The Work Around examines one family’s challenges as they face extreme adversity. “The Work Around gives us examples of how Christian families should face adversity, in these end times.

One of the dynamics of “The Work Around is that it shows a man admitting his frailties and submitting his will to God for help which should be the posture of a person coming into the light and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Humility and meekness not weakness which is the essence of Christianity. The belief in the power of grace and love of a risen Savior who will receive us when we are broken and in need of mending.

There are several goals of the author for “The Work Around. One of which is to bring exposure to the Gwinnett County’s jail systems’ racist and imbalanced practices of incarceration of minorities for profit. The county jail functions as a cash cow to Gwinnett County itself. Gwinnett County’s incarceration system is analogous of the judicial system in the state of Georgia. Which is the new slave industry.

Additionally, “The Work Around is being published also to bring light to the Gwinnett County Jail Corporation’s system of judges and their practice of jailing minorities disproportionately for profit. With an agenda of ultimately dismantling the African American family within Gwinnett and middle Georgia. The frequent engaging partnering and persuading of African American women to go against their Men as a business-as-usual exercise. As well as the brutal and antagonistic culture and military-style management of inmates, would be exposed by “The Work Around.



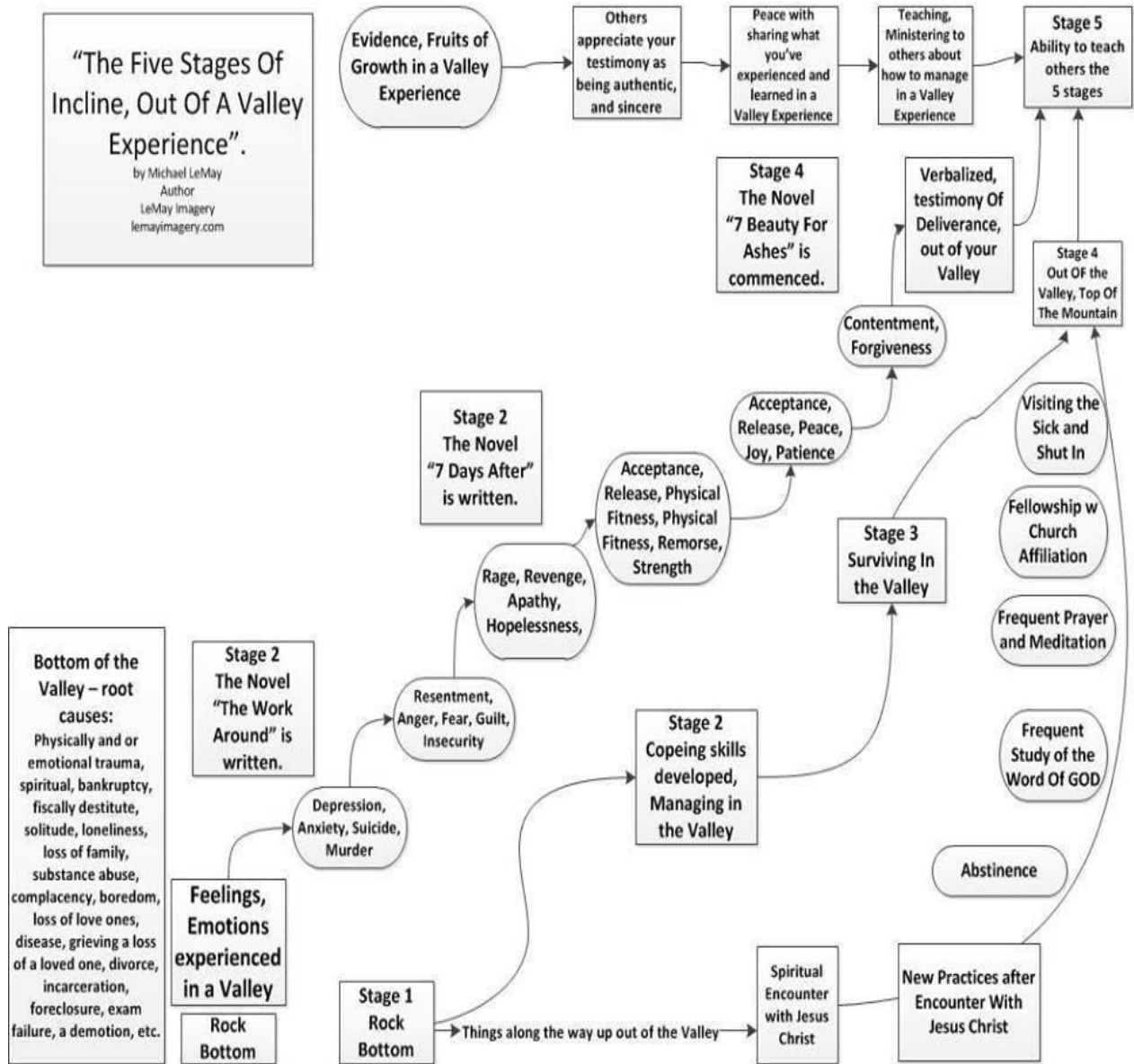
'The Work Around is an inspirational reference material for those who find themselves in an incredibly challenging situation and or a tragedy such as the loss of a loved one, the loss of a job or a great disappointment. The author outlines six principles for surviving a personal storm or valley experience and how to recover from it by capitalizing on the adversity.

**The 6 principles for surviving, thriving and capitalizing on adversity, and the “Incline out of the valley illustration.**


1. Don't panic! You will survive and even thrive and then perhaps even capitalize on the perpetual and temporary downturn.
2. Turn your face toward God. In the storm, he is there with us and there's usually a gift waiting for us once we do.
3. Never stick your head in the sand. Don't run away from your problems, deal them head on. Get on your knees and fight like a Man.
4. Allow the valley experiences to promote personal growth and character development within you.
5. Be honest with yourself and with others about your circumstances. It encourages help from a variety of sources.
6. The last weapon in a trial is reinvent yourself. Don't miss and or waste the opportunity to grow and learn something from it all



**“The Five Stages Of Incline, Out Of A Valley Experience”.**  
 by Michael LeMay  
 Author  
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## About the Main Character



The main character, Mitch May, experiences a major event in his life that causes him to come face to face with his own personal ghosts and he must decide to change his ways to move forward in life. Now the challenge for Mitch is that he is in an adverse situation that he has no reference for and for which also blames his wife. As he has been incarcerated by his own spouse who was his wife of 13 years and the mother of their 2 children.


Now Mitch must learn to take ownership for the current situation that he is in and through the experience Mitch goes through a very personal and spiritual metamorphosis and becomes an entirely different person. He struggles with the constant anxiety, pain, and stress associated with being incarcerated and he faces thoughts of suicide and depression daily.

Yet the situation becomes a catalyst for developing the underlying peace already within him and lying dormant. The peace that had been waiting for the situation to prompt the beginning of his awakening, much like Moses. Through the pain, Mitch learns to depend on God for his strength and he develops day-to-day **work arounds** or subtle managing skills for getting through each day. Mitch goes through a personal renaissance and as a result from the pressure of the trial he develops several tactical strategies for surviving a trial that anyone could adapt during their personal hell.

The pain of separation from one's family especially when the trauma is inflicted by your own family members and when it is beyond your control can be devastating. The pain the author endured is mirrored by the main character Mitch May. Like Mitch May, the author found a newfound joy in expressing himself through art and constant fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Much like Paul the apostle, the author and Mitch May can say, "Lord, I finally can tell you thank you for allowing the pain." As the main character and the author learned, "The things that have happened to me, will further the Gospel. As the author has found himself through his work and recommitting himself to God. The main character, Mitch May, experiences a similar enlightening and alignment to the Spirit of God.

Although Mitch is extremely unhappy with his new surroundings he begins to take responsibility for his being there. Then he begins to accept his reality and move on with his life while developing in his new life of spiritual awareness and contentment with a new commitment to serving God and relinquishing his old habits in exchange for his new-found strength, joy and peace.



Then Mitch later begins to find contentment with his circumstances, as he begins to let go of the world that he had built on sand. He realizes the error of his ways by allowing himself to be exposed to those less fortunate in life than him, and he is forced to deal with his inner man and facing and addressing the internal flaws that he has.

Mitch now realizes that everything that he had valued in life such as money, corporate positions, real estate and power begin to mean nothing. He begins to learn that the most important things about life is where he will end up after physical death and how he treats others along the way. He'd spent twelve years in a career that he was doing for money and 13 years married to a wife who hated him. His life was in shambles and in a downward spiral.

The challenge for Mitch now was to walk among them and yet not sin. He must figure a way out of the emotional pain and spiritual bankruptcy he is now enduring. So, he turns to the one source that he knows will help him which is his God. Jehovah Jireh. Having attained a supernatural awakening, Mitch explores his faith to the maximum and like Gideon, he puts God to the test. A test that only God himself could perform.

Much like the Joseph in the Bible, Mitch May has been betrayed by his own family and all but left for dead. And like Joseph, Mitch May must find the ability to forgive his spouse. "The Work Around gives the reader an example of a man who faces the pain and stress of having found himself incarcerated at the hands of his own spouse and discovers the man that he was always intended to be, through the fire and through the test and because of the valley experience.

Travel along the journey with Mitch May as he grows into the supernatural life that God has been predestined for him. Through his trial, he will be perfected, and understands his calling. And ultimately thank the Lord for the trial. Follow Mitch May, as he journeys through the supernatural and learns the value of giving being better than receiving.





## **Acknowledgments**

**I would like to acknowledge my dearest cousins. Monica Payton Cook, her daughter Monique Hyler, Brenda Payton and Vanessa Morrissette. For their constant encouragement, that helped for me to finish this work. I've promised my cousin Monique, who is Monica's daughter, an autographed copy of the very first printed hard copy of the work around.**

**My cousin Brenda Payton gets a shout out, for cheering me on, during the process. I'd like to also thank my first wife, Gaylhia LeMay. For inspiring me and for helping me to believe that I could complete the process. Despite the many obstacles and challenges that presented themselves along the way. Gaylhia is the mother of my first child and the Grandmother of my first grandchild. For which I am forever grateful. And of course, I acknowledge my wife, Mia LeMay. Who has loved me and stood beside me through it all; through the valley.**

**Lastly, to my beloved children and granddaughter, who have never seemed to miss a beat, in giving me their love and affection.**

**ml**





## Chapter 1: The Violent Extraction

Try to imagine a fetus in the comfort of its mother's womb. Warm and protected and safe. Existing in a floating world of comfort and serenity. Secure and insulated from the world. Suckling, quiet, calm. Only ever distracted by the vibrations of its mother's voice. Suddenly, an eruption! A rippling, startling, loud, and an abrupt crashing of light and sounds. Penetrating all the fetus's senses simultaneously. In a frightening cascade of motion and noises.


It is so nerve-racking and disturbing to the fetus, which was only moments ago sleeping and in ecstasy. Now suddenly ripped from its sanctuary and calm. Like a small cub picked off from its burrow by an opportunistic eagle. The immediate trauma, and the urgent pain, is much more than the fetus can manage. In an instant, the babe does intuitively what is expected. It cries! It screams from the pain. The pain of being unexpectedly now separated from its mother's womb and ejected into this cold and frightening new environment.

Now forced to breathe independently. The stress is unconscionable, cruel, and unrelenting. The pain and fear are overwhelming. There is only one thing to quiet the babe at this moment. It is the rhythm of his own now-disconnected mother. In an act of compassion, the newborn is placed near the mother's breast and is now able to hear the rhythms of her heart and is prompted to begin to suckle on her breast.

The warm and familiar fragrance of the baby's mother's sweet sustenance is the only antidote for the babes suffering. For the babe only knows the comfort of the surroundings it has existed in for all of its life. The change has indeed caused immeasurable trauma and an intense shock to the babe's psyche.

Conversely my forced and unanticipated separation from my wife could be illustrated in this way. I'd spent and invested 13 years with my lovely Brown Sugar together in the same bed for thirteen years. Her voluptuous Nubian frame was my personal paradise. I'd interpreted it as a gift from God for me personally and designed for me by God himself.

I was immediately consumed and captured and immersed in infatuation for my new-found pleasure and treasure. Her body and mind belonged to me. I was completely absorbed with our marriage. She was my main completion. My entire life's ultimate ambition in the form of a sensual black woman. Whom I loved and spent endless hours with.



For 13 years, I'd known the same body, slept with the same person shared the same address. The separation from my wife was unexpected and I was unprepared to say the least. Nor was I aware of the trap that had been laid for me, by my wife. But the web had been spun. And I was the Foolish Fly, caught in the web. About to be sucked dry of its life's plasma.


The comfort of her being close was now gone and without warning I was forced to separate myself from being close to my wife's body and to her smell that I'd loved for years. I hadn't known any other routine. My life was my marriage and was my existence, as it should be. Suddenly, my very identity was removed. I had no reference for life at all, and I was told not to react, as though I'd never invested time with her and our family together.

The expectation seemed absurd and unreasonable. And completely unimaginable, that my spouse would "entrap" me. But indeed, that is what had happened. And to my wife, it all seemed to have no impact. No concern about the impact on our family.

Months later, I learned that the intent was established some time before. Several years prior to the dreadful events of October 5, 2013. The stage had been set and the curtains began to be drawn open slowly, and there was nothing I could do about the loss that I was experiencing. The catastrophic anxiety I was about to endure was all intentional and instated from within my own family, (my wife), who was the main culprit of the confusion and discord that was within me.

I should have been able to see the writing on the wall. For years our marriage had been a house of cards in many ways. I hadn't protected myself; and as a result, I would ultimately take the entire blame for the failure of my marriage. I was a fool waiting to be taken advantage of. I would also face a very painful divorce and a horrible custody battle. In my mind, I'd married a woman who did not honor the sanctity of marriage and did not believe in the establishment of the contract of marriage as being ordained by God. But I was the one who was the hypocrite. I was the one, who had been unfaithful, and had stepped out of the marriage. I told myself that my wife was to blame. When inside, I knew that I was to blame.

As far as I was concerned my wife was all, but an atheist and I should have known it. I should have recognized witchcraft when I saw it, but I tried in my own pathetic way to just adjust what was happening for the sake of staying married. I realize now that my pride played a major role in me trying to hold on to what was already gone.



I had tried to be the man and husband I thought that my wife wanted. But it always ended up being only what I thought was needed. But I couldn't see what she really needed. Which was much more than the attention that I gave her. We spent a lot of time covering up the problems with sex when what we needed to have been doing was communicating about our problems and expectations for our broken marriage.


I realize now that she needed more communication from me and that I needed to have taken the lead in the conversations. Taking ownership of the role was what needed to have happen. I shouldn't have depended on my wife's intellect and the fact that we were married to deliver us from the eminent destruction that was about to happen. Looking back on it all now, I wish I'd paid attention to the signs. I could have circumvented the events to come.

My hope is that this story will help to assist others who are heading for these pitfalls and hopefully to help them to avoid them. The African American family is under attack. And all its members are susceptible to being broken apart, no matter how strong we think our marriages and family relationships are, our relationships are not impenetrable. There are always holes, which the enemy can infiltrate. The enemy of the family is the devil, the Jinn. He looks for an opportunity to cause havoc in the order of the family so that he can undermine our society consequently. As the adage goes, "a family that prays together, stays together."

We couldn't seem to get past the problems of the day to focus on the future. Most of the things that challenged us were common to other couples, and I thought we had the maturity to manage it all. But there are situations that arise in a family that no one is prepared for. Life happens, and so does death. But when families work together, and make the effort to stay together, they have a chance at withstanding the issues of life. But when they don't stick together, the breakup the family is inevitable.

My challenge was to get my wife to understand this information. Her sensitivity to God had diminished. She would associate the things I'd done, as being a false relationship with God. And she didn't give my relationship with God much credibility at that point and couldn't hear from God and wouldn't listen to his wisdom. She would turn nearly every encounter into a fight. But I realized it was just the enemy, but I was part of the problem, and would constantly accommodate the turmoil.





I didn't protect myself; I didn't know that I needed to. I had been set up for an extremely prejudiced divorce and hostile parental custody takeover. I was a fool just waiting to be taken advantage of, and to the blame for the failure of my marriage. But I tried in my own pathetic and apathetic way to adjust. I tried to be the man and the husband that I thought my wife wanted me to be. But it always ended up being only the behavior that I thought was good, and not what she really needed.


I never really understand what she really needed. She needed all the normalcy that a woman desires in a relationship. Such as compassion, sensuality, tenderness, attention, appreciation, security and patience. The traditional "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. These characteristics were sporadically distributed, at best.

I was more preoccupied with my career and my own agendas, to simply take the time out to simply be concerned for her needs as a woman and my wife. All I ever needed to do was to talk to her and listen to her, no matter what she had to say. I never learned to listen to her no matter what she had to say. I never learned to just enjoy the things she loved. It was always about the things I wanted. But nothing could stand in the way of me getting it.

The erosion of my marriage was noticeable shortly after the three-year mark. When we became pregnant with our first child, I noticed that things began to change. I was very busy achieving advanced technical certifications. My wife was just busy being pregnant. Looking back on the period, it's clear that the constantly ignoring of my wife contributed to our distancing, especially during this very sensitive time in our relationship, which was pregnancy.

The subsequent premature birth our daughter only caused more stress to an already unstable relationship. But as parents, we both stuck it out and found ways to maintain the peace to get our daughter to physical independence. The ordeal should've brought us closer. But in the end, my wife waited till the critical nature of my daughter's case subsided. Then she constructed and planned the divorce and restraining order idea and plan, which resulted in me being evicted from the home, a home that I'd maintained with her for the last eleven years with her.

The very cute innocence and the lack of external polishing and refinement was tapered by her very articulate speech and execution of the English language. Her diction wasn't particularly eloquent, but my wife was an Ivy Leaguer in every sense of the term from an academic perspective.




Her simplicity somehow captivated me. She had an innate goodness about her, and the potential to love I perceived when we first met. She wasn't the kind of woman I'd normally be drawn to. But she had so many positive attributes that she was definitely attractive in a "girl next door kind of way. This inner beauty would change later as my wife became the opposite of the person I'd fallen in love with.

The fact that we were incompatible in the beginning was suppressed by both of us as we both were motivated to get married. My wife was interested in becoming a mom. This was clearly her agenda. The idea that a woman would desire to raise a child independently when they don't have to in our case was and is still unconscionable to me. Yet many women in the US seem to have adopted this notion. Not interpreting the potential dangers that the children of single parent's encounter. God ordained the family order). We have perverted the idea of a traditional nuclear family to be less than relevant.

My wife had fallen for the same deception and was on a path to destroy her own family, at a time when we should have been working through the challenges of life together and as a family. I was breaking down her strengths by being in compassionate and obstinate. My wife was internalizing the pain and building a wall that would take years to tear down. We were both so far from the Lord at this point and everyday together become a struggle. We used sex as a blanket for our problems. We needed healing in our relationship, we needed Jesus's help.

Never addressing our problems, only covering them and hoping things would get better. In the end, I realized that I was ultimately accountable for everything that happened, in terms of influencing the relationship. But I couldn't figure out how to make the changes as we weren't walking with the Lord. When all I ever needed to do was to allow him to enter my heart and begin the process of change in me, for the better and for life.

There were occasions where there would be outward signs of affection from both of us. My wife mostly did this with our children, rather than try to make her understand that I needed love too I would just accept the things I saw and just dealt with the tasks of working, raising our family and professional growth.




This trend went on for years to the detriment of my marriage. I knew then that my wife's lack of biblical education and spiritual depravity could cause us problems, but I didn't think it was a big enough opportunity to destroy our marriage. She never took the time to learn the word and didn't place value on being educated on the subject, which I felt was contrary to her Catholic upbringing and schooling. I began to feel that my wife was becoming intimidated and felt uncomfortable with my professional achievements. I believed she began to feel less than substantial and inadequate. I began to feel that our intimate relationship was more related to fulfilling marriage vows than anything else.

After a while, I felt less and less emotionally connected to my wife. I felt that she was only giving me her body and not her whole self to me, as she had in years gone by. I felt that she began to become jealous of me in many ways, and I felt that she had begun to withdraw from the projects I'd started and simultaneously, she began to withdraw from me as well. But I couldn't understand what was happening. I realize now, it was from my own arrogance and ignorance.

By this time, my career as a computer engineer had begun to flourish. I felt that there was nothing that could stop me. Things began to move along very quickly for me. And our daughter was stabilizing. If I stayed motivated to work, I felt invincible. What I didn't understand was I should've been cultivating my family and investing in the woman God had given to me and for me to watch over as a Good Steward. But I took my relationship for granted. I should have been cultivating my relationship with my wife and made her happiness my priority. I should have been grooming her for the long haul of life and working on ensuring the sanity of my life's partner.

But I really had no clue of what I really should have been giving her. This behavior seems to be systemic among males in the US culture. They are as me, generally lacking the skills to show genuine skills in laboring with their love partners. I would often feel frustrated, and that my back was against the wall. Why didn't I know intuitively what to do? I would later ask myself these questions over and over. What is the root cause of my inability to understand my wife's needs? And why didn't I humble myself to perform them?

At the time, I could only see achieving success in business. And it seemed to me that whatever social achievement I'd acquire, my wife seemed to resist. It was a subtle but effective plan. A plan to undermine and get rid of her husband. Satan had used a woman in this trap. The oldest trick in the book. Use a woman to entice a man, and then lead him into destruction. It



happened to the best of men. King David, King Solomon, Samson, President Bill Clinton, and Prince Charles to name a few. All fell prey to the clutches of love and lust. We are all men of like passions, and all subject to falling.


The same devices are used to entice all men into temptation greed and sex. Lust and the Pride of Life. The scent of a woman and the inability to maintain self-control when engaging with a woman. The woman is the ever powerful opiate of men. Suppressing the mind and sedating his affection for his God, is the plan of Satan. Which is to deceive man into thinking that he even exists.

I was very happy with my wife; yes, I loved her. We shared everything together. I shared my aspirations and money with her. As per any couple. I was married, and in the partnership forever. I never considered divorce. I loved being committed to my wife. It was a lifestyle I'd been accustomed to for many years. I never wanted a separation, ever. I believed in the sanctity of marriage. And I did believe in mine. And I wanted to see it to the end. Unfortunately, my wife had always reserved the option of divorce. I hadn't made such a reservation. I'd never planned for the potential of a divorce.

Looking back, I think my wife was very caught up in the form of security. She was very dependent upon the world's system of rewards and the economy. But she knew how to get things done, so there was always an attraction in terms of her being very industrious. I later began to realize that we were simply "unequally yoked." Yet I didn't understand that the unbelieving spouse is covered. Neither did I have the Lord in my life to be able to handle the spiritual deprivation that was taking place in my family. I had failed as the priest of my home.

And once the stress came, my marriage began to show the battle scars. My family's "hedge" had been penetrated. My marriage had been infiltrated by the spiritual and emotional fluctuations that my wife and I both experienced. But rather than working through our married life together, my wife decided the marriage wasn't worth striving to maintain. I would later learn that this is typical for women when they are ready to depart their marriages.

Typically, by the time the male understands that she is completely mentally departed from the relationship, she has already concluded that her life would be better without her spouse. In any case, my wife was making a huge mistake in breaking up our family. She could have had the ability to understand the tremendous potential damage that a divorce can cause on a family particularly with the children.



My wife behaved as many women, in the U.S. She took the easy way out of her troubled marriage seeking some other form of existence that appeared to be less complicated. The reality is, the challenges of life are what make a couple stronger together and builds the spirit and trust of each partner in each other over time. My wife became a puppet in the covert agenda to dismantle the black families, in Gwinnett county and the south. And she fell into the pervasive culture of the projects to the prison mentality that has been fostered in African Americans, since slavery.


The experiences together form the glue that binds them together in life and teaches them how to manage life together, as lovers, as parents, and as Christians. My wife didn't believe in the family unit or striving to make a family better. Except for God's grace, we were destined to fail. In my ignorance and pride, I was allowing it.

My wife had given up on the beauty of our relationship and trust that she had built up in me to sustain the damage that our relationship was now facing. We were headed into a tumultuous storm, without Jesus on board to calm it. And her mind had been seared, like a hot iron, believing the lies of the devil. She was an infidel, an unbeliever, a Babylonian. I was willing to believe God in faith for healing and restoration. My wife had no idea what that meant, or the concept of believing in miracles.

Our struggles would always end up in days of frustration with neither person being able to understand the other, then turning away from each other rather than turning to the right sources for help. Neither of us sought counseling or even the help of church support. I was indeed way too prideful to ever submit to counseling.

My wife did suggest it over a few years. She did want to help the relationship but later threw in the proverbial towel. And decided her life was better without me being a part of it. This deception is founded and further perpetuated by the father of lies; the devil. I could all but feel him laughing at me as we argued daily, as we were drifting further and further apart. I couldn't figure out how to resist the same old temptation of just shutting off the fuel to the fire and I never backed down in an argument.





I realize now that there were so many times that all I needed to do diffuse the conflict was to back away and to simply just walking away. I was treating my wife like some people do in other cultures. The proud ones who seeing the corpse lying on the side of the road that others would step over and keep moving or kick the corpse as they walked by. “The pride before the fall.


My ego was always the first person to respond, and not my brain. I would just react the way the enemy wanted me to. My family was heading for failure, and I couldn’t save it. The hopelessness of the situation didn’t deter me from digging us further into resentment for each other though. And before long, my wife became cold as ice. And then her plan for divorce began to formalize.

Most men just don’t get that when a woman is complaining, it’s time to listen and make modifications. In my case, I followed suit with the rest of the clan. I allowed us to get worse and worse until I was completely on the outside of the marriage without understanding what was happening. My wife had been planning and looking for an opportunity to separate, and ultimately get me evicted from the house. She kept her agenda very quiet, and patiently waited for the right opportunity to launch her action plan. It all seems so sinister now, but this was the person I’d married and been close to for twelve years. I had given all that I thought I should and all that I could.

She felt trapped at that point, and I wasn’t willing to work on our relationship. And rather than invest in it, she decided to throw it all away, like an old piece of furniture. She would later reference our life together as a waste of time, which was very disturbing for me and extremely painful to internalize. How could someone be that close to you then plot to remove you from your home and defraud you access to your children and simultaneously abandon their spouse by denying physical intimacy? It was torture.

There is no way a woman could understand what the denial of physical intimacy does to a man. Especially one that has been used to it for ten years. I equated what I was experiencing to eating all my life and then someone turning off my access to food without warning and no snacks to get me by. Just cold turkey, “no more sex.” It was criminal in my mind. But for my wife, it was simply pay back for what she described as “being in an abusive relationship.” And shutting off physical intimacy was the prelude to the bigger initiative.

## **October 5, 2013 Jailed for Ejecting Cold Coffee**



It was another night of no intimacy but plenty of arguing. As I look back now and understand that even if I'd stopped the argument, we were still heading for a brick wall. We'd argued the better part of the evening and into the early morning over whatever couples usually do. But this one was more intense and just pointless. But as my pride would have, it persisted, and reasoning and logic went out the window. My wife was in one of those modes where she was simply uncontrollable. I understand now that she wanted a fight.

We both kept bringing up the past with everything we said to each other. I had no selfcontrol and I certainly hadn't demonstrated any over the previous month. I had this subtle way of speaking foully to her, but without using curse words to validate my godliness. My wife never had a restraint on her tongue either though, and she would just usually add fuel to the fire.


This tendency of hers was particularly irritating to me. So, when we would argue, the verbiage would be incredibly foul and intended to hurt each other. I was always being short and condescending to her. She was always being a foul-mouthed, unladylike venomous viper with a forked tongue. We were just playing right into the enemy's hands, just as he planned. And my wife's plot was unfolding.

She knew how to get under my skin and really push my buttons. Like no one else could. And I would simply add fuel to the fire. My ego was always in the way. It was pride. All I ever had to do was shut my mouth. And give the enemy an opportunity to disgrace me and my family. But I would heed to the voice of the Holy Spirit which is meek and lowly. I was proud and puffed up. And nothing that came out of her mouth against me would go unnoticed and without a response. Always causing more hurt feelings and further problems to our marriage. She would never back down, and neither would I.

## **October 13, 2013**

### **The Cold Coffee**

We'd been arguing most of the night, naked in bed. It was ridiculous, and my sexual anxiety was feeding my anger. I wouldn't simply be quiet, and my wife continued to torture me with her body by not giving herself to me. As a result, I felt so abandoned and all alone and unknown to me, it was only the beginning of the challenges that I would face. I really had no clue what my wife had been planning. In my own ignorance and denial of her feelings, I'd dug myself in to a hole with no rope for escape. The stage was set.




Finally, around six AM or so I finally gave in and shut my big mouth. Then I decided to do what I always did when I was angry. I went into my office and began to work on a project. Typical of a male to avoid his wife's needs and demands by burying himself in work. When what I should have been doing was have listened to her and perhaps things would have gone differently. Now I realize this, but I didn't then. I was too arrogant and too bent on success to listen to her needs and how she felt. I felt justified and I felt that I was doing the right thing, by stepping away and diffusing the situation.

Somehow, I thought that I was being obedient to God in that moment by backing down. But my spirit was so messed up and ripe for corruption. I didn't have the discipline and love to be able to not listen to the enemy's taunting and temptation. I went to my desk, in my P.J.s at my computer. That's when my wife storms in, and she was now completely naked. It was very bazaar. Then she stated something to me that was so vile, that I hate to repeat it. She shouted, "does my Pussy look like your Momma's?"

She just stood there and looked at me for a response. She was just standing there naked. There was only one way that I should have been responding in this case. And it wouldn't be with verbiage, naturally. But she was there to taunt me. To further enrage and humiliate me. Then she made the statement a second time and then she made a despicably uncharacteristic pose, that would've been welcomed in a different context, such as a gentlemen's club.

But she was there to taunt me and to further enrage and embarrass me. She knew exactly what she was doing, but I had no clue. I thought we were just having a very bad fight, and that we'd both settle down later as per usual. But this fight was very different. No physical contact, but very offensive language and particularly mean spirited to each other. I did stop, but my just wife kept taunting me.

I had just finished a cup of coffee at my desk. There was about a fourth of a cup and it had gone cold. I said to my wife, "If you say that again, I am going to throw this cup of water on you". At that, she walked away and retreated in the adjoining bathroom. I thought it was over. So, I got up to get another cup of coffee, with the quarter full of cold coffee in tow. Passing by my wife, who was in the bathroom with the door open, and she was still naked and behaving very weirdly. But I still wasn't aware of her agenda.




As I walked by her, she shouted the same obscenity to me that she had before. It was like a scene from the Exorcist movie. Then she placed her left leg upon the vanity chair, so that I could clearly see her prowess, and then she said again, “Does my Pussy look like your Momma’s?” And then she did another vulgar body movement. I was stunned. I lost it. In that moment, I couldn’t hear anything. Only the beating of my heart pulsing. My ears were ringing, and my blood pressure was rising. I advanced toward her. She went silent. And looked somewhat startled.

As I moved slowly toward her the hell fire in her eyes turned them to red. The demons of revenge and confusion had taken full control of my actions now. God’s angels that where there in the room had no power in this case. Their hands were tied due to my attitude and sin sickness and the enemy the devil, was in control of my life. I could hear the demon on the right of me yelling at me, “do it, do it!” The one left of me just stood there looking at me, intimidating and awaiting my actions.

I stared her down, then I ejected the contents of the coffee cup into her face. I am sure she thought it was hot, but it wasn’t. The cup had been sitting on the table for well over an hour. Caught by surprise she gasped and then realized she wasn’t burned. Her first words were, “I’m calling the police.” I didn’t take her seriously at first, we’d had many spats before, and I thought this was just going to be another one. So, I left her standing there, covered in a cold cup of dark roasted Gevalia Roasted Bean Coffee.

She wasn’t impressed, and she was very serious. She immediately called the police and stated that I had battered her. I didn’t think much of the event at the time and I went back upstairs, having poured another cup of java. I was wearing my favorite Ralph Lauren robe and slippers. It was about eight AM on a Saturday morning, and one that would have otherwise been a wonderful family day, but we’d been wasting the night arguing.

The next thing I knew, the police entered our home and engaged my wife first. She explained to them how I had thrown coffee on her and battered her. The police then requested that I come downstairs and talk to them. I complied. I had to stand outside of our house the like an aggressive offender, in my favorite Polo robe and slippers.



It was incredibly embarrassing, but I was used to it. I knew my wife was being used by the kingdom of darkness and I knew that she had no idea how ignorant she was of how she was being used as a pawn to separate our family. An African American family and I had played right into the trap that she'd laid. I had taken the bait and swallowed it whole.


Then the officers began to question my wife again, who was fully dressed by this time. Then they came back outside to speak to me again. I thought, to myself, "this can't be good. The officers told me that it was a punishable offense to eject a fluid onto anyone. My wife was and had been aware of this, but I surely wasn't.

I was shocked and very surprised. I was even more surprised when they told me she was going to press assault charges against me for ejecting a cup of cold coffee on her. I was standing in the front yard, in my designer robe, P.J.s and slippers about to be arrested for ejecting designer cold coffee, at my wife of 13 years. There was nothing I could do to make the situation better except be quiet, and so I did, as I looked at my children through a window in a police squad car, as I was driven away.

As the officers drove me away, my wife laughed and cursed me, as my children who were oblivious to what was going on, played. They had no idea what they were seeing. But I suspect my daughter had an idea that there was something wrong happening. I listened to the officer explain to me how his brother has been incarcerated and that it wasn't going to be a big deal for me. He said that he would only charge me with simple battery, a misdemeanor.

As I looked back at the scene driving away in the back of a squad car I didn't understand what had just happened, I didn't understand my wife having me jailed. The officer was too young to know anything about me or my background or the viciousness of my wife. He didn't understand anything that I'd been through with her. And how she intended to hurt me and destroy our family.

Upon arrival in the jail, I was booked in. In my designer robe and slippers. I wasn't embarrassed though at the ensemble that I was wearing such an ensemble. It was October in Georgia, so it was still warm. The arrest resulted in a week's stay at the Hotel Gwinnett County Jail, due to an arrest warrant for an unresolved traffic offense. I learned this upon being arrested. I called my wife from the jail after being booked in to have me bailed out, as per usual. She acted as though there was nothing wrong, she talked to me as though nothing had happened.



She said that she would and take money from my account that I had, but then she said I would need to find another place to live. At first, I thought she'd made a mistake or something but then she repeated it. I learned later, that she'd also filed a restraining order at the time of the arrest. To my amazement I was being evicted and barred from my family that I had been with only a few hours earlier. I was standing there in a jail, on a public jail phone, trying to understand what was happening. I couldn't grasp it. Why? What had I done?


I didn't know what I was supposed to feel or how to act. I was in jail, and my wife of ten years had just told me over the phone, "yes, I will bail you out, but you need to find somewhere else to live." Try to imagine my disbelief of what was happening. My absolute confusion and hurt. We had been down this road once before and never separated. She'd never tried to hurt me before and this was new, and I wasn't prepared for her actions.

The stage had been set. My wife had strategically worked out a plan to jail and evict her husband. Her plan was taking shape and I was going to be the one receiving the knife in the gut. The Friday after the event, I was released. The morning of my release I was led to court for the restraining order hearing. In the Gwinnett County Jail-issued two-piece jail uniform. As I was led into the courtroom, the first person I saw was my wife. She was wearing a skirt. Which was odd for her. She was fidgeting when I came in. And moving around and wouldn't look me in the eye.

This was very awkward. I'd been home with my wife only a few days before arguing. And now the person I was connected to and had children, with was sitting in a court room accusing me of being an aggressive and violent criminal. I couldn't fix my mouth to even clear my thoughts. The situation was surreal. And the worst experience I'd ever had. She was a completely different person. The spirit emanating from her was one I didn't know. I couldn't understand what was going on. This was my wife, and we were in court.

My wife had the opportunity to speak first to the Judge. My wife proceeded to lie to the judge about the argument. She indicated that the fight was over sex, and that I had tried to rape her. I was dumbfounded and mortified. And the judge said that this was the testimony given to the police. However, my wife admitted the coffee was cold to the police and signed a statement that the coffee was cold.

I was standing there listening to my wife trying to understand what was going on. The judge was speaking to me, but I couldn't hear her. I saw her speak to me, but I was numb. The judge was a strawberry-blond woman, senior in age. She just sat there speaking to me condescendingly and directly, but I couldn't hear a word she said. My thoughts were removed



from me and I didn't have the words to respond. It was like a heavyweight fighter in the ring with an invalid.

I sensed that this was the norm for the judge. I felt that she had a history dealing with these types of domestic cases. I felt as though the judge was a proponent and advocate of the effort to dismantle the African American family, and my wife had played right along with the agenda. The agenda of moving blacks in the south from, the projects to the prison. The enterprise of incarceration.


The Gwinnett County Court System and the jail had a long-documented history of dealing with black males more severely in terms of punishment and I was to be dealt with no differently. I was simply just another Nigger in her court, with another Angry Black Woman, bringing charges against her husband. Just another case. Just another black family being split up, at the flick of a pen. It was all just business to the judge, she showed no emotion at all. No care for the children's welfare. No questioning of the plaintiff, it was just another case of breaking up another minority family in Gwinnett County.

I would learn later of the penal practices of the Gwinnett County Courts, as it relates to the sentencing practices comparable to other counties in the state of Georgia. I discovered in my research that cases involving African Americans were sentenced to longer and harsher sentences comparable to their white contemporaries.

I knew that the same thing couldn't have happened in the City of Atlanta or DeKalb or Fulton Counties. The police officers in these counties have more pressing work to do than arresting fathers at their homes whose wives are simply angry at them. But my wife had the mercy of the court at her disposal. During the hearing, I was able to say a few words. I indicated that my wife was a vindictive, manipulative, divisive liar.

The judge wasn't impressed and awarded her a one-year restraining order against me. I didn't know what to do next. Or what to think. The woman I'd slept with for 13 years had turned on me like a vicious pit bull. But now, it was like she'd never known me. It was like we'd never





had children at all. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. I thought to myself, "this can't be happening to me".

I would learn later how common the occurrence of awarding restraining orders to African American females in the Gwinnett County court system. I would also later learn that my wife had been on a path of deception with me. A set plan for entrapment. A plan for divorce and subsequent full custody of our children.


I felt somehow though that everything would be okay. I knew the Lord then was on my side. But I didn't know what to expect next. I was holding on for life and hoping for the best. Even at that moment, I felt hope and I felt strength. I knew the Lord was there even in the courtroom and that the presence of the Holy Spirit was there comforting me. Even while the evil judge sided with my blinded wife, I felt the Lord's presence.

After the Judgment from the evil Judge I was taken back to the pod, upon leaving the courtroom. It was midday and as soon as I walked through the sally port to the dorm the guard shouted out, "May, pack it up!" That was the best thing that a man could hear in that jail. Unless he was homeless and had nowhere to go. It means, get your stuff together, you're being released. Apparently, my wife had bonded me out before the court hearing. I thought it was time to go home with my wife and make up. I didn't know what to think next. I got my things together for departure out of the jail.

It was an awful place to be in and I couldn't believe what was happening. I was given back the items and clothes that I had come in with. Which were my Ralph Lauren robe and slippers. I was then escorted to the front entrance of the jail; I didn't know what to do next. So, I just sat in the waiting area in my pajamas waiting for someone to pick me up. I didn't know what to do or what to expect. I had not spoken to anyone neither did I know I was even being released.

It was a sunny day and the waiting area was full of radiance. It felt so good just to be on the outside and not detained. Just as I was looking out through the glass windows I noticed my wife's car was approaching the parking lot. It was her indeed. I watched as she got out the car. She departed it, but not before grabbing a parcel which appeared to be one of my bags from home. I didn't know what to think or what to do in that moment. My wife of 13 years was bringing me clothes to the jail. It was the most strange and surreal experience that I'd ever had.

She came through to the security doors with my duffle bag in tow. The evil judge had indicated to me that I was to stay away from my wife. So, when I was waiting in the waiting




area, I didn't approach, and she didn't see me in the waiting area. She walked to the entrance of the jail and into the passage way to an awaiting officer. Then she handed my items over to the officer. I stood there watching my wife of 13 years, hand my bags over to a guard in the Gwinnett county jail, as though she were getting rid of my belongings and as I stood there in a trance in my Ralph Lauren bath robe and slippers.

Then she turned around and began to leave. I was standing there crying my eyes out and yet somehow crying a dry cry at the same time. I really didn't know how to be or how to behave. I only knew that I was supposed to stay away from my wife and from my children. The family that I'd loved and known now for 13 years was within my reach, yet untouchable.

This reality was devastating for me and very difficult for me to comprehend. The comfort that I'd known for so long, was now gone and I had to find some way to reckon with had just happened to me, to my life. Now, I could no longer walk down the hall to my children's bedroom to kiss them goodnight. I could no longer send my children off to school, with an encouraging word. I could no longer embrace my babies and I was told not to even respond and not break the order.

It was, "a violent extraction from my lifestyle and from my reality. As she walked away, she turned back and caught a glance at me through the corner of her eye and saw me standing there with tears in my eyes, and she just looked at me with this empty look. This was all so new. I'd not been in this situation or anything close before. It was hard to see my wife walking away from me. I realized in that moment, she'd always been moving towards me. I didn't know what to do or how to feel. I was looking at her from a distance, like some stranger and like someone I'd known long ago.

I knew in that moment I knew that my life was about to change drastically and for the worse and I knew I wasn't going to take it laying down. But the reality of it all left me in a daze. My wife of ten years had just left a bag of what appeared to be my belongings on the doorstep of the jail and I was put out of my home of 13 years. Just then she saw me standing there. She said nothing, she just looked at me with this empty expression which conveyed to me that she felt no remorse and that her decisions were final.



Then she left the jail. I couldn't understand what was going on. I was devastated and crying. I finally got up the strength and courage to walk over to the guard, who then handed me my belongings. I took my bag and opened it up to view the contents. My wife had packed up some groceries, clothing, my laptop, and \$200 cash for me. I didn't know what to do, but I knew I could not stay in P.J.s and a robe. So, there was a bathroom there and so I went to change into the clothes she'd left for me.

As I got dressed, I pondered the situation. I was out of jail, but my wife who had always been my partner had left me at a jail and I was barred from my home. A few hours went by and it was getting dark. I had nowhere to go and no way to get there. Everything was shut down and I couldn't get a taxi to anywhere that night in Gwinnett county.


I would've taken one to my house in Atlanta which was rented out at the time. But I had no way to get there from Gwinnett County as this was prior to the Uber era. So, I called my wife. I called my wife, whom I had just been ordered to stay away from. My wife whom I'd been in court with just hours earlier. I called and asked her to pick me up.

She came with my children within twenty minutes. We didn't talk about the situation at all. The children were in the back seats and seemed relatively content. This bothered me. I wondered how could my kids not be upset at my absence for a week? What could she have told them to console them? We went to get burgers at Hardy's. I commented to my youngest about how good they were behaving.

My wife then suggested that we go and sign the bond papers at the bonding office nearby. I complied. I didn't know what was going on. All I knew is that I was with my family and everything seemed normal. I was ready to forget the whole nightmare and I thought my wife was also. My wife never said a word about what had happened. She seemed to be over it. I thought that it was over too, and I was ready to just put the entire nightmare behind us.

We ended up at home at our family dwelling in Gwinnett county which had been for thirteen years. I hung out with my kids for a while we watched some goofy kids' programs and laughed out loud together. It was a Friday night and it felt so good to just be chilling with my kids, as usual and as per the norm. Then I took a shower and went to sleep. As though there was nothing the matter. I should have been suspicious because we didn't have sex though. But I chalked it up to just being part of the stress and problems that we had been going through.

I really hadn't considered the whole big picture. I still didn't understand what my wife had done. I only understood that I'd been in jail, and my wife came and got me. And now I was



home with my family as per normal. But it was to be short-lived. She woke up after me that Saturday morning and started getting dressed. Then the kids got up. She said it was time to go. I asked where. She said, “I’m taking you to your house in Atlanta.” I didn’t know what she meant. She had decided I was not staying there, although we’d just slept together under the same roof and in the same bed after the restraining order had been in place. I thought she’d lost her mind. But I didn’t panic. I didn’t want another opportunity for the police to come to my house.


So, the four of us packed into the car and headed to Atlanta. It was a feeling I cannot describe with words. I kept trying to find some rationale, some way to make sense of what was happening. My kids were in the back seat, as though nothing had happened and oblivious to what was happening, and my wife was in a zone that I’d never seen before.

We drove to my house in South West Atlanta. I was afraid to go in as I hadn’t been there in several months. I was afraid I’d find the contents of the house emptied or someone off the streets living in it. We left the kids in the car as I didn’t want them to see the house in disarray if it were. They had spent a lot of time there, so I wanted to protect them. My wife walked around the house with me. It had been trashed. We both were shocked, then she said to me, “Now I see why you didn’t want to come here.”

I didn’t know what to say or do. I was standing in my house that had been trashed and vandalized. The house that I’d renovated by hand. I had just gotten out of jail and I was under a restraining order with my wife who was standing next to me. I couldn’t bring my kids in, they wouldn’t understand what had happened to their Daddy’s rental property. And I didn’t know where the nightmare had begun, or when it was going to end. I hadn’t been prepared for anything although my wife had.

Then my wife said, “I think it would be a good idea for you to stay somewhere else.” She was very serious. I couldn’t speak at all. Then she said, “How about your Dad?” I said nothing. Then she said, “I’ll call your Dad and you can stay there for a while.” This statement only made the experience more difficult to manage and the pain of the court-imposed separation from my family was setting in. Staying with my dad didn’t work out for either of us, and how could it have? I ended up living in my house in Atlanta for months.

My house had been vandalized there was missing plumbing, electrical, and HVAC equipment. The house was essentially uninhabitable at this point. And the house was dangerous to be in. No power, no water and it had been a target for vandals and derelicts. Yet, I wasn’t afraid. My spirit and the Lord’s Spirit was there. I’d put my blood, sweat, and tears in the



property. I'd given all I'd had to the renovation, my resources and my time. Time I'd stolen from my family.


It was as my cousin that once told me, "I know that the house was a labor of love for you." She always seemed to understand me like no other woman in my life next to my daughter. As though we were created from the same spirit. They could look at me and know what I was feeling, and they always showed me this endless love. It is still amazing. I knew then, and I know now, how incredibly blessed I am to have people who love me that much.

My wife however as I understand it now, did not love me in this way. She had essentially left me to die in an abandoned house. With no resources, and no love. I didn't know how to respond. I was told that I shouldn't respond. I didn't know how to approach what was happening. Nor did I understand what was coming. Just a few days before all this happened, I was like a proverbial fetus, being snatched out of the womb. I had no idea what to do or think. My entire life and my identity and my livelihood had been altered violently and without warning.

Now, I had only my tears as tangibles. I thought no one could make me feel better. No one could understand why this was all happening to me. No one had ever seen what my wife had done to me and why. I was devastated and my wife who I had been in bed with only a few days before, now wouldn't communicate with me. I had no reference, there was no play book for this experience in my life. I did not know where to look for help to understand what was happening to me. I would later recall Jesus being betrayed and denied by his close friends and somehow his experience had similarities to mine. I'd been betrayed by my closest confidant. My wife.

Looking back now I understand that I was very ill and beyond explanation. I was so distraught, and I did not know how to describe my deprivation. I had not felt this kind of depression and pain before in my life. I had no reference for the terribly painful emotions that were now oppressing me at the separation from my family. And would be with me to stay for an indescribable period. I couldn't have known what to do. I couldn't have offered any one help with their problems. I was no longer a witness for the Lord. I had nothing to offer and I felt that I had no reason to live anymore having lost it all I thought.

I began to understand why or how someone could get to a point where they are ready to take their own life. I felt a connection with those who were on their last leg and with those that



felt that there was no hope. I had been a minister of the Gospel. A leader and a confidant of those who I'd lead to me to help. Now, I needed the same encouragement to prevent me from pulling the proverbial trigger. I needed help. I needed Jesus to help me. I needed his Holy Spirit to bring me out of the valley that I was now traversing through.


I was heading for death and hell. My family life was destroyed; my wife of ten years wouldn't speak to me and I didn't know what to do. I only knew I still believed in Jesus's love and his restoring power. But I couldn't seem to call on him. I couldn't even pray, and my meditations were flat and didn't reveal anything to me. I needed a restoration, I needed a fresh anointing. How could I return to where I thought I should be in him, when I was in such a strange land?

I didn't know what to say to the Lord. I felt my situation was all my fault. And that now, I was in the hands of an angry God who I thought wanted to punish me. I sat in the house for hours each day, contemplating how I'd gotten in that position and contemplating the next steps for my ruined life. I couldn't figure out what I should do. I had no idea who to talk to. I felt I was all alone. No one could help me, I thought. There is no help for me, I thought. My family is gone, and I am all alone I thought repeatedly to myself.

I couldn't see a purpose for life without my children. I didn't understand why I should want to. All seemed too unfair and unbelievable. I felt that my life had been destroyed by my wife. I hadn't yet begun to understand and acknowledge anything that I'd done to contribute to the deterioration of my marriage and my family life. I tried to rationalize what my wife had done to our family. For me, it was all a planned evolution. My wife had been looking for a way to dissolve our marriage and destroy my relationship with my children.

I couldn't get my head around this. Why would she do this after 13 years of marriage? Why wouldn't she just leave the relationship rather than try to hurt her husband. She took the resources that I had accumulated, from me. I was left with nothing. Unemployed, and with nowhere to go. I understand now it was all the cause of the forces of evil that we had allowed to control us and our submission to them. We were both to blame. We had allowed the enemy to have his way in our family and break us up.

We had both helped to facilitate the agenda to destroy the American family. The plan was hotly active in our house. The only thing that wasn't obvious was that our children weren't rebellious. They were so young and had been raised in the word.



The tactic would have to be to go after me, the head, and to allow the damage to trickle down to the rest of the family. Without the covering of the parents. We were both blinded to the enemy's attempts to corrupt, destroy, and unseat our family. Despite all my training and understanding. I couldn't resist arguing with my wife. I always wanted to get the last word. I always wanted to get my point across.

I could be wrong, but very seldom. It was my ego, it was my pride. And I thought I didn't have a woman that was conscious enough to understand her role. I didn't understand that I hadn't demonstrated the behavior that I expected myself. I thought she knew what she was supposed to do, beyond just having sex when I wanted. We both had so much to learn but I was the only one willing to fix it at this point.

## **Chapter 2: The Pain Inside**


I know had many nights alone to ponder my circumstance and it never looked good to me. I just wanted to see my family again. I just wanted to speak to them. But I wasn't allowed to. I was told they would have to visit me in the jail. I couldn't stand that. I couldn't understand why she was doing this to our family. I knew our children wouldn't understand what was happening.

I knew that I could never divulge the whole story to them. I was going to try to protect them from the truth, at all cost. They only knew that we were separated but didn't ask why. I could only imagine what my wife had told them about why I was gone. Somehow, I knew the Lord would work it all out, I knew he cared. I knew the Lord was there.

I was determined not to turn to the dark side with the situation. But there I was, in a situation that I had no reference for, once again. I was a professional working-class mature man with a family and a life, and back in jail. I had been arrested again, and this time for breaking the restraining order. Ironically, I never went to our home. I'd harassed my wife, by phone and emails from my house in Atlanta. I was at my home in Atlanta like some desperate soul, longing for his lost family. For this, I was apprehended, and jailed again.

I couldn't understand why, and in many ways, I was completely in denial that this was now my current reality and that I could be my ultimate life. But for survival, I began to make small efforts to accept the fact that I was incarcerated, although I hated it. There was nothing to be happy about. I loathed life. Being detained against my will was the worst experience that I'd ever encountered.





I believe now that my pride was the biggest contributor to the depression and anxiety that I felt at the time. I couldn't just let go of my life. My memories and my past. I had a real life with a family. It was destroying me. I spent hours each day in anguish. My stomach in knots. And in my denial, I justified in my mind why I shouldn't be held. I was angry and disjointed. There wasn't very much to be happy about, I thought. I was a mess; my life had spiraled downhill. And I had no understanding of how to remedy it. Neither did I feel motivated to try. I needed help. I need a balm for my soul. I needed Jesus.


In one day, my life as I knew it was taken from me. All that I'd built with my wife was turned over to Satan. My wealth, my career, my home, my children, and my identity. I didn't understand what was happening. My Dad says I should've just divorced and called it a day and moved on with life.

Everything I'd believed in was now gone, in an instant. By my wife, of all people. I couldn't understand why? Why? What had I done to deserve this? What did I do to cause this? I hadn't hit my wife. I threw cold coffee on her. And this was enough for her, and all she needed to deploy her plot to destroy me and break up our Family.

It was inconceivable to me that someone you'd just gotten out of bed with could be so mean and heartless. Looking back, it was all about my feelings. I hadn't ever pondered how we'd gotten there. I'd spent all my time consumed with my own feelings, and never really gave my wife's feelings the validity that they deserved. So, there I was, trying to understand the storm that I'd created but, from the wrong perspective. I could only see my hurt and my emotions. I wasn't understanding my wife's side, and now it was too late to try to remedy the broken relationship as we were separated, and I was under the confinement of a restraining order.

And I didn't know what was happening with them or anyone else in my family. I was completely cut off from all that I'd known and established. Suddenly, and without warning. I later learned that the children had suffered greatly during this time. My wife never apologized for this. To them or me. I would learn later that my children wrote me letters, but that my wife kept them from me. I could now empathize with incarcerated people who had been separated from their families. It was dreadfully painful, and for me, it seemed that there was no ending for my sorrow. No end for my grief and discomfort.

My wife had instated a restraining order that was a no contact order. So, I was going to maintain the order during the incarceration. I couldn't risk my wife making another compliant to the court. I would later learn that she wanted to come to the jail with my children to visit. I



interpreted it as a slap in the face and a further humiliation to me. I did not want my innocent children to see me in that capacity. My wife thought it was appropriate and had requested my children visit me through my attorney.


One can only imagine what it felt like for me to go through an unintentional separation from your family. A mandated exile from all you love. I wasn't in the armed forces or in war. I wasn't hospitalized. I was incarcerated. But I didn't have the right to speak to my children, or a wife who I still loved deeply. I would often try to imagine what it would have been like for the Jews in Poland. Being stripped of all their wealth, then imprisoned. And the only thing to look forward to, was death.

This was my personal hell. And my wife of ten years would continue to perpetuate this kind of stress later as well. For her own sport and warped pleasure. For my wife, the agony she caused me was just a game. And our children were just incidental pawns. But this was the person I'd married. And she had no shame in jailing her children's father.

This analogy only added to my pain and frustration. In front of my children, as the officers drove me away. She laughed and cursed me, as my children played. They had no idea what they were seeing. But I suspect my daughter had an idea that there was something wrong happening. These images played repeatedly in my mind. I was sick and felt like dying. I couldn't see anything but pain, and I revisited the rejection I felt every day.

I was languishing and bathing my mind in the stench of depression and guilt. I would spend hours biting down on a towel to help subside my pain. Nothing worked, the suffering continued. All day, all night. Why, why, why? Why had she done this to me? Why was I in the situation to begin with? I'd given her everything. I'd given my family, all of me. The thoughts of my wife with another was so disturbing that I plotted to kill any man or woman that would come into her life intimately.

What had I done to deserve this punishment? This pain. I couldn't get past the fact of being set up like this. It took several weeks for the painful changes to set in, and for me to be able to cope with this new and intense anxiety, which was now my reality. I was devastated. My life had been destroyed, and I felt that all I had was gone, at the stroke of a pen. And administered by a judge who knew nothing of my background. A Judge that knew nothing of, neither was interested in hearing about or learning about the constant care and love I'd given my children. She knew nothing about my family, or me. She only knew about the charges by my wife. I was just another Nigger, another opportunity to separate a black family.



My wife had lied on me and given false information to get a restraining order instated. I didn't understand that this was all part of her plan until sometime later. The judge had simply sympathized with my wife, which was the usual outcome of domestic cases in the Gwinnett County court system. All I'd built, all I had established and believed God for, was over. Thanks to my wife's embellishment of her life with me. And a callous judge, more interested in punishing another African male than digging into the facts. My wife's shrewdness and cunningness had paid off. And she was awarded the prize of a codified eviction of her husband, of 13 years.


The agonizing reality of losing my family to the enemy's plan haunted me day and night. Like a yoke around a beast of burden's neck. The depression and anxiety came together and formed a noose around my neck that grew tighter every day. It was an unimaginable pain and emptiness that I'd never experienced before. An aching, relentless constant tearing of my heart and soul. It also made my very testis and my gut ache.

I had heard of people dying from a broken heart. I felt that I would too. I considered suicide many times during those weeks. I could hear the voices encouraging me to end my miserable life. I would lay in my rack for hours oppressed by the demons of depression and anxiety, for weeks. Curled up in a ball, as they ripped my insides out with invisible knives. I felt that my life had been tragically altered by the acts of my own flesh and blood.

The one person whom I trusted with my life, my wife. I was dealing with the loss of my family, in a cage. With no one to help me or understand. I couldn't see light at all. My condition was no different than the detoxing inmate in the next cell. We were both struggling emotionally, and in desperate need of love and affection, and a spiritual healing. There was no one to help, no one there. Except for Jesus, and the comforter. Who would be the one to lead my soul out of the darkness, then recover me from the pain.

I thought of Joseph, who'd been betrayed by his family. He'd been sold into slavery by his loved ones and the ones he had trusted all his life. I can see them throwing him into the hole. I can imagine them spitting in the hole and urinating on their brother. I can see Joseph experiencing the same hate that Jesus experienced. And I felt the same. I had been turned on, by my beloved wife, and now I wanted revenge.

I knew the Lord was with me, I knew he cared for me. But I didn't know how to ask him for help yet, through pain. I'd always been able to help others through suffering and pain, and tough if it out on my own. But it wasn't working this time. I was empty. I'd lost my family and I was near suicide. I wanted a pacifier, a balm a drug. But there was none. There wasn't even a



Tylenol around to ease my headaches. I saw no help and no reason to live. It was the darkest moment of my life and without my wife. I would learn that Jesus is here to help me through pain and suffering (come ye all that are burdened).

During this time, I only wanted to focus on the pain and resentment that I felt. Jesus seemed far from my mind and inaccessible. I had decided that my calamity was God's punishment, and that there was no need to seek the face of the Lord for guidance and help. I wasn't hearing from the voice of God. I was completely living outside of his will and full of anxiety and depression. But I was so caught up in my struggle that I couldn't hear the voice of God. Who was there to help me carry my pain?


Yet, I didn't respond to his unction's through his spirit and the interventions of inmates who were willing to talk with me. I was in desperate need of help, and I felt all alone. But the Lord was there, waiting to soothe my shattered heart. And heal my broken heart. He had been there all the time "Create in me a clean heart and renew in me a right spirit.

I was alone now, sick and dwelling on my circumstance day and night. The mental stress from the preoccupation was making me ill and like a mad man. I was mad, and sin sick. I could only feel pain and I felt separated from the love of God. Much like King David must have felt during the period when he was being pursued by his father in law, Saul.

I needed to be lifted, and I needed a renewing of my mind, by Christ Jesus. But the pain was so great, and my anger was persistent. I wouldn't listen to reason. I wouldn't listen to the word of God. I only wanted revenge for the pain I felt, which was like a constant gnawing from my genitals up to my chest. An agonizing feeling of loss and depression. How could I build myself up? How could I be restored. I needed Jesus to restore me.

I had calls coming in for jobs, but three times I was denied starting roles that I hadn't even had to compete for. Two times recruiters called me and said to just get on the plane and start Monday. I knew the Lord was working on my situation. I knew that he cared. Somehow, I knew he would restore me to my place of leadership and royalty. What I didn't know though, was that I was about to face a terrible trial. One that was as hard as any man's trial could ever be. And I didn't know what to do and I wasn't ready for it.

I was drinking again. A bottle of wine or brandy daily. So, I was extra angry and ready to exhibit it. But I just wanted to hear that things would be okay. I just needed someone to tell me they had seen this before. But no one came to my rescue, and I was looking for strength in the



things that were temporal. I was heading for a breakdown and a total departure of my relationship with God. I was ripe for corruption and the Kingdom of Darkness knew it. They had been working on me and my family for at least a year.


I understood later that there were many instances that the enemy was working, and my wife was always ready to give over, like a proverbial Eve. Blinded and working against God and working against her own family. She was the enemy of God and the family unit. But I didn't realize how far she was gone until all this erupted. We needed help from Jesus, but neither of us were humble or perceptive enough to draw near to his love and help. And my wife gave up and believed the lies of the Kingdom of Darkness and began to foster the same lies in our children.

But I thought I didn't deserve to ask him for help, even. I felt I'd gone too far in wickedness. I thought I had lost my relationship with the Merciful King. I didn't know how to speak to him, I didn't know how to ask for his help anymore. Why did I believe I couldn't be restored? Why did I believe the condemnation I felt was my end of the road with the Lord? I felt I didn't deserve his grace and mercy. I was wrong. "His Mercy endures forever".

I knew I had fallen. I knew my life with my family was over. I felt I was in a place where no one could find me. I imagined premature pregnancy for my daughter and drug abuse for my son. The enemy hit me with foul, depressing thoughts. I needed a new life, but I couldn't remove the one I had created and ruined. I felt it was all over for me. And there was no one to help me understand that my life wasn't over.

The things I thought and the way I think isn't like the average, I'm an artist. I learn and grow in knowledge, with spiritual, psychological, and intellectual perceptiveness. Different from others, I've always felt. Kind of like being on a high all the time. So, things that I would perceive were always deeper saturated for me and more vivid. Things always hit me heavily despite my external appearance. I was completely undone by what had happened, and there was no way I could make sense of it all, or reason with it. I was at the bottom of a pit and needed to be lifted out. I needed the Lord Jesus to help me. I needed his Grace. I needed his Mercy.

How to change, how to grow? How to advance mentally, spiritually and emotionally, in a prison? The physical and symbolic wall before me was immense and formidable, like Jericho. It was the greatest challenge I'd ever encountered. I had strength to overcome before. But now, I didn't have my family. I felt that I was alone, and without God. But what I didn't understand was that God was enlarging and fortifying me in my distress. He was somehow using this situation for his purposes.



I started to accept that God still had a plan for my life, and that he was going to use me, despite my circumstance. The word needed to be the way out. I needed to look toward Jehovah for my health. “I waited patiently, and in my waiting, I developed a new song” (Psalm 40). I had an idea of where to turn, but I didn’t. I had put my faith and trust in the Lord in my back pocket. And I listened to the voices of hell, the voices of darkness and despair. I entertained their conversations.


Every night, for about three weeks, I was at my house in Atlanta, without my family. Going through hell, alone. I could all but feel the demons pulling at my flesh. I could feel them in my head, twisting and manipulating my thoughts.

My children’s security was now compromised. Had my wife considered the potential impact on children of divorce? Did she feel like the rest of the woman that had been lied to? That she could do it all on her own? With all devices in the world, premature pregnancy, drug abuse, and school dropouts. I was possessed, at this point. I was bent on vengeance against my wife. She had taken everything from me. I felt unloved and unwanted. And my children had been turned against me.

That night, I was busy sending texts and emails to my wife, she wouldn’t answer me. It was disturbing. I couldn’t make the right choices then. I was being led by evil and the feeling of revenge felt good to me. I had never been in that place before. Enjoying the feeling of revenge. I sat that night and looked out a window and drank until I passed out. I was full of anger and pain.

That afternoon, I’d taken a drug test, as per the request of an employer that wanted me to start the following Monday. It was a great contract that would have put me on easy street and would’ve opened many doors for me. The next morning, I was awakened by the employer’s call. He’d indicated the incursion on my background was going to prevent me from starting. I had been awakened by this call. I had put everything into moving into the role, it was a new beginning for me. I was devastated, and in a fit of rage, I called my wife. She wouldn’t answer.

I left her an angry and evil voice mail, cursing her. This was all her fault, I felt. Looking back, I am glad she wasn’t near me at that moment. I was sick in my mind and spirit. A day later, another employer called me in the same manner and said to get on the plane, be in Dallas Monday morning. Then they called back a few hours later, and said the deal was off due to my background. I was a man who would joke with my family about how successful I was going to



be in life. “The future is so bright, I got to wear shades!” Now, I was immersed in shame and guilt. And nothing was for sure, and everything I’d built was over and gone and I was left with ashes.

I didn’t know what to do but to be angry. It hurt so badly, and no one cared. I’d never had these kinds of hindrances before. I was in a terrible state. I could feel the demons now laughing at me and taunting me. I was alone and wanted to die. Later that night, I was at home and got a call from another vendor. We talked a while, and he wanted me to come work for him. He indicated he didn’t care about offenses on my record. I thought to myself this is God. And I began to thank him. At that moment, we were discussing the compensation, when suddenly there was a knock at my front door. I went to investigate and noticed police at the front door.


I was drunk, but I didn’t think or know that I’d done anything wrong, so I opened the door. I wasn’t going to resist, and I opened the door, as I was aware of the potential dangers of resisting the police. Later that night, I envisioned what could have happened that night. There were six Gwinnett county officers that came to my house, in Atlanta on a Friday night to arrest me and I was drunk. They could have shot me dead on my door step.

Then I heard one detective say, “Have you been harassing your wife?” I said, I guess so. He said, “Well, you’re under arrest for stalking.” I asked what was stalking. They said to get my stuff and get outside. “You are under arrest”. I had a job lined up the following Monday. It was Friday night, the most ambitious thing I wanted to do was to read up on the contract I’d just received. It was like a terrible dream that I couldn’t wake up from. And too incredible of a story to create. It was real, it was happening. I wasn’t dreaming, and these were real officers and detectives at my door in Atlanta.

They had come from Gwinnett County to serve a stalking warrant on me. I’d stalked my wife electronically, and she had filed a complaint about it, triggering a felony charge. It was a blow between loved ones that no one should ever experience. I could not accept the analogy of what was happening. It was just too much to grasp, especially in my drunken stupor. As we got into the car, the detective in the back seat began to read me the charges. It was an incredible situation to be in. But somehow, I knew the Lord was with me, I knew he cared. Even though I hadn’t been showing him love for him.

It was so obvious he loved me, just the peace I was experiencing alone about the situation I was in presented so much evidence of his presence and compassion towards me. I knew he would help me. I knew he would protect me through this storm. But I couldn’t understand how





my wife's love for me had changed so drastically. I couldn't understand her not needing me anymore. I couldn't understand her not respecting the sanctity of marriage. I was convinced that there was some invisible evil force, that was influencing her.

I was experiencing this warped sense of entitlement of God's grace and mercy. I knew I was under his grace. I knew Jesus had died for my sins. And I felt I came to him when I needed him. Like being on a date. In my mind, I believed he would take care of me, even though I had gone astray and left him. And he would. But I didn't understand the consequences. I didn't understand the result of the choices that I'd made. I didn't understand what I was causing in the spiritual realm, manifested in the physical realm.


I pretended every day that things were going along okay. And I believe I could sit in church, worshipping the Lord then leave and continue to live like a heathen and in hypocrisy. I was a church member, with nice shoes and suits. My children were being taught the word of God by me. Yet I had a wife who hated me, and that was waiting to destroy me and our family. All the while, I was a good church member.

But it wasn't the church's fault. The institution itself was intact and the people were growing and being delivered daily. However, I wasn't seeing the victory in my own personal life and marriage. It appeared that whenever I would take one step forward I would also take two steps back in our relationship weekly. The enemy was in control of my life. I was not the head, I was the tail. But I looked the part.

And lived with a wife whom I couldn't even pray with. How could I approach a just and holy King for help given what I'd done? How could I ask for help and believe that he would bring me out of this mess? How could I expect a miracle from him if I didn't intend to continue to walk in his promises and Grace? And how could I be restored and recover my losses? I needed a change of mind and renewal of my mind.

### **Chapter 3: Grace and Mercy**

That evening, the volunteer minister arrives to the hall for the weekly service. He was a Grey-haired, conservatively dressed chap wearing a Grey cardigan sweater. The Brooks Brothers kind that you don't see much anymore. He looked like one of the inmates' granddad. As I was being admonished by the guard of the day, Guard Davis. Who was the soft-spoken type but every bit the angry black woman. The kind that I'd grown to love.




Sitting in the hall were the usual suspects. Reverend, Doc, Scott, and about eight other inmates. We were all looking for something this morning. We all got involved in the discussion that the volunteer was delivering a discussion of grace, prefaced with the teaching on the day of atonement as a reference. He illustrated how Jesus was now the atonement for our sins, and that Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice for mankind's sin. Through his blood.

We all responded to the orator's words with concentration and anticipation for every sentence. And then we all gave thanks to God for the opportunity to worship. And each inmate gave their personal testimonies. Scott was there, a twenty-two-year-old who had been incarcerated for a misdemeanor offense. Scott would be going home to his wife once the incarceration was all over. To work things out with his wife. I envied him, he was still married, and his wife still love him. But I found the maturity and love inside to encourage him.

I often told him to stay in love with his wife. I didn't understand how to do it myself at the time. I only knew I wanted to be in love again with my wife. I thought that I if did reach out to others, and help them with their problems, I could somehow find my way to healing my own marriage, and then somehow do all the things I'd never done. But that I promised God that I would, if given the chance to love my beautiful wife ever again.

After church, Scott approached me about doing drawing for him. He had an envelope that he wanted to have flowers drawn on for his wife who was coming to visit him. He said she was coming that evening which convinced me to do it for him. I might as well help someone else to feel better, I thought to myself. All morning after church service, I thought about reckoning with the acceptance of Jesus's forgiving grace toward me and how I was beginning to feel forgiven. Once I did, I felt whole again and free. I understood that he had forgiven me, according to his grace. It was the beginning of a new attitude and mind set for me. But the joy of that morning would be short lived.

Scott gave me a pre-stamped envelope. He wanted me to draw flowers on the front of the envelope. Illustrating four flowers, one for each family member. I agreed. I had a magazine lying around and showed him pictures of some flower samples. He was excited about seeing the drawing, so I went ahead and started it. Scott wanted four roses, two in the center, smaller, representing the kids, and the larger two, one on either side of the smaller inner flowers. I began the sketch.



The flowers began to take on a life of their own. The number 2 pencil seemed to flow across the paper. In a melody of perfect strokes, the petals appeared to blow in the wind. Right off the paper. The drawing was working out perfectly. I was happy with the results. And ready to present it to Scott. After chow that evening and during the evening free time, I gave Scott the envelope. He cracked a smile from ear to ear. Revealing his missing front upper incisor. “Thanks, man!” he said, drawing the attention of the guard and the three other inmates seated at the table with Scott.


The other inmates commented that the drawing was very nice. Scott was elated. And the other inmates commented on how nice they thought the drawing was. (We were grown men, in jail, commenting on the pretty flowers). Something about the picture makes me laugh. Scott was elated and said that he couldn’t wait to show his wife the picture. Then he left the day room and returned to his cell. I was puzzled by his statement. Later that evening, I asked Scott what his wife thought of the gift. He began to develop tears in his eyes after my question. Then responded, “She hasn’t seen it.” She came to visit but wasn’t allowed into the facility. The guards hadn’t added her name to the visitation list. This was a common occurrence at the Gwinnett County Jail.

### **Rebellion against the System (Week 2)**

I’d submitted several requests over the last week for medical attention and had yet to receive any. Asthma, dementia, migraine headaches, spots appearing on my chest, and the fact that I hadn’t had a bowel movement for eight days. So, I thought, I had better advise the staff of my problems. In the hope that I might get some medical attention. Also, I thought it would be useful to create a paper trail. For when I would be able to lodge a formal complaint against the jail.

At this point, I was very preoccupied with vengeance on the jail and the court system that facilitated me being incarcerated. I wanted revenge on against my wife, as she had wife had sent me to Jail. And I would continue to plot. I was in a terrible state of resentment and anger then. And there was no one available to help me. I needed forgiveness, and to have my own guilt removed. But who could help me with this?

Several days went by with no response from the medical staff. I vowed in my heart to pay them back. My mind was no healthier than when I was incarcerated. I was angry and bent on getting revenge. For lack of attention to my needs. To my wife, who had planned the entire thing, as though we’d never been married. I was in a very dark place, and there was no light that I could grasp and allow to fill me.



Transport to the actual sick call location meant shuffling the prisoners that had been granted an opportunity to go (about every other week). Or inmates who were critically ill or injured. The protocol was the same. March the inmates in single file through the corridor. Then walk from the towers to the medical sick call office. The long walk presented an opportunity for stretching my legs. So, I would always try to get a sick call request in. Although it was about a two-city block walk through the entire jail, from one end to the other.


For the disabled and incapacitated it was a different story. The guards and staff really didn't care or make a fuss over their wheelchairs. They were expected to perform in the same capacity as inmates without disabilities. I'd been brought in to the jail with a prescribed asthma inhaler which I wasn't allowed to have. Even after numerous sick call requests being logged. As well as having provided a release for medical information to the jail medical staff. Unfortunately, it was never recorded at inception. So, every visit to sick call, I had to reiterate the fact that I had a prescription for asthma management medications.

It seemed the nurses would ask the same redundant questions. I wanted to shout every time, "Have you looked at my chart?" They just seemed so nonchalant with the inmates. And I would often wonder about the backgrounds of the staff. What kind of training they had. Had they worked in other facilities prior to coming to Gwinnett County?

The overall lack of training in the areas of interpersonal skills was very apparent with many of the guards and nursing staff. The other percentage just didn't care. And seemed more like glorified security guards, just collecting paychecks. My opinion would later change. Thanks to God's enlightenment and grace.

The constant daily and unending badgering and antagonism from the guards. The constant lack of human courtesy from the medical staff began to hurt me intensely. It was pervasive in the culture of the guard's system, from the top down. The guards and many of the support staff seemed be conditioned to be mean and condescending to inmates. The mistreatment and abuse of inmates was common.

There were only a few guards who were friendly with inmates. There were bad feelings in the air toward many of them. And most of them didn't care that they could run into a disgruntled inmate on the outside. These guys had a license to be in-compassionate and unpleasant to inmates. And many of them enjoyed the sick power trip of being offensive to inmates.



I would often try to separate myself from the experiences. But at night, in my dream, the events of the day and the reality of my surroundings would haunt me. There was no escaping this reality. And for me, going to sleep and knowing I would wake up in the same world was riveting and disheartening. When would this endless nightmare cease. When would I be released from this hell? Day after day of turmoil, noise, pain, agony, and separation from life and the family I had cultivated. My anguish was greater than I'd ever experienced.


I vowed that I would try to bring light the Gwinnett County Jail. But I would have to wait until the time was right. It was nerve-racking because of this. I feared retaliation on my life and the possible extending of my time there. As I began to journal the things I would witness daily, I knew that my notes could be confiscated. And if read, could be interpreted as a threat. So, I wrote largely in secret. Only confiding my work to two other inmates, while everyone thought I was just a loner. I was investing my time of confinement in documenting what I was witnessing. And ultimately, sanctification.

I felt like a pre-emancipation proclamation slave on a plantation. And I didn't know how to react most of the time to the tyranny. I didn't understand if the guards' actions were collective and or if it was a form of government promoted from the jail system being perverted by them. And if they were just coming to work every day and enjoying the grief they gave.

There were a few I could speak of at that time who were different. In my mind, the staff were only there to fill out paperwork, which in my case didn't always get filed. I can remember explaining to four different RNs about the deterioration of the retina that I have, which would have gotten the attention of normal medical staff and explaining that it was getting progressively worse.

I was in a facility, facing blindness. And no one seemed to care. I had been taking prescribed drugs for the condition, but the jail staff hadn't bothered to assist in getting the prescription from the pharmacy. It became a race against the clock. I understood that I could go blind in jail. But I didn't know if it was isolated to one eye. My career was threatened, and my life was going down the tubes quickly. My hope was fading fast. And everything around me was negative. Life at this point seemed hopeless to me.

I needed a healing for my soul. And I couldn't seem to figure where the help would come from. I knew the name of Jesus, but I'd never needed him in the capacity. I didn't understand that Jesus visited and his spirit lives in prisons. I had so much to learn about his mercy, his love, and



his grace. Then I remembered how Jesus was always seeking out the oppressed and the burdened.


But I couldn't remember to call on him at that point though. I wasn't ready to allow him to help me carry my burdens. I was going to manage it all on my own, in my own strength and power. (Trust in the Lord, with all thine heart). I was in a place like David, when he wrote, "Restore unto me the joy of my salvation." His soul was bottomed out, I was spiritually bankrupt.

I needed someone to tell me things would get better, I needed an answer. I needed Jesus (perfect peace). I knew Jesus loved me still. I knew he was able to help my mind, body, and spirit if I'd only ask of him. I knew the Lord was there. Even in my state of mind, suffering and misery. I knew I would have to put my faith in him, till the end of the situation. And the dark place that I was in. I didn't how he would deliver, but I had enough faith that he would. I was being forced to depend on him, and I would have to put my trust in him completely.

I had to figure out a way to renew my strength like King David had. I knew I would have to reconnect with the right source to gain peace of mind and a way to manage my pain. I knew then Jesus was the answer to my troubles, but I still wanted to fix things on my own. So, I began to pray about my eyesight and my overall destitute situation. And deep within my soul, I knew it would be okay and I knew the Lord loved me.

I knew he was able to do "exceedingly and abundantly above all, that I could think or even imagine for." But I hadn't trusted the Lord Jesus for comfort through the valley that I was in. I hadn't trusted in him, that there were people around me who did care. Only I couldn't see them, as I was more interested in finding the fault with them. And preoccupied with judging the people who would ultimately be used by God to assist me. Blocking my own blessings, through doubt and unbelief.

I knew I had to make some changes and start a process of healing for my broken heart and troubled soul. I started to spend my free time, which was about four hours total per day, in my cell, either studying, writing, or doing calisthenics. Associating with other inmates was vital for social placement. I would try to separate myself from the evil influences lurking around the pod. There just never seemed be enough positive things to engage in outside of my cell. So, I decided to focus on myself and personal growth while I was going to be incarcerated. I realize now that I was being consecrated.



As dark as the hour was, somehow, I retained a measure of faith and hope for my life. I knew the Lord loved me, during the storm. I knew I was in his care; although I had been transported into hell by my own actions. I knew somehow the Lord would work things out for me even in my sin sick condition. Even on the evening of my arrest, I had a calm that was like nothing I'd felt before. I would experience this supernatural calm throughout my incarceration.


It was a day like any other, and I awakened to the same never-ending nightmare. Yet I gave God thanks and cursed my wife's name for destroying our family. I knew I was wrong, and I knew that I needed a change of heart. The other inmates had begun to treat me differently now because I was a bit of a loner. Over time, more inmates learned of my background and considered that I was from a privileged background. I wasn't. I'd only been exposed to greatness, by the grace of God. But because I would separate myself from the crowd, it was interpreted that I was somehow special. I had many material blessings come my way and had experienced many things that the average man would never have, including a wonderful family and wife whom I loved.

They began to treat me better because of it. I was developing a reputation as a "smart guy." My intellect had begun to shine, and people began to call me "Mr. May." I had become a bit of a rock star because of my intellect. I enjoyed it, but I knew I had to remain humble. It was 3:30 a.m., chow time and I'd been angry that I'd gone to sleep hungry. Upon going into the chow line, I yelled at the inmates on the floor to pass me their extra chow and to not just throw it away, if they didn't want it.

There was practice at the Gwinnett county Jail to throw away trays of food and not distribute them to inmates. This practice was disturbing, considering the people who could use the leftover trays of food that the Gwinnett County Jail would simply throw away. Not to mention the inmates who needed the extra food. On one occasion, I picked up a piece of cake from an untouched tray. The next thing I heard was a guard's yell. "May, put that freaking cake back!" I put it down immediately.

I was later admonished by a houseman that the way to get extra chow in the jail system was to ask other inmates for theirs and not to yell across the pod. He was speaking of "swapping." It is basically swapping your food for another inmate's, usually for cigarettes. The guard on shift determines whether we could keep the extra trays of chow as well as if we could swap chow. So, during this period I would be hungry daily. As I had no money on my "books" and didn't understand the system as of yet of food Swapping. One way a jail draws their revenue





from the county, is by using an all inmate labor force. All meals are prepared and served by inmates.


The jail makes a 100 percent profit on each inmate. The jail then bills the county \$147 per night, to house and feed each inmate. While the food trays cost \$2.50 to produce. There was a code with food in the jail. The “house man, ran the dispensing of food in the pods. Thereby providing further free labor to the jail. The house man would also take what they liked to eat. After the inmates had their chow, there were always at least ten trays left daily, per breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If the house man didn’t consume them, the guards demanded they be thrown away. The Gwinnett county jail system throws away thousands of meals, per day. I never understood this until I learned about the commissary system.

The commissary system is a system is well orchestrated by the jails in the south that allows their chosen vendors to sell vended food items to inmates, at a premium price. Inmates purchase mostly junk food, via a kiosk system. Inmates are encouraged to spend their money in the jail system as to further feed the jail systems, and ultimately the new slave trade, in the southern United States. So not allowing inmates to consume extra trays was part of the Gwinnett County Jail’s plan and continued revenue stream.

Like many jails throughout the South in the United States, the jails are managed and sometimes owned by a small core of people. A clan, if you would. Influencing court cases to maintain revenue streams. In this case, the Gwinnett County Jail is an independent jail billing the autonomous Gwinnett County for its services.

You were always cold and hungry in the Gwinnett County Jail as there was no heat, in November, December, January, or February. We were told the heat was turned down very low to combat mosquitoes. (Mosquitoes in November, December, January). The truth was that the jail was going to maximize its profits in any way it could. So, we had no heat, at all ever. It was clearly an effort to save costs on power. Not to mention the lack of a few other items such as paper napkins and paper towels to eat with. Toilet paper was a commodity at the Jail. It was rationed out to inmates, further increasing the jail’s profit margin.

We didn’t have adequate clothing in the Gwinnett county jail. We wore a short sleeve, two-piece outfit that was referenced as being a uniform, and shower shoes for shoes, in the dead of winter. We wore them to court, or wherever else an inmate might need to go. I felt like a Nazi war criminal, scrounging for food and warmth. Yet I was in the Gwinnett County Jail, which was



supposed to be a modern correctional facility. The only thing that was modern about the jail was the equipment and weaponry that the guards had in their arsenal.

Conversely, the guards had the most sophisticated weaponry and training. But the inmates didn't have paper towels or a napkin and proper utensils to eat with. Many of the guards were war veterans, who had recently returned from the wars in Afghanistan. This only added to the day-to-day grief and mental cruelty incurred by inmates.


The pain and suffering being inflicted on inmates was real, and it was encouraged by the administration. We'd plan to resist, but there was nothing that could be done while on the inside. Once I filed a complaint about the poor food the inmates were receiving. It was promptly responded to with a very definitive "no extra food, and no changes will be made to your menu. I would learn later that disciplinary actions were handled rapidly while calls for help for medical and or psychiatric help would go unanswered for months and if ever.

Which meant if your floor wasn't called out for chow first, you would have to grab a seat on the floor to eat. It was demoralizing and dehumanizing. But I would tell myself, it could be worse. I couldn't complain, for fear of reprisal. I couldn't call anyone, because my phone card had been stolen also. I had no money on my books left and I was going to have to trust God through the experience. I couldn't speak to my wife because she had a restraining order instated.

My life then was nothing like the lifestyle I'd had prior to all of this and I couldn't forget about my lifestyle and about my family. The family that I'd been taken away from. I couldn't release my past from my mind. But I tried to adjust to the environment and accept what was happening and to somehow learn something from it all. I needed to find a way to make the best of the experience, no matter how long it would be.

So, I started to ask inmates and guards for advice on how long an average stay would be for someone who'd been charged with stalking. The response was always the same: "I don't know." The guards were mostly too busy to even share their experiences with inmate times for going in and out of jail. But there were a few who would offer what they knew. I later learned that the average time for my offense which was stalking, would take an average of four to six week for my case. Or so I hoped.

My attorney was confident she could get me bonded by then. This would not be the case. I would have to wait on the Lord, and trust in him for deliverance from the situation. I referenced the physical and mental state that I was in as "Shoal." I didn't know, or when, but I knew the



Lord was going to deliver from the pit of hell. I knew Jehovah cared for me. I knew he would rescue me. But I would have to go through the storm first. To learn to trust him. I didn't want to trust him, I just wanted out of hell, and I wanted my old life back.


The visits to sick call would be long and usually a colossal waste of time. All the inmates would be gathered into a room and told to wait until called. The process would be to check in the inmate (triage), then send him back out front for the next inmate to be called in for triage. Once this was complete, the actual sick call would commence, and a nurse would examine the inmate according to the problem listed in the request by the inmate.

The process would usually take several hours to see thirty or so inmates. The waiting room adjacent room the clinic itself was much better than the pods. It was heated for one and had a proper restroom. Sitting there in the waiting room was always a tremendous waste of time for me as we weren't allowed to read anything while waiting to be seen. Meaning the time would be spent listening to the constant yelling and complaining of the other inmates waiting to be seen. For me, this was agonizing and just a huge waste of time. Sitting in the waiting hall, listening to inmates go on about their unproductive lives, for me was torture.

The bulk of the conversations that went on during these waiting periods were nerveracking for me. I would usually ball up a wad of paper and put them in my ears to block out the trivial and foul conversations that would go on. It was like having an open mike for all degenerates of Gwinnett County in one place and allowing them to vent all their frustrations, concerns, and complaints. But only to each other. Man, would it ever get old. The endless bickering, the constant talk about things that none of us could control.

The foul language, the bad smells of the men who didn't shower, and just the fact that I couldn't do anything about it was frustrating beyond explanation. The guys would talk about everything from their cases to describing what they wanted to do with the nurses. Explicitly, like juvenile teenagers in a schoolyard. It was awful and such a waste of time. It wouldn't have been half as bad if there was something to read in the waiting room to sick call. Just a magazine a paperback or a Bible.

I wouldn't be stuck like that again. I decided the next time I came to sick call I would have something worthwhile to occupy my dead time. I remember those times, asking the Lord to preserve my brain so I wouldn't lose my intellect. He blessed me, and I didn't. I would draw samples of computer network designs on the back of sick call requests that I had copies of to keep my brain functioning and to not forget how to.




It was so very frustrating to be all alone, in that world and no one knew anything about my skills sets or of my ability. I couldn't discuss things with the people that I was surrounded by, but I needed to learn humility and learn to appreciate the souls I was encountering, as would Jesus. After a few weeks, I realized through the grace of God that I could learn something from even the crudest inmates there. They all had a story. They all had something to offer in life.

Many were just lost and needed help. Or homeless, so they would end up in jail, repeatedly. The Gwinnett County Jail system was designed to constantly circulate repeat offenders for revenue. I began to understand that I needed to become humble and make friends, not enemies. I needed to show the love of Jesus to those who were oppressed and offer what I knew to the downtrodden. I knew I needed to be a friend to the friendless. I had begun to understand during those visits to the infirmary that I needed to give and not receive. I was in a dark place, and I was charged to be a light.

But how? I was in no condition spiritually to lead others. My lamp had gone out and my salt had lost its savor. I needed a spark. I needed to renew my relationship with Christ Jesus. The visits to the infirmary helped to begin the process. (Humble yourself before the mighty hand of God). So, I decided to reach out to the inmates when I was in waiting mode in the infirmary, and not be an island. I didn't know how I could help but I was going to try. I also wanted to figure a way to have something to do with my hands and brain while waiting. So, I was going to figure out a way to get something to read or write with into the infirmary waiting room the next time I visited. I was determined to take advantage of the time and document the things I would learn from them while waiting to see the nurse.

I didn't just desire to share with others, I was genuinely intrigued to a certain degree with my new associates. I would learn later that the men incarcerated with me were more honest than most people I'd met in my life and I believed many of them would even make better long-term friends. Although I was meeting men who were at their worst point in a moment in time, in many ways, it was also the best time to encounter them. Because these guys were striving to regain their dignity and their families and their places in life, all over again. Which requires bravery and character. I would get to see the real person under the hard exterior. Unbridled, open and honest.

Which exposed the true nature of the person, the person that was broken and in need. "A broken heart and a contrite spirit, will I hear". (Psalm 51). Like King David, many of the inmates and guards that I would come to love exhibited the heart after God. I just needed to humble myself to experience the interactions that God was opening the doors for me too. I couldn't see it at the time. But it was intentional. I needed to allow Jesus to use me, even in this pit of life, as it was.




The next morning, in the cell, I began to focus on a way to get some reading or writing materials out of the pod. I'd been drawing a few weeks before to keep my creative side fresh, usually bumming a pencil from inmates. It always was a blessing to receive a pencil as I had no money to buy any. So, everything I had I knew came directly from Jehovah's hands. Like Manna from Heaven. I had two pencils left, both were used down to the two- to three-inch lengths.

Then it hit me like a ton of bricks. I remembered that there were usually sheets of paper in the waiting room from documents being left on the floor from inmates, and I felt I could get anything I'd written back into the pod somehow. I had to think of a way to get something to write with out for the next time I'd make the trip to sick call. I thought about my socks, but the guards would pat, them down. I thought of my hair, but it wasn't long enough to conceal a pencil. I thought of my mouth, but that was unsanitary. Then, the idea came to me. "Lodge the pencil between your butt cheeks."

I said to myself. "What are you thinking?" But then the picture became clearer. If I could hold a pencil in place between my butt cheeks long enough, I could have something to write with. The temptation of doing it and getting away with it was inescapable and rather humorous too. Not to mention the challenge of it all, would give me something to do. I was bored to death most of the time, so I had to be creative. So, there I was, at a crossroads. Considering smuggling a pencil out the pod for my next sick call visit.

Now, one would think, I could've found something more constructive to do with my time, even in a jail cell. But I was hooked on the notion now and committed to the execution. I looked over at the desk where my things were and there were the two pencils that had been reduced to a few inches resting there. I had to try this first on a dry run before the real deal. So, I was going to do a drill, exercise. I took one of the shortest ones, wrapped in a small piece of tissue paper. Then proceeded to lodge the pencil between the upper section of my butt cheeks. It worked. The pencil was buried and felt unnoticeable.

But I thought I should walk around a bit, for further testing and analysis before going into production with my plot. It was free time, so I walk out of the cell, slowly. And with a rather obscure look on my face. No one knew I had a pencil secured on my person, between my butt cheeks. It was a bit of a thrill, because it gave me a sense of adventure, and something to do out of the norm of playing checkers or watching TV.




So far so good, the pencil wasn't moving. So, it thought I would be good to go for my next trip to the infirmary and that I would be able to write something, anything at all while waiting and listening to the endless chatter of the inmates about nothing. As I was contemplating what I had just accomplished, a new bunkmate arrives at the cell. I'd been on my own for two weeks. I wasn't happy about it, and I had a pencil suspended between my butt cheeks.

He was a scrawny looking tall blond guy who looked much older than he should've. He had the burned-out look that regular illicit drug users have. But didn't want to judge. I immediately challenged him. "Don't touch my stuff!" He responded with his best Southern accent. "I ain't gon touch yer stuff!" "Good, cause if you do, you will have a problem!" Then I got in his face, definitely violated his comfort zone, and I shouted. "Do you want a problem?" He shouted back, "No". Spraying some spit in my face as he did. He didn't budge, he just stood his ground.

The inmate in the next cell heard us shouting, and he shouted out, "May, if you hit that white boy, you'll go to the hole, and be up on charges." I turned my face to the inmate's shouting voice, while still facing my bunkmate's direction. Then I looked at him again, eye to eye. He said nothing and just stood still. The guard heard the commotion, and shouted, "Both inmates in 40c, get out here, right now!" I was out of the cell first. The guard shouted. "Where is the other one?" I replied to the guard, "He heard you, but won't come out."

Then he came leaping out of the cell and came to attention. The guard was on the way to the entrance of the cell by then, and I could see the inside perimeter of the pod, with the on looking inmates' eyes glued to catch what was going to happen next. The guard approached the inmate, and said, "Do you have a problem with cleaning, inmate?" "No, sir." The guard told us both to continue with the morning cleanup, and at that, I didn't give him any more grief going forward. He had proven his toughness to me.

"Sick call for the following inmates!" shouted the guard. I was on the list that morning. The inmates were mustering up around the sally port to depart from the pod and postured for the pat-down before exiting the pod. I was going for it. I was going to attempt to smuggle contraband out of the pod, and into the jail. I felt like Jim Brown, in the *Dirty Dozen*. I carefully lodged the pencil between my butt cheeks and then made my way down the staircase, and then into the lineup for the standard pat-down. With a three-inch pencil lodged between my butt cheeks.



When suddenly a chilling thought crossed my mind. What if I coughed and the pencil were to cut me? What if I made a sudden wrong move and stabbed myself in the inside of my cheeks? How would I explain that to medical? I tried to restrain the laughter as the guard approached me for the pat-down. I had a silly grin on my face. I knew I could get in a lot of trouble for carrying contraband out of the pod. But the thrill of being able to pull it off was just too tempting to pass on.

But just then another thought passed my mind. I thought, if I get busted, who's going to extract the pencil? The idea of this guard or anyone else having to extract the pencil was incredibly funny to me. I began to chuckle, while my hands were on the wall, awaiting the frisk. "May, what the heck are you laughing about and why do you have that stupid look on your face for?" I don't want any of your crap today or I'll throw you in the hole." He said.


I quickly regained my composure. I remained silent and didn't look up as he frisked me and then the guard moved on to the next inmate and completed the rest of the pat-downs. We advanced to the door and headed through the sally port. There were about ten other inmates from the pod immediately across from 1F awaiting to go to sick call as well. I was second in the line that morning, immediately behind a young Hispanic inmate. We proceeded down the corridor about a hundred yards, then we were told to stop.

To the left was a door which swung open. And out came a very tall guard, standing in the sally port. He looked at the young Hispanic male in line in front of me and said, "Hey, Amigo, wanna Smoky, Smoky?" While gesturing the act of smoking a joint with a hand to mouth movement. "Amigo, wanna Smoky, Smoky?"

The guard transporting us began to chuckle with him. I didn't find it funny at all. The young Hispanic inmate didn't flinch or utter a word. He just kept looking straight ahead and absorbed the bullying until we departed the passageway. This kind of intimidation went on all the time at the Gwinnett County Jail. I would later nickname the guard "The Mexican Hating Guard.

The rest of the walk through the corridor was long and always cold. Those sections of the jail were always very cold. The guards who escorted us would always have on full winter clothing and never seemed to care that the inmates wore a two-piece short sleeve ensemble, in the winter and that they lived with no heat in the facility. The one advantage of the outfit was its accessibility to your body parts as the tops were usually worn outside of the bottoms. For me, that day the feature became a benefit.





“Hands behind your back, when walking!” The escorting guard shouted as we approached the elevator. I managed to slip my right hand under my shirt and move my hand around to my trousers and then reached down to the awaiting pencil that was all but screaming “get me out of here! I snatched the carbon instrument that was never designed to be in such a place and in doing so, I scratched myself. “Ouch!” I shouted, which got the attention of the transporting guard. “Ouch what?” He said.


I stood still and didn’t respond, grimacing from the laceration I had just given myself. It felt somewhat wet, but I couldn’t tell if it was blood or if I’d soiled myself as a reaction from the jab. But I dared not try to check until after the initial pain had subsided. This situation brought on another wave of a sudden sense of humor, and a new urge to laugh. But I resisted as we entered the waiting room to the infirmary, with the disguised pencil wrapped in tissue in my right hand. As we entered the waiting area to the infirmary there was a restroom to the left of the entrance, which I quickly entered. Now inside the bathroom, with a measure of privacy I was able to remove the pencil.

It wasn’t damaged or covered in blood, it was just sweaty. I had another good laugh, quietly to myself, then I cleaned off the pencil in the sink. Now armed with a writing instrument, I felt ready for the events that would be happening in the waiting area to keep me preoccupied, while the crass bantering of the inmates would be going on.

The waiting room itself was about a twelve by twelve room adjoining the actual infirmary. We all crammed into the little space. Sixty smelly, cranky inmates. But the warm room was relatively comforting and far better than being in the cell. So, I decided to just relax and enjoy the show, from the “Motley Crew, that was about to begin.

The room was filled with Gwinnett County’s low lives. The societal misfits who couldn’t make it in the county or had found themselves in the county, the way I had as a tax paying citizen and father and husband of 13 years. Many had migrated to the county from the south side of Atlanta, Chicago, and New York. The demographics of Gwinnett County had been rapidly changing over the last decade or so and at least as long as I could remember.

Like any other population explosion, many of the new residents were contributing to the increase in crime over the last decade in the county. Consequently, the profits of the jail over the last ten years had increased marginally. I’d observed the changes in the community as the innercity residents were forced out of the cities and began to move to the suburban counties. In our case, this was Gwinnett County. The typical inhabitant of the county had changed over the last ten years. Not coincidentally, this dynamic was happening in all the major US cities.




The dynamic of gentrification was very evident in Atlanta. I once heard an author on the subject make a statement: “We have a new place for the pimps and pushers of the inner cities, it’s the suburbs.” He’d published materials on the subject of how the inner cities were essentially becoming populated with prominent young aristocrats, and the traditional low-income city dwellers were now heavily migrating to the suburbs. I found the information to be very relevant, and a good assessment of what had been transpiring in the big US cities, and definitely in Atlanta.

The infirmary that morning was filled with pimps, pushers, and violent offenders. Most of whom really weren’t from the county but had women, significant others or other ties in the community. The average inmate I’d speak to didn’t own property in the county but usually had a “baby momma in Gwinnett County. It was an eye-opening experience. The things I was learning about this new culture I found interesting from a sociological perspective. I was always careful not to offend inmates in conversation though. But I wanted to know as much about this new culture that had arisen in the county.

I was also intrigued as to why so many black males were in jail to begin with. I wanted a root cause or something to point to that would explain why this county, that was traditionally white Americans was now filled with African Americans and Hispanics in disproportionate numbers. I wanted to understand if this was the result of some kind of a bigger corporate initiative or due to the influx of minorities entering the state. I was going to begin my research right where I was, beginning with the inmates themselves. To gather information seemed to be a logical approach as I was going to be part of the family for an undisclosed and unknown period of time. I knew I couldn’t waist the time that I had to spend there. I knew I wouldn’t be forever.

So, I decided to change my perspective of the situation, and I began to view it as an opportunity to learn and opportunity to share and ultimately, an opportunity to help to evoke change. So, I was going to have to assimilate into the culture without succumbing to the evils of jail life. Once, I heard an inmate ask a guard if there was a difference between a jail inmate and a prison inmate. The guard responded, “When you figure out the difference, let me know.” I knew that I had to figure out a way to create a dialogue with the inmates and build alliances with them to get the information that I needed. I knew that I needed a strategy.

But, I was determined not to be categorized with the rest of the inmates and somehow still show humility, while learning something about myself while I was incarcerated. This is when I began to notice changes in the way I thought and the way I felt. I knew Jesus was there and I knew he cared. But I had to come to him to help me to get through the valley that I was in.



I was going to have to depend on God and trust in Jesus's word.


As the waiting began, so did the arbitrary conversations between the inmates. They began to tell each other of their backgrounds and throw up colors signs as we each waited to be seen. They would each take turns and go around the room, bragging on how they got there. It was like a class reunion for many in a Jail infirmary waiting room, filled with pushers, pimps, and gang bangers. Mostly from Chicago and the south side of Atlanta.

It was impressive to me that there were hardly any incarcerated in the room who were from Gwinnett County. A lot of the chatter was from the concentration of amateur rappers in the room. Rapping seemed to be a staple with them. They would go on about the origin of many of the rappers they came up with. How Waka Flaka, got his name stood out as a prominent discussion. Apparently, the name came from a Sesame Street character. There was a young white guy whose face I'll never forget. He looked like a cross between Kid Rock and Eminem. Except that he was grungier. I'll refer to him as Tom.

Tom was sort of talking a lot on his own to no one in particular. Then he suddenly began to talk about the origins of the El Rukns, Vice Lords, and Black Disciple Gangs in Chicago and its leader, Jeff Fort. I was impressed with this. As the guy seemed to be only about twenty. The conversation shifted between the inmates for a while. Some noted how whites had been moving into traditional black turfs. I interjected with "hostile corporate takeover. No one seemed to understand that. No one laughed.

Then, one of the other black inmates called out to him. "Yo! How you know Waka Flaka?" Tom replied, "I know that nigga from way back!" Then the conversation became more academic and informative with regard to the hierarchy of the local gangs in Atlanta and their origins. My ears were peeled. I was learning more about Southern street gang culture in one afternoon than I had in ten years of being in the South. I began to develop a new respect for the "Jail Rappers" of Gwinnett County. They had an entire language of their own which impressed me because of their creativity and simplicity.

I was beginning to understand and beginning to feel an inherent connection with the folk in the joint. I thought I knew a lot about the people in the SWATS, (Southwest Atlanta). I felt that I understood and that I could communicate with anyone from the hood. But being there in jail with them was an experience I would never forget.




I heard the word “Nigger,” about a million times that day. It was obvious the rap community still perpetuated this verbiage. It was a commonly used adjective among young people of every race in the jail. What was new though was the context in which the Hispanics, Asians, and whites also referred to each other as “Nigger. Denoting that the word was no longer was restricted to blacks. No longer a racially descriptive term, but a way of describing a connection to different social classes. A class that had now crossed color barriers. The words “Nigger and “Bitch, were now non-descriptive and used to characterize people of this particular social class and females in general. Sad but true.

But I wasn’t some scientist doing some controlled longitudinal study. This was real. I felt the same frustrations and anger that every other prisoner did. I felt the same desire to hit someone during the day. I felt the same urge for violence, just like any other inmate. I felt the same urges for sex. I knew and understood that I could allow the hate and anger to overtake me. I was beginning to understand that I had a choice and that was that I could live civilly and respect others. I was beginning to really understand feeling love for my brother.

The temptation to conduct myself as the average inmate was always there. I could always follow the prompting of the enemy’s henchmen, beckoning to me to perform acts of aggression toward other inmates, but I knew even then that I had the strength to resist the temptation for being aggressive. I knew that if I resisted, Satan would flee. I tried to use the study of the word of God to counteract the day-to-day challenges. By staying centered and grounded in the word. I never really lowered my standards or stopped using proper English when communicating. But I would use ghetto jargon sometimes to better communicate an idea. I vowed I would not lose my integrity or my faith. But the joy part, well I would have to work on that.

My emotions were still very much up and down and I struggled with anxiety daily still. But as I extended myself to the jail populace, I began to find strength to cope a little bit better day after day. Then, I began to notice that I seemed to have an innate ability to relate to the inmates. I’d always been a bit of a social butterfly and able to talk to anyone in any walk of life. I wanted to be able to do the same, no matter what the situation that I was in. Although my vocabulary was more advanced than the inmates and any of the guards, I never talked down to anyone. In jail, everyone is the same, no matter their backgrounds, they all need Jesus. We all looked the same in the same ugly two-piece canvas.

Later, it was time to go back to the dorms, and I decided not to take the risk again of ripping my flesh to write. So, I left the pencil in a trash bin in the rest room. I felt rather down in



my spirits when I returned to the pod after sick call visit, and it was a rainy day as well. There were raindrops sparkling from the window pane above the security-enclosed basketball court, which doubled as a smoking ground. Probably the only place left in Gwinnett County where you could still smoke. I will never forget the way the inmates looked, lighting up cigarettes under a basketball hoop. It seemed like the dumbest thing one could do. This perception would later change to one of understanding and compassion.


It was one of those times and days that I felt hopelessness was my best friend. I was looking for help from anywhere at that point. I remembered my attorney mentioned to me that my wife said I was bipolar which was news to me. She indicated that a bipolar designation would get my charges dropped. Of course, I contemplated it later. How could I make this happen? How could I get this designation and somehow get released? I knew it would take several weeks to see a psychiatrist. So, I needed a fast track to get some face time with a doctor. So, I came up with a plan.

After chow that evening, the night nurse was making rounds and came to Pod 1F. The guards had to oversee the nurses distributing the pills to ensure the inmates wouldn't attempt to keep the drugs and sell them. You'd have to open your mouth after swallowing the meds for the guard. When she gave me mine, as the guard stood there, I said the magic words. "I want to kill myself." I felt that no one was paying attention to my needs, and I felt like I was losing my mind.

## **Chapter 5: Into Hell**

About ten minutes later, I was in the cell and heard the guard's key opening the cell door. I thought to myself, "this can't be good. "May, get up. Pack your stuff and come with me, now!" I didn't know was happening. I didn't know if my wife had dropped the charges, or if I was in more trouble. I complied immediately and started gathering my things and packed them into the travel bin then ascended down the metal staircase to the guard desk. There was no pat-down this time.

The escorting guard led the way down the corridor. I knew the drill by now. But I couldn't figure out where we were going, and alone. Was I being released? I tried to settle my thoughts and relax. For a moment, I felt like a slave, being led to the nurse. But that feeling dissipated once I saw the sign on the door to where we were heading. I'd seen this door before, I remembered it. The sign on the door read Psychiatric Ward.




I realized that I wasn't about to be killed, but I had no idea what to expect. Suddenly I had a strange feeling of calm that took hold of me. Suddenly, I wasn't worried at all or anxious for anything. Everything just went quiet and surreal. I felt like a character in a Spike Lee movie traveling on an invisible virtual conveyer belt into another dimension. There was no sound, just the beating of my heart in my ears. I was in my body, but I was completely separated mentally. I knew that the Lord was with me. I knew that there was nothing that could hurt me, and I had no fear at all.

The door swinging open sounded like some spooky eerie sound in a Vincent Price movie. It was a very surreal moment. Bright lights from the ceiling flooded the sally port. Suddenly, the guard appeared from out of the sally port. He was tall and formidable looking. I thought of David facing Goliath of the Philistines. I looked up at the giant in the eyes. It was the "Mexican Hating Guard!

Then I heard the voice of Vincent Price. "Owe, Hoo, Ha, Ha!" He stood there laughing and railing. He was quite intimidating looking from my perspective. But I wasn't afraid. The Mexican Hating Guard stood there like Goliath inside the proverbial entrance to hell. He said, "Stand over there." I advanced at his command, forward and into the main entrance area. To my left there was a glass-enclosed room, about twice the size of a regular cell in the pod. To my right, there was a larger glass cell, and as I peered at the cells the one on the right had a woman standing in the glass out the cell. She looked like a character out of an Alfred Hitchcock movie.

She stood motionless with her head against the glass. Just standing there, half clad, looking out the glass. She had very dark and long hair. She was thin with and with very pale skin. I thought she would have been of Arab or Mediterranean descent. Which made her Gothic appearance even more intriguing to me. I wanted to know what was going on in her head, to be standing there frozen with that cold lifeless and empty look in her eyes. I wanted to understand what I perceived as pain. In her case, pain that had been repressed into numbness. She stood there lifeless, just staring into space.

Suddenly I heard a voice, a scream. It sounded like a scream that was from a resident of hell itself. It sounded like the sound of a screeching sound of a demon in hell, begging to be released. It was a high-pitched scream that would switch from high to low octaves as the scream resonated through my ears and pierced my soul. It was like sound effects from a horror movie. It



was an incessant disturbing shriek of terror. I knew that I'd entered the outer gates of hell, and I didn't know if I'd ever be leaving.

The Scripture of the rich man that entered Hades and asked Father Abraham for water began to race through my mind as I stood there, listening and observing. Listening to the screams with my eyes fastened on the inanimate damsel stationed at the window. I thought to myself, I'd refer to her as, "**your Majesty**."


Then the voice of the "Mexican Hating Guard rang out. "Get over here and strip!" He shouted. I immediately complied. Then he said, "Turn around and face that wall!" Then, upon his visual inspection of me for contraband, he handed me an outfit to put on. The outfit looked like a cross between a Marilyn Manson outfit and an explosive ordinance disposal attire. (Army Green). It had big straps going over the shoulders. It looked like some kind of an S&M outfit, (known as the turtle suit). No bottoms. Your loins were exposed to the world and the outfit prevented contraband that could be used by an inmate to commit suicide.

With that, I said, "Do you have anything with more color?" The Mexican Hating Guard wasn't impressed the guard said, "Look over there at the rest of the inmates and figure out how to put it on!" So, I did. As I peered into the Plexiglas cell to the left of me, I noticed several other inmates of various ethnicity which was interesting. Up until now, I'd mostly seen minorities in the jail. But this was the psych ward, and the inmates were wearing what appeared to be the same outfit the guard had given me. So, I thought I should be able to figure it out.

I slid the Kevlar suit over my head then fastened the big sadistic looking straps over my shoulders. Then I asked, "How do I look?" He didn't reply. Then he said, "Pick up that mattress and bring it over here!" I picked up the vinyl mattress begrudgingly and walked over to the guard. Then he said, "Get yourself in there!" He pointed to the Plexiglas cell on the left.

The guard opened the door to the cell revealing a room with no chairs and no racks. There were six men in the cell on the floor. With mats like the one I was now holding. In my mind, I thought that I had surely entered hell. I thought that could be no way that anyone, knows of a place like this. No one could remotely even envision a place like this. This was a special place reserved for Demons and the Devils henchmen, and I was there, and I didn't know for how long, or what was going to happen next.






All of the inmates were all wearing the same green turtle suit, and they were all on the floor. All but one inmate was nestled under the green Kevlar blankets accompanying the turtle suit. The ward itself was quite warm, much more so than the jail pods. The cell itself seemed to be comfortably warm. But it smelled like a year's accumulation of excrement and urine. Meanwhile, the haunting sounds of the screaming persisted as the Mexican Hating Guard shouted, "Find yourself a place to lay!"

The other fellow was pacing the floor in a repetitive motion. To and fro, within a twofoot diameter that he had for his space and mat. In the background, the screeching persisted. Eerily. As I looked around the cell, the first thing I noticed that really got my attention was the swastika on one of the inmate's shoulder of a white guy on the floor, closest to the northernmost bulkhead. On the other side of the cell was a young man who looked to be of Hispanic or Middle Eastern descent, with very long hair. He had pentagrams tattooed on both of his shoulders.

So, there I was, in a psychiatric ward with Hitler and the Son of Satan on either side of me. I sat my mattress down on the space between Hitler and Satan. They each made a little room for me. I knew I was in hell. So, I decided to be a nice guy and see what I could do to make the experience better for everyone, like Jesus would've. He was always comforting and consoling people. I thought of him when he had gone to hell to set the captives free. Now the Satanist, who called himself Seven, spoke first and said, "hello, is it chow time yet?" The Nazi responded to him, "Almost." Then I spoke to everyone in the room, and said, "How is the chow here?"

Then the Nazi replied, "The food is great here, way better than in the Pod's"! I was in hell, with the Prince of Darkness's and Hitler's sons. Yet, I felt relaxed and comfortable in the situation. "They give you a lot of food here, more than you can eat." Said Hitler. "Really"? That's great I said. "I was always starving up top."

Everyone in the cell nodded in agreement and simultaneously. The cell was about the size of two regular cells. With an open toilet and a tap for water which was connected to the top of the toilet fixture. It was utterly disgusting, but we could get water. There was no soap and you had to ask the guard for toilet paper. I was determined to not have a need to use the toilet paper.




On the other side of the cell was ‘Pacer. He never stopped pacing. I couldn’t understand how anyone could be so nervous. It was as though he’d never had to wait or believe in faith for anything. Yet he was an American. I later learned that he worshipped Thor as his God, ‘The god of Thunder. That explained everything to me. He had never known or how to trust in the living God. I tried to avoid discussions with him on the subject. I just let him know that I believed in Jesus Christ as Lord whenever the conversation came up.

The pacer explained to the inmates in the room how he’d been sent to prison for murder and had served ten years in prison. He’d kicked a man to death while he was incarcerated. Because the man threatened to rape him. So, he got rid of the problem by murdering him, and received a ten-year sentence as a result. He was rather mild mannered though. In speaking with him, he seemed to be very much in control of his emotions. But he just couldn’t stop pacing and pacing.

I knew Jesus could give him peace. I knew Jesus could calm him, like when he calmed the storm that arose. The whole Thor Asgardian worship didn’t faze me at all. I was actually very intrigued that a grown man could worship a cartoon character. The other black man in the room, ‘Malcolm was on his mat by the toilet. He was an openly gay black man and made no excuses about the drugs he dealt and that it had landed him in the Gwinnett County Jail. I didn’t particularly like him, because he was so feminine. I judged him, and I was wrong about that, I would come to realize later. But at the time, I didn’t want to show him love or associate with him. Because he was a sissy. Especially not in a jail setting. We were all supposed to be tough guys. Right?

At the time, I couldn’t remember any references to Jesus’s dealing specifically with homosexual spirits. Neither do I remember any now. But I know that Jesus loves everyone and that he doesn’t have respect of persons. Malcolm was a narcotics dealer and prostitute, and he was in trouble. Yet, all I could see were his differences. I was like a high minded and fake religion Pharisees. Pretending to be holy but really unjust inside. I was a whitewashed sepulcher. I needed to be able to pray for him, but I would need to ask forgiveness first for my own judgmental ways and attitude. I was in my own personal hell now and in a straightjacket. With 6 other men, who were in as least as much trouble as I was. Yet, I had an unexplainable peace.

‘Seven, was a young guy full of life and he was remarkably intelligent. He was also well informed on the subject of mental illness. He would talk for hours on end about the different medications and therapies around. He knew a lot about the homeless shelters and halfway houses in Atlanta. Many of the people in the Gwinnett County Jail were from Atlanta. ‘Seven, was one of them and had an extremely good working knowledge of Scriptures, as well. He was from a



troubled background. He later asked me not to publish the stories that he'd tell me about his upbringing.


There was one other fellow there who had been in a car accident. He didn't speak much English. He told us that he was Korean. He spent much of his time on the floor with us. Probably due the fact that he couldn't walk. The guards put him in the cage and left him without a wheelchair and with no assistance to get to the toilet. He would hobble across the floor to use the toilet. Without anyone's assistance he'd be in agony. He would grunt and groan from the pain in his legs, which were broken and bent. No one in the administration seemed to care. It was so disturbing to me. But it wasn't the worst mistreatment that I would see at the Gwinnett County jail.

The daily psych ward counseling sessions were on as per usual. My name was called. I came out the cell and toward the nurses' station. I was greeted by a young black man who directed me to sit down in the chair in front of him. I sat down in front of him. He introduced himself as Dr. Adams and then began to ask me a series of standard evaluation questions. I wasn't impressed, and I quickly grew annoyed with his line of impersonal questioning. I felt he was wasting my time as he continued to try to crack my shell. But he could tell that he wasn't getting anywhere with me. I was getting more and more impatient and frustrated with his redundant and canned questioning.

Finally, then I said. "Listen, I just need something to ease my pain, while in jail, a velum would be nice, everything else is irrelevant." He looked at me as though he didn't expect an intelligent comment to come from a black man in jail. like me in jail. Then he said. "Don't you think you will have the same problem when the drugs wear off?" "Yes, man, that's the whole point. Why are you antagonizing and mocking me!?" I shouted. "This will conclude our meeting." He said.

The same patronizing persisted the next day and the next with each new counselor and the next. Then, they sent me a counselor that I thought that should have been working at a high school, and not in a jail with adult men with adult issues. But her discussion with me was more informative and interesting than her arrogant colleague.

She wanted to identify my motivation for causing the stalking order to begin with and my being delivered to the psych ward. She determined that I had worked out a logical plan of



revenge to get back at my wife for filing a restraining order. Which was the most sense I'd heard from anyone in weeks. She characterized my behavior as revengeful, for the way my force the restraining order. When what actually had happened is that I was torn and broken and deeply longing for my family. What this counselor told me, was not what I wanted to hear.


It was obvious that my plan for obtaining mental disorder case dismissal, wasn't going to work. My plan had backfired. The jail wasn't going to help me, neither was there any effort to rehabilitate me. As the administration and its puppets had decided, I wasn't ill, just angry. I was disappointed and forced to deal with the reality that I was still very angry and hurt, and also that I needed to have my spirit healed and my mind renewed. I needed the Lord to help me. There wasn't going to be a pacifier. It was going to be me dealing with my emotions straight-no-chaser.

No painkillers, no drinking, no drugs. I am grateful to them now, for them making me face my own anger and take responsibility for having it. They did help me in understanding how to control my excessive compulsive behaviors, which my attorney identified for me, and not the jail psychiatrists. At the time, I felt that the jail staff were there just to collect paychecks. I would later change my mind and opinions of the staff as I began to engage with more of them, day by day. The interactions began to destroy my prejudices and biases about the guards and I felt grateful to them for that. I had to learn to let my guard down and trust the people that had been assigned to keep me safe while I was there. I had to learn to trust the system that I was in although I hated it. I had to believe that things would get better. I had to maintain my optimism and try to maintain my integrity. I needed Jesus to help me with my demeanor and attitude.

## **Chapter 6: Friends in Hell**

I had been awarded a fast track to the psych ward with the expectation of getting an audience with a psychiatrist. My impatience had led to my poor decision making. I had risked it all once again with my hopeless optimism and faith that everything would be okay. I was off to the races. It wasn't what I was looking for, but I was there. I knew that I didn't want to be, neither did I need to be in the psychiatric ward.

The guys on the floor each told me that the stay there would likely be forty-eight hours and that my departure from the ward, would be based upon the responses given during my interview. I couldn't understand how they'd know that, given they were all still in the psychiatric



ward with me. I asked what my posture should be. They all said that I would need to just show improvement to be released.


Now I was trying to get a designation of bipolar so, I decided to go along with whole game of charades. Upon my interview with the ward corrections officer, I played it cool and acted like I had some sense. I was calm cool and collected, and I told him exactly what he wanted to hear. Which was that I was fine and over my fit of rage and irrational behavior. This was what he needed to here to release me, and to avoid additional paperwork.

Forty-eight hours later we were all transferred to a room on the left which was a larger cell with five other inmates in it. Making it eleven men total, in fifteen by fifteen cell, with one toilet and sink to share. I learned later, that I'd been in a suicide watch room. Which was the jails version of a 'rubber room. There were what looked like tombs to me at first. But they were actually cinderblocks built up to accommodate the two-inch vinyl mattress to go on top.

The coffins for bunks, were about three feet high and six feet long and about two feet in width. It looked like a room full of coffins. I knew that I was still in hell. But somehow, I'd been transferred to a less disgusting yet still a terrible, terrible, place. This room did have showers as I recall it, and my shoulders didn't hang off the sides of the mattress like in the pods. Also, this area of the jail did have heat so, I felt it was a little better.

Looking back, I believe I had a cold hard glimpse into what true degradation is and what it feels like. When everything that you have is stripped from you, you begin to go into survival mode. Then you suddenly realize that living with minimal resources causes you to appreciate what you have had in your possession. But the deprivation that I was experiencing taught me how to survive without the normalcies of a successful person in America. I would come to view many of them, I would come a place of enlightenment, and call them 'attachments. One of the coping skills that I developed during this period, was to constantly remind myself of who I was and who I had been before I'd landed in hell.

I realized that life was still going on without me, and that I was surviving without the world that I'd known for so very long. I would later learn to use the experience to survive and then thrive and further capitalize on what I would later refer to as, 'the valley experience. The compromises that were imposed on me were dramatic and instant, so I didn't have time to react or plan. I could only try to cope with this new reality, to the best of my ability. As I had no frame of reference for being without my children, and without my family.




So, upon entrance to the cell, I thought that it looked like tombs with inmates' bodies atop. The cell was steamy because of the open shower to grant quick access to an inmate in the event of him attempting suicide. Which gave the cell an eerie and spooky looking. Kind of like a grave yard and with fog settled onto the ground. The cell very looked creepy, to say the least. So, there I was, in a scary movie. But I didn't panic. I knew the Lord would protect me. I knew Jesus had my back. I was able to see the humor in it all, by the grace of God. I knew that one day, I would tell this story, and no one would believe me. But it didn't steal my joy. I was able to laugh, and that was what I needed the most right then and there. To relax and understand that everything was okay.

There was one inmate on the southern bulkhead introducing himself as General George Patton. He was eating orange rinds like they were gum drops. I knew he was too young to be George Patton. The look on all the other inmates was indescribable and they all looked constipated. I couldn't figure out any of these guys. Nonetheless, we were back in jail, out of the suicide watch dorm with clothes and able to take a hot shower. So, I settled in. I had no fear and I knew that the Lord was with me and I felt that I had seen the worst.

The house men, (inmate labor) were accountable for cleaning psych ward cells. The jail had all labor performed by inmates to maximize profits. There was an inmate there who never said a word, he just kind of stared at the wall all the time. But he did acknowledge someone when he heard his name called for chow. I didn't try to analyze it too much. There were people incarcerated and in the psych ward for various reasons. Besides, he didn't appear to be dangerous. That was just the label the jail put on inmates. His name was Jefferson. He was very young.

That evening the chow was brought to the cell. We were all able to swap trays because we had a cool guard shift. I always ate the most of anyone to the amazement, due to my size, which was attributable to many years cycling and running. So, I was using the stool afterward which is adjacent to Jefferson's rack/tomb. From his rack I could see the commode and from the commode I could see Jefferson's rack. I heard the guard call for the trash pickup from chow. My Styrofoam plate was already at the door of the cell and ready for pick up by the house men who were doing the pickups.

The house man called out to Jefferson to bring his tray up, but Jefferson didn't move. He just sat there in a trance staring at the wall in front of him. The house man requested the trash again from Jefferson. Jefferson remained inanimate on top of his rack/tomb. With his legs



crossed and his arms in a yoga position. He had this expression of disgust and tranquility on his face. It was interesting to see.

The guard was alerted by the house man now, because Jefferson wouldn't bring out his trash for pickup by the housemen. I could hear the guard come into the cell. He shouted, "Jefferson, bring me the trash!" Jefferson didn't seem to hear at all. He just stayed motionless, as though he wasn't aware of what was happening. The guard grew agitated and said, "Jefferson, I said bring me that trash!" I started to complete my business at that point. Jefferson was just sitting there in his yoga pose as though he was the only one in the universe.


The guard shouted, louder this time. "Jefferson, if you don't bring me that trash right now, I am going to have you disciplined for insubordination!" Jefferson turned his head only to the guard and looked at him with the same blank expression and said and did nothing but sit there. I could hear the guard moving closer to Jefferson. He had a number of weapons at his disposal to motivate an inmate. So, I knew him approaching Jefferson wasn't going to be good.

I darted out of the toilet area and darted toward Jefferson. As I approached him, I shouted, "Jefferson, give him your tray!" He just continued to stare at the guard and didn't respond at all. I quickly grabbed his trash and stood between Jefferson and the now irate guard. I gingerly handed the guard the trash not knowing what to expect. He could now discipline us both for being insubordinate. I knew that both Jefferson and I could be sent to the hole, or have our sentences extended for insubordination. Or worse, I had heard of inmates being electrocuted with a stun gun by a guard in the shower. Why would a guard ever be in a shower with a stun gun?

Then the guard took the Styrofoam tray from me and took a deep, then he turned away and left the cell. I turned to Jefferson, who was still looking at the guard. I said nothing to him. I just wanted to understand what he was thinking. He just turned his face back to the wall. I tried to understand what could cause a man to be so desensitized and numb. I wanted to understand if it was his pride that had caused his noncompliance. I was learning a lesson. A lesson in what a man is capable of when pushed to his limit.

Jefferson was so young that I couldn't understand how he could be so hard. There was a deadness in his eyes. He showed no fear to the guards, yet he had an obvious gentleness about him. Like Jesus, strong yet meek. I wondered what he'd seen, wondered what had happened to him. I would not find out because he wouldn't talk, and I would leave the psych ward that





evening. That evening there were two other young men who checked into the ward, one of them was in a wheelchair. They both seemed to be rather relaxed.

I think when you are so numb from trauma, after a while you just relax. He was in a wheelchair, and the guards just dumped him in the cell. I noticed him, and I walked over to him and offered to help to get him onto the mat on the floor. He said no. I helped him any way down to the floor mat. The pod was full of inmates. Living and sleeping on the sepulchers. We talked a while, and he told me how he'd gotten there. He'd been arrested for some traffic offenses when he was taking his wife to work. She had just gotten a new job.


Now, she would likely lose it as she wouldn't be able to show up. He was in jail and couldn't walk. I wondered how the officers interpreted the situation. I wondered if they'd even asked about the matter. I wondered what happened with the job that his wife had just gotten. I never got to see a psychiatrist.

## **Chapter 7: Back to the Pod**

I was in a different pod when transferred back to the towers. The day started like any other, with me complaining about my surroundings and my dreadful situation in life. I drew comfort in my sorrow. I enjoyed feeling the negative energy of depression. I felt akin to it, the misery of it all. I needed help to change. I didn't need a reason to complain and I was unpleasant to most during these days. I needed the love of Jesus to heal and restore my soul.

I managed to get in a quick callisthenic workout—pushups, squats, and so on. A passing thought crossed my mind. I thought to myself, physical fitness is no different than spiritual fitness. You get the results from putting in the work. Then I grabbed the swab to get it first before the rest of the inmates got to use it. My friend Miller who had been living in the cell didn't seem to have ever mopped the deck in his cell. I asked the house man passing by with cleaning supplies to save me the next available toilet brush.

When the inmate in the next cell was done with it the house man brought it to me. I used the brush and then shook the remaining water off the brush in the bowl and handed it on to the next awaiting inmate. It was Deputy McCallister's morning shift, which meant gospel music



would be played in the pod. I enjoyed it, but it always made me think of my own children and the times we'd spent in church together.

Then, out of nowhere the feelings of depression would grip me like a blanket. Swallowing up my joy and sending me into a tizzy. I would begin to weep dry tears. Then console myself with the notion that I'd have many years left to be good to them. I couldn't see the end. I couldn't see that the Lord was going to make everything all right. I couldn't see then that the Lord was keeping a hedge around my babies. I couldn't see that the Lord had already worked it all out. For my children to stay in love with me. But he had, so I had to keep the faith. I would have to trust the Lord (Walk by faith not by sight).


The young house man was still there. He said, "It's good to have a sense of humor in here." I replied, "Yes, you have to laugh to keep from crying in here sometimes." He smiled at me then moved on to the next cell. I had been talking to him off and on. He had four kids and he was going off to prison soon. I told him that I'd be praying for him and that I believed that his children wouldn't forget him and that somehow, he'd have time to spend with them. I told him that I believed that miraculously his sentence would end sooner than specified.

We were all glued around the late '80s model television at break time listening to the reports the night of Nelson Mandela's death was announced. The inmates in the pod all seemed saddened. I was thinking to myself. Wow, now there's a man that has a lot to look forward to.

## **Chapter 8: Guards from Hell**

As time went on, I began to learn that there were many guards who were personable and even nice. But there were also many who were just dreadfully mean to the inmates. (I referred to this particular piece of vermin as officer friendly). I recall that night there was one guard who made a point of walking through the pod announcing that he'd be selecting inmates that needed to take a shower. Since 90 percent of the inmates were black, I felt his actions had racial overtones. What I heard was, "You need to take a shower, nigger." I later had a black guard suggest the same thing, causing me to rethink my personal prejudices and I was full of them. I needed the mind and heart of God to take over and to transform mine.

Some guards would taunt the inmates by throwing away their extra trays of chow. Knowing that the inmates were still hungry, officer friendly would round up all the left-over trays that were full of food and simply throw them all away. It was gut-rending. There we were




often very hungry, and another human being would throw away good food as a taunt and a mockery. I would think of Jesus being mocked by the Roman soldiers during these times. The practice of discarding good food and throwing it away was disturbing to me. I knew that there were hotels and hospitals that participated in redistributing the extra and uneaten food to the needy.

I couldn't understand why the guards couldn't show compassion for the inmates or the need in the local community such as the food banks. Why couldn't they simply allow the trays to be distributed among the inmates? It was unfathomable to think they would enjoy this, I knew the practice had to have been fostered at the top of the Gwinnett County jails management, down to the guards. During these time, I felt ashamed sometimes to be an American. I felt that kind of guard was the kind of individual who would go to places like Afghanistan and treat the defenseless with cruelty. I needed help for my mind. I only saw the wrong in these men. I needed to change.

I felt that the guards used the tactics of starvation for intimidation and punishment of inmates. I was an informal form of torture at their disposal. These were the kinds of practices done all the time at the Gwinnett County Jail. I recall one instance of a Hispanic inmate who had a poor use of the English Language. He made the mistake of using the incorrect cup for chow and was awarded an additional day in jail. The Guard had the inmate's release date moved back. He was due to be released that very day. The guard blew up at him for not understanding and sent him to the hole for the last day of his incarceration. These were the kinds of occurrences that went on all the time at the Gwinnett County Jail.

The female guards, particularly the African American ones, would almost exclusively harass the black male inmates. Often making condescending, cruel comments about to and about black the inmates. There were particularly vicious black female guards who were not only intentionally mean to inmates, but they used the jail's standards in a distorted way to intimidate inmates. Such as forcing them to trim their nails. The practice of hygiene is a good one especially in a setting where there is the potential for the spread of bacteria and germs.

However, a female guard lining up an oppressed group of men and commanding them to clip their nails is borderline coercive and an attack on the male ego. I would often wonder if the female guards understood that they were creating the environment for aggression from the inmates. Perpetuating more incarcerations of repeat offenders. They never seemed to care but appeared to just come to work to earn a paycheck.




Like many black females in Gwinnett county who is a single mom, she had hidden aggression and resentment for black males. They would come to work and exhibit it and flex the muscle of their uniform. One of my biggest frustrations was that these Guards who are supposed to be facilitating the inmates' transition back into society, having been reformed were more concerned with causing inmates mental stress. It was a normal daily occurrence in the Gwinnett County Jail.

I would try to separate myself from the incessant suffering from the constant mental abuse being imposed on the inmates. I would try to remember my life before all this happened with my family that I loved very much. I would try to think of how civilized I was before coming here. As my wife would tell me months later, "I had everything."

I felt that the practice of treating the inmates as less than human was fostered from the top of the jail administration down to the guards. The perception was that it is a jail and that I should just get used to it and forget who I am. I had several guards express this idea to me. But I was determined to never my past and my experiences. I knew where I'd come from and who I was. I always stood up against wrong in the jail where ever I could. I never let the foul guards interfere with my integrity or my faith. But I needed a refreshing, a revival. I was dead inside and it seemed that I couldn't get help.

That evening, I was in the pod at one of the group tables and I was filling out a request for a medical visit. I had my Bible sitting on the table next me. Then, an inmate named Andre, came and sat down next to me and then asked about me getting a Bible for himself. I stopped what I was doing to tell him how the process works. "You will need to go to a church meeting and request one from the visiting minister." He didn't understand, and he continued to try and fill out his own medical request form for a Bible. I noticed it and repeated to him that that wasn't the process. He then looked up at me, with a look of frustration, and said, "Can you fill this out for me?" "This isn't the way you will get a Bible, I've already told you how."

His frustration seemed to grow. He clearly didn't understand what I was trying to get across. He didn't care to listen and wanted a confrontation. I was prepared. I said to him again, "This isn't the right paperwork to request a Bible". "You need to come to a church meeting and have the volunteer minister order one for you." Then he asked me again if I could fill out the paper for him. With that, I became enraged. It was all I needed to blow up. I said to him. "Look, I'm not your freaking secretary! Now how bout you get out of my face! Can't you freaking read?"




He became angry and shouted, “Why don’t you just help me?” I stood up to walk away, as I was now very hot. Just then, Dallas walked over to the table. He said, “May, take it easy, he’s asking for help.” I responded, “If I want your help, I’ll ask for it.” They both stood there in awe of me. I picked up my Bible and stormed to my cell to cool off. I sat there in anger, trying to think my way through the terrible spell of anger. I didn’t understand how I was supposed to act in the situation. Whether I should show my feathers to the other birds or just be cool. I didn’t know how myself control would be interpreted. I could feel my blood pressure rising and my adrenalin pumping. I could feel the demon creeping up my spine. I could feel the evil angry spirits pushing me, egging me on and on.

I needed to learn to control my mind and the spirits that were influencing me. As I sat in the cell, trying to calm down the spirit of the Lord spoke to me, in a still small voice and said, “peace be still.” I knew I that I had been wrong. But I wouldn’t understand how wrong until later that evening. That evening there was a night church meeting in the pod. When I got to the meeting room for the meeting, there was Andre seated. He looked me straight in the eye but said nothing. I was speechless.

When the meeting was over, Andre walked past me and acknowledged me. I didn’t know what to say, and there was awkward silence between people when something has happened. But I knew I had to say something. So, I simply said, “Man, I’m sorry. If you’d like to, you can have my Bible. I still have the same one today.”

“I got one ordered from the volunteer. But thank you. And don’t worry about it, man, we’re all human.” It was one of the most humbling experiences ever for me. After Andre spoke to me, I felt an incredible calm and a peace came over me. As I stop and contemplated the moment, I realized that I had just failed a test that had been presented to me, and miserably at that. Andre had come to me because he saw me as a light. He assumed I knew how to get him a Bible.

He was right in his assumption, but at the moment I was full of the wrong spirit. I had blown an opportunity to assist and also blown an opportunity to gain a new friend, be a help to someone and possibly to have lead the man to the Lord. But I had allowed my short fuse, to get in the way of both of our blessings. I prayed that the Lord would give me another opportunity to go back around that mountain. I knew that he would.



I knew the Lord would forgive me, as the scripture says, ‘he is faithful and just to forgive. I knew he would present the opportunity once again. I wouldn’t blow it again. I felt remorse and I knew that I needed to repent, and I knew I would retain the lesson for the rest of my life. I was dying inside, little by little, day by day. With each new day there were new challenges, mentally and spiritually. But I began to take hold of his promises. I knew Jesus loved me. I knew he cared. I started to aggressively suppress my tears. And I tried to reject the spirits of depression and fear and anxiety, knowing that God was able to keep me. And that he never intended us to be in confusion (a God of a sound mind).


It was going to be personal and spiritual renaissance. A rebuilding of my heart and mind (if any man be in Christ). And the Lord wasn’t going to allow me to take it for granted. He had my attention, and I began to understand that I was a royal priest after the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews). I had concerns over my future, but I wasn’t afraid of the direction I was heading in, through Jesus.

I saw the opportunity, while I was incarcerated to develop my spiritual man and to grow in faith. Yet, it was a difficult and challenging time. I couldn’t see my way, and my joy meter was up and down. I would practice repeating the promises of God to myself and reference King David’s pleas in Psalms 41. I began the practice of only speaking positive words over my situation and to the others that I would encounter. I started to remove certain verbiage from my vocabulary. I had decided to adapt a renewed mind. I knew what the Buddhist taught about positive thought energy. I understood what they taught about clean living. But I knew Jesus was the way for me to clean my house.

I knew that Jesus was the key to change and I knew that he was the key to glory. I had to figure out how to have joy despite the circumstance. I found the answer in the word of God. “The joy of my salvation, is my joy”. (Psalms 136). David understood that the situation is temporal, and that he had to worship Jehovah despite the circumstances. His salvation was the center of his joy. But he had to revitalize his happiness through his relationship with Jehovah. Then he was able to rejoice. “How can we sing, in a strange land”, (psalm 118). I was being consecrated. I was changing inside. About this time, I began to notice the burden of feeling resentment. I was begging for change in me. I didn’t care so much her actions that landed me in jail, but I did blame her. It would take some time for my heart to change.

## **Chapter 8: Glimpses of Hope**

It was a difficult time for me. But I had to believe that God was working things out for me. All that I’d been accustomed to was now gone, such as the ability to access my children, as



well as my daily intake of classical music. I prayed that Jehovah would give me an opportunity to listen to fine music again. Like Chopin. I knew Jehovah would restore my life. I believed Jehovah would restore me to my wife. But I would have to be patient and allow him to work and keep the faith.


When you are confined, as I was, you have so many questions but find no answers. Answers to simplest of questions, are as far away as the moon it seemed. I thought the Gwinnett County Jail could've done a much better job in assisting inmates with helping to answer their questions with regard to their cases. There was never any help with this. The inmates just aimlessly existed in a bubble, providing the fat for the Gwinnett County Jail system. It was like living on another planet, completely isolated, from information, love and any resemblance of a normal life. Tragically, many men believed the experience was life.

I knew that there were prisons and jails in the US that functioned worse. I also was aware of the revenue that the jail was drawing. The guards had the latest equipment. They would often taunt the inmates and gloat over the techniques. I felt that most of them belonged in jail themselves. But I was to blame for my situation, and I had started at that point to take accountability for my own mistakes.

I started to realize that my problems were created by me and could have been circumvented had I only listened to God's warnings and had walked with him. He had a plan for my family, and I didn't adhere to it. But I also realized that God himself wasn't punishing me. At some point, I understand, and I believed that he was actually training me for greatness. Although the pain and suffering persisted, I began to understand his immediate purpose for my life. Through study, I discovered the biblical text to support my feelings, in 1 Peter 5:10, which says, "After you have suffered a little while, the God of all Grace, will himself perfect, establish, strengthen, and restore you".

But the changes in my spirit, that need to take place would be challenging to achieve and neither was the carnal man inside me, going to give so up easily. He was too comfortable, and he had been for years. There were so many things that I'd never considered until I was incarcerated. I was looking to the Gwinnett County Jail to offer me more support with these areas of concern. But they didn't. It was purely about the money and the constant revenue stream for them. We had no books, no computers, and nothing to do but smoke and exist.





It was the most effective way to steal a man's ambition and his desire for normal citizenship in the human race. I reckoned the practice of the Gwinnett county jail and jails throughout the South, to be in many ways like the early slave traders in the US. They would take away their slaves' relevance, thereby breaking their spirit. The Gwinnett Jail was a place of archaic practices and blatant disregard for the human spirit.


But I knew that Jesus was there with me and I knew that he had been patiently waiting to show me the jail from his own perspective and to comfort me during the experience. Which I felt was so very positive and practical, and as I began to embrace his Love, then I also started to feel a newness and a freshness towards my life and of life itself. I felt that a new life and perhaps even a new love, was now an option for me despite my circumstances.

During this period of enlightenment, I started to accept the fact that I could use the same innate ability with people on the outside in jail. I would begin by implementing the simple practice of saying please and thank you to test my theory of reaping the rewards of being nice. It was then that I started to take my focus off of my own situation and I made an effort to try to remember all of the situations that God had delivered me from in the past. And I started to remember all of the times that I'd found myself in a world of trouble. Whether it was with my family, occupational, in facing death, and on every single instance that I could recall. I began to think of the goodness of Jesus and all the wonderful things that he'd done for me in my past.

I understood the power of praise and worship as tools and conduits toward consecration. I'd been taught these principles in my early twenties and thirties. I knew the praise of God would create a virtual channel to his throne, and to his mercy seat. The worship of God, my faith and obedience would need to become my first and foremost priority

Then, God enlightened me as to how to understand how to apply these principles in my situation. He was providing me a way out of the darkness and a way out the pain. But I knew that he wanted a deeper relationship with me, and not only just to rescue me. I remembered how he had healed my daughter in the NICU on a respirator. She had been born so early. But I would pray over her constantly and I believed in faith for her. And I believed it would all work out.

Then, I remembered how I prayed the prayer that King Hezekiah had, when he was told that his life was over and that he needed to get his house in order. In an instant, Hezekiah asked the Lord to remember the life that he had once lived. He asked the Lord for grace and mercy and that he would consider his past. So, as a result of his life and his petition, Jehovah granted him




another fifteen more years to his life. I believed that Jehovah would do the same for me when I prayed for my daughter, Taylor.

I prayed for my son Joshua also and he recovered. I was begging to walk by faith as I had so many times before. I knew then Jehovah had a plan for my life. I knew he had blessed me with a special ability to talk to the underprivileged and underserved, like Jesus could. I knew he had a calling for me, but I wasn't ready as yet, to accept it. I was still so angry still about my lot in life, and I didn't want to admit that this had all happened to me. I was not the kind of person who goes to jail. But somehow, I knew that this experience was what I needed to experience to become humble to do the lords bidding.

I could feel the prayers of those who loved me. I took comfort in knowing that those who loved me and cared for me, I knew were interceding on my behalf. But I couldn't speak to anyone. I didn't have my extended family's phone contacts. And even if I had the \$20 phone card that I had was stolen from me. I was faced with incarceration, with no way to communicate with my loved ones and certainly not my wife. I had to really walk by faith and not focus on my circumstances. It was difficult, but somehow the pain became my proverbial foot stool after a while. My misery became my strength while I was being broken and rebuilt for his service.

I was being reengineered, for Gods purposes. **God shattered my heart like a hammer to a mirror. Broken into a million pieces.** The pain was necessary, though I didn't understand it and neither did I want it. "Why me, why me?" This was my daily cry to Jehovah, until I began to realize, that it must need to be. I was on a journey that I would have to learn to walk and be content with. I would have to trust him all the way and I would have to learn obedience through suffering.

I was beginning to see that it was all a part of his plan and perfect will, that I walk through this valley. I didn't understand, and I didn't want to understand. But then I began to let go and let the Lord have his way in my heart. I would have to relax and allow the Lord to show me his grace and mercy. In a storm, the storm that he was aware of coming. And allow him to calm it. And just like the Lord Jesus, I needed to learn to rest in the mist of the storm. I would need to rest in him, for success with him, and for my family. It was time for me to stand on what I'd always known and practice what I'd preached for years.




Another Sunday had passed, and no one had come to visit. I had been anticipating word from my attorney to whether or not she had been in touch with my wife. To continue to try to have her drop the charges. I called her a few days later. My attorney said my wife wasn't ready to drop the charges just yet. It was a slap in the face, a gut-retching insult. But I knew somehow, I couldn't panic. I had to keep cool and trust in the Lord. I had to learn to wait and to maintain my integrity. I'd managed to not join a gang, use or sell drugs, or become a cigarette pimp. I wasn't about to lose my perspective and give in the temptations around me.

The guards would pull cell inspections regularly, looking for drugs. But most of the time they would just harass inmates for taking food back to the cells. I was one of the biggest culprits. I was always so hungry. But when they would do the inspections and find food in the cells, rather than make you or someone else eat it, they would throw it away. Throw away food, trays of food, or fruit. That people could benefit from. This was a practice of intimidation and mocking of the inmates. Sometimes, they would do it only to take away. "Mayonnaise Packages."

The inmates would often laugh out loud at them when doing these exercises. It was one of the silliest and wasteful examples of the bad practices at Gwinnett County Jail. As I was running through the trash bin one day for discarded sandwiches, Brother Dallas shouted to me, "There's nothing in the trash bin." I returned to my Cell. As I entered I began to sing to myself, "My greater is coming." Dallas next door heard me. He heard me singing praises to Jesus. During the day, he stopped me and said.

"Here, have this." It was a snack pack and some crackers. "It is all I have, but please take it." (Such as I have, I give unto you). It was just what I needed to get me through the night, to keep my stomach from burning a hole in itself. I was weary and very hungry. It was hard to find the strength to praise Jesus that day. But I became reacquainted with the power of praise that day. I felt as though it was manna from heaven. There was no source. I was learning to be content with my circumstances and to receive his blessings, which are more than enough.

I told him I'd pay him back. He said, "Just pray for my family please." We'd talked earlier about how he'd lost his house but still had a Family. I told him he has everything he needed. A wife that loves you is more than enough to begin again. I'd lost my wife. If I had the chance again. I exhorted him to love on her constantly and keep her happy. The crackers filled my stomach like a steak. I had some coffee creamer (also contraband) which I'd stashed. So, I was able to make a warm cup of pretend milk from the creamer. It helped ease the hunger pains. And I was able to complete this very page.




I went to sleep with the praise of the Lord on my lips. I had expectations that one day it would be my morning for court. Each morning, I would wait with earnest expectations. Yet I didn't come. I would hear the air locks on the cell doors opening and wait to hear it for mine. I knew my day would come someday. I knew the Lord would deliver me one day. It was time to focus on getting better. Time to focus on healing. I'd been a fool with the wonderful gifts that Jehovah had blessed me with. In that of a wife, but it was time to move forward with my life. And focus on my relationship with God rather than the situation.

I could feel the prayers of those who cared for me. I could feel their spirit around me. One evening, I was there pouring my heart out to God, telling him how sorry I was for making a mess of my life. And how sorry I was for being so foolish with his gifts. I was at the moment, thinking of my first wife in Bermuda who is a believer and thinking about how my life was with her as a believer. I had blown it all with my immaturity. I was engulfed in my pity party.

Just then, some materials were passed under my cell door. I looked across the cell floor, and there appeared to be correspondence. There were post cards from Bermuda. From my first wife. She had sent them to inspire me. She'd added some Scriptures, **1Peter 5:7. (*Casting all your cares upon him*)**. It was a high point of the day. I had been so wrapped up in sorrow and there was a word from the Lord to inspire me. From someone I'd loved and known. It was a wake-up call to remember who I was and could be in Christ. He still loved me, he still cared.

I spoke to my attorney a few days later. It was obvious at this point that my wife wasn't going to drop the charges. My attorney was nearly irate when I spoke to her this time. She must've had a run-in with her. But I didn't sweat it. I just told my attorney to maintain and keep up the good work. I knew the Lord was on my side. I would pray to the Lord at night and in the early mornings I would meditate. I found I could talk to God clearly during the wee hours of night, and I found that I could hear from him. In the quiet of night and solitude, I learned to listen to him and to hear his still small voice. And he would meet me in that special place and commune with me. I would feel transfigured before the entrance of the tabernacle through the inner courts to the Holy of Holies. To the Mercy Seat, where Jehovah would meet me.

I knew that one day the tables would turn and that I would have to be an example of God's grace and mercy to my wife despite what I felt. I had to learn to let go of the resentment that I felt for the Gwinnett County Jail system as well, but this would take some time and effort on my part. Jail life was always challenging. Yet the bulk of the guards were just working-class people with jobs that they hated.



It wasn't very difficult to trick them, and I managed to get an ibuprofen prescription for my tail bone that had a bone spur. I hadn't noticed it until I started sleeping on jail mattresses. It was a two-inch piece of vinyl. So, for months, I'd slept with my legs at an angle to keep from sleeping on my back with my tail bone pressing into the mat, and the cold hard steel below it. It was excruciating, but as a result, I managed to get a prescription for ibuprofen, and the painkillers helped to buffer the pain some.


Receiving the tablets, the guard would have the inmate open his mouth to ensure he'd swallowed it. I would find creative ways to not swallow them and save for later. It was the most entertainment I'd get. Just feeling like I had an up on the guards, cheap thrill. I began to spend more time with the inmates during the day though. There were all kinds of dangerous people around. Murders also. But they never intimidated me. I grew intrigued, as time went on, with their stories. Their stories captivated me, and day by day, I began to realize how much God loved them also. They were also his creations. And I was no better than anyone locked up with me (we are all men of like passions).

As I spent more time with the inmates, I started to understand the men, that they were often just people caught in the downturn of the economy and life itself. My opinion began to change. And I started to better understand the simplicity of God's love. And his people. And most that I was encountering were loving family men, who'd gotten a tough break.

## **Chapter 9: Optimism**

There was one exceptionally evil guard on duty that day, who gave me a lot of attention which I did not welcome or want, which included a pat-down for contraband. Cheese, mustard, and oranges in this case. She wanted to make an example of me, in front of the inmates. "Get on the wall for pat-down, May! I know about the cheese and what else are you hiding?"

As I embraced the wall, I was unusually quiet, as I hadn't had this guard. She would become known as the "Angry Black Female Guard." She took the oranges I'd stashed in my socks and threw them in the trash. Whole, fresh oranges, thrown away, to spite me. I wondered at that moment if she had ever been hungry. Had she ever been in need? She asked if I thought she should write me up. I didn't respond. She recoiled from her attack and decided to try to intimidate another inmate.




That day, she didn't pick on any white males, only black males. This seemed to be common MO among the black female guards. I didn't understand if this was a hiring phenomenon, or if the black female guards were just meaner than the male guards, black or white. I would contemplate this notion during my entire incarceration. I felt that maybe she'd had some very bad experiences with black males and would come to work to give them a hard time, as though she was working out some anxiety by intimidating black males in jail.

She reminded me of my wife who also had repressed anxiety and would often break and smash things at home. Such as computers. But my wife had a small arena, her home. The guards at Gwinnett County Jail, the black female guards, had an amphitheater to perform. They weren't all this way. There were three or four I could name who were just normal people doing their jobs.

But the bulk of the black female guards were intentionally condescending and mean to black male inmates daily. They would often call attention the saggy bottom trend of the black male inmates and commit exceptional attention to this clothing trend. I was never a fan of such. But I would never have associated it with black males specifically. The black female guards seemed to do this as a custom. On one occasion, the Evil Black Female Guard whose name I won't give, took away the free time privileges for every black male in the smoking ground. They all had their hands in their pants.

The trend of putting one hand in your pants and the other holding a cigarette wasn't a trend at all. The inmates wore a two-piece garment with no undershirts and flip flop shoes. In November, December, January, and February of 2013. It was freezing. And those who smoked would do this while smoking. Now I could never understand freezing to smoke. But I didn't judge their vices. The black female guards made this particular observation a racially fueled matter. I vowed to do some sort of study on the matter later when I was out of incarceration. The next day was my court hearing. I wasn't allowed to go, incidentally.

There had been a hearing set for December 19. That morning, I waited for the list of the names of inmates going to court that morning. I tried to calm myself by meditating and praying. Today was supposed to be my day. At 3:30, the list was read, just after chow. My name wasn't called. I laid in my rack, still and motionless. My body was limp. Upon my lips, the soft still utterance came. "Thank you, Lord, for another day, you are great Jehovah, you are worthy to be praised."



The tears began to slowly trickle down my face and down to the sheets. I would have to believe that it would all work out. Although I hadn't been called to court, I had to believe and have faith, no matter what I saw. The date of my hearing had been switched, no one told me that my hearing date had been switched. I assumed a man's life and future wasn't important to the Gwinnett County court system, to advise the inmates that their case's hearing dates had been switched. I later asked a guard. He said that happens all the time with the Gwinnett County court system.

All the inmates and guards had told me that my date couldn't be switched. But it had, and no one had advised me. I was to have been released today. Yet no one had spoken to me, the inmate at Gwinnett County Jail. I was heartbroken, devastated.


"Top floor, come down for chow!" The guard commanded. I slowly rose from my rack and made my way to the day room for morning chow. The grits were warm that morning. Many inmates offered theirs to me. It was a sign of compassion. They knew I was supposed to have gone to court. They knew I'd been left behind. They knew I was heartbroken. The guard that morning looked the other way as we swapped food. And the men gave me their grits.

Now, the men that I'd been counseling all this time were now offering me counsel and offering their experiences that they have had before a judge. I had many challenges occurring daily. But I also had so many positive things happening to keep me motivated and encouraged. There were new mercies every day to remind me that I was still loved by the Lord. At some point, it got easier to lift up my head and there was no question that the hand of God was upon me.

I knew that the Lord Jehovah was in charge of my life, and I knew the things I asked for could be granted. I knew he was in control of my life, and I knew that he was going to help me. I knew that I could ask for any little thing. I knew that I could ask him for anything from medicine to pencils to draw with. I knew that his hand was upon me, and I knew that I had his favor.

The inmates began to show me compassion and as they did I began to realize that they were looking for something that they saw in me, which was the Lord himself, shining his light through me. And as my journal began to grow, it seemed as though the Lord's hands guided everything I wrote. From then on, I allowed the Lord to dictate everything that I wrote. Sometimes it seemed as though my words seemed to flow like an opus by Mozart.





His plan for my life was hard at work. I was receiving a renewed mind, (*let this mind be in you*). I could feel the comforting spirit of the Lord in the jail cell and I knew he wanted to be first in my life. I was able to calm down about my circumstances and just focus on his will. And believe that he was in control and knew my desires and would deliver from Shoal. No matter what, by faith. So, I focused my energy on crystallizing his desires for my life through my writing. I was able to say that his love for me was all I needed in life.


I began to let the bad thoughts of my children go. I knew Jehovah had already worked it out for me, with my children. I knew down the road, I would have my relationship, back with them again. So, I needed to just walk by faith. Despite the temptation to feel doubt and depression. I had been in for over 30 days now, and I'd learned so I was learning so much. Understanding his love for me was becoming my preoccupation and I was learning to wait on Jesus, and I was beginning to feel better. I knew that I was free, and I knew that I was possessed supernatural powers through the Holy Spirit, and I knew that it was the same power that had raised Jesus from the dead.

In prison swapping food was associated with swapping sex for food. In jail, swapping food was a symbol of love and concern for your brothers in arms. And somehow, the man who gave the most away seemed to always have the most food. I would test this principle more and more as the days rolled on.

## **Chapter 10: Day 35, (December 15, 2014)**

After a while, all my encounters became symbols of Gods intention for me. I was in jail, but I was still free. My mind soared and my imagination yet flourished. I hadn't yet seen the things I pondered or envisioned but I was able to perceive them as already done. And I knew it would come. I started speaking to myself in hymns and Psalms. I knew I couldn't give up. My strength was depleted, and my courage all gone, and I had no strength to fight left, only my faith remained. I told God about it, and he directed me to proverbs 3:5.

“Trust in the lord with all thine heart.” I was doing all I could to make it. The prayer, the meditation, and the study of the Word wouldn't allow me to give up. The Lord guided everything I wrote. From then on, I allowed the Lord to dictate what I wrote. journal began to grow. It



seemed the Lord's hands were atop my hands. And every time I had a negative thought, I would rebuke it, and bring it and immediately bring it into subjection.


That day, as I was in the pod just drinking water. A very intimidating looking formidable inmate approached me. He had the badges of every street gang on his skin, all over his arms and neck. He wore the badges of a drug boss. I braced myself for a smackdown. He then said, "just sit down a moment please." I did. He said, "Man, you look like you have the weight of the world on your shoulders". "You cannot carry this weight alone". "Why don't you allow Jesus to help you carry the weight for you"? "You have to let it all go, my friend." Then he said he'd have the amigos pray for me. My head dropped down into the palms of my hands, and I began to weep.

It was just what I needed to hear. Casting all your cares on him, for he cares for you. I spent the next hour in fellowship with the Amigos. It was the most I'd learned about worship in that one hour than I had in all my days. My burdens began to melt away as we worshiped together. My stress began to dissipate, and I began to feel better. And I knew there was nothing coming my way that I couldn't manage with God on my side.

"Take it up!" I heard the guard shout. As we got up, I noticed a sandwich left there. The inmate said it wasn't his. I reached for it, and as I did, the guard for the day looked at me. I felt as though she wouldn't stop me, but out of respect, I whispered to her, "May I have it?" She nodded and looked away. I grabbed the sandwich and scurried to my cell. She was a black female guard and one I will never forget. This woman, had just changed my opinion of the black female guards. I realized in that moment, that I'd been judgmental, and that perhaps I hadn't given them all a chance. And I realized that perhaps I was encountering the ones that I was somehow even drawing to me, because of my attitude.

Now, the ibuprofen prescription that I had was finished. It'd been a great ride. Getting more prescribed pain meds would be difficult. But I was able to get a dose of Tylenol per shift from the oncoming guards. Now, I had developed a chronic pain in my right shoulder that just wouldn't cease. As a result, I got an audience with the head nurse. She said she'd help and I felt comfortable with her telling me that. Although she had made me wait two and a half hours for Tylenol in the psych ward as I tried to block the pain out of my mind. I would have to depend on the house Tylenol supply and hope that it wouldn't run out. I was up to four tablets a day by that time.

The concern of addiction was resonant in my mind. And I knew that the threat of becoming an addict in jail, was a very real possibility. But I was in so much physical and mental pain and I needed the help of the painkillers. No one could understand the pain of being in a jail



cell, while being forced to deal with the reality that you have just lost everything in life that you understood to be good and forever. Forever losing everything you'd worked for all your life.


In that situation of no hope, you have to let go of everything you cared about and everything you loved just to cope, just to stay sane. The mental anguish and associated physical pains were overwhelming at times. And any little comfort, chemical, mental, or spiritual, was welcomed. I understood then how someone could become addicted to pain meds in jail as well as how inmates could earn significant amounts of cash from drug sales in jail.

Spending nights with the amigos in the recreation room wasn't planned, but beneficial for me. Church in jail meant time with other believers to fellowship with. The recreation room was reserved for Catholic services a few nights per week. This night, the recreation room belonged to the Amigos.

That particular night, there was news spreading that an inmate in the pod next to us had just killed himself. The news was kept quiet and hush-hush. I wondered who he was. I wondered if I had ever seen him before, perhaps in a corridor. I wondered if he had a family. I wondered what his name was. I wondered if he had any children. I was troubled in my spirit that perhaps, I could have said something to prevent this from happening, had I known of his trials. Then, my calling and election was becoming sure to me. My mission was becoming crystal clear.

Then, I began to understand that I had an opportunity to deliver hope to the downtrodden through the word of the Lord and to help wherever I could whenever the opportunity presented itself, (*in season and out of season*). I saw Jehovah's plan. "You are my servant". "A Royal Priest, after the order of Melchizedek." But with this commission would come significant responsibility. I had fallen into the enemy's entrapment. The evil thoughts had to be put away. The oppression could be broken. And I knew how to break free now. I only needed another opportunity to prove myself to Jehovah.

But there I was, facing a maximum of ten years in prison for my charges. The charges of stalking for electronically stalking my wife. The wife whom I loved still very dearly and the children who would now be facing having a loser criminal for a dad. The tension was incredible.



It was a rock bottom place to be, and I couldn't see the light at the end of the tunnel. So, I dug in and held on to what I knew. No matter what the circumstance, I was determined to believe for my change.


I would fall on my face before him. But I couldn't figure out a way to manage the loss of everything. My family, my career. I still loved my life. How to manage, I didn't know. I missed my wife and children dearly, and I saw no end in sight to my incarceration. Neither did I know of my wife's intentions for our family and of a life together. The anxiety of it all was excruciating. I needed a word from the Lord. I needed a small sign from him that things would be better. A little sign from on high is what I needed. A sign to know that he wasn't going to leave me in pain. My grief showed on my face and my countenance presented further evidence of the pain I carried inside, and I wore my troubles like a garment.

The phone didn't ring for me that day and I was learning and beginning to understand that patience was the virtue that I was being forced to learn. I was broken and now open to correction. Humbled by the mighty hand of the Almighty. I knew that he loved me. I knew that his compassion and mercy endured forever. But how to keep my joy from day to day given my circumstances, still escaped me? How to maintain happiness in the situation? How to sing in a strange land, as the psalmist said. The pain of the loss was riveting.

But then I began to understand how God was working in my situation. I began to realize that God was allowing me to walk through the anguish to learn of him and to learn obedience through suffering, and sometimes by smashing the heart of a man into pieces. But then in his mercy, the Potter mends the broken heart.

I would have to learn this truth about his enduring love for my peace, and that it all added up to being charted on a course towards his ultimate purposes. He'd helped me deal with the immediate pain of being incarcerated and the guilt of my wrongdoing was leaving. I felt healed and delivered from alcohol. I knew then that drinking would never govern my life again. Now, I was going to have to trust him to pull me out of the miserable thoughts about my children. Then I realized that I had to accept his will. I had to agree with the work he was performing in me. And believe in the hopes for a positive outcome from what was going on in me as dark as the day seemed.

I had to let go of the things I loved and begin to accept that the situation was out of my control. And I had to believe that somehow, it was all a part of God's will. I had to accept that it



was intentional, and that I would have to wait on him to be able to understand it all. The challenge for me then was to understand, how could this be his will? How could the suffering be a part of his plan for my life? How could this terrible situation be his agenda for my perfect life? This wasn't supposed to happen to me. This interruption of my life.


I couldn't get my head around the concept of "Obedience through Suffering". I still hadn't gotten past the grinding of my teeth at night or when I tried to rest. And my problems were displayed in the tension of my brow which I wore like a hat to the inmate population. The depression was my cloak and gown. I had to begin to think about next steps for my life. Even through the present darkness and the constant contemplation of going through life with a broken family was eating away at me. I needed a way to relieve the anxiety. I needed the help that only Jesus can bring to a life.

## **Chap 11: Still Here**

My faith was being renewed by the visitation of the Holy Spirit. I knew he was with me, and I knew a renewed mind was what I needed. Through the washing in his blood. I realized that I had the power of Jesus to speak to my problems and that I could expect a result to happen. I realized I needed to stop asking for things that were already provided through his grace. And somehow try to help others get through the ordeal of incarceration. It was a paradigm shift for me. Once I took the focus off my own problems, things began to change for me. I knew his mercy endured forever. I felt incarceration was worse than suffering the death of a loved one.

The phone didn't ring for my departure today again. I understood that patience was the primary discipline I was being forced to learn. But I knew he was compassionate and I knew that he loved me. And I knew that his mercy would endure forever. But how was I to keep my joy, day to day, was my constant challenge. How to keep the faith under tremendous pressure of being incarcerated. It was for me an indescribably painful experience, comparable to suffering the loss of a loved one or a divorce or long-term employment, that a person had invested in for many years. But I was beginning to feel better, despite the pain, through his Spirit. My day began with the worship of God and giving him thanks for his mercy. Life, health, and strength.

It was a breakthrough that next morning and I suddenly felt the overwhelming calm and confidence that my case would be addressed soon, and that my release would be coming soon. I



felt that everything would be fine about my case. And I felt the peace of God and also the reassurance that I would be leaving soon.

I knew then, that I would be recommencing my life. I would have to wait and find the strength to maintain my joy. I knew that I couldn't be anxious for anything. But that I was to pray without ceasing, and then the peace of God, would sustain me. And then it was like a comforting spirit came over me. I was able to not be anxious about the date and just relax. I was able to not be preoccupied with focusing on the day of my release, and just believe that it was coming.


The day had moved on. It was chow time, 3:30 AM. There was a different voice this morning over the guard's loudspeaker. "Arm band check!" she shouted. She began her walk through the pod and confirmed the inmates on the list. And then she began the standard floating weekend guard speech. Which usually began with hurling insults of the black male inmates.

"The brothers are always the ones who get on her nerves the most". She said. Then she gave us all advice on what to do if we needed counseling or had a problem with a woman guard. Inviting the inmates to come and talk to her about their problems. "This isn't anything new to me, and there's nothing I haven't heard". "I've been working with you criminals forever". "You are all the same." The statements were beyond repulsive. No one responded, we all just stayed in the lineup. It was 3:45 am.

Her speech was particularly vile and filled with profanity even for a guard. She then stated something even more repulsive. "Jesus can't help me". "He knows I'm a crazy MOFO". This guard was a black female, and the epitome of the worst kind. The kind that had a bad night at home and came to work to be disgusting. For me, it was like a weird kind of reverse racism. I didn't know how to characterize it, or how to respond.

I pondered how the black female guards treated black female inmates. She then referred to herself as, the bitch you didn't want to piss off. And then she stated that the only thing that she wanted to do today was to change her nail color. She had several bottles of nail polish with her in tow. She then asked the inmates for color suggestions. It was the most bizarre experience I'd ever had. It was 4:00 am, and there was this belligerent woman, asking men she'd never seen before whom she is supposed to be guarding, for their opinions of her nail colors.

I wondered how she would be able to do the counseling and change her nail colors in one shift. But where there is a will, there is a way, I thought. The perception that a black female guard



would intimidate black male inmates to exert authority was reprehensible. It was like some weird kind of reverse racism.

To trivialize incarceration was a matter of poor ethics on her part. But I felt it was a systemic issue promoted by the Gwinnett County Jail itself. The guards were always making jokes and laughing at the inmates. Cruel humor and bullying was rampant. Incarceration, just isn't a funny subject. A man's life has been altered, and now he is inclined to continue down a path of bad decision-making. And end up back in jail, and ultimately prison. Especially black males.

I vowed that I would make an effort when I could, to bring light to the situation. This systematic covert attempt to incarcerate black males for profit. The effort to foster a culture of black males who would become, a modern-day commodity in a modern-day slave trade. But I feared repercussions from the Gwinnett County Jail and police. I knew I'd have to wait for the right opportunity to bring light to the abuse at the jail and the Gwinnett County Court. And that meant, being released.


I knew that I had to get my writings, out of the jail safely. No one knew what I was writing. No one but the Lord knew of my plans to expose the corruption mistreatment of the inmates in Gwinnett county jail. No one knew of my plan to expose the covert plans to incarcerate black males and women, for profit. The enterprise of incarceration.

That week, I got a new bunkmate. Enter Mr. T. Burman. Not the roughneck criminal, just an average Joe, but rather a gentleman. We began to see many things that we had in common. We began a great friendship while in the pod. His attitude was always nice which made things better for me. He once told me about an experience he had once as a young boy. He'd been in a fight with another kid, which turned into the kid wielding a knife. The kid struck out at him, cutting open his chin. He was aiming for his throat.

"Thank God!" I said. "Uh huh." He said. "This is why I keep a beard. To hide the scar on my chin". We shared hours of stories over the month or so that we bunked together. Telling each other stories of God's mercy and grace toward us. Incredibly enough, he was a man who didn't snore. A man who didn't snore. I cannot adequately express what it's like to live and sleep with a woman every night, and hear her breathing, smell her body, waking up to her body next to mine. And all the things that would normally be associated with being married.

But when you bunk and live in close quarters with a man, it can be very challenging. Especially when he snores. There is no normalcy to this. Sleeping in the confines of the same sex





was just not what I'd been used to and hadn't been used to since I'd been out of the Armed forces and out of the fire service. But me and T were really cool. Until one day, he decided to wash his socks in the sink, in the one face bowl that we shared in the cell.


There he was washing his grungy, smelly socks in the face bowl, where I brushed my teeth and washed my face. It was like the scene from *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles*, where John Candy washes his underwear in the face bowl. I thought of how my wife used to wash her underwear in the face bowl. I didn't know what to say and I didn't know how to respond. I just sat there inhaling the hot, smelly steam of his funky socks. Then, my brother hung the wet socks to dry on the towel hooks on the wall.

The steamy stench of his funky wet socks radiated throughout the cell. It was as if he had no concept of the smelly stench though. I wondered what his wife thought about this. But he just kept on talking about what ever inmates talk about to me while the stench grew fouler and fouler. And I just kept going, "Uh huh, uh huh". I knew I would have to put up with it.

T's personality was one that bruised easily, and I didn't want to offend my brother. I didn't want to hurt his feelings. I remember once on a job site, there was a very senior guy who smoked so much that the secondhand smoke was unbearable. He would light up outside about forty times a day. He smoked on average about two packs a day at least. He was like a walking chimney. I once asked my boss to speak to him about it. She advised me to move across the cubicle and said that she would speak to him with regard to him not getting too close to me as the secondhand smoke could trigger and Asthma, which I suffered with infrequently.

I indicated to her that I didn't want to offend him as I felt her speaking to him would cause a problem for me communicating the love of Jesus to him. She didn't bring it up, I did move to another cubicle and she fired me two weeks later, anyway. T and I shared many ideas over the period as well as facts about our lives before all this mess. T had a life, with a family before he was locked up, and it was difficult for him to adjust to being incarcerated as well.

One day, I was feeling really down and hunched over, sitting on my rack below his. He said. "What's wrong, man"? I couldn't understand why he needed to ask. What was it about being in the situation that everyone seemed so comfortable about? I hated being there, and I was in extreme pain, and I missed my life. I responded. "Everyone here seems to be so comfortable". "They all acts as though they haven't a care in the world".



T responded. “What you’re seeing is the behavior of people who are used to this”. Going in and out of jail, it’s just what being institutionalized does to you”. “It is normal for them, but not for you or me”. “Keep the faith man and cheer up”. I grew to love my brother, and after a while, his stinky socks seemed to not bother me at all anymore. How could God use a situation like that to show his character? How could Jesus show up in a jail cell to show his unconditional love that abounds and endures forever? How could the Lord be able to help me understand temperance in a jail cell? How could I find grace in a jail cell?


One evening, T climbed up to the rack atop of me. He said. “I fell asleep at the desk reading the Bible”. I replied. “Yes, that happens sometimes, and what a place to wake up”. He didn’t understand. I had done the same thing, many times before.

## **Chapter 12: A Prophet Among Us**

The phone didn’t ring again for me today. I understood that I was going to have to discharge my thoughts of home. To relinquish my thoughts of my children. I had to begin to accept that my experience now was intentional. Somehow, the situation itself was becoming a resource for a cure to my pain. It was hard to accept the idea that the Lord was using the situation for his purposes and to rebuild and reengineer my mind. But I couldn’t get my head around the fact that the Lord was using my circumstance for his will. I couldn’t understand how that somehow I would become better during the process and after the trial was over.

Despite the mental pain that I was in, my faith was being renewed daily by the visitation and communion of the Holy Spirit. I knew that he was with me. I knew that my thoughts were being filtered by the renewed mind that I’d received. At some point, I simply stopped asking God for my deliverance and began a practice of thanking him for what he had already done. As well as what he was about to perform in my life.

I also established a personal praise time and a daily worship and devotional time. What did it matter if it were before Christmas or not? I knew I had his favor. I knew he loved me. I knew the Lord was guiding my steps now. But I also had so many questions about my newfound desire to serve others. Was I capable? Would the feeling last? How could I be able to encourage others in my condition? How could I minister the Gospel to the lost in prison while I was yet there with them? I didn’t think I knew enough about the risen Savior.




I thought that I needed more training and time to grow and mature spiritually. I thought that I needed an ordination from a church, to be able to minister the word to the people around me. But all I really needed was the anointing of the Holy Spirit, as my commission and the Word, hidden in my heart to feed the hungry and downtrodden. But then, I became aware that I could show love and compassion for the inmates and spread the glory of God with others, even in my imbalanced and broken condition. I promised the Lord that night in prayer that I would be a mouthpiece for him, forever and no matter what my circumstances were.

Later that evening, an inmate approached me and asked me to pray with him. He said that he needed peace to be able to make it in jail. I told him that I'd just been praying for the same thing. And that we were on the same page with our spiritual vibe. I knew the vibrations I was feeling were of the Holy Spirit and I knew the unction's would increase. I felt that I couldn't escape the burden of being an exhorter and I knew that this was my calling and election and my 'Dharma. I knew then that I was in his favor and I also knew then that I was within his perfect will, and I knew that I could do all things through Christ, who had and was strengthening me for the work that lay ahead. I knew that I could ask for anything.

We sat there in the middle of the pod, amongst seventy other inmates and prayed for peace together. Then I shared some Scripture with him. Which was 1 Peter 5:7. "Casting all your cares upon him". Which was the same scripture that had been shared with me for my encouragement by my first wife in the form of a post card, a short time before. The night that the post card arrived, was a particularly dark night for me. The card arrived right on time, to encourage me. Like a light in the darkness to pick me up and sooth my wounded soul. I thought to myself if she ever thought that that one gesture of kindness would touch another man's life, oceans away in a jail cell. But it had, and the word doesn't return void.

He began to smile as he read the texts that I shared with him. Which were the ones that I used as my go to method for anxiety management. I tried to explain to him that he would have to discharge himself from his current situation, and just try to forget about it all for the time being. I also told let him know that this isn't being irresponsible or nonchalant to separate yourself from your emotions, for the sake of sanity and managing the anxiety. But I express to him, that this was simply a way of a coping mechanism for this. I also told him that you can't continue to try to



manage the things that you can't control and that he should use that energy in prayer and meditation.


Then I shared with him, the scripture in Philippians 4:6-7. "Be anxious for nothing, but in prayer and supplications, make your request known to God". And then I told him, that he should try to relax a bit. I'd finally gotten to a place where I could actually console someone and encourage them, in their time of need. Then I realized that I was only able to do this because I'd been through the same struggle myself and I realized that I had light to share with him, because I'd been through this myself.

We went walking around the day room, completing a virtual circle around the pod, and in that moment, it felt like we were both back in the corporate world, running around a fitness centers track. It was so therapeutic and liberating that we could both be imitating a power walk, like corporate yuppies and discussing new business while were in Jail. I had begun to get a reputation as one who walked with God, and people were now coming to me, for help and counseling. Even in my new and refreshed mind and condition, I still wondered if it would all change and if I would again lose my joy now. But then I realized this was only fear and not faith. I knew that I had to learn to walk by faith and not only by sight.

Suddenly, there was a young man in the day room who reminded me of someone that I thought that I knew. Out of the corner of my eye, as I examined him more closely and he began to resemble of all people, "Seven, from the mental health ward. He was sitting there awaiting a cell assignment. I stared at him and then I got his attention, telepathically. He raised his head and he looked straight at me, like a puppy. Then 'Seven cracked a small but genuine smile and I knew that he remembered me.

"May, is there a boat in your cell?" Asked the house man on shift. "What chu talkin bout, Willis?" I replied. We continued the morning routines until the next break which was for lunch, while taking the abuse and intimidation of Guard from hell, Guard Andrews. Who was a woman with a nasty a disposition and a very foul mouth. She walked up to an inmate while we were having lunch and she told him that his mayonnaise was contraband. Then she confiscated it from his plate. I immediately departed the table, quietly yet abruptly.

I made my way to my cell and as I returned to the cell, I noticed that there had been a "boat," a *portable bunk*, placed on the floor in the cell. Which meant we were about to become a three-man cell. Of all the cells with one inmate we had to get the third inmate. The brutal break was over, and T was doing his customary complaining about the oncoming Guard. Then in



comes ‘Seven, and then he sits down on the boat. We said nothing for a moment, and then he gave me a grimace, and then I gave him a welcome to the cell.


T said, “You know this kid, May? I responded, “Yes, we used to rob banks together.” At that, ‘Seven raised his head a bit and lightly laughed. Then said, “Hey, May, how have you been?” Neither T nor I asked why he was in our cell. We both just accepted it, and never asked the guard. I accepted that it was God’s will, and I just accepted that ‘Seven was in the cell by God’s divine intervention.

We talked with Seven for hours and was a great conversationalist. He was very intelligent and well versed on a diverse array of subjects. Especially the subject of bipolar disorder and mental illnesses. He had a wealth of information about the subject matter. He was young and full of life, yet misguided. I thought that his knowledge of the Bible was exhaustive for being such a young man.

It was Christmas for me to go through ‘Seven’s bin. He had accumulated a lot of literature on yoga and relaxation practices which was what I’d been praying for weeks, and suddenly there was everything I needed to assist me in my mediation practices and also a person with substantial knowledge of relaxation techniques. Like manna from heaven. Just a little grace to keep me going, and new mercies, daily. I immediately asked if I could borrow some of the books on yoga. He said yes and then grabbed one on the Avidya Tree. Which illustrated the areas of the body to focus on to discharge negative energy. The papers were very useful to me. At the time, I didn’t understand Chakra sciences, reflexology or deep meditation for spiritual and mental healing.

I found it all intriguing and useful though, and ‘Seven said that he knew I’d enjoy the Avidya Tree. ‘Seven told me he knew that I was a prophet, and I thought that it was cool that that he interpreted that about me. I asked him what he meant and why he felt I was a prophet. He told me that a prophet tells the truth and foretells the coming of things to come. Guard Andrews was done ranting for the morning and had settled down.

The cells in the main jail pods were approximately ten feet by five feet, and in our case with three men assigned for a birthing that would normally would have two men assigned and they were always very cold. So, it always felt like it was 40 degrees inside. We didn’t have clothing for the Georgia winter weather, we were no were prepared for the freezing temperatures



that the state of Georgia can spit out. We wore flip flop shoes, and a two-piece outfit for clothing, which was essentially pajama's in the dead of winter, everywhere we went. Whether out to court or to an outside medical appointment.


The lack of adequate clothing, was simply another way for the jail and the prison system, to cut operating costs and to fatten their profit margins. I would learn later, that many of the prisons in Georgia administrations, had this same practice of reserving and pocketing the money allocated from the state to the facility, for their own gain. This enterprise of imprisonment is essentially the new cotton and slave industry, in the South. I knew that one day, I write the book entitled, "From the projects to the prisons. The industrial agenda to imprison African Americans, for profit.

We had no T-shirts, no hats, no scarves and no gloves in the dead of the winter cold. The cells themselves were a little warmer than the open pod. Probably because of the body heat of the inmate that the cell was being shared with. The itself was a little warmer than the pod, but still freezing. It was gut-wrenching. Meanwhile, the guards had the latest military-style equipment, yet the inmates didn't have winter clothing or even a napkin to wipe our mouths with after eating. Toilet paper and soap were rationed out and books and literature were few and inaccessible. I vowed that someday I would bring attention to the inhumane deplorable conditions that existed at the Gwinnett County Jail when I could upon my release. I knew I had to wait until I was completely out of their snare and ability to pull me back into their snare of the enterprise of incarceration of African Americans for profit.

But I knew I could pray to Jesus for help to get me through this valley experience and I knew that I could and had to keep my emotions and grievances between myself and the Lord until the appropriate time. I was beginning to see results from my waiting. Results from my faith and obedience. I was beginning to see the results of my meditation in still quietness within the Lords presence. I was learning the power of earnest prayer and meditation.

'Seven, took a trip outside the cell for toiletries, as per normal. We were allowed to request toiletries during our break time only. 'Seven returned to the cell, and as he did, he slapped the cell door. Which caught the attention of everyone in the pod, including the guard from hell, Guard Andrews. I thought to myself, "this can't be good.

She came barreling over to the cell door like a locomotive, in a rage. The flames were shooting from her mouth and smoke was billowing from her nostrils. She was infuriated and wanted to take it out on someone and that someone would be, 'Seven.



“God Damn it!” She stayed just outside the cell door as she shouted and never opened it. She just stood there and screamed like a demon in hell screaming at the earth. The door vibrated, and the hinges rattled as she ranted and raved. The things she said to ‘Seven, that morning was too foul to repeat, so I won’t. Both ‘T and I, stood there praying she wouldn’t send ‘Seven, to the hole for his sins.

She hit that boy with every profanity in the dictionary. I tilted to the left to get a glimpse of the onslaught that was happening, and telepathically I told him not to respond. He said nothing, he just stood there, taking the railing. As the verbal abuse continued the tears began to well up in ‘Seven’s eyes. ‘Seven had been a very emotional person, and the situation would normally have resulted in violence, but today as the tears rolled down his face, he said nothing. He just stared back at her and looking her directly in the eye.


It was great display of poise and maturity from ‘Seven, I was impressed by his growth. I thought of Jesus, at Pilate’s court in that moment, as he said nothing in his own defense when questioned by Pilot He stood there like a lamb heading to slaughter. ‘Seven was a great kid, he was just misguided, misunderstood, and troubled. He reminded me of my eldest son and I wondered if my son would have responded under this kind of attack.

Then, the vicious attack from the dragon ceased, as suddenly as it had begun. The demon recoiled and the smoke and the embers from the fire settled down and began die down. Then the dragon backed down, crept away and the attack of the dragon was over. ‘Seven sat down, on the portable bunk on the floor of the cell. He said nothing and just kept looking at the bulkhead in front of him. Then I said to ‘Seven. “Looks like you have a fan, son”. He said nothing, but he had also stopped crying by now.

I was sitting in front of him on the bottom bunk, in complete silence. Then I started to tell him a story about when I was in the Navy. It was a story of how I once got into trouble for not being where I was supposed to be. After a few occurrences, these lapses landed me in front of the skipper, for a Captain’s mast. The commander could have ruined my career, but God was with me. He charged me a few days for the offenses and gave me some good advice. He had said. “Find more productive things to do with your free time”.

That was the advice that I gave to ‘Seven, while we were all sitting there on the floor in a jail cell, and that was to find more productive things to do with his time. I encouraged him to not





give up, and that one day he will get out. How did I know this? How could I be so optimistic? What spirit gave me this confidence in a jail cell? It was the Spirit of God and I knew that the Lord was there. I knew he cared for 'Seven, and for me.

I had a sandwich stashed in my bin under my rack. I retrieved it and offered it to 'Seven. He said nothing, as he took it from me. Then he divided it in half and gave a half to me. I said, "Did you wash your hands"? He cracked a little smile, as we both ate the sandwich halves. I was just happy to have been able to add any measure happiness to his life.


I got up and moved over to the plastic cell chair and desk mounted into the wall and began to organize my thoughts again to begin to output. Seven had given me many mental visualization and meditation techniques. I was beginning to say a sentence, when Seven got up from the portable and quietly walked out of the pod. It was an afternoon free time and we'd been in the cell for a few hours, mostly just me talking to Seven. 'Seven, was just kind of looking at the wall.

After a little while, T comes back into the cell, in a bit of a hurry, and asked, "Do you know where Seven's flip flops are?" I said, "Huh?" Then I remembered. "Yes, under my rack." I wanted to prevent us from tripping over them, so I put them under my rack. Seven had a habit of leaving things all over the place. Then I asked why. T replied, "She's got him hemmed up outside, I think he's going to the hole, and he doesn't have any shoes on!"

Immediately I fell to my knees and began to pray for Seven, and as I was, T had left and returned to the cell. He said, "Seven had indicated to Guard Andrews that he wanted to die and the he was going to be transferred to the psychiatric ward." Seven had stated that he wanted to commit suicide. I was stunned, but happy that he hadn't been successful in doing it.

I didn't know what to think but I knew God was there and I knew that he cared for Seven also. I knew that I had to maintain my composure and knew that I had to keep the faith. I wondered what was on "Seven's mind at that moment when he was thinking of suicide. I was just talking to him moments before and I now I wondered if there was anything I could've done to help him.

I wondered if the guard felt that she had contributed to Seven's relapse and meltdown. I wondered if she cared at all. I thought of my dog Fritz, who would always run away. Somehow, I



knew I would see that puppy again, and somehow, I knew that I would see Seven again. I vowed to do something about the abuse and mistreatment of inmates that went on at the Gwinnett County Jail when I could. I knew that I had to continue writing everything down that I witnessed. I knew the time would come for me to be able to bring to light to this particular and present darkness.

11:30 PM. “Arm band check.” We had only laid down to sleep an hour before and were now being awoken for a silly arm band check, by the oncoming guard. I’d never seen one done at night by an oncoming shift guard. I learned later that the evening guard that we usually had wasn’t doing them at all and that we had been blessed to not have to be awakened at night by some on coming shift swinging guard.


Despite the night and day cell inspections, I had managed to maintain two blankets. The guards were so insistent on finding contraband, yet they never looked through my rack, and no one noticed that I had maintained two blankets so far. The game made me feel as though I had gotten one up on the guards. Anything that I could get away with, made me feel empowered. Whenever they would do a surprise inspection, I would just play it cool. They never saw me sweat, never. It was child’s play to me, only this wasn’t school, it was incarceration.

Every time that I would feel the impulse to doubt the Lord, there would always be some little ray of hope to keep me going. Some new drops of mercy daily, to keep me sustained in my faith and sanity. I began to see how much he loved and also favored me. It wasn’t just luck or charm or my personality, it was Jehovah himself imparting his grace and favor on me. I had begun to understand who I was in his eyes.

I had begun to realize that I didn’t need materialism anymore and I realized that I didn’t need to be a celebrity anymore. I understood that I could approach the throne of Grace at any time and receive an answer. I was starting to understand my anointing and that he loved me still, despite what I had done, he loved me despite my situation.

I had been seeking the face of the Holy God of Zion. I had been asking for his mercy over and over again although I had abused his grace over and over time and time again. Yet, there I was expecting him to extend his grace to me, again and again. But I maintained the prayer and asked him now for the peace to make it through this storm. I had tried everything to pass the time and to suppress the thoughts that I would be going to prison.

I couldn’t kid myself, it was a reality and possibility, but I just kept praying and believing it would all be okay. I had seen Jehovah perform his great works many times before and I had



experienced his mercy many times also. There was no reason to doubt him now, I knew that I needed to learn to rest in him. I thought to myself. “The Lord hadn’t changed, so why should I?”

The negative images of the inmates were a constant and terrible reminder of my circumstances. The inmates represented an incessant mountain of examples of my failed life and they were constant reminders of my plight. They were resonant examples of ignorance being bliss. Yet, somehow, I knew that I had to continue to press on. But how to walk among them yet not be condescending was my challenge. How to lift up the inmates without disturbing my own joy and to inspire them without insulting them.


I learned that I would have to lift up Jesus, and allow him to draw men unto himself, through me. While all the while I battled feelings of doubt and feeling as though nothing, I prayed for would ever result in the natural realm. I had failed in marriages, in life, and as a father, and as a minister and priest. The inmates around me were constant reminders of this, they never let me forget why I was there, and how I got there.

Now my children had been turned against me and it was my darkest hour. I had nothing to look forward to beyond life in a cell and isolation from the world. At this awareness, I was revisiting the thoughts of suicide. The only thing that stopped me at that point, was the fear of eternal punishment and that I didn’t want to hurt my children. I felt that I’d already hurt them so much and I didn’t want to add more pain to their lives.

Being incarcerated, you have a lot of time to worry and contemplate things that are negative, and there’s not much to look forward to. Gwinnett County had become a haven for dealers, pimps, and gang bangers for the South Side of Atlanta and Chicago and also from the Katrina fallout. Now, I found myself unintentionally as part of the whole money industry of the enterprise of incarceration. The enterprise of incarcerating minorities for profit.

Like most small jails, revenue comes from their respective counties. Now, socio economic dynamics and gentrification, had now turned the suburbs of Gwinnett and Conyers counties, into and places for new expatriated citizens and havens for undesirables and various criminals of Atlanta, to reside. As a result, the Gwinnett county jail, had become very profitable. In fact, the jail itself was often overflowing to capacity, to the point where inmates often had to sit on the floor to eat, shoulder to shoulder.

This new subculture was now engrained into the fabric of the east and west suburbs of Atlanta. I was now unintentionally a part of this culture and I was slipping back into depression



and I felt once again I had nothing to live for. I felt as though I was just another number and just another small time criminal. But I knew the Lord loved me and I knew he had a plan for me. I knew that his mercy endured forever, and I knew that I could ask for anything and later see my petitions manifest. Perhaps even within seven days.


After a while, all my encounters and everything that I saw began to become symbols of his intention for me. Although I was in a jail, I somehow felt so free. My mind would soar, and my vivid imagination never stopped. I hadn't lost my mind, it was only depression and anxiety. I had to try to remember this and I knew that I had to continue to believe and keep the faith.

Although I hadn't seen the things I pondered as manifested as yet and the days lingered on and on. I began to sing to myself in hymns and psalms. I knew the people praying for me would be doing so constantly. I also knew that those closest to me knew what I would do in the valley. They knew what I would do under pressure. They knew that I would turn my face toward the Lord. I realized my courage had been all but depleted, so I decided to turn my face toward the throne of God for my help and strength. I would approach the throne of Grace daily, in quiet prayer and I'd tell him of all my troubles, through the Holy Spirit, who would also comfort me.

I was doing all I could to make it and I was standing on the word and depending upon my training in Christian leadership to help me. After a while, it seemed as though all my encounters were intentional and guided by him. If only I had a radio, I thought, I could encourage myself with the songs being played gospel and encouraging music. But I would have to recall the songs that had been embedded in my soul and in my subconscious mind. There are no radios in the Gwinnett county jail.

There were a few songs that I would sing to myself daily. One of them that I'd often sing to encourage myself was, "great is thy faithfulness. "All that I've needed, thy have provided, great is thy faithfulness!" Sometimes people would know the songs I'd sing, other times they wouldn't. But all the inmates knew that I had a relationship with God. They all knew that I had a connection with the most-high. They all knew to come to me for spiritual help and moral support.

By this time, all of my ideas about my life had gone away. I felt the desire to do anything that Jesus wanted from me, and my own desires had begun to fade away. I didn't quite



understand at the time, if I'd be continuing in a career in information technology, but I was sure that I had to pursue a career in writing and ultimately a career in publishing.

The worldliness that I maintained was gone. I had stripped down and divested of material wealth, I had nothing but Jesus to depend on, and I began to accept his calling and election. In that process, I was being humbled for his good work. There was no escape, my election was irrevocable, and I was his servant, I was his High Priest. Just as the apostle Paul had been charged and called.


The exposure I'd had all my life to the word wouldn't allow me to not be optimistic though, I couldn't forget all of my professional experience and skills. I knew that the Lord would help me to use them all cumulatively to further in life, in ministry and as an author and publisher. Now, I knew that I couldn't give up and I had begun to understand my purpose.

I was beginning to understand that my frailty was what Jesus wanted. I knew then, that he would take my inability and my problems and turn them into successes. I was beginning to learn that a broken heart is what matters to him. I could feel his power all around me then and his peace began to overtake me. My shame began to leave, and the guilty feelings began to subside. Jesus was working through my weaknesses and my preoccupation shifted from dwelling in my pain to leaning on Jesus for strength. It wasn't just self-preservation, and it wasn't just my mind protecting itself. I was sick and horribly broken, and I knew that only Jesus through the holy spirit, could heal me.

I didn't think that I had the authority or the ability to minister in jail though. I didn't believe that I was capable to work through all the pain that I had, to be able to help another inmate, but I was wrong. I had to learn that it wasn't going to be about my strength, but that it was going to be about my strength in Jesus, and him only to become an effective minister of the Gospel. I had so many questions about my commission and the more I would question the Lord about it, the more my spirit would groan.

I knew I would have to stop questioning and just learn to accept his will for my life and get on with his commands over my life, which was now his. I could no longer remain in the flesh as I had been converted and spiritually enlightened. It was now time for me to learn to press through the pain and deny myself and forget the past. I needed to learn to forget the past and move forward for the mark of the high calling.

Up until that time, I had managed to keep two blankets unnoticed. Despite the constant cell inspections of the guards. It wasn't luck and I knew the Lord was providing little mercies for



me daily. An extra blanket was a small thing for me to give him glory over, so I did. I felt that it was nothing for the Lord to show me that he loved me through something so small.


The cell block next door to me had two guys, in it. One named Harris and the other was Kevin. Both Harris and Kevin were very encouraging to me. They would constantly remind me that I would be getting a bond at my next hearing. They both had secure bonds and knew that they would be leaving the jail at a specified date. They both had families to look forward to and they both had a wonderful family, to resume. I wished I could have changed places with them. I was anxious, and ready to get on with my life, and to see the Glory of God manifested in my life. But the reality was, that I had to family to go home to, and neither did I know what had come of my rental home, in Atlanta. But I was ready to see the results of my faith and I wanted to see results.

## **Chapter 13: The Work Around**

I wasn't afraid anymore and I felt that I could ask Jehovah for anything, as King Solomon. Yet he asked for wisdom. I felt that I needed stronger leadership and ministering skills. I felt that the jail was a training ground. I also felt that I needed the inmates to see the Lord working in my life through miracles so that I could impact their lives. I felt that I could ask Jehovah for anything and I'd see it happen, sometimes immediately and sometimes within 7 days. It could be food, paper, even lotion. More importantly, when I would ask for peace to manage day to day, he would provide it immediately. The inmates knew that I was a man of God, and they gave alms to me to bless me and to encourage me.

I expected that any day that the phone would be for me, and when it wasn't I would give him thanks, that soon it would be for me. Rather than before when I would become disheartened and full of sorrow. The anxiousness and the sorrow of waiting was beginning to subside. I believed and kept the faith that someday I would hear these words. "Pack it up!" Signifying my release, one day soon. I knew it would come and I knew that Jesus was there, and I knew that the Lord loved me.

That day, I gave Officer McCallister, a prayer request written on a scratch piece of paper. I'd written a note on it, asking him to pray for my release at my next hearing, and that the judge



would show mercy to me. I believed McCallister would bend his knees for me and on my behalf. I knew that Jehovah would move on the judge for me no matter what had happened before at the first hearing. I knew it was all part of his will and an opportunity for me to build my faith and for God to get the glory.

The sun was shining today through the cinderblocks atop the courtyard. The light streamed through the small openings. It was excellent, and nothing short of God's glory shining into the pod just for us. I believed it was his way of reminding me he was still in control and that he was still in love with me also. My court date was set for December 19 as per my attorney's advisement. I'd spoken to her on the phone a few times and she'd advised me of that. She told my judge had been changed, and that the hearing was going to be on a different date. But she said that she didn't know the date, as yet.


I was upset and sorrowful at the news that I wasn't going to court on the date that I was told that I would be. Yet I didn't panic at the news. I knew that I had to keep the faith and I knew it was just a test. So, I began to ask other inmates if they had ever seen a judge being switched with a date. Everyone told that in their experiences, that the judge never gets switched with the judge being switched and that the judge switched was likely something else. I asked many guards, and they all said a "calendar switch" is a switch of the judge, not the date.

I stayed focused on the date of the hearing being **December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014**, as my attorney had told me. But she didn't know when the new date would be. She didn't know why the change had been made. No one had spoken to me about the case, or if it was going to change. I would have to wait on the Lord. I would have to trust in him through this change.

I would have to continue to lean on him for my strength. I knew if I waited on him I would see his glory. I knew then if I waited on him I would be lifted up and released from jail. I knew the name of "El Shaddai. I knew to call on the name of Jesus, the prince of peace. For my strength and encouragement and I knew by now, that he would lift me up out of the mental hell that I was in.

I thought of my first wife for strength and of how she would sing to me and sing songs of praise throughout the house. She was God's gift to me, but I didn't realize the gift that I had during our marriage. I didn't appreciate it, nor did I recognize her for being the blessing that she was. In those days in the jail, for comfort, I would reflect on the work of her hands. It was so painful to sit in a cell and ponder it all and all that I'd forfeited. My first wife also had hands like a nurse and she could stroke my neck and hands and then bring relief from my pains almost





instantly. I knew that I couldn't reach her now, but I knew that she could send her hands miraculously across the water to calm me, and I longed for her now.

The daily burden of what I'd lost and of all that had happened to me was great. Not to mention the environment and how dangerous it was made it all so very impacting, psychologically. If the guards caught you with a shank, they put in the hole or possibly charged with a weapons charge. If you were caught without a shank, an inmate could hurt or kill you. The main ray of hope that I had during this period as the new year approached, was that each new day would end and that one day, the entire ordeal would all end.


Although the night would come, it would give me the opportunity to build my relationship with God through earnest prayer and meditation. Like David, I would weep to Jehovah at night, and in relative silence. He would meet me in the quiet place of my mind and spirit. Jehovah's spirit would speak to me quietly and comfort me as I was going through the journey of incarceration. No one could understand why I would leave the pod to go to my cell quietly and secretly during the evening free time breaks.

My nightly encounters with the holy spirit became a necessary meeting time with the spirit of the most-high. I would tell him my troubles and give him thanks for hours, especially when I couldn't sleep. Sometimes, his Spirit would awaken me, for something Jehovah wanted to pour into me. I knew that Jehovah loved me, and I knew he cared, despite my present circumstance; despite the now.

Later that week, my attorney informed me that my previous bond hearing had been reset to **January 17, 2015**. I had never seen such abuse and disregard for people in my life and certainly not the in the US. I couldn't speak to anyone about it, as I was on the inside. I knew I would have to wait and be patient, while my life was in the hand of the demons that ran the Gwinnett county court system.

I knew that one day I would get my chance to tell my story; it was the waiting that was so hard and mentally draining and frustrating. It's like planning an attack on a formidable enemy, hoping that you can hold out long enough to see through. I was reduced into thinking like a criminal, at least in this regard to planning and contemplating like one two. I'd employed their mental strategies, and had become criminal minded, to a degree.

I'd just returned to the cell as T, was heading to the showers. He told me he and a few others were organizing a list of inmates in an effort to strike back at the administration. I said to him to make sure my name is on that list. He said that my name already was. I told him I wasn't



afraid. He said he knew that you're not. God was richly blessing T. T's fiancée had gotten together the money for his bond and He had so many wonderful things to look forward to now. My life, in comparison, to T's was in a shamble. I had no family and no home to go to.


It was just a waiting game for T at this point; just waiting for the judges to sign off on his release. It was a slow death for me though and sometimes, it just felt like waiting in vain. But I knew that Jesus was in control of my destiny while we waited for the attorneys and judges to take their holiday vacations and enjoy their families. The inmates at Gwinnett county jail were the mercy and calendars of the Judges of the Gwinnett county court system, as all the hearings stopped for the holiday season.

It became painfully obvious, that there would be no chance of my being released before Christmas. I was at the mercy of litigator's and the judge's schedules. But I trusted in Jesus, and I also waited with expectation for him. The Lord was helping my ailments and illnesses and, in my spirit, also. And as I continued to wait on the Lord, I was also learning to trust him more and more. I needed to learn to wait apparently even more than I already had. I needed a way to manage during this storm; I needed a "Work Around."

Now, the headaches, the asthma, and the stresses were being managed by God, miraculously. The systems stressors and pains began to fade. I was getting by and growing in grace; I was surviving and being healed. The bad dreams and the anxiety had started to change and had also started to subside. I continued to pray for my deliverance from the jail and for restoration to my children. I knew Jesus loved me, and I knew that he cared for me and I knew that I had his favor. I began to just relax in Jesus and to spend time fellowshiping more and more with the believers in the pod.

I had become known as one who knew the Lord; one who would pray for you whenever you needed me to. Inmates were now coming to me for encouragement and to pray with them before court hearings for mercy from the Lord. I was becoming known as a *jailhouse preacher*. But it was hard and so painful and very difficult to find the motivation to help others, as I would daily fall back into my own self-pity and preoccupations with my own pains. But I knew the strength of Holy Spirit would keep me going. I knew that I was walking and abiding in him.

I knew that Jehovah is a God of healing and restoration; and I was beginning to fully see his power and love for me, miraculously. And it was being revealed to me through his word. I was at my lowest point in my life ever, yet I felt liberated and I had no fear of anything that was coming my way. I was at peace with life and with all the things that I'd done, and I knew that I was forgiven. But now, I also knew that I could handle the challenges of ministering to those



around me; with God's grace and strength. I knew that I was tasked to lead the flock in jail and to be a witness to the unbelievers and to share my testimony, while in jail.


I had learned methods and ways of approaching and relating to the downtrodden and broken spirited inmates and to the officers of the Gwinnett Jail. I had learned to do work arounds. And I began to see that what I was learning, not only was invaluable. But I was receiving a special anointing, to do so. I was able to connect with the rejected, the disliked, and all those who were at their last wits in life.

I had been ejected from my home like trash and left on the side of the road like a derelict. The kind of derelicts in times past, I would've plashed dirty water on from our car tires as I passed them by on the road. Now, though I understood these inmates' pain. I knew Jesus understood them too. I was the same as them, despite my background. I knew that I was capable of committing the same offenses as they were. I was an outcast also and a pilgrim. I was the weary traveler on the side of the road, broken and beaten. Awaiting help from a would-be passerby.

I had prayed every night that I wouldn't spend Christmas in jail, but that day came, and I was still here. December 25, 2014, and there I was, still in jail and still in hell. I had decided that nothing would get me down though; I'd decided that nothing could hurt me and that nothing could deter my faith. I was full of the Holy Ghost and full of a fresh anointing.

I'd managed to survive 3 months in jail and now it was Christmas Day, in jail. I had overcome by my faith, prayer, self-discipline, and meditations. **I had overcome adversity, by my faith in God. I had created 'work arounds, for keeping myself sane and my mind relatively sharp, with minimal mental stimuli.**

I had also been suffering with pain from a bone spur in my tailbone, which developed as a result of laying those crummy cheap pieces of vinyl, that they called a bunk to sleep on. Aggravated by the thin mattress, I prayed earnestly to Jesus for healing. I knew that he was helping me cope with these pains in my tail bone and feet and the various body aches that came with the conditions that I was living in and experiencing. God was there, looking back on it all; but I would cry at night from the pain in my tailbone and try to constantly reposition myself every night to not sleep on my back. I had been used to sleeping next to a wife, for 30 years, I was not built for this life. I knew I had to continue to press through, and I knew that one day, I would enjoy the comforts of a normal home once again, one day.



So, every night I had to lie on my side to avoid the intense pain from my tailbone radiating through my back. The Holy Spirit spoke to me about it one night. He said, “Take the blanket and double it, then take the sheet and place it under the area where your tailbone is”. It was a simple and an obvious thing to do. Double the blanket, in the area of the sensitivity. It would have seemed as though someone of my mental capacity would have thought though this. But alas, the spirit of God had to kick start my brain, to help me out, and he did.


It didn’t completely take away the pain, but it minimized it. I thanked God for the little mercies; all the little things that he would do for me. I knew that he would continue to help me through the pain. I knew he had a purpose for my life. I knew he was going to use me as a priest, and I knew that I could ask him for anything, and see it manifested sometimes within *7 Days After*.

I had no sacrifice to give him, only praise. But I knew that in his word he says, “a broken heart and a contrite spirit, I will not despise”. (Psalm 51). I decided to give myself to the people I could help that were around me; I’d decided to be an effective minister and exhorter, where I was. I decided to shift my attention from myself and to helping others. I would learn later, that these skills would become useful in dealing with the senior citizens, that I would be in physical rehabilitation with, just under a year after my release. The lord had been training and perfecting me, the entire time.

Meanwhile, during this process, I had to deal with changing many of the negative aspects of my life. I was condescending and not very humble, not at all. I’d had a life of comfort and relative luxury, compared to many in the U.S., and in the world at large. I’d had owned 2 S classes, earned over 6 figures for a few years at least. I was at the top of my game in technology. I was also heading for the director’s role, in 2 years, and I’d accumulated a great 401k. Then, my frivolous, irresponsible reckless and lustful behavior, lead to my down fall.

Now, I had been presented with the opportunity to repent and to grow from my bad habits, and into the man that God had always intended me to be. “The man after God’s own heart. I knew then that every season change. I knew that things would be better, and I knew that I had a golden opportunity to embrace change and take control of my behavior and learn real selfcontrol. The conversions would all be accomplished behind the walls of a jail cell, and hopefully never from the walls of a prison.

So many nights, I would wake up to the sound of a man pissing in a commode very close to me. I’d been used to sleeping with my wife for ten years and this was killing me mentally. I




never got used to that, I just learned to cope. It wasn't like being in the military or the emergency services, where you're working in close quarters with your brother. This was punishment, that never ended at the end of a shift. This was incessant torture that you just couldn't stop, unless you strangled the man above you in the bunk. Which, I pondered many a night. Then the spirit of God would stop me and remind me of our soldiers and what they are going through in having to use latrines in the field of war. These images offered me a measure of comfort and solace to maintain my peace.

But it was always very difficult to wake up to a man's voice and smell and listen to him piss and fart, while you tried to brush your teeth. It was just something I had to learn to bear, and very painfully. Not waking to the scent of my wife, her soft blossom her soft sounds and feminine persona. You could always easily tell the guys who were used this. And you could always tell the ones who were accustomed to the polar opposite. I tried not to judge, I always to try to share the love of God with them, to lead them to him and the true as to why they had the imbalance. But I would never argue with a man over his preferences or his beliefs. I learned not to do that ever again having encountered Marshall.

I would have to learn to be humble. I realized later it was all part of my training. How would I find strength to be humble in jail? How would I learn to not look down on others? How would I learn to be humble and appear to be real? In the face of those who could see through me. Anthony knocked on my cell door for the Bible study that evening. The whole pod saw him. I was now associated with a known radical Jesus lover. I had to maintain my status as a Christian, even more so now.

The temperature in the day room was colder than normal this evening. It was always so cold in the dayroom in the evening. I fetched some hot water from the kettle and then proceeded to the table where the brothers were having Bible study. I would put the cup of hot water underneath my shirt for warmth, to allow the steam to warm my body. These were the kinds of methods we'd employ to keep warm; with the short-sleeved pajamas that we were in winter.

It was hard to press through though on this night as it was so cold. But I knew Jesus was at that table and I knew through his spirit that I needed to be there. I didn't know if I were going to be receiving something special, or perhaps he would be using me to deliver a word to the group. You never know what the Lord has in store, through the holy spirit. We'd been discussing obtaining peace and letting things go that you can't control. A good message for any inmates. It seemed exceptionally timely for me as I was in jail for stalking my wife.




That night, brother Anthony shared with us how very fortunate that he felt that we were by being in this facility, as compared to a prison. He told us and recounted being in prison, and how at 1:30 every night, he'd hear the attack dogs being let go on the inmates that were targeted by the guards and other inmates for punishment. He recounted the sounds of men screaming being raped and beaten all night long sometimes. He told us how he'd hear the sounds of men's bones being broken from the guards' clubs at night and all night sometimes. At that, we all stopped and thanked God for his protection.

This night was going to be another challenging night for us, and I prayed we wouldn't have a vicious guard coming on to the shift tonight. Our regular 5-day was going to be off that, so we didn't know what to expect. It was being revealed to me by the holy spirit, that I was being trained, and that the trials that I was enduring were helping me to grow more and more.

Brother Anthony had a special way with the inmates and especially with the Amigos. He had this innate ability to talk to anyone just like Jesus could. He also spoke English very well. He was formidable looking, intimidating and *kinda* scary looking. But when you talked to him you saw the love of Jesus in him shining and radiating onto you. He looked like one of the toughest gang leaders that you'd ever see in LA. His tattoos and scars were a virtual map of his background and experiences, but not his future. He was a fire and brimstone preacher in the jail and he was authentic. He wasn't just using the Gospel and his relationship with God, just to get out of jail. As so many were doing.

Brother Anthony was the pillar of faith and the example of what a believer in incarceration, looks like. I needed to be the leader in the jail and to be able to inspire the nonbelievers to come to Jesus. I knew that the Lord had put me right in the mix with Brother Anthony, for my growth as a minister. I knew God had put me there with him, at that time to encourage me in my own ministry and to assist brother Anthony, in his. The Lord was helping me with the feelings and emotions of guilt shame and fear of being a witness in jail. I knew that the Lord had put Brother Anthony was there to help to build me up and to strengthen me as well.

That same evening on our break time, brother Anthony beckoned to one of the Amigos that I wanted to trade chips for a sandwich with him. The Amigo then blessed me with it and told me to keep the chips. It felt like this blessing had come directly from Jehovah's hand. I was receiving blessings from the men; 'alms, if you would. I knew it was Jehovah. So, I gave Brother Anthony an orange and a cookie that was given to me during the exchange to show my gratitude. I found myself weeping, from the outpouring of grace that was overwhelming.



Then, I signaled to the house man to give me an orange. And then gave me two oranges, which I gave away immediately; embracing and testing the spiritual law of, "it's better to give than to receive. It was a sign of humility and gratitude to Jesus and it was a rule in jail to give first before eating. Some inmates didn't practice this law and I started to notice that it seemed that they were usually the ones that had needs. There was one chap, who was named Matt, who always seemed to beat everyone else to the leftovers on other inmates' plates.

I was speaking to some inmates at the table when Matt walked by. We were all talking about the laws of giving and receiving. how some inmates were just pigs. Who were busy eating all they could and not sharing at all. "A pig is one that eats everything in front of them, and never stops". I said. Matt overheard me as he walked by, and perceived I was talking about him. He immediately came over to the table and challenged me. I looked him in the eye and reminded him that there were cameras watching and that the guards would know that he provoked me to beat the hell out of him. He ceased the attack at that.


I took another orange and gave it to another young inmate and he was very grateful and said that he had been sick. I said to him, "Never say you're sick, say you're healed." I told him the power of life and death were in your tongue.

I knew that it would take an act of God to change my wife's mind about the charges. Like God did on Adonai, in the releasing of Jeremiah the prophet. I knew she wasn't the kind to do the right thing on her own. But, I knew my forgiveness was tied to me forgiving her. So, I continued to pray for her through the pain that she'd caused me. The pain was traumatic, but I knew I had to forgive her and after while I started to make the effort to stop thinking of vengeance against her. I was begging to understand the spiritual laws of cause and effect.

And then one day, I saw the evidence that there had been a move from heaven on my behalf. My attorney showed up at the jail unannounced. She said that my wife had changed her mind about the charges, and that she would be contacting the DA to request that I get the bond at the forthcoming hearing. She also told me my wife would like to bring my children to the jail for a visit. At that point, I hadn't seen my children for two months. I missed them immensely and I missed my wife also. I wanted to see them so badly, and now I would be able to.

But I thought I'd spare my children seeing me in a jail. I thought that wouldn't be good for them or me. Them seeing me in that capacity would be more than their young minds needed to process. So, I declined the offer from my attorney to allow my children to visit me in jail. A part of me thought it was a cruel joke on my wife's part. I know realize that this kind of behavior is simply just her personality.






My attorney also indicated that in the restraining order that I would have to meet my children in the jail. I quickly refused that offer too. I thought to myself, "Why should I subject my children to this? I thought. I told my attorney that I would go along with whatever plan my wife had, as I didn't know what to do anyway. In many ways I didn't understand what she was trying to accomplish. I thought that she was just trying to torment me in jail further perhaps. I was very skeptical, but I kept believing that God was doing something to change her heart. The attorney told me the children had been told that I was on a long trip to Florida.

By now, I had begun to take responsibility for my actions. I'd begun to look deep; inside myself for answers and explanations for what had contributed to my behavior and patterns. I thought about the times that I was away from home and how I would neglect my wife. I thought of all those times, that I was physically there, but my heart wasn't. I thought of how I basically used to use her for sex. In fact, the only time I could recall making love to her, was the few times that coinciding with my children's conception. During those times, I thought of it all as just a traded off. She wanted children, I wanted sex.

Looking back though, I realize that she didn't have the ability to communicate what she wanted. So, sometimes she would use others to talk to me, like her sister, which I hated. In the beginning of our relationship, it was obvious that in many ways that we were just unequally yoked. But I felt that our relationship could work. I felt that I could somehow cover her sins and shortcomings. I thought I could balance out her inadequacies. I thought that I could change her into who I envisioned that she could become.

My passionate attempts to bring my family back together were indeed a breach of the law. But the things that I'd done, in no way could be compared to what my wife had done to me. She had me charged with a felony offense for contacting her. Consequently, she indicated to the DA that she had made a mistake and wanted the charges dropped, but it was too late. The state picked up the charges and was moving forward with the prosecution. In the state of Georgia, the black male is always going to become the enemy in the court room. He is considered guilty until proven innocent. There is no one in a court room that is his friend except Jesus. Everyone who has come to court, is there to nail him a coffin. From the projects to the prison, is they're goal. The eradication of black males via the courts in the state of Georgia, for profit is their only goal.

The prosecution of a man who had done nothing but send his wife emails and texts on a restraining order is a systematic method, designed to destroy another black family. My wife had played right into the hands of the racist regime in Gwinnett County. I felt that she wanted to have



a relationship with her sister, a common law type of marriage. I had evidence to support it as well, but I could only speculate about the inordinate relationship that they had.


I was trapped by a black widow that I needed to be able to forgive for my heart to be right with Jesus. But how to find sympathy and love in a jail cell, was my constant challenge. How to forgive your loved one for such an injustice? I knew the Lord had been working on her heart and I knew the Lord hadn't forgotten my works; the works that I'd done in my children. I knew he would count my faith as righteousness as he had with Abraham and Hezekiah. I was beginning to understand the concept of God deriving positive results from adversity and suffering.

I knew that I would have to resist the temptation of anger and resentment. And I knew that I needed to somehow embrace the unique but painful opportunity to grow. And, I knew I would have to trust him if I ever wanted to see my family again. I still loved my wife, but I wouldn't know to pray about the restoration of my marriage until very much later. Being surrounded by negative people all day was taxing, to say the least. The on-shift nurse gave me grief about a request for another asthma refill inhaler and she said that she would not be helping me again. She told me next time I needed one, or her help, I would have to go to someone else. I prayed I wouldn't run into her again. I knew that if I needed to come to her again, I would be prepared.

I needed a change of mind though; I needed a renewed mind and a clean spirit. The spirit that only the love of Jesus could bring. I needed a radically new way of thinking about Christianity and of my obligation to ministering. I needed a paradigm shift in my belief systems; I needed the Lord, to take over my thoughts.

My bond hearing was set for **January 17, 2014**. This date would leave me would leave me two weeks to stop the pending foreclosure of my home in Atlanta. But I remained in faith. I didn't believe that the Lord would have put the property into my hand to begin with, to have it taken away from me. There was a young inmate who had checked into the pod. He had a new pencil. I asked him to swap it with my chow. He said I could keep it. He had no idea I would finish my manuscript with that very pencil.

I had been waiting patiently on the Lord for a new pencil to appear. I would give the Lord thanks for every little thing. Nothing seemed insignificant to me or unintentional anymore and it



probably never again after this experience in the valley. I was seeking the Lord's face and building a relationship with him. I wasn't just getting close to him just to get out of Jail.


My Joy was short-lived that afternoon. An inmate asked me at chow to draw him. I told him I would but that I would need some time to do it. I told him I would start the work in my cell from memory, then complete it later with him. I felt there was no rush to complete it, neither did he. So, I thought I'd set the drawing aside for a few days. Suddenly, there was a commotion on the top floor, a rustling of sorts. I saw a goon squad guards on the upper deck. And I thought to myself, "this can't be good.

The Gwinnett county Goon squad officers specialized in tactical and aggressive takedown of inmates, and by any means necessary. They had the latest military style weapons and technology. Coupled with the latest physical training and punishment techniques of inmates. The guards wore special fatigued combat gear while the inmates had flip flops and pajamas to wear to court.

Most of the Gwinnett county jail guards and were Iraqi and Afghanistan war veterans, who had just returned from active duty and needed a reason to test their news toys, on any inmate possible. Most of them were looking for an opportunity to try their new toys on US soil and in the jail on inmates and they all had a hard on for it. Meanwhile, the inmates didn't even a paper napkin to wipe our mouths after we ate.

The goon squad guards drug him down the staircase, backward. He was handcuffed and facing away from the guards. They violently dragged him down the flights of stairs backward, with his naked feet hitting every step of the metal staircase on the way down. His hands were handcuffed behind him, creating an opening for the guard on either side of him, to pass his arm through. Making his body like a tea cup. In that moment, I thought of Jesus on the cross, and the way the Roman soldiers positioned his body to cause the most pain and suffering in his body. Causing the body Jesus to convulse in pain as he suffered and bleed.

One guard tugged and jerked at him and looked a tea cup. One guard for each handle. As they dragged him across the floor, his feet tried to catch a footing on the floor as they drug his body along the metal floor. Finally, he stopped trying to resist. And when he did, his went limp and fell. His face showed the pain and agony that he was in. And his teeth were grinding from the agony and pain of his locked shoulders being used as handles, to drag his motionless body across the floor.



The sound of a man's unconscious in the corridor adjoining the sally port, where there are no cameras. I wondered what his offense was. I wondered if he had a family. I wondered if he had a wife. I wondered if he knew Jesus. I wanted to act; I wanted to respond. I wanted to react. But I did nothing. Like Peter on the night when Jesus was taken in the garden. We spoke of doing something about it. We all vowed to take action, when the time came. We vowed to bring light to the violence and mistreatment to inmates, at the Gwinnett county jail, when we were able to.


I could feel the prayers of those who cared about me and I knew how to pray. Like feathers being lifted through the air, the peace of God was upon me and I intended to hold on to it and not waver in my faith. I was convinced that the Lord still had a plan for my life and that it was irrevocable. I knew that I still had favor with him. I knew I had to give back to the lost and minister to those who needed to know the Lord Jesus. Like me, those who were imperfect and broken. Just like the Lord wants us to come to come him.

But how to lift up his name, in my present condition; how to give God glory, in jail? How to sing in a strange land? How not to seem boastful of my faith and yet not appear to be ashamed to preach the Gospel message? How to be positive every day no matter what happened, while admonishing the inmates?

I thought of Jesus and how he was so unorthodox. He did nothing the aristocracy wanted and he never complied with their unholy secret financial practices. He did everything his Father told him to do. I knew that the Lord had brought me through so much, but I still didn't know how to accept that he would give me the desires of my heart, given my crimes and sinful living. I felt I'd abused his grace and mercy just one too many times.

But I kept on praising and worshiping him through the storm. And through my anger and pain, I kept on believing that he would grant my petitions through his riches and glory. I knew that I was his favored, I knew that I could ask for anything. I was letting the guilt go and knew I could come before the throne of Grace directly.

I'd been trying to reach my dad for weeks and I wasn't getting any responses from my calls to him at all. He wouldn't pick up the phone when I called. I hadn't spoken to any of my family members for months now, and I didn't know if the world and my family were against me. The terrible thoughts of my family turning their backs on me were incessant. I would learn later that this was the furthest from truth. But during this period, there was so much paranoia and confusion, that I couldn't. It was heart-breaking, but I kept believing and I kept the faith. I asked Brother Charles if he would call my dad upon his release. He promised me that he would. I



needed my dad to manage a conference call between me and my mortgage company. I knew my property was in trouble and I needed a specific date, if at all possible. I needed someone on the phone to dial the mortgage company, 'Wells Fargo, for me. I needed the help of the Lord.


My Brother, Charles in the cell next to me did agree to call my Dad, when he got out and to ask my dad to pick up the phone. He would tell him that I would be calling with a calling card. I knew the call would take a full half hour which was the remaining amount on my card. I felt indebted to Brother Charles. I believed that he would make the call for me to my dad and I believed that the Lord would help me. Bro, Charles left the jail a week before Christmas, but I knew that I'd see him again someday.

It was **Christmas Morning, 2013** and I knew that it was going to be an interesting day. I had mailed my dad a letter informing him that I'd be calling him on Christmas day. I decided to try my dad again and speak to him about organizing bond money for the forthcoming hearing on January 17. I took a shower after the morning cleanup and prayed during my shower. I prayed to the Lord that he would go before me, on the call with my Dad. I prayed that he would help with the words to say to my dad, and that my dad would be receptive to my plight. And that he would not allow his anger over my situation to affect him helping me.

The pressure and the stress associated with being confined while being unable to communicate with the world outside; and most of all my family was incredibly difficult and painful. I felt as though I was the enemy now, and I felt that I'd failed my family immensely. I felt that my dad was very upset with me, and I also felt that I'd contributed to his failing heart condition and hypertension. somehow causing my dad, to be some kind of an accomplice in my folly. I didn't want to hurt him anymore. I just needed him to help me, to get a call into Wells Fargo, to find out the actual foreclosure date.

I knew that it would take at least 3 months for an official foreclosure to be processed. I knew that I was running out of time, to save my home from foreclosure. Now, I had become just like all the other criminals in jail, who had lost everything. Their families, their jobs, their lives all gone. Now, I was just like everyone else. Helpless and dependent on the help of their family's friends or other contacts, outside of the jail and at the mercy of the Gwinnett county judges. **The new Jim Crow.**

It was like an endless game of Russian roulette. Always waiting and waiting for the call, the call for some good news from your attorney or from a friend. In my case, none of my colleagues, and none of my associates could ever know about this. They could never know what



had happened to my life. I had fallen from grace, like a disbarred attorney. Like a corrupt politician, who'd been brought down as a result of their own self implosion.


The experience was gut renting and demoralizing. I'd been a six-figure senior system engineer. I'd climbed the corporate ladder, excelling in the profession of information technology. I'd worked for major corporations and had several homes and a family, in an upscale neighborhood in Gwinnett county. I'd owned 4 Mercedes Benzes, traveled the world, served the country honorably, I'd even been a landlord. But now, I was helpless and just another inmate awaiting a bond hearing, from the new *Jim Crow* judges.

As I showered, I felt a sense of total contentment and peace about whatever I was going to learn about the status of my house. I would be content with whatever the outcome would be. Selah. This affirmation, as tears trickled down my face. It was a morning free time and I'd been meditating and praying about the matter of my property, all night. "Lord, should I?" What if he doesn't answer? I was learning to trust the Lord; and that he would do what I asked of him. I was going for it. I was going to try to call again. The morning free time was announced over the horn and I made my way to the phone, it was available, no one on it yet. I wouldn't need to fight over it this time.

"Sox exchange"! McCallister shouted over the horn. The spirits of frustration, anxiety and anger gripped me, at the announcement. It was a common practice for the guards to do weekly uniform and linen change and maintenance on our beaks. Causing us to simply miss the break time out of the cage for the day. It's no wonder why inmates would get into fights all the time. The guards only added to their tensions with stunts like these all the time. I knew the sox exchange would take well over an hour.

I knew that this was an attempt by the enemy to beat me down, ever further. I knew that I had to get to the phone and call my dad. But now the guard had called a lousy sox exchange. Which meant, I would miss my call with my dad; a call that I had prayed about it all night. I knew the Lord had told me what to do and I knew that he told me when to call, to get a hold of my dad.

My emotions were running high as I darted over to Guard McCallister and said. "Guard, I have a conference call with my dad and mortgage company". "If I do the sox exchange, I will miss it". "May I be excused from it, please"? I waited for his answer, as though I were waiting for an answer from God, and with earnest expectation. There was so much riding on the call. I needed to know if my property had been foreclosed on, already. I didn't panic, I was waiting on the Lord, and I trusted him now more than ever.



Guard McCallister answered, “Go ahead, make your call”. The Lord was using him mightily that day. He had busted me the day before with extra towels under my bunk for warmth. He didn’t have to say yes. He could’ve made me conform to the rules and miss my call and he would’ve been justified, but he didn’t. He was the kind of man who would allow a blessing to flow through him. He listened to his heart. He listened to Jesus.

I hurried to an available phone, and I started the call. Immediately was given a message that my card didn’t have enough time on it. I tried the process again and got the same result, over and over again, each time with the same result. Suddenly, I suspected a problem with my calling card. But how? How could the balance be wrong? I’d only used it once. I was in a jail, trying to make a critical call, with a card that had been compromised. I was furious and confused and I didn’t know what to do at that moment. So, I stopped and prayed and didn’t panic.


I realized then, that someone had hacked my phone card account, and had stolen the remaining card balances. There I was, needing to make the phone call of my life, and someone had stolen my card number and hacked it. It was my own fault. I’d been so naive and so gullible. In that moment of grief and embarrassment, I remembered that I’d let another inmate use my card. I loaned it to him for an hour to have an hour of time from it. This dude had obviously hacked my card used the full amount and taken advantage of me. But there was nothing that I could do about it. I could have confronted him, but he’d only lie about. I knew that I had to just eat it and chalk it up to experience.

I knew then that I had to protect myself; I knew then that I had no friends in the place that I was in. I knew that I was surrounded by people who used to take advantage of people. And, I knew that I was at the mercy of the new Jim Crow judges of Gwinnett county. So, now I needed to call my dad collect. I knew that he wouldn’t be happy about that. But, I decided to call him collect anyway. I didn’t know what to expect, but I felt that I should try. I dialed again and got the collect call option. I knew the Lord was on the line with me; I knew that he cared, and I knew that I could ask for anything.

I decided right then and there to be content with whatever the outcome. I was hanging on an old analog phone, in a jail, with a line of angry inmates behind me waiting. I knew that my dad would answer, and he did, and he accepted the collect charge. I didn’t know what to say, so I just said hello. He said hi.

I began the conversation, and I told him that I needed to move money from my GUI account to my checking account and that I would need his help me with this. I knew that it would





be a challenge for him, so I asked the Lord to help us. I took my time speaking; I was careful to not offend with doing computer stuff for me. He was always intimidated by them, and he thought that I was some kind of specially gifted person, to have excelled in technology, the way that I had.


I knew that I had to be very patient, while being mindful of the fact that this was a collect call. As I contemplated this, I was reminded of the penal system in the south being designed to make money off of inmates and their families, using the phone systems. Through what I call extortion, via the payphone systems. The payphone system in the state of Georgia's penal system is one of the most profitable tentacles utilized in maximizing profits, in the Institution of Incarceration. Inmates and their families, are charged a premium rate for phone calls. Phone calls that cost near to nothing now, with the advent of cell phone plans.

But I calmed down my emotions and refocused on the task at hand. Which was to get my dad to log into my GUI account, and file for the weeks that I'd missed. Which was 7 by now. I managed to get him to log in. I had at least seven weeks of benefits available to me so far, as I hadn't filled for unemployment insurance, in at least seven weeks, since I'd been incarcerated. My dad was traversing through the fields to file the weeks of compensation, outstanding. I had no feelings at all about having my dad file for me, and on my behalf. I didn't think twice about it.

I was desperate, and it was the only plan that I had. My dad traversed through the application as best he could. I tried to talk slowly, to not intimidate or upset him. He was under enough stress, with me being incarcerated. He seen me go from serving in the armed forces. To becoming a father. To flourishing as I.T. professional, and even a land lord. Now, here he was talking to me from a jail cell and having to apply for my unemployment benefits, for bond money. It was a despicable and deplorable situation to be in, yet no one around me seemed to be fazed by their circumstances. No one around me seemed to be ashamed of being incarcerated. I could never get comfortable; I could never get used to be incarcerated.

Then, as my dad finally filed for the weeks that I'd been incarcerated, there was an error message that said that **I could not certify**. Because I hadn't logged into the system, for the last three weeks. My mouth dropped as my dad read this to me. I realized at that moment that I wouldn't be able to get the bond money, from this source. But I didn't panic. I thought we'd move on and try calling the mortgage company. I knew that I was asking a lot of my dad; I knew that I was pushing my luck with him.

He had just heard that the source that I was trying to get money for my bond, wasn't going to be available. I could hear the frustration and pain over my situation in his voice. I knew




that it hurt him. And I knew that his hurt was being masked by anger. My dad was old school and had been cultured by an era that said that you couldn't show emotions, and that you couldn't show your true feelings. So, he would hide his hurt with expressions of anger and impatience with me.

I understood this behavior and I didn't let it move me, we had an agenda and that was to find out the foreclosure date on my house in South West Atlanta. So, I asked my dad to move on and to call the mortgage company to get an update. He did, and he managed to get a conference call with Wells Fargo, on the line. I didn't know what to expect; I didn't know what I would hear. I was in jail calling about my mortgage that was in an active foreclosure status. I had been approved for a loan modification just before I was incarcerated. I'd stopped a foreclosure, which was set for **November 5, 2013**. But I wasn't able to follow through on the process, due to being apprehended before finishing the paperwork. But, I didn't panic. I acted as though the foreclosure had been stopped, in faith.

So, we were on the phone with the mortgage company. I had no idea what to expect nor what to do. I knew the Lord had given me the vision for the property. I knew that he had a plan, no matter what I was seeing or hearing to allow the property to be foreclosed on. I had to believe, from the inside of a jail cell. We were transferred to the foreclosure team on the phone. Then a very helpful and encouraging lady spoke with us and indicated that there had been a new foreclosure date which had been set for **January 5, 2014**. For me, it was a sign from God that he was working for me; I knew he cared. I knew he would keep his promise to me.

Even though I'd heard the worst news that I could have, I still felt that the Lord had already organized the desires for me to maintain my property. And I felt that he had been working on my behalf and for his glory, in the background. In that moment, I knew he was working on my situation and I knew that I needed to turn over my focus on the matter on to him, and I did. Through his ordeal, I had figured out that through my trust and exercise of faith, God would work. And show me his limitless power. So, I waited on him, knowing that whatever was coming, that he was in control and that he had my best interest at heart.

I had to learn and to understand that what I was going through was only for a season. And what do seasons do? They change. It wasn't a game, it wasn't luck or wishful thinking. It was my faith that was being counted as righteousness. It was real what was happening. I could reference my heroes in life but only from an intangible physical perspective. People like Steve Jobs, who'd lost all he'd worked for and then rebounded from his fall. Or the founder of



Chipotle, Steve Ells, who borrowed money from his dad for his start up. Or Elon Musk of SpaceX. They all had to believe in something they couldn't yet see. But they still had tangibles to work with. But Jesus required faith and trust in his word without seeing your way and the reference being my life's experiences and his written word only.


A couple of months before, I'd gone in the garage and pulled out my wheel barrel. I was going to continue with the landscaping projects that I'd started months before my fall. I had been doing landscape work on a property that was in foreclosure set for November 5, 2013. I knew Jehovah loved me. I knew he cared; I knew I had to stand on his word. I was going to act like it was already performed.

Foolishness to man, but I knew God would honor my faith. It was miraculous I got the foreclosure stopped two hours before the foreclosure date. Praise God. What happened was an example of what happens when walking by faith. I didn't fully understand what the Lord had done for me through faith until much later. But it was an example of what happens when we put his word to the test. I had seen the miraculous happen and I was going to trust him for the same now, in jail. I knew then that I had to trust the Lord forever and I knew that there would be other challenges coming my way.

But I rested in him and his word. I had so many plans for the property. I could envision my children running around the property and playing basketball on a court that I would design and excavate. I knew the Lord wouldn't let me lose it and not allow me to fulfill my dreams. As they were good dreams and ones that he I knew that he had given me. I knew that I was dreamer, but dreaming is what people and America is made of. Without dreams, we die. I was already living in the supernatural, and I had to remember God's provision. I knew that God owned everything already. And I knew that he isn't in any way close to my small level of thinking. I knew that he could do exceedingly and abundantly above all that I could think or imagine.

## **Chapter 14: Truly Blessed**

The next morning, as I was in the middle of meditation, brother Anthony knocked on my cell door and asked if I had any extra paper for Bible study. He began to encourage me and speak to me about the forthcoming hearing. We both had learned that day that we both had hearing dates the morning of the seventeenth of January. As we talked, Brother Luke knocked on the cell door. I offered him an orange that I'd stashed earlier. We began to speak of the Mercy's of God. I'd been reading that day in the Daily Bread of the Lord's mercy enduring forever.



I had affectionately named him Luke, after Luke, Jesus's disciple. Brother Luke then began to tell us of how the Lord had blessed him in court. He had miraculously received a bond on a weapons charge involving a weapon that had had been traced to a murder. He didn't understand why. I understand God's miraculous grace and mercy and I understood that God could use him to encourage me also.


I gave him a copy of an extra Daily Bread that we'd been using as a study in the mornings with whomever would come and gather during the morning breaks, for the study and fellowship. We'd noticed that the flock was growing daily. The Lord was adding to the church daily. Brother Anthony said that he felt lead to partake in the morning bible studies. And he said that he needed someone to interpret in Spanish while he ministered in English. But he said there was no one around.

Of all the Hispanic inmates who were bilingual, none would help him with his effort to minister to the Hispanic brothers. I told him the Lord would work it out. He told me that he believed that the Lord will provide a bilingual minister to the flock. Brother Anthony had been giving and giving to the inmates but hadn't been replenishing it seemed to me. He needed a refilling and fresh anointing. He needed the encouragement that only the Holy Spirit can give.

Officer McCallister was on shift that morning, so we knew that we could share and swap food, which would be a blessing. That day, and going forward, the brothers, Brother Anthony and Luke (the disciples), as I nicknamed them, had more chow than we could eat. We had food go give away now. The more chow we gave away, the more we seemed to have to give away. We were grateful to have had a nice warm meal that day.

It was New Year's Day, January 2014. We were happy to receive a form of a traditional celebratory dinner of smoked ham, greens, and pumpkin pie. I stowed plenty of it away for breakfast for the next morning. It was freezing in the cell, no need for an appliance to keep the food cold. That morning, the oncoming shift guard was the foulest spirited person I'd ever encountered. I won't name him, but he was an evil little runt. His name was Officer Gupta. He hid his evilness under a cloak of a sinister smile. He would walk the dorm floor while we ate leaning in over our tables, to intimidate us and to make sure that we didn't eat any more than we should. Why did he need to watch us eat? He announced he'd be doing cell inspections later. I wasn't moved by that. I just prayed and slipped into my relaxation meditative mode.

I promised Jehovah that night that when he delivered me from this present hell that I would build him an altar and pay tithes to Fellowship Church of God in Christ in Jacksonville



Florida while I was in the Navy. Where I had learned to worship him God, in an entirely new and different way. I understood and had faith in planting seeds if I just believed. I was going to continue to worship God and believe for my deliverance. I would later learn and understand that I needed to take my eyes of the matter altogether and turn it all over to him in faith and allow Jehovah to work it out before my very eyes.


The last forty-eight hours had been such a blessing to us, because our regular five-day guards had been on. Which meant we were able to sleep without being awakened for arm band checks and weren't going to be unnecessarily harassed either. We would also be able to swap chow. We'd been experiencing discomfort of an inmate who had a tendency of loud flatulence and belching that could be heard throughout the pod, all night long. I later learned it was actually our night shift guard. He had been on since I'd been incarcerated. I thought all this time it was an inmate. Laughing, as I told T. We both laughed, and said, "Well, as long as he doesn't wake us up at night for the arm band count, he can do whatever he chooses to".

He was the regular guard at night, that we felt that had been sent from God to watch over us at night. There were two other guards that I believed were also sent by God. The three of them never punished us. They never looked down on us and they never mistreated us. They were our friends and they showed us the love of God that was within them. The regular 5-day night shift guard was a good chap and a former U.S. Marine also. I had a lot of admiration for him. And despite his ungratifying job he always seemed to be in a pleasant mood. We used to take the piss with him; we used to take advantage of him.

Once, I'd stashed some mayonnaise packs one day; like 5 packs or so. When he did his required inspection, which was really for drugs, he discovered the packs in plain view. I told him they were for my hair to be used as a conditioner. The stuff worked great as a hair conditioner. He confiscated them all though and that's all that he did, when he could've sent me to the hole.

That same morning at chow, I told my Brother in Christ Charles in the next cell about how our favorite guard hadn't sent me to the hole, but that he could've. I told him about he had missed the extra blankets on my rack, as all the other guards had. We laughed until our sides hurt. I surmised that we laughed in the way that people laughed at Noah. But Noah believed Jehovah. I knew he was with me through those random bunk inspections; they never found drugs or any other contraband in mine.

I was clean, and the guards knew it. They knew I was a believer and they feared me to a degree. They knew that I was not the average inmates. They knew that I'd had a life that was uncommon to theirs. They knew that I was very skilled in areas that they couldn't fathom. They



knew that I had more formal education than any of them. Some of them despised me, while some admired me. Some wouldn't acknowledge me because of the God in me, and because of their own ungodliness. Some would call me college boy. But I loved them despite it. Like Jesus, I would look beyond their faults and see their needs.


My Brother Davis had started walking around the pod for exercises and stress relief. He started using the perimeter of the day room like a virtual track, walking the circumference of the room, like it was a corporate outdoor track. Like the kind I'd been used to running on, only a few months earlier. I knew he had class from the very first time in speaking with him, about prayer.

I started walking with him on our morning free times and talking with him even more. We would exchange about the goodness and mercy of our king, as we power walked the circumference of the day room and lapped it. Brother Davis was beginning to become a leader among the Christians in jail. His bunkmate and others began to look to him for guidance and encouragement. The place was becoming a virtual church in jail.

Me and my Brother Davis talked more and more day by day. Turns out Brother Davis was a technical recruiter. I never to this day asked him why he was there. As we spoke, I said to the Lord, "You have got to be kidding?" How could you give me what I need in a jail cell? I'd been complaining to the Lord for weeks, that I didn't have anyone to talk to, and that there was no one around me, who had my background or experiences. How could you bless me with knowledge and resources in jail? And how could you use me to be a blessing to others in jail and encourage a corporate executive in jail? I thought to myself, who is man that he is mindful of him.

I was wrong about that notion. This was a reality that I would learn later, which is that there are people from all walks of life become incarcerated for many different reasons. And they are people from all walks of life, genders ages and races creeds. One thing for sure, we all make mistakes sometimes get caught, or just caught up in circumstances. And in the state of Georgia, the covert new Jim Crow laws were in full effect and being utilized fully. Within the confines of the Enterprise of Incarceration of Minorities.

But I felt that I was becoming what the Lord wanted me to become through this process. I was trying with all that was in me to not present myself to the inmates, but to lift up Jesus before them or wherever he would send me. The changes in me were astonishing. I knew that I had become and was still becoming a new man, (a new man in Christ). I knew that I had such a long way to go, and I knew that I had so much more to learn. I would ask the Lord daily, "Why me, Lord?" "Why have you chosen me?" "I am afraid, and the least of men". Then, I would hear his soft response in my spirit which would say, "in your weakness, I am made strong".



Now, my writing had become an obsession to me. Mostly, because it was the most productive way to spend my time. As well as a way to chronical all that I was seeing and experiencing. I knew I was on to something big; something much bigger than I'd ever imagined ever before. I knew that I had been anointed to document it all, and I knew that my story needed to be told.

Then, I began to understand and accept my burden a little better. I knew that I was called and now, it would be easier to accept my charge and election. Now, I could accept and bear the pain, as I understood that it was all part of his master plan. I knew then that the calamity wasn't God's fault or doing I understood that I'd caused the adversity in my own life and the lives of others that loved me. I had only myself to blame, but I also knew that it was an opportunity for him to get the glory out of my life. I knew that I would be the vessel that he would use to accomplish this goal.


Which was the goal of bringing awareness to the imbalance and racism that exist in the Gwinnett County court system against African American families and the court's covert agenda to dismantle black families, when-ever presented the opportunity to. The Enterprise of Incarceration, that is pervasive in the Southern States.

I knew the Lord was with me and I knew that he would guide me to his truth and deliver me from Shoal. But, I knew that meanwhile, I had to work to fulfill his will. And I knew light was stronger than darkness. I knew that it was only a matter of time before the tables would turn for me. I knew that I was going to learn the discipline of patience.

But I would have to give myself away; I understood that to whom much is given, much is also required. I knew that the Lord expected me to work were I was and to spread the Gospel message to the poor. "Give me your strength, oh Nazarene, to spread your Word, and do your will, kind King. "Your humble servant is here for you. The spirit of the Lord was upon men, and he had anointed me to preach.

I asked the Lord daily to deliver me from incarceration. I also began to thank him for what he'd already done for me. And I prayed for him to give the balance I needed. I knew I was changing, by Jesus's love in me. The pain and anguish of losing my family began to be replaced with calling on and leaning on Jesus in my jail cell. I suppressed the pain with prayer and meditation.






I still didn't know clearly what to pray for, as I didn't understand all that had happened. I only knew to pray for God to stop the pain. I was still trying to rationalize and understand what had happened. While I was simultaneously learning to accept my inadequacies and negative tendencies to respond negatively to circumstances and to women, inappropriately. It all seemed so unfair, and my wife didn't seem to care. I loved my family, but I didn't know how to get us back to where we once were. So, I poured out my heart to the Lord, knowing that he could and would help me. Like David, I was broken and open. Which is what the Lord wants. "A broken heart and a contrite spirit, I will not despise.

During that period, I began to realize that the fight wasn't with me or her. It was with the enemy, the *devil* and myself. I realized that I needed to aim my intention to change towards the spirits that I had been allowing to influence me. I was gracefully becoming, 'self- aware. I realized then that I couldn't turn my wife's heart and I understood that I couldn't make her love me again. I realized that I couldn't make her turn her heart to the Lord, either. I realized that my wife had been blinded and bought into the lie that the ruler of the kingdom of darkness had sold her. In that a family is unimportant and not necessary. I knew then that my fight wasn't with her, but with the enemy. I realized then that I wasn't fighting against her. But that I was fighting for my own mind and the control of my spirit. Thereby, deriving the love from my wife and family, that I so desired and needed.

I knew that I had to let the Lord work it all out and give me strength to endure the suffering, believing that somehow, and someday I would receive the reward for my pain, and see my family restored. I believed that I would one day receive, "beauty for ashes. I knew that the key my healing and family restoration, was to completely allow my spirit to be saturated by his spirit. The right spirit, which is the spirit of the most-high God, Jehovah.

So, I finally decided to turn to the source to take the pain away, I realized that I should be asking for the ability to endure it and the wisdom to learn from the valley experience that I was now enduring. And then, at some point, pain the pain became easier to manage. I couldn't understand that part, but it was happening. I believed the peace that I was experiencing was a miracle.




As I began to cry to Jesus, it wasn't that the pain was gone, it wasn't that the problem wasn't still there, but I began to feel the peace that only God can bring through casting care upon him, can bring. I knew he would work it all out. I knew he had already restored my family. But I also realized that I would have to walk through the valley, to see the victory and restoration at the end. After a while, the day to day seemed just a little to bear. Like when you've suffered the loss of a loved one. With time passing, the pain seems easier to manage. I had relinquished the carrying of the burden on my own; I had turned it over to Jesus.

Brother Davis was becoming an encouragement for me daily. He was getting better, and it was obvious and visibly noticeable, that he was. I knew that it was the Holy Spirit and nothing that he'd done on his own. Having learned that he was a technical recruiter, I decided to talk to him about potential employment in the future. I wasn't going to waste the time in incarceration on trivial dialogue. And when I told him I was a senior IT engineer, he was shocked that I was as humble as I was and had never mentioned it. He had gotten to know me as a Christian, and that was all I'd presented to him or others.

I'd told Brother Davis, that I didn't know that there was anyone around who would understand my skills background or the lifestyle, that I'd been accustomed to prior to all of this. Myself and Brother Davis were both being presumptuous and thinking of God in a limited way, with regard to him being able to connect us with each other and or others of like minds and relative skills. I thought that I was the only one around, with my intellect. I thought I was the only one around who was conversant on the subjects that I knew and understood. Then I remembered what I'd learned; that God always has a witness and a remnant around somewhere.

The inability to connect with those around me about my lifestyle, used to depress me. But then I learned to focus on helping the inmates and to just try to forget about my own circumstance. And then, over time, I began not to see their faults. I could only see their spirit and their needs after a while. I began to see them as 'sentient beings. Who were in need of the help of the Lord, and I was there in this context to be a messenger of the Most-High. To deliver a word of life and healing through his spirit.

But how to be a blessing to the needy without drawing attention to myself, was always a challenge for me. I still had this need and tendency to brag about my background and the experiences that I had, and about my children in Gwinnett county. But I perceived that Brother



Davis was curious about why a man like me was incarcerated in the first place. So, I shared my story with him. He wasn't judgmental of me, he just listened. Just like Jesus would've done, when he was hearing the complaints of the men who wanted to stone the harlot.


I understood then that it was intentional, that we were there together at that place in time, although as uncomfortable as it was. Brother Davis wanted to know more about my skills. So, that morning, I sat down and drew by hand and with a pencil and paper, a sample Windows network design. I did it from memory. When I showed it to him, his jaw dropped. He couldn't understand how I could recall and illustrate a real network design on a piece of paper from memory and in a jail cell.

For me, it was simply just a way to keep my skills fresh as best as I could. It was a way to exercise my mind. And in some-way, I had derived a sense of being valued, by demonstrating that I could perform a professional process within the confines of such an environment and under such circumstances. I remember the sense of hope I felt, from having Brother Davis be so impressed by my draft. I felt as though the cosmos was saying to me, "you will work again as a professional.

It was an indication to myself and Brother Davis, that I hadn't forgotten what I'd learned, and that I'd actually done the work that I professed to have done. It was also an indication to Brother Davis, that I was worth the compensation, that I would later ask for from his recruiting agency. We had no access to technology or educational materials in the jail not even a newspaper. So, I found it very challenging to stay academically, professionally and technically challenged and mentally healthy. Most of the inmates spent their free time playing cards or just being engaged in trivial conversations. I spent hours trying to suppress the fact that I was getting progressively ignorant in jail.

But the Lord had other intellectual pursuits for me. I was being retrained and conditioned for another and greater role, in the human experience. But being the graceful God that he is, he heard my cries for help in providing sources of mental stimuli for me. I needed an academic challenge in jail. I needed the spirit of God to keep my brain working well. I also needed him to humble me, so that I could be able to share what I knew with anyone who might encounter. Meanwhile, I was forgetting the fact that while in this current valley situation, I was writing by hand. Which for me, as a typist, handwriting had become a lost skillset.

Now, I was determined to redeem the time and to improve myself mentally and physically while being incarcerated, by recreating myself through the pain and the pressure and deprivation. Later, I talked Brother Davis into doing a mock interview of me, just as and as close to what he would've with a normal candidate. I could see how Brother Davis, would've been



able to derive a feeling of value also, by doing the mock interview in jail. For him, it meant that someone in jail with his or at least similar corporate experiences, appreciated his status as a professional I.T. recruiter.

So, the more I thought about it, the more that I realized that God was working on both our behalf's. To give us what we needed in that moment, as children of God. New mercies, little mercy's every day. I continued to believe that I had favor with God, and I continued to believe on him for my release from incarceration. I continued to believe that soon I would hear the words, 'LeMay, pack it up!


We pretended to two corporate guys jogging along the virtual celestial track, that we'd created in our minds. And for a moment, we were back in the corporate world, being yuppies or buppies, (given the context of the story). Having a run after work among with some colleagues. We had created "Work Arounds, mental coping mechanisms for dealing with the trauma of being incarcerated and separated from all that we knew and loved.

A work around is technology related jargon. It means to provide a short-term fix long term solution. It means allowing people to work, although there is a system problem, that exist. Such as provided an alternative log on, for users who can access a normal VPN portal. But today, we were able to connect to some semblance of our lives back in the corporate world, through each other and our collective experiences. As, we jogged along, Brother Davis performed a verbal interview of me, in the Gwinnett county jail.

We gave glory to God for giving us the opportunity to exercise our brains and to strengthen our bodies, as we jogged along the virtual celestial track. We realized how much of a blessing it was being fed and inspired all but directly from the hands of God, while being incarcerated. It was like a river in the desert to a degree; it was like Manna from Heaven. We were flourishing in adversity; we were overcoming the adversity through our faith in God. We were thriving in adversity and receiving beauty for ashes. I'd begun to experience these blessings, about 7 days after Brother Davis was manifested to me.

## **Chap 15: Miracle Central**

I shared with Brother Davis, that I had concerns about my charges being an issue for me, in my life down the road. I told him that I believed that a negative outcome of my case, could have dire consequences on my career. His response to me was. "I think that you are thinking about things that you don't need to be concerned about." I will never forget those words, it was a




statement of faith that was profound to me. Brother Davis had unknowingly boosted my faith and put the wind back in my sails.

As we walked and talked about Jesus, it seemed that the celestial track illuminated with the light and glory of God. I imaged it looking something like the Shekinah glory that would come down on to the top of the ark of the covenant, the mercy seat. When God would meet with the high priest on the day of atonement. The track looked like a rainbow to me; I imagined us running on a rainbow, in jail.

The oncoming guard came on and started his condescending usual speech to the inmates about how he didn't want any crap from us on his shift, which was the usual protocol from the oncoming swing shift guards. It was freezing that night in the pod and cell that day. I found myself contemplating about the vents on the wall and how I could fill them to block the air blowing through them into the cell. I couldn't understand air conditioning blowing cold air in the cell in January. It was explained to us that it was to keep bacteria under control, and to kill mosquitoes. Mosquitos in January?

I knew that it was just another method of cutting costs, to increase the profit margin of the jail. They would reduce the A.C. in the summer and turn off the heat in the winter, to maximize profits. It was all part of the new Jim Crow era; the enterprise of incarceration in the south, and with the Gwinnett County Jail. So, modern HVAC systems would not be implemented there. Yet, the guards had the latest military styled equipment and clothing.

Then, I started thinking of how to block the vents to prevent the cold air from being blown into the cell. I thought of paper, plastic, etc. All would be noticeable. The vents were mounted and plastered into the cinderblock walls, and the vents were painted white. But then, I noticed several tooth-paste tubes sitting on the sink. I thought to myself, "it was worth a try. "Everyone to the day room!" Shouted the guard over the PA system. We all fell in outside our cells immediately said. While we were standing in formation, for what-ever was about to happen. I said to T. "Get as much toothpaste as you can on your break." He asked, "Why?" With the expression of a Cheshire cat smiling, I replied. "Trust me." I took a small amount and smeared it on my finger, and had T, look out the cell door window to see that the coast was clear. When he said it was, I climbed up on the toilet to a vent, and said. "Watch this." I smeared some toothpaste over a couple of the honeycomb-style vent holes with my finger. I made a thin layer



on a few holes, then turned to T for approval, with the same Cheshire cat smile that I'd had before.

He asked, "How did you come up with that?" I said, "God just gave me the idea." I covered the holes of the vent with the toothpaste over the next hour or so as discretely as I could, using my finger like a paint brush while being careful not to cover the entire vent, so that it wouldn't look obviously tampered with. When I was done, I walked around the pod to see if I could notice the layers of tooth paste on our vents, from various perspectives within the day room.


Then I said to T. "If we get busted, it's my fault, I did it all on my own". "You knew nothing about what I had done." He didn't respond. I knew it meant a week in solitary if I was found out, but we were both on board. And now both accomplices to the crime of blocking the air vents for heat. I was essentially doing paper-mache and the application looked like paint spatter. I was rather proud of the work when I was done and took some time to gloat over my work and pat myself on the back for coming with the ingenious plan.

Everything was going great, until T came back to the cell, and said, "Man, it sure smells strong of mint in here". "I can smell it going out into the pod". "Not to mention what will happen when the steam from tap is turned on." I didn't panic. I prayed to God for his grace over the matter. I'd done the deed, now I might have shot myself in the foot, trying to keep warm. Me and T laughed that day until our sides split that day, about it all.

The rotating shift guard had come on, and I'd left a sandwich out on my rack. Which was a very big no-no in jail, and for a number of reasons. First of all, it creates an opportunity for theft. And also, the necessity for the guards to have to perform spot cell searches. Secondly, we weren't supposed to keep food in the cells, for the risk of pests.

Just so happens the guard was walking by looking for things to persecute inmates about. He looked in our cell and he immediately saw the sandwich on my rack. I said to him, "I'm busted." Now this wasn't boy scouts leaving their gear adrift. This was not college kids who weren't keeping their dorms untidy. This was intimidation and fear tactics in a jail. He said. "You have two choices, eat it now, or it goes in the trash." I said. "I'll eat now, thanks." He didn't have to give those options; God bless him. I was fortunate that he didn't respond negatively towards me, he could have sent me to the hole, for such an infraction.

He would become one of the guards who I had already begun to admire the most, out of all of them. The guard would never understand why he did the things for me that he did, but I



gave God the glory for it any way. I knew that God was working through him to show me compassion. He didn't understand why God had favored me, but he was showing me a side of his himself that revealed to me that he knew the Lord. He never noticed the toothpaste on the vents. Me and T laughed like drunken sailors, for hours, but only after the Guard had left, of course.


The next morning, the sun was shining through the top of the cinderblock enclosure, behind the day room. I was glad to be alive and gave God thanks for another day. I love the sun, and I sat in front the beams coming through the glass for as long as any little break or opportunity, would allow me to be able to. The rays of light were nourishing to my soul and skin. During those periods, I would imagine myself being on a boat or on the backyard relaxing. And then, for a short moment, I would drift away for the stolen moment. Sometimes, I would stand in that glass, and I would pretend I was on a golf course, practicing my driving. The inmates going out to smoke would say, "You look crazy." I would respond, "By faith, I'll be doing it soon, and you'll still be here smoking."

That morning, I got to sneak in a T.V. news report, before the guard made us change the channel. We weren't allowed to watch the news, which was the very first thing that I'd turn on when I'd get to the tele first. I couldn't understand grown men sitting there watching day time TV, in jail. I thought I would learn something where I could; I wanted to watch Bloomberg, but we didn't have it here at the Gwinnett county Hilton jail. The guards would switch the TV station as soon as they saw that the news on. The inmates would sometimes switch it before they got there. I never did, I'd always just wait till they came. I wasn't an instigator or being disrespectful, I just didn't like the idea of a grown man being told what to watch on television. Especially since I just wanted an hour or so of information. So, on this small matter, I would always rebel.

I was exhausted that morning; I'd been up all night, listening to T toss and turn all night. I knew he couldn't help it, being in jail was a huge adjustment for him. I thought of how my youngest would toss and turn at night sometimes. And then, I'd sleep with him to calm him. I'd sleep with him also, when my wife would snore me out some nights. Now I wish that I could only here my wife snoring or my baby tossing and turning. I'd do anything to speak to my babies at that moment. I missed them so much, and I began to wonder if I'd made the wrong decision about not allowing them to visit me in jail. Yet, I knew that I could never do that. I hadn't seen my babies for three months now.

I thought of Mary on the cross looking at her baby. I knew that she didn't have a choice and that my wife **did** have a choice in keeping me detained. But I kept on believing and knowing that as long as I kept my face toward him, he would deliver me from bondage, one day.





Meanwhile, I would continue to be a blessing to others, where I could be. I was finally beginning to see that my adversity and my pain, was all useful and necessary for my growth and for his purposes.


Although it hurt, I was almost ready to tell the Lord, “thank you for my trials.” Which would be a paradoxical shift for me, and an entirely new way of thinking. A transformation of the mind; but I was convinced that I was right about the things that I had been building and about the things that the Lord had been creating within me. I knew my instincts were correct. I would need to work harder, but in the spirit and staying in the supernatural realm to grow and to be in tuned with his spirit. I needed to get to a point and level of understanding to know that all things are really possible in the spirit; in the supernatural realm.

Enter Brother Matt. An inmate who was the proverbial Johnny come lately. Saw me practicing my golf swing and noticed me. “You play golf?” He said. I said, “I pretend that I can play.” He ended up giving me some pointers. We were in jail talking about golf. Now I knew that Jesus hung out in jails; I knew that Jesus cared for the incarcerated. I shared some coffee with Brother Matt that I had been blessed with, as a gesture of thanks. In keeping with the spiritual law of receiving a blessing to be a blessing, Brother Matt gave me a pair of homemade earplugs, made from flip flops.

I was grateful to have met him Brother Matt, he was leaving today. I asked Gunny Land if I could be moved into his bunk when he left. It was further from the noise in the pod and away from the ambient cigarette smoke. He said that he’d consider it. Then I decided to just give thanks for the peace for what I already had.

I went to medical that day and I was complaining because I didn’t want to waste my time. But I got there and had an unexpected conversation with a young inmate who was an ex-pro football player. He was a repeat offender, but also a believer. He was a young man with piercing grey eyes. We talked a while in the waiting area. I shared with him about how I was heading to my bond hearing in a few days. I shared with him Jesus. He knew Jesus, I could see it in his eyes, and he lifted Jesus up.

He was intent on getting me to understand that I needed to be content with my circumstance and be to be sure that I was simply being allowed to be used by the Lords spirit, while I was there. He said that I should accept that God was in control, and that he had a plan. He told me that I may not get the bond, but that I should be happy and content with being used while



I was here. I couldn't understand how he hadn't gotten the victory over drug use. But I understood that he was on the right track, no matter where he was currently.


My experience with this young, who's name I never got was very enlightening and intentional. He dropped the right in my spirit that I was supposed to hear. Although, I didn't want to hear it, I needed to know that my journey was being used by God, for his glory and for his purposes. It is a burden, it is a walk of faith. It is work, to serve the Lord, and often a job that we don't want. I found myself often saying, "Really Lord? Is this really my walk; is this really how my life is supposed to end up?" Later that day, Brother Dave and I walked the track that evening and had fellowship together. The celestial track seemed to glow and all but levitate as we walked the circumference of the pod. We talked about Jesus and the love of the Father.

The next morning, I was unexpectedly hauled into court. I had no idea what I was doing there; I only knew that I was on a bus, in chains and on my way to court. While waiting in the holding cell, I noticed the attorney that had been assigned my **cold coffee throwing case**. And then I was brought out to speak to him, like a dog being let out of a cage. I wondered if today, was my day to be released from incarceration; I didn't know what was going on. But I felt the Lord was with me.

I remember now how warm it was in the courtroom and how freezing it was by contrast in the jail and pods. The county made sure the judges and the litigators were warm and comfortable. I wondered if they knew the jails were freezing. Everyone in the courtroom could see our attire, they knew we were improperly dressed. Yet, it didn't stop the prosecutions; the show would go on.

I was at the superior court in Gwinnett County. The epicenter of some of the most profound demonstrations of racial hatred and injustices of black families, in the entire country. Gwinnett county courts system was a demonstration of the enterprise of incarceration in the south. I was in the very pit of hell; the core and the seat of the agenda to systematically dismantle black families in the county and in the state. A place designed to further the initiative, of **'the projects to prisons**.

Why was he here? I wondered, as I listened to the voice of the **cold coffee throwing** attorney. His voice was soothing and reassuring and he didn't have bad news. He was there to



offer me a plea bargain. An offer of sixty days-time served for the **cold coffee throwing offense**. An incident which had cost me my family life.


He said that it would be good for my case, as I had been charged with the felony charge of stalking. So, although I wouldn't be released today, I was still heading in the right direction, by settling of the coffee throwing misdemeanor and with my good behavior. My hands were tied, and it was no time to argue how I threw **cold coffee** at my wife, resulting in the restraining order.

So, I took his advice and I agreed to the terms of the plea offer, of *60 days, time served*. And the case was settled in the plea offer. Now, I would only have to deal with the felony charge of stalking. I would learn more about plea offers later. I didn't realize it at the time, but the Lord had orchestrated the whole event. He was helping me along to get ultimately free. He was working it all out in the background. He was honoring my faith as righteousness. I felt that the Lord was giving me a taste of his good favor and mercy which endures forever. Despite my actions, despite my disobedience, despite my lying, the was still showing me his grace and his mercy. I knew then that I had to hold on. I knew I had to keep trying and not give up. I knew that I could be strong; I knew that I could ask for anything.

I couldn't give up on all that I'd learned and all that I had accomplished in life. Although the enemy screamed at me daily to quit believing and take my own life. But I hid myself in the Lord and meditated even harder. I immersed myself into the word; reinforcing the strength that I was gaining. And I knew he was showing me a part of his plan and giving me little drops of mercy, continually.

When I got back to the pod from a long day at court, and our 5-day guard, officer Land, was on shift. Officer Land was my favorite officer, of any of all of them. He always seemed to have this smile on his face, no matter who had offended him, or who had made his job harder that day. He was a retired Marine, and a Christian. Gunny Land, was waiting at the cell door for me that evening, like a mother hen rounding up her chicks. I felt complete an unprecedented comfort that night, which seemed odd to me.

How could I feel such contentment and peace in a jail cell? How could I be so happy behind bars with a thin piece of vinyl and a steel frame to sleep on? I'd been sleeping in a kingsized bed with my bride for more than 13 years, before all this. And rolling over to her during the night for intimacy. Now, I listened to the snoring and pissing of an unfortunate man above me.



T was sleeping when I entered the cell, but then he came out of his slumber. I told him that he'd be stuck with me for a little while longer. I said, "You're under the covers!" He said, "Yes. Land let us get under early due to the weather. It's like twenty degrees out." At that news, I told the Lord thank you. I explained to him what had happened earlier. He was glad that it had all worked out for me. I knew the Lord was there; I knew that the Lord cared.


He told me that Officer Lite leman, had been around today. Now, Lite leman was a black female guard, who was especially foul to black males. I was glad that I had missed her encounter. I was still resentful of her condescending behavior toward black male inmates and her reprehensible behavior toward them. And I was always tempted to respond to her, when she'd do it. So, it was better that I'd missed her, to avoid any trouble.

T said that she had been in our cell today, throwing things around and confiscating everything that she could possibly through away or on the floor. He said that she had tossed the eggs I'd stashed. The eggs that I was looking so forward, when I got back from court. They would use any little thing to power trip with. In this case, it was the boiled eggs that I'd stowed. Any opportunity to show their control, a guard like Lite leman, would take to make herself feel good and big inside.

I was so looking forward to those eggs. I was extra hungry as I hadn't eaten at court all day. But I didn't sweat it, I just let it go and gave God thanks. She'd had missed the toothpaste on the vents, and my multiple blankets. So, deep inside I felt that I'd gotten one over on her. I knew that one day, I'd see Ms. Lite leman again. And on that day, I prayed that I would bless her, and not curse her.

That evening, I took advantage of the early under-the-blankets call. I was so warm that night. I rolled the blankets over my head like a cocoon and allowed the warmth of my breath from my lungs to warm my torso up, underneath the blanket. It was a jailhouse heating system; a practice that I'd adopted since being incarcerated. Somehow, it made me feel comfortable and swaddled; in many ways, it was similar to the contentment that I would derive when I cuddled next to my wife. Or whenever I'd hug and embrace my children. With the covers pulled up over my face, I felt the presence of God. And every night, Jehovah would meet me there at my proverbial mercy seat, under the covers. I felt safe and as loved as I'd ever felt in my life that night.

The next morning, I jumped on the track with Brother Davis and started lapping him. He was down in his spirit today. He told me as we jogged, that he had been given a tough blow.



He'd been handed another month's sentence. I tried to keep him cheerful, as I could feel his pain. I continued to try to encourage him. I told him how I didn't know if my lights were on and that I didn't know what the security situation was with my house. I knew it had been vandalized, but I didn't know if the culprits had been back.


Although I suspected my old tenant, I had never followed up on the accusation. I figured that they would reap what they sowed. I knew that the vengeance wasn't mine to get. I realized that I was incarcerated for being vengeful, and I felt then that I had to figure out how to let the Lord handle things. I decided to take the pain and suffering and to allow the Lord to move on my behalf. The Lord had been with me through all the pain, and in this valley, so far. I knew that he loved me. I knew that he loved Brother Davis. And, I knew that I could ask him for anything. And now, I believed that I could ask for the manifestation of my prayer, to be in 7 days.

## **Chap 16: Lesson in Humility**

I was up that morning very early, doing some quick calisthenics work outs. I looked out the cell door window. Across the hall was inmate number 313. He was in the cell door window looking around as per usual, but tonight was different. He had a towel wrapped around his head in the shape of a tomahawk and I thought that was very creative of him. He wasn't crazy, just bored and being creative. No telling what he was facing. I decided I would talk to him in the morning and find out a little more about him. I didn't care about his background, I only cared about his soul, like Jesus. I thought he was probably a man of great character and a fine candidate for the Kingdom of God. I asked God to give me an opportunity to lead him to Jesus.

The night before, Brother Anthony had a fantastic sermon. To be reckoned with the sermon on the mount. Brother Anthony was a fire and brimstone preacher. He reminded me of a young Billy Graham, only Hispanic. When he preached, he would be so full of the Holy Spirit that it would seem as though light would appear around him and around his virtual podium. We'd been fasting for seven days for our forthcoming hearings, on the seventeenth of January. After that we escalated to full celebrity status. We needed a chopper to get from cell to cell, for speaking engagements. We were high rollers.

The evil intention of my soon to be ex-wife didn't faze me. It was becoming clear that I would have to sign off on a plea bargain. A divorce for my release. That was the plan, and it was beginning to unfold. The DA and my wife wanted an exchange. But I never wanted a divorce ever. I was being forced into it. And now if I wanted to be free, I would have to submit to the plan. The jig was up. "Clean off those vents, right now!" shouted Gunny Land.




Miracles were happening daily. Men were coming to Jesus under our ministry. Men were repenting and coming to Jesus Christ in jail. The ordeal had been painful and exciting at the same time. At some point, I was able to say, “Thank you for the pain, O Lord.” I began to understand the growth that he intended for me. I began to understand how he would use the situation for his glory and ultimately restore me from the suffering I would endure. I had fought the good fight and had been used to help many to come to Christ. That night, I fell under a deep sleep. Like Adam, when the Lord extracted his rib, to create Eve.

When I awakened later that night, T was still awake. When I awakened, I felt refreshed and everything seemed to be white from lights. I thought I’d gone on to glory. Then my vision cleared, and I realized I hadn’t gone to heaven but was still in jail, and the nightmare persisted. Although me and the disciples had fallen under tremendous satanic assault. But we stood, and the Lord was using our trials to grow us and to bring others unto the light.

T said to me, as I was waking up; “Brother Davis left this evening.” “What?” He said, “Yes, they came and took him this evening.” Brother Davis was gone, like a thief in the night. All the inmates knew the Lord had performed a miracle. All the inmates knew of Brother Davis’s walk with the Lord. They knew of his obedience to the Lord. I knew my journey wasn’t over with the Lord in the jail.

I was grateful to have had the time with Brother Davis. I knew I’d see him again, on the other side. The next morning, the team was assembled at the table and ready for the morning Bible study. Brother Davis’s bunk mate, Philip, had been Brother Davis’s student twenty years earlier. Brother Davis was his soccer coach at a local church. They discovered this while bunking together in jail. How do two men meet and find grace in a jail cell together? And coincidentally, develop a mentoring relationship, through Christ, in jail. There is no such thing as coincidence, only intention. And he would send in fresh troops for the job soon.

I knew the enemy’s attack wouldn’t cease despite my prayers but only increase. We were soldiers but taking on casualties. The strain of helping others was showing. We had to stay strong and together and encouraged. I sat down with the prayer team, but I said nothing. It felt like the Last Supper to me. Philip was there weeping. I asked him why. He said that he was saddened




about Brother Davis leaving. I reached over to him and patted him on the shoulder. I said, “We are experiencing the miraculous before our eyes every day, for his glory. And it’s like in death, you can’t touch them any more right now. But you know you’ll see them again.” We didn’t know who was going to be blessed and released next. The miraculous was happening every day. Philip went to get me a pencil and paper from his cell. As he came back down the stairs to the table where we were, the guard came on the PA. “301, pack it up!” It was Philip’s cell number, he was being released.

That morning, I was served with a divorce statement. It was unanticipated and a blow to my psyche. I was devastated, yet I tried to hide my pain. It was a difficult thing to deal with for me. I felt like ending my life at that moment. And I was inclined to file my own decree. But I didn’t I listen to God and the advice of T who had seen this many times before in his own extended family. I decided to sign the divorce decree, but I pondered it and prayed about it for two weeks before mailing it back. I didn’t know what to expect, I didn’t know what to feel. Only pain. It felt like a movie, when they’re dying, and they say, “My life is passing before me.” That’s how I felt, like every part of me was dying. I felt that sending me a divorce in jail was cruel and inconsiderate. As I sat on the bunk and looked at the cinderblock wall in front of me, I pondered the worst. That day, T, talked me out of suicide.

I shared with Brother Anthony the mountain of material I had accumulated from writing, well over seventy pages at the time. All written by hand, and in pencil. And inspired by God. I was happy with the work we were doing, I knew we were helping people. And that we were laying up treasures in heaven. We were becoming celebrities in jail. People were coming to us daily for encouragement and prayer. I always only spoke the word as a reference when encouraging people. And I prayed for the words to say. I thought about how blessed I was on this New Year’s Day, under arms. I felt that I had all that I needed.

It was one of the most humiliating events I’d experienced at the jail—the boxer exchange. It was a necessary evil, but demoralizing. “One for one,” the guard said over the PA. I began to make my way down the staircase. Inmates were coming and going, up and down the ladder. I pictured it as Jacob’s ladder. They were moving up and down like they were getting gifts. I hated the idea of someone telling when to change my shorts. Jauve was hungry, so I shared my chips with him.





This was also the day the magazine restrictions were put in place. We weren't allowed to have magazines in our cells overnight any more. They would have to be turned back in by the end of the shift. I had been using the magazines for practicing drawing and I'd gotten the time down to three hours for a portrait, and I was about to start more aggressive marketing of my pencil portrait business. And I was finding joy and a level of personal enrichment from providing portraits to the inmates.


Guard Haddi was on tonight, at the request of Satan, to buffet us. He was a sadistic control freak, with a passion for intimidating the black male inmates. He didn't faze me at all. I knew he was just a punk, looking to make himself feel better by antagonizing inmates. He never seemed to be able to look me in the eye, he was a coward. He stayed clear of my cell though. Must have been the blood on the door post. I knew he'd try to prevent us from having extra food that night. So, I asked Jehovah for extra provision. I'd decided to stop the fast that night.

The next morning, as I waited for the flock, I knew the Lord would provide daily. One of the brothers we'd been mentoring was being released. I told him to stay encouraged. I leaned over to Brother Anthony and told him I'd stopped my fast. He asked why. I said that I'd spoken to God, and he said for me to stop the fast. Brother Luke looked on quietly in expectation. The fast had my tendency for hypoglycemia to go into high gear. I was actually just hurting myself. I had made myself sick trying to get Jehovah's attention, which was the polar opposite of my goal.

So, I asked the Father for forgiveness and if I could stop the fast because I was getting sick. God said, "I can't use you sick, so do stop the fast. Arise, you got my attention, my ear is inclined to you. And now I know your heart, my son. I know that you are willing to sacrifice. And I am also well pleased with you, my son".

Jehovah spoke to me on my sick bed. My head was light, I felt weak. My skin had become flush, and my eyes were bloodshot. I could feel the digestive juices in my stomach erupting and burning like fire from there not being any food in it. He spoke to me in a still small voice and calmed me. Jehovah then reminded of Father Abraham and how he had been willing to sacrifice Isaac. He reminded me that counted Abraham's faith as righteousness. I knew I was walking his Grace, I knew I was his favored.

We were becoming celebrities with the guards, and they now called me Mr. May. But I knew I couldn't come off to the inmates as more than what I was. I was just a vessel, yet I knew I was called. I knew the enemy would rise up demons against me. But the struggle over why I was




there, was over now. I was now able to accept my lot. And ultimately, I was able to give thanks to God for my suffering and pain. How could I be content with my circumstance? How could I be at peace about it all? That night we fellowshiped together and supped on the word of God together. Javier prayed and chanted this song: **“Yo Tango un nuero, Amor, que Melote, Sin, Paraty uno. Que me adico, teamo, de vernda. Jesus, mi amor mi amas que, amor mi dusle paz.”**

The events of the day reminded me of Paul and Silas the night of their forthcoming beheading. I hoped and prayed Javier wouldn't snore tonight and that he wouldn't be singing all night. But he was in love with the Lord, so under his breath, between snoring, he would have small hymns. But I was grateful to the King for how far he had brought me. And it was all the King's work, now. I wasn't turning back. And my complaining gave way to praises and thanksgiving. Every night I would make my petitions none to him and meditate on his words. And then, he would meet me at the mercy seat.

As I scaled the steps leading to the day room for chow, I had my hands behind my back, hands folded together. The next-door cell mate Willis, next door to mine commented. “He's bad.” I said. “Yes, he is going to hell.” Haddi heard us from the deck below and said. “We're already in hell, and we are all going!” I yelled back at him, with Godly indignation. “I am going to glory, not hell!” Willis stopped me from becoming angrier and more aggressive and told me take a few deep breaths. I did, and it helped. I didn't want praise for my actions. I wanted the inmates to understand the believers have the power, not the enemy. So, I thought to put him in his place by cutting him with the word and that we have the advantage even when outnumbered.

As we ate chow on the floor, I was sitting next to young Joshua. He said, “He's evil.” I said, “I know.” He asked if I wanted some of his chow. I said, “Yes, but be careful, I don't want you to get into trouble for sharing your food, son.” He looked at me with eyes of Stephen (*the first martyr for Christ*). He said. “Here,” and subtly passed his tray over to me. I quickly scraped up the veggies from his tray. As I did so, I told him not to miss this golden opportunity while incarcerated to move closer to Jesus. He nodded his head and then departed. I would continue to pray for him. He had more character at eighteen than most ever develop. And I told him that there is no other name under heaven that men may be saved but Jesus.

That night while I was asleep I was awakened to the sound of the door lock disengaging. It could only mean one thing, and that was that a guard was coming in. I was perched and ready to respond. The guards had three methods of immobilizing an inmate, so I knew that I had to keep cool. I knew there were angels all around. I considered deploying a Spider Man flying drop kick from my rack, but the Holy Ghost advised against it at that moment. So, I refrained my



excitement. Turns out, it was just one of his silly cell inspections. I knew the enemy had crept into the cell, but I gave him no attention and I didn't move a muscle. It felt like a panther, leaching around me, but I didn't flinch.


A few hours later, at the table in the day room. The table was occupied with the usual worshipers surrounded in study, of the book of Romans. A little bit later, the Holy Ghost caught a hold of me. And then suddenly, he began to speak through me. In utterances that could not be discerned. In an environment where shouting was prohibited, **there I was in the middle of the jail, speaking in tongues, for all to see.** The brethren went quiet and said nothing. But everyone knew what had happened. The spirit of God was upon me. To be a witness to everyone around me. I guess some there had seen it before; many hadn't.

I knew I had won the fight, I knew I had been redeemed. I knew I was walking in his grace and mercy. I left the table quietly, the team remained. I walked slowly back to the cell, worshiping Jehovah as I walked. I worshiped Jehovah for what had just happened. I was humbled and suddenly full of peace. I knew the jail wouldn't care, but I felt we'd given the kingdom of darkness a black eye. We knew that the attacks from the kingdom of darkness wouldn't cease, but we maintained our faith and kept our prayers going up. I was done complaining.

I had accepted my situation and my lot in life. And somehow, I'd found the strength to be thankful for what I was going through. I'd learn to create, "work arounds; coping mechanisms. How could I be thankful for the pain and suffering that I'd endured. How could I find contentment in a trial? Jehovah had now revealed to me that it was all part of his plan. And if the suffering would come, so would the healing and restoration as well.

I struggled with it for a while, but after a while, I let my entire life go. The old man was killed, and I knew I had been reborn. At that point, I'd decided to completely devote all my attention to serving Christ and to developing my relationship with God. Forgetting all my own personal hopes and giving up all my personal dreams and ambitions. I was finally ready to give the Lord my life forever. I knew that it was all part of his plan and ultimate will.

Javier was sent to another cell, but I knew that Jehovah had organized our time together although it was a relatively short time together. I was reminded of my time in the military, the Navy. We'd often be connected to people, who you'd know for a short time. But spend time with them in some of the most intense and demanding scenarios. You'd get to know the person intimately. You'd learn to depend on them and you'd learn to love them.



And then, they'd be gone, just as quickly as they came on station. Rather transferred, redeployed, etc. You'd had to learn to appreciate the time you had with them and the things that you'd learned from them, or what-ever you were able to teach them. I told him I'd finish the pictures of the flowers for him, that evening. Javier didn't smoke, and he was a true follower of Christ. I believed that he was heading for greatness in the Lord. And I believed he would eventually get a pardon from **ICE**. I believed that God would continue to show his mercy toward Javier and I knew I'd see him again, on the other side someday.


## Chapter 17: He Love Me So

Suddenly, the cell door lock opened to allow our break time out of the cell. I was sitting quietly writing, and then the spirit of God came upon me. My head fell onto the table, and my tears anointed the paper that I was writing on. I felt in my spirit that there was something coming that I would need a special anointing for. I was in tune with the Father and I was completely sensitive to him and his assignments.

Then Brother Anthony came into the cell, and we began to talk about my hearing that was scheduled for the morning. I was prepared for whatever was coming though; I was ready. We had a saying in incarceration. "Expect the best, prepare for the worst. I was encouraged to walk through this valley, and to grow in grace with God. Then the Holy Spirit spoke to me. "Relax." He said. "I have already paved the way for you". "Rejoice and relax." I thought of Paul and Silas the night before their scheduled beheading and how they were singing. I thought of Jesus when the storm arose and how he was sleeping; he was resting.

With these enduring examples of peace, I was ready to face the court that morning. I knew it was all for his glory now. I knew that I would be able to tell others about the miracle about to happen for the rest of my life. I didn't know what the next phase of my life would hold, but I knew that the old me was dead and gone. The old me had been purged, and the sin in me was gone. I was a new man and I would never be the same. I was looking forward to serving in his army as a lifelong soldier. **I had been broken violently into pieces, like a hammer to a mirror, and then put back together by his grace.**

Sitting in a jail cell, looking at a cinderblock wall, you have a lot of time to consider everything that you've ever done or thought, in your entire life. You contemplate everything that you could want to do or even imagine. You are forced to confront your ghosts and your own



spirit; you are forced to look deeply into your soul for the answers as to why you have failed; why you have lost your way.


For a parent, it's even more difficult. The self-observation is painful and demoralizing but very necessary. You blame yourself for everything, you constantly consider bad things coming to your children. You consider and imagine bad things happening to your family. It's like a curse or an incessant spirit haunting you. Day and night. Stabbing you in the stomach and tormenting and torturing and taunting you.

I couldn't stop thinking about my children. I couldn't stop thinking of my wife. I couldn't stop thinking of what I'd built, and why I had lost it all. Somehow, I knew it was all part of his plan, and in his control. Yet, the memories of my family being together only a few days before, was a constant agonizing pain. I'd had everything ripped from me—my children, my church, my life, and my wife. By the evil regime, the Gwinnett county court systems, new Jim Crow, agenda to incarcerate blacks for profit. The pervasive projects to the prison effort.

Everything that I'd valued and loved was now gone. But there had been no hurricane, no tornado. There hadn't been a natural disaster. Yet, I'd lost all that I had. But love is stronger than hate, and I realized now, that the spirit that I was actually fighting was the spirit of love itself. I had no counselors in jail. No professionals to assist me on my journey. Only the help of the comforter to help me.

Everyone that I'd spoken to about the case, would draw an expression of disbelief on their face. How could you marry someone then raise two children then ten years later have you barred from the family home? No one that I told the story to, could understand it. My closest ally, my wife, was now my enemy. I would need a lifetime to recover from the trauma. And I was the only one who cared about what it all had done to me. I'd lost all I'd worked for. My life, my wife, my family, my identity. Who could pick up the broken pieces of my life? Who could somehow restore me to my wife? (*Nothing but the blood of Jesus*).

I had spent every day with my family, and now I wasn't allowed to speak to them at all. I even had suspicions, that my wife had invited her incestuous relationship with her sister, into our family home and with no warning. The two had decided to have an open relationship together in our family home. It was subtle at first, but over a few weeks, it became obvious. I didn't know how to handle it. It was all new territory for me. I sat in jail, trying to figure it all out, but alas, there was no way to make sense of it all. I had been betrayed by my own family. My wife. She




had viciously removed my family and the balance that I so depended on. For life, health, and strength. She had attacked me like a pit bull that turns on its owner and was having an incestuous relationship, with her younger sister.

My wife had spent years with my parents and eaten at their table, many times. I met her at my parent's home. But now she was the enemy. It was all a terrible mess, and there I was lying in a jail cell, trying to understand it all. What had I done to deserve this? And was my entire marriage just a lie? These were the questions that ran through my mind constantly hour by hour. Without any explanation, without any apology. My world was destroyed, in one day, by the stroke of an evil judge's pen. My wife had all but left me to die; like a roach that had been stepped on. There was no comfort for me, but I knew where to get a balm for my soul. Every night, Jehovah's spirit would meet me at the proverbial mercy seat, under my covers in my bunk.

We'd been experiencing lessons in humility all day. I was sitting on the floor next to an inmate who wanted to debate the Bible with me. I listened to him for a while go on about nothing, and then I jumped in and rebuked him regarding something he said about the Prophet Balaam. I knew he didn't know what he was talking about. He became uptight with me and then I asked him for the remaining corn on his tray. He turned his nose up at me and then immediately got up from the floor then went to the chow line to throw away the trash. Brother Luke was there and said to me. "Did he just throw away the food you asked him for?"

I said. "Yes, apparently we have developed some enemies now." But I wasn't going to argue with him. The swing shift guard came on the PA and said. "No extra bowls at the tables tonight." I heard him clearly and so did Brother Luke. As soon as we'd gotten our chow and sat down. No sooner than we had, an angry guard was standing over us. With his left hand on his stun gun, still holstered. He'd been using the cameras to watch us and saw us bring down the bowls from the cells. I didn't panic. I knew there were a host of angels around.

"No free time for you, May!" He shouted to me. Which meant that I would be punished by staying in the cell and reading the word. I looked him in the eye and chuckled to myself. The next shift guard came on. He had been complaining that the inmates hadn't been taking showers. He was right, the pod smelled rank. There were over seventy men in the pod, with six showers to use. As soon as he was done ranting, I said to him. "I'm on lock down, but can I take a shower?" He said. "I'll give you a free pass, take a shower."



I got into the number 2 stall, which was the best one of all the showers. I was so grateful. I worshipped Jehovah in the shower and gave GOD praise for all he had done. “Take it up!” I heard shouted over the PA. The cell location in the pod was like being in a monastery. The quiet peace of that end of the pod allowed the still small voice of Jehovah to emanate through the cells block. And the harsh and brutal sounds of the jail seemed to fade away. I imagined the sound of water and breeze blowing through trees. It was the most peace I’d had since I’d been there.


I had asked the Lord for peace to pray and to meditate. I had asked Jehovah to make it possible for me to be able to think clearly. And now, he’d answered my prayer. The next thing I knew, I was moved to a different cell, and it made all the difference in the world to me. The sound of the flushing toilets, the PA, shouts, and the endless trivial chatter was wearing on my mind. No smoke, less noise, and believe it or not, a cell mate who loved the Lord. It was more than I could have asked for; it was Christmas. I knew Jehovah loved me. I knew he was there. And I knew that I could ask for anything, and see it manifest in **“7 Days.**

My dear mother’s birthday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, had come and gone. I knew that she loved me dearly and I thought of her daily in the cell. I thought of how I’d ended up, and how she wanted so much better for me. She saw the ability in me to be a great leader and had supernatural expectations for me. I thought of how she would tell me, “Don’t marry that girl, you know she’s half crazy.” I knew that she was completely lunatic, but I loved her, and I felt that I could handle whatever came our way. I felt that God had sent her to me and I still did. We were both deceived by the ruler of darkness and we both had forgotten his calling and blessings that he’d intended for us. How could we get back to loving? How could we get back to Jesus? How could we get back to be a God-fearing family? But I knew then that it was all part of Jehovah’s plan and I knew that I had to finish the journey in jail to please him, and to give him glory, and to learn the things that he intended for me to learn, while there.

I was devastated that day, upon receiving the divorce decree in jail. And I thought the very worst. I had visions of my wife running off with her sister and getting married and corrupting my children into believing the lie that an alternative lifestyle is acceptable in his sight. I had to push those thoughts out of my mind just to sustain myself. And now I was being used by Jehovah, to help others. But I knew that in my weakness, I was being made stronger. I felt that my wife was trying to finish me off mentally, and I perceive the divorce decree as being an attempt to bully the mentally ill.

In that moment, the enemy entered my mind. And I thought that I would file a complaint of adultery and incest against my wife. And I thought of filing a complaint against her attorney,






for coercion and intimidation of the mentally ill. I started the paperwork for both, but never went through with it. The Lord led me in a different direction. Javier had talked to me about his two-year-old daughter and showed me pictures of her and her mom. I knew that Javier missed and longed for his children. I wondered if my wife had any idea what it was like to miss a child? I knew that she never had to. I knew that she didn't care what I felt, or the pain that I had endured. Like Javier, I was in a desolate place. But he wasn't in a bad place with his wife, and his wife hadn't had him jailed.

Javier asked me to draw a picture of them, I agreed. As we sat there, Javier began to weep. The man was broken as broken could be, before me. I thought of the many comforting songs that my ex-wife in Bermuda would sing to me. "Burdens are lifted at Calvary." I would sing it to all my children. I hummed the song quietly to Javier, and for a moment, he was able to stop weeping. I asked him what the matter was. He said, "My baby and wife have nowhere to live. And my baby needs surgery." For the moment, I stopped thinking of my problems. I realized then that I had been selfishly absorbed in my own problems. I realized that I'd been acting like there was no God.

I knew that the Lord was there with us, to comfort and console Javier with his spirit. I knew that he cared for Javier. I thought, "how could I be so preoccupied with my own grief, when the wife and child of the man in the bunk below me were facing homelessness? I thought of my daughter, who was born prematurely, and how during that period, I'd had the benefit of insurance. So that she was cared for and developed into a functional child with access to opportunities and advancement in her life. Javier's situation was disturbing, and a reminder of the system that I was in. A system that created conditions for people to be in his situation. I wondered if anyone at ICE cared about Javier's family.

I had internalized all the pain; I knew I had become an island. So; I continued my studies with prayer and meditation. I was still a dreamer, although I was detained, and my ambitions had been stifled. And I knew how ignorant my wife was of the cartel of Gwinnett county judges, for putting me in this situation. Rather than being a stable black woman, she had been used as a pawn by the system to incarcerate another black male and to break up another African American family. I thought of the words of Marcus Garvey, and I prayed that the resentment that I felt for her would someday leave me. I knew that I needed to forgive her. I knew that I needed to let the resentment go.

I felt my wife was just another angry black female, playing into the kingdom of darkness's plan, who would someday realize her folly, years later. But how to prove the point to



such a blinded person? How to make her know and understand the terrible destruction she had caused? But I knew I couldn't be like Garvey. I had to listen to the voice of God. And I knew that the Lord had hardened her heart against me and her family, for some purpose. But I didn't know what to do. So, I knew I needed to pray and wait.


My wife had been cultured in the new world that says you don't need to raise children in a traditional nuclear family. She had been lied to by demons of the kingdom of darkness. There are no cultures in the world that had adopted such an ungodly ideology. I struggled with this nightly. And in my dreams, I would try to escape. Did my wife know what I'd suffered? Did she care what she'd done to our children? I knew that God would have to take care of this; I knew that God cared for my children. I knew that the Lord would take care of my children, and I knew that they would never forget me.

Javier told me that night of an inmate who had been brought into the jail. He'd had a car accident and unfortunately his wife and child were killed in the accident. There was a drunk driver in another vehicle who caused the accident. The man was now incarcerated for not having a license and was awaiting exportation. The man received no counseling, and no help. He'd lost his family and wouldn't have a chance to attend a burial service for his family. How was he to mourn his family in jail? This was the kind of event that happened all the time at the Gwinnett County, and the penal systems in America.

I contemplated the events to come in the morning. What would be my posture before the judge? Would my wife be there? What if I don't get the bond? All of these questions constantly ran through my mind. I told myself that I just needed to remain calm. I knew the Lord was with me. I knew that he cared for me. And somehow, I didn't care what was about to happen. I had given my trust over to Jesus and decided to let him handle the case.

The next morning, we arrived at the court, usual protocol. My attorney was there and spoke to me privately. She'd worked out a plea offer with the D.A. for me, before I'd gotten to the court. She told me the process and advised me on how to respond. I was to be quiet and humble, and only to respond when spoken to. She told me she'd worked out a plea offer for me. I asked myself. **“What is a plea offer?”** Apparently, my wife had made an effort to have the case dismissed, but the state picked up prosecuting me. Apparently, my prayers had been answered and the heart of my wife had been moved on to have the charges dropped. And she no longer wanted me in jail. According to my attorney. I knew the Lord had moved on her heart to do so.

We entered the court; I was in leg irons, like a violent and deranged killer. I could only take baby steps toward the desk before the Judge. The D.A., went first. She painted me as villain and as ruthless cold monster, who'd never had a family. A degenerate without reasoning or




culture. A Neanderthal with no morals or decency. And as one who was bent on killing my wife. She spoke of my relationship with my family as one of constant turmoil and chaos. She suggested I was a deviant monster in my home, waiting to explode. As I listened to the railings, I thought of the Scripture that says the enemy rails against us all the time. And I pictured Jesus standing before Pontius Pilot, never uttering a word.

This D.A., didn't know my family. She didn't know anything about my kids or my wife. She was there for one reason, and that was to discredit me. The judge listened to her claims. I don't recall if my attorney ever got to speak. But it didn't matter, the judge's mind was already made up. Then it was time for his judgment. "No bond." He said calmly and distinctly. "No bond." I didn't understand what that meant at the time. I only knew that I wasn't being released today.

My attorney whispered to me during the hearing that she'd worked out a plea offer for me. I thought. "What is a plea offer?" She whispered to me that she had a plea offer worked out for me to sign an uncontested divorce for my release. Which was the one that my wife had sent me. I felt like Malcolm Little at his sentencing. I knew that the day wasn't going the way I wanted it to, but I also knew that God was in control. Although it had been a day of being beaten in court and very painful, I knew I had to put my total trust in the Lord.

Back at the pod, I tried not to think too much about what had happened. I knew I had to face the brethren. They all knew that I hadn't gotten the release, they all knew that I had failed. But I was still optimistic, and I believed that the tables would turn for me and that I would be released soon. Brother Anthony wasn't released on January 17th either. I carried the feelings of his disappointment also, and I tried to keep him encouraged for the next hearing.

Later, after contemplating the divorce decree for a couple of weeks, I decided to go ahead and sign it and return it to the attorney. It had come to me in a self-addressed envelope. Then, within three days of sending the decree back, my wife's attorney showed up at the jail. She indicated to me that I filled out some of the documentation incorrectly. I didn't know if she meant the fact that they had listed a date for release and also the date for child support. I didn't know if they knew I was still in jail, or if they were thinking wishfully. I hadn't been released, and they wanted me to pay child support. I had no income, no leads, and nowhere to live. Yet I was expected to confirm.




So, my wife's attorney revised the verbiage in the order, and she took it back to her office for filing. The decree relinquished my wife from all marital accountability. And I had to forfeit all financial holdings, that we had in the marriage. These were the terms of the uncontested divorce decree. It was a get out of jail free card. I had no choice. I felt coerced, and I wanted to get out of hell. So, reluctantly, I signed the divorce decree. Effectually, signing away my life and family.

Forty-eight hours later, my attorney came to the jail and advised me of a new hearing date. I was happy, and she was optimistic. The date was set for **February 25, 2014**. My attorney stated that the new hearing date was a result and triggered by me signing off on the divorce decree. And that we would be moving forward and asking for probation as I had never been in trouble before. **It was my first felony offense** and I was going through the motions, day by day, awaiting the hearing. Suddenly, there was a glimpse of hope on the horizon, and a clear path to my release. And my attorney had asked for probation, from the evil D.A.

Then, one morning, very early, like 2am or so, two days later. My attorney shows up at the jail and had new news for me. The DA had now requested a one-year prison sentence, to coincide with the compliance of the plea offer for probation. It was a shock to hear. Especially at 2 am. My attorney had told me 2 days before, that we were good to go, and that we would be getting the order of probation. Now, that had all changed, and she wasn't even sure what was going on. She would have to change the game plan. She would have to revise her strategy. She would approach the judge's bench before the hearing and beg for the probation order. She was optimistic, but not sure we'd get it.

With that, I was would have to sign off on the one-year prison sentence to receive the probation order. I had to sign away my life for a year in prison to get the ball rolling. At 2am, after having signed away my life, 2 days before. Via an uncontested divorce decree. I had no idea what to expect, but I trusted God. So, we carried on. I prayed daily about my situation, but more importantly I trusted God to deliver me. I knew I had to face the same judge once again. The one who had denied me bond, twice before, with his side chick D.A. at the pitcher's mound. I knew the enemy would be in the courtroom as he was before. I didn't talk about the hearing coming to



anyone; I didn't want to bring any negative energy to it. I patiently waited and prayed in silence to the Lord on my behalf in my private closet.


That morning, I got a first-hand look at transport to the hole. I'd been in a confrontation with a guard and I'd accused her of making false statements about the facts centered around the events. I was sentenced to thirty days in solitary confinement. Although I was calm and compliant, I was ushered there the violent way. I was slammed to the floor by six guards and taken to the hole in the manner used for aggressive inmates. I was thrown into the hole face down and told not to move until they left.

I didn't realize the damage they'd done to my shoulder until I moved. I felt that it was a separation. As I looked around the cell, I noticed the toilet had a buildup of calcium that appeared to have been there several months. And there was no hot water in the cell. My time in the hole didn't bother me. I gave myself to the study of the word daily in solitude. I developed a closer walk with the Lord then.

At night there was one inmate who used to yodel. The man was there, yodeling at night. After a few days, I began to enjoy it. After a while inhibitions and notions about many things, began to go out of the window. I was in the hole. Solitary confinement. The deepest pit of hell, and lowest place of my life. I'd been a hero fireman and served the country. Now, I was in solitary confinement, without hot water. I'd heard about it. I'd seen it on T.V. But nothing could've prepared for this. Yet, I knew that I would survive solitary. I knew that somehow, God wanted me to see it and to record what I saw. I'd seen the inside of the Gwinnett county jail's psychiatric ward, and now I'd become a resident of their solitary confinement facility. I figured, it couldn't get any worse than this.

As I looked out the cell door from the top floor, I noticed several guards hovering around the cell below me. I tried not to be noticed, as I peeked over the ledge that shielded me from their view. **What I saw was something I will ever forget and probably the worst thing I'd ever seen at the jail. There were about eleven goon squad guards assailing a man into a restraining chair as one guard wrenched down on his neck from behind with a choke hold.**

The other guards tightened the Velcro straps about his body, which were connected to the chair. The inmate said nothing, while the guards muscled him down into the restraining chair, and the strait jacket. It looked like a relic from medieval times. I tried to understand what would make a man so uncontrollable that he needed to be strapped down naked into a chair and a strait



jacket. I tried to imagine his thoughts and fears. I tried to imagine if he knew Jesus. I wondered if he had a family. I wondered what substance he was addicted to.

I wondered if he'd killed or really hurt someone. I wondered if he'd hurt himself. I'd seen restraining chairs before, but never in use. I'd seen strait jackets before, but never in use. I'd seen a man put down by other men, but never body slammed before by several men at once. I'd seen a man low before. But I'd never seen a man so low as one who is in a restraining chair, foaming at the mouth, in a strait jacket.

The event was a cold reminder of where I was, and how low I'd fallen in life. I'd been to the top of Ice Bergs in Iceland. I'd been all over Europe. I'd employed people and been a landlord. Now, I was in the lowest space in the state of Georgia. helped people to become enlightened. Now, I was in the gutter, the hole.


I'd read stories of people being converted in prison. I'd heard of the changes that one may evoke on a journey such as this one. I'd learned of the transformation of Malcolm X. I knew of Eldridge Cleaver, and of Nelson Mandela. I was not to be compared with them. I was more like the Buddha being awakened. I knew this experience was for my own good, I knew the Lord would use this insight for my growth, but I couldn't see how I was going to have some great revelatory message for the masses from this. I only knew that I wanted to be released, and that my punishment, did not suit my crime.

I'd electronically stalked my wife, and now I was in the depths of hell, in the state of Georgia. At the mercy of their system to keep blacks from prospering and populating. By the systematic incarceration of them, and the dismantling of their families.

## **Chapter 18: River in The Desert**

It was early morning, very early. Like the wee hours of the morning when King David would meditate at. The lights hadn't been turned on as yet and I was awakened to the "click" of the cell door lock opening. Then the sound of the air lock disengaging followed. I had been awakened by this sound many times before. Sometimes good, sometimes bad. I didn't know what to expect that morning.

"May, get up right now, and pack up your stuff". I had been sleeping. Like Jesus had been, during the storm. I knew Jehovah was with me; I knew Jesus loved me. And I had peace about whatever was coming. As always, I'd been pleading with Jehovah all night about my circumstances. I'd been patiently waiting on him (*Psalms 40*). But I knew I couldn't give up on



my faith in his word. The Lord had been so gracious and so merciful to me, thus far. There was no reason to doubt his love for me.

I began gathering my belongings, which equated to all of a few documents. There were some toiletries, and some chow from earlier that morning. As I made my way toward the staircase to descend, I realized I'd left something. I turned back, the houseman shouted at me. "Don't you want to leave?" I responded, "I am content in a Palace or a Pit." I was content, at that point no matter where I was. I made my way down the cold metal framework and advanced to the security desk. The guard was there with paperwork for signing. As I signed off on the documents stating my contents, I noticed another paper, attached to the top of my bin. 1H was the numeric assignment for a different pod. I was definitely leaving the hole, but I didn't know where I was leaving, and why.


**I'd been sentenced to thirty-two days in solitary confinement. I didn't remember how many days I'd been in solitary, but I knew it hadn't been thirty days as yet. My experience with God is that whenever he moved me, it meant a promotion or a better situation for me. To feel better or learn something ultimately for his purposes. And there was no reason to think anything different.**

I was told to move through the sally port to leave the hole which was the next adjoining pod to the hole. Funny enough, as I approached the pod cell door, I was at peace and was especially humble. I didn't want to give the impression to the new guard that I was going to do anything to cause a problem. I hung my head down and stood awaiting the door to open. Out of the corner of my left eye, I could see a person approaching the door.

I kept my head down and stood fast in place. As the door slowly opened, I remained still and never looked up. The guard emerged from inside the sally port and said nothing at first. And then he said. "Come in." Calmly and quietly. It was a first. The bulk of the guards I'd encountered were abrupt and tried to intimidate us. This young man was relaxed and appeared to be a nice guy. I advanced toward him. I noticed his name badge and said. "Good Morning, Guard Jones." As I passed by him.

He said. "No one told me you were coming." I didn't respond. But quietly moved into the pod from the sally port. I was immediately approached by an inmate who said to me. **"You're going home."** I looked at him as though he was a prophet giving me a word. I said yes. I didn't consider what my attorney had said to me days earlier regarding the state wanting me to do a





year in prison minimum. I considered not my situation. I simply responded in faith. “Yes, I am leaving.”

I later learned that this was the pod for inmates that were transitioning out of incarceration. I was walking by faith. The guard checked me in and gave me a key to my cell. I took a few steps and immediately noticed someone I knew. It was Judas, (*Daniel*), approaching me. It was like seeing an old friend from school from years ago. There he was, by the coffee machine.


He said. “May?” I said. “Yes, Daniel, it is good to see you.” We exchanged a fist pump and chatted for a moment. Of all people, here was a man I’d nearly fought with welcoming me, and making me feel at home, as relatively as possible. It was an example of God’s love and mercy and a harbinger of things to come. God’s spirit, was in the pod, and his spirit was abounding in the air.

There was an easy feeling flowing through the air, it was clearly a different kind of pod. The inmates were very different in their mannerisms. It was as though I had gone to another planet; it was surreal. Even the lighting in the ceiling seemed softer and warmer. And as I walked toward the assigned cell, my stride seemed easier than normal.

As I made my way to the cell, I caught a glimpse of a television stationed near the courtyard, which was normal. It was a morning free time, so the pod was full of people going about. I noticed that there was a man on the screen whom I seemed to recognize. I turned to the right and began to move closer to the screen. To my surprise, as I got closer, I realized who was on the program. It was Charles Stanley. My mouth dropped; it was an existential experience for me. I’d been in jail for three months and had yet to see a television at all, let alone any spiritual programming. For me, it felt like seeing my mother again in the flesh.

There he was on the television, being broadcasted from his pulpit in Atlanta. I immediately sat down in front of the television, stunned with my coffee as comfortable as I’d been in weeks. And I began to absorb the message in the presence of other inmates, as though we were at home with our families. It was profound. His message was about hope, using the apostle Paul as a main character in the message.

As I sat and listened, the inmate who’d greeted me at the door came over and sat down. So, did another inmate, and then Daniel followed. I was completely undone. I could hardly grasp the wonder of the moment. I could only try to manage the fact that God was here in mercy. And



that I was in an environment where Jesus was also. It was humbling and beautiful. I felt as though I had been transformed; and moved before the throne of Grace that morning. I couldn't believe what I was experiencing. But it was real; I wasn't dreaming. The good feeling, I had was real.


I began to realize that I had been released from the hole and was now in an environment that I felt very comfortable and welcomed in. I was at peace and my problems were far away. I had a cup of hot coffee in my hand and I was being fed the word of God. From Charles Stanly on the television.

I'd been in darkness for weeks. Now, almost miraculously, I was receiving and basking in his presence and in his light. It was absolutely beautiful. I turned to the inmate on the left. He looked at me, and I said. "Is this TBN?" He replied no. I asked how is it that Charles Stanley is on? He said they always watched religious programming on Sunday morning. This was the Christian pod. I asked. "It's Sunday?" He said yes. It was like I'd died in the flesh and gone on to glory.

How is it that Jesus was there in this place? Jesus was everywhere, it seemed. Whether in the hole or general population. Jesus was there. His love and presence were inescapable. I watched the show as though I was sitting in one of the church pews. It was exhilarating. My coffee tasted like a fresh-brewed Starbuck's Sumatra Blend roast. Awesome, I thought. I was so content and so happy. I knew the next show would be either Jenson Franklin or Joel Osteen. I couldn't wait. I sat in complete concentration. Then Joel Osteen came on. I darted to the coffee dispenser for another cup of java.

As I returned, another inmate was sitting down watching the program. I said to him. "His father is John Osteen. I watched him as a child. Joel admits he never wanted to be a preacher. He thought his elder brother would pick up the mantle of his father." He just continued to view the show. As we watched the show, I noticed the people sitting around the tele. Daniel was there, and a few others I'd noticed from around the jail. But I was only acquainted with a few of them.

Then I saw him, 'Yardie. The big Jamaican dude, who used to shake down guys in the pod that I was in before. He was near the television, standing and not making a sound. Which



was unusual for him. He seemed to be watching the program also. I noticed that he seemed very quiet and still. Which was also unlike him. Something had changed in his demeanor. He was calm and just didn't seem as aggressive as he had always been. He veered over to the small crowd, centered around the tele.


Then he noticed me and looked me in the eye. I thought; this can't be good. Then he smiled at me, which he never had before. We were in jail, and there was this hardened criminal smiling at me. But then, I realized through the spirit of God that he'd experienced changes, as I had. My will had been broken for God's will to surface. And I began to understand that this man had been exposed to the same grace, and that he was also a new man now.

It was remarkable. This man had been changed by the Love of God. Jesus was alive in his heart now, and he would never be the same. And he would be partaking in the "new life that Jesus had destined for him to have. *'If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature. Old Things are passed away. Behold all things are become new.* I marveled for a few moments at the spectacle of what appeared to a six-and-a-half-foot man being captivated and pacified by the likes of Pastor Joel Osteen.

I decided to talk to him, so I advanced toward him slowly and cautiously. This was, after all, still a jail. I didn't get beyond his comfort zone, but I spoke to him a couple of feet away. "Whapin star!" "Cool." He then gave me a smile, said "Good to see you. You going home?" "Yes, I am." I was speaking in faith. Given he was the second inmate that had been prophesied over me. No way I was going to speak death into it.

As Joel wrapped up his message, I thought that I should go ahead and put my items into my assigned cell. So, I got up and turned around and saw the cell number that corresponded to the key in my hand. Going to a different cell was always awkward. Especially if you didn't know who was in it already.

I slowly brought myself toward the steel key hole and slowly turned the key. The air lock disengaged. And slowly began to open the cold steel door. The cell appeared dark inside, which was odd. As it was the beginning of the morning. Lights are on, always in the morning. As I opened the door fully, I notice there was someone on the bottom rack. I crept past the inanimate, motionless figure. I didn't want to cause an alarm. Or upset the sleeping individual in the rack.



I had no idea who he might be. I was assigned the bravo bunk, “the top one.” I hate top bunks, but it would be home, and there was fresh coffee in the day room. So, I was going to make it work, no matter who the person was. I put my bin in the compartment underneath the racks. And decided to wait until the guy was awake to shuffle my things around and make my rack. But I was unsuccessful. I began to notice a rustling under the cover and movement. He was getting up. I stood unanimated; and postured for an act of aggression.

Then, he peered through top of the blanket concealing his head. He looked up at me and said. “Yo.” He said. “Yo. Didn’t mean to wake you up.” I said. “It’s cool.” Then I relaxed and started to settle my things in and make my rack. I asked him if we were allowed to turn off the lights and get under the cover during the day, in this pod. He said. “No, not normally. It just depends on the guard.”

I thought to myself, this is different. I remembered the H dorm, on the awning above the pod door as I waited for access. And then it occurred to me, I’d seen McCallister leaving that pod a few times. And I realized then that this could be his five-day pod. So, I asked the inmate, “Is this McCallister’s pod?” “Yes.” He said. I thought to myself. That this was an act of God. How did I end up being transferred to the same guard who I had grown to respect and admire? And that I looked to for support during the entire experience? As well as not having to deal with Guard Robinson. It was a dream come true.

I wondered McCallister had had something to do with me getting released from the hole early. I wondered if he’d had something to do with me coming to his pod. The inmate introduced himself to me as Joe. I told him my name and then he got up at that point. He was tidying up his rack, then reached for the pack of cigarette rolls below his rack. Then he darted out the cell. I’d already developed a kind of prejudice against him because he smoked. I hated cigarettes, and the people who smoked them, I found offensive.

But I was in jail, and not at the Hilton. And the jail was no place to be judgmental. Being judgmental was one of the character flaws that could get one killed. The guards did a great job of being condescending to inmates. The inmates didn’t need more putdowns from other inmates. The jail was an equalizing place, a place where everyone is the same. And whoever my brother was, I needed to love him. And I knew that I needed to be an example of Christ to him.




## Chapter 19: Beauty for Ashes

The early morning of the twenty-fifth of February had arrived, and the time for the court hearing was upon me. I tried not to think about whether I was going or not, I just decided to meditate on his word and his promises to me. I'd put together a list of Scriptures for walking through the valley the previous night. Yet I felt no apprehension. I was at ease, despite failing at the last hearing. And I was ready for anything. I knew the Lord was with me, I knew I had his favor. And I knew that I could ask for anything. And see my meditation manifested, in 7 days after the prayer.

That morning, I didn't sleep. I wasn't nervous, just anxious to get to the process. I was confident, yet not boastful. Happy and content, yet not overjoyed or giddy. Just ready. I'd been trying to prepare for the worst, yet I knew I would be free and I had such peace. The outcome didn't matter to me at that point. I was going to follow Jesus, in or out of jail. I rehearsed the valley Scriptures like a man heading to his execution. Like a man at the end of his earthly, that had come. But was looking forward to a better life.

The paradox; the feeling of facing death, I was there. I repeated Psalm 27 to myself over and over that morning. I was in a trance. But I knew Jesus was with me, as he had been with King David. It was chow time, 3:30am. I was wide awake and hoping that with the announcement of chow, that my name would also be announced for court. I hoped that I wouldn't be passed over, as before. I could feel my blood pressure rising, although I felt no pain. I tried to imagine the feeling of leaving the body. The feeling of taking my last breath in this clay form. I felt liberated and I wasn't afraid. "Bottom floor chow! The following inmates get ready for morning court!" shouted the guard. My head was pounding from my blood pressure rising, but I felt no pain. I felt no anxiety. "White, Jordan, Cuffy, Blake, May, Anderson and Charles. Morning court."

I had heard my name, but I had to be sure. I wanted to hear say it again. So, as we assembled for chow, I approached the guard's desk. "Did you call May?" I asked. "No. I said LeMay. Fool! Now get away from desk." Said the guard. It was good enough for me. I was going to court as my attorney had organized, and God had sanctioned it. I knew Jehovah was in this; I knew that he was there. I knew in my spirit that today was my victory day. And I knew that this day, that God would be glorified. I knew today I'd here, "**pack it up!**"




After chow, I retreated to the cell and started to pray and to recite Psalm 27. ‘Yea, though I walk through the valley, I shall fear no evil. I whispered it to myself quietly, over and over again. I was alone, but Jesus was with me. His Spirit was upon me and I felt his power and love all over me. He told me to be calm and he said to me in my spirit, “I will walk with you, through the fire.” In a still soft voice. I felt my breathing slow and shallow at that moment. And it was as though the plasma in my body was seeping out of me onto the floor. Like in a movie, I felt like I was dying.

As I stood there imagining the blood seeping from my body, I awaited Saint Peter’s beckoning to me. I suddenly heard the air lock on the cell disengage behind me. And I thought, if I’m going to heaven, why would I go through a door? “May!” Was the next sound I heard. “Get ready for court.” By this I was brought back into reality. I was in a cell, not bleeding and not dying. I could not escape what was about to happen next.

The thoughts began to race through my mind, like beams of electricity shooting through my brain. It felt like my brain was on fire inside. I had to settle down and be calm. I began to pour the word like a spiritual syrup on the raging blood vessels in my brain. ‘Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. The word was begging to be soaked into my mind and to permeate every part of my spirit and my heart, and it calmed me.

Then I got myself together and departed the cell. ‘No weapon formed against me shall prosper. I quietly whispered to myself. The other inmates were already assembled near the sally port. This morning, there was no frisk. We departed into the passage way. There were several other men in the passageway already assembled for the ride to morning court. It was the same as any other morning, (4:30am to morning court). The guards didn’t care. The inmates didn’t care. It was all just a normal routine, with no emotion, except those complaining about having to get up early.

Then I got myself together and I departed the cell. ‘No weapon formed against me shall prosper. I quietly whispered to myself. The other inmates were already assembled near the sally port. This morning, there was no frisk. We departed into the passage way. There were several other men in the passageway already assembled for the ride to morning court. It was the same as any other morning, (4:30 to morning court). The guards didn’t care. The inmates didn’t care. It



was all just normal routine, with no emotion, except those complaining about having to get up early.

A great cloud of defeat and doubt was there and hovering over the inmates' heads as we marched through the corridor to the bus for transport to court. No one cared. They barely knew you were there. The guards just hustled us through the corridor like a herd of sheep heading to slaughter. Departing the Jail with the customary shackling of inmate to inmate. Left arms cuffed together. I thought of my fellow missionaries. How they'd suffered much, sometimes unto death. And then, I quietly began to humble myself. And shut off my emotions.


"Yea though I walk, running through my mind. I could hear the church choir sing it. Every angel was singing it. 'Through the valley of the shadow of death. I could hear my favorite preachers in the most emotive way that they would shout. "Yea, yea! Halleluiah!" I could then see them cheering me on as we walked through the valley. The freezing cold of February was of no matter to me this morning. The bus with no heat was of no matter to me this morning. The flip flops I had on were of no matter to me this morning. "Yea, yea," was all I could hear this morning. The glory of God was upon me. The Spirit of God was upon me this morning. Hallelujah. And I knew everything was going to be fine in Jesus's name.

In the holding cell, there were several inmates, and I integrated with many of them going to court. I listened that morning to an inmate who was angry at another inmate for snitching on him. He described vividly and in great detail about how he was going to decapitate and mutilate the other inmate. Until a guard came, and he stopped the threatening talk. So much for the great citizens of Gwinnett County. There were four other believers in the holding cell. We decided to pray before going in the courtroom. So, we did, together in a jail cell. We joined hands together and prayed. As we prayed, my name was called out.

"May." It was time to go to the hearing. My attorney came in and said the judge for today had been switched. I said, "Lord, is this you?" She then said, "Today, I think we'll get what we want." I kept my head down and humbly walked into the courtroom. I didn't look up at all. I was going to show the judge my humility. I was reminded of Jesus at the court of Pilate. He said nothing in his defense.

The D.A. went first. This time, I was instructed to confirm to the verbiage in the one-year sentencing order and then the plea offer. So, I did. I was playing ball with the DA. My attorney listened quietly until it was her turn to speak. The DA painted me as the worst individual in the





state once again. I knew I was signing my life away. I was committing to a year in prison for stalking my wife electronically. But I trusted God that morning. It was time for my attorney to speak. She was very graceful and made me sound as good as my mother would.

She pleaded with the judge and let him know that I had a family that I'd been engaged with up until this point of incarceration. She presented me in a way that was fair and accurate. She then requested that the probation order be instated immediately without restrictions. The judge at that point asked me, "How old are your children?" It was the only thing that he'd asked me.

I slowly opened my mouth and said, "Taylor is ten, Michael is six." He looked at me and then looked at the DA but said nothing. He then asked if there was anything else either counsel would like to submit before he passed his judgment. Both sides rested. The judge then gave his judgment. I stood there awaiting his word. I knew what happened. I was going to believe in God and keep my faith. It was one of those moments when you feel something good is about to happen, when you know you are about to be blessed. And a warm sensation comes over you. And all you can do is praise the Lord for his goodness. So, under my breath I did.

He ordered my immediate release with probation and no restrictions. The DA became aggressive with the judge. She wanted me to go to prison. Though I couldn't understand why, perhaps she didn't have children. Perhaps she thought every inmate is the same and should be treated the same way. Perhaps she just didn't care about my case and my children having parents in their lives. We were just another African American family being torn apart and what did she care. In her mind, I was just another animal going through the system. The world would go on. But I tried to understand her position and I told myself that I would pray for her.

The DA tried to argue with the judge, but the judge immediately shot down her argument. My attorney looked at me with a little smile. We'd won. The judge asked me if I had anything to say. I humbly said to the judge. "thank you, sir, for recognizing the needs of my children." My attorney looked at me and said that I will be released soon.

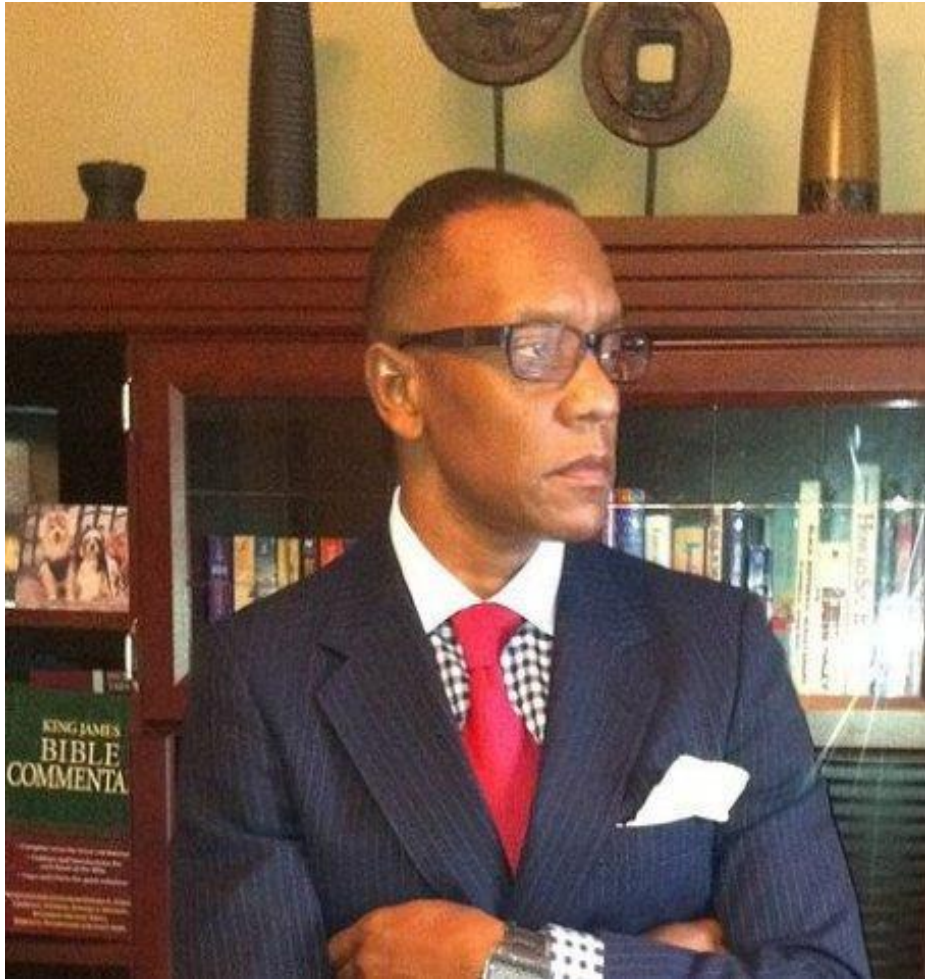


Back at the pod, I was congratulated by the other inmates. But I played down the excitement. I knew the Lord had done the work for me and that I had nothing to brag about. I went to sleep, and I was awakened to hearing my name on the PA. “May, come to the guards’ desk!” I got up and made my way to the desk, the guard looked me in the eye, and said the heralded words to me. **“Pack it up.”**





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