PRISON FELLOWSHIP

I Surrender My Fear

Fear is a subtle attacker. Sometimes it lunges around the corner and throttles us. Other times it slowly nibbles on us until we are gradually consumed. It can penetrate any area of our lives, especially in prison.

But the Bible tells us "perfect love casts out fear." (1 John 4:18) Many Christian men and women, amidst the threats of prison life, have discovered that perfect love.

For Further Study:

Psalm 3:3-6
Psalm 27
Psalm 34:4-7
Proverbs 3:21-26
Isaiah 44:6-8
Matthew 10:26-31
John 14:27
Acts 18:9-10
Romans 8:15
Hebrews 2:14-18
I John 4:18

Stronger

"He who calls you is faithful, and He will do it." (I Thessalonians 5:24)

As I rode the bus home after being released from prison, I was suddenly confronted by all kinds of fears and questions. I made myself relax by meditating on the Word of God; I thought deeply about my new life as a believer in Jesus Christ. I knew that I trusted Him with everything in my life and that He would be faithful to meet my needs.

When I got off the bus in Washington DC, my husband was there waiting for me – but only to take me to the halfway house where I would have to live for almost a year. Here I was, in my own hometown but unable to go home to be with my loved ones. And as the months went by, it was sometimes frustrating trying to live by the rules and regulations of the halfway house, maintain a job, and spend a few hours with my family, only to have to leave them again.

But I stayed in that halfway house for seven months and came out stranger in the Lord than when I went in. God brought me through every long step of the way. Now I live in a new home with my husband and three children. God kept us all in His hands so we could be back together again.

Violet,* released from prison

PRAYER: Thank you, God, for Your faithfulness. I would be lost without you. Thank you for watching over me and leading the way. Amen.

A Spirit of Power

"For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline." (2Timothy 1:7)

Before becoming a Christian, I was fearful, not only of life in prison but also about being released and going home. I was especially worried about the people in the community – would they accept me?

But now I am a new person in Christ and I'm no longer afraid of how others may treat me. I know that the God who controls all things is with me. I am His child and He will not only free me from my fears, but will also fill me with His spirit of power and love.

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Phoebe,* incarcerated

PRAYER: O God, you have made me free to choose You and love you. Thank you for freeing me from fear! Help me to show your love to each person I meet today and every day. Amen.

Eternal Life

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me." (John 14:1)

When I came to prison, I felt as if I had come to a dead-end road. I was insecure, lonely, and afraid. I had no idea what I would face. Then while I was in the new-arrival unit, I met a girl who felt the same way I did. We shared stories with each other about our lives and families. Our friendship grew.

One day my friend was called to the assistant warden's office. When she returned, she could barely walk or talk, her face completely white. She had just been told that her husband had been killed in a fire.

There I stood. I wanted to help her, but I had nothing to say. I found myself praying for her, and I suddenly realized how precious life is – and how short it can be. We never know when the Lord is going to call for us. Maybe that was God's way of showing us both that we could not put off accepting Christ – because only through Him can we have eternal life.

Much has happened since that day. My friend and I have both accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior. Our loneliness is gone; we have security in His companionship.

Patricia,* incarcerated

PRAYER: Our heavenly Father, thank you for helping me see all the opportunities awaiting me once I accepted You into my life. Amen.

**Names have been changed*

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