

I Surrender My Family Worries

It's a great comfort to know that you are part of God's big family, especially when you are so far away from your own loved ones. And when you realize that God's arms are not only around you, but are long enough to reach your family and care for their needs, you can feel comforted knowing they are in His hands.

God Is in Control

"Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7)

When I was in prison, it became clear to me very quickly that I was not longer in control of my life, from the biggest things to the smallest detail. I was told when to wake up, what to eat, when to go to sleep. One of the most frightening things I lost control over was my family's situation. They were without me and I was completely unable to help them.

One day after my wife had visited me, I was watching her drive away and realized that if she were to have an accident, even right there in front of the prison, I could do absolutely nothing. It was one of the most important moments of my life, because I suddenly realized that I needed someone to be truly in control – Jesus Christ. I turned my family over to Him; I cast my cares upon Him. And because of that, my wife and children accepted Him as their personal Savior.

My family and I survived the prison experience. All our obligations were met during my incarceration, and it was because I turned everything over to Christ, the One who promised to be faithful and answer the desires of our hearts.

Edward,* released from prison

PRAYER: Lord, I ask that as those in prison read these thoughts, they will, as I did, put their complete trust in you – and entrust their loved ones to your tender care. Amen.

Listening to God

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand." (John 10:27-28)

I used to live as a Christian, but then I strayed away from the truth. For many years I drifted in and out of trouble, knowing deep inside that I desperately needed the Lord, but fighting it because I was afraid of Him.

Yet a very simple example reminded me that God was always calling me tenderly back into his fold. During my time in prison, I had never told my children about my situation. Whenever I called or wrote them, I was just "away" and everything was "alright." But then a Christian lady and good friend in prison told me to tell my children the truth.

For Further Study:

Psalm 68:5-6
Psalm 107:41
Psalm 128
Matthew 6:25-34
Matthew 12:49-50
Acts 16:31
Ephesians 2:19-22
Philippians 4:6-7
1 John 3:1

So I told them and waited two anxious months to hear from them. Finally I received a great blessing – the first letter from my daughter. At the top of the page she had written in big letters, “PLEASE WRITE SOON!” and “MOMMA, I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU.” It was like the old saying, “Out of the mouths of babes...”

My daughter’s words opened my eyes to a great truth – the Lord always loves me. I pray that I may be faithful to him and that I may become whatever He wants me to be.

Nina,* incarcerated

PRAYER: Dear Lord, please help me to live the life you desire for me from now on, one day at a time. Thank you for your patience with me. Help me to be patient with others. Amen.

God’s Great Love

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

I have made plenty of mistakes in my lifetime, but even if I had been as perfect as humanly possible, I still wouldn’t meet God’s standard. The Bible tells me that my sins carry a heavy sentence – death. But it also tells me that God gives me a free gift – eternal life through his son, Jesus.

Such a great love is difficult to comprehend, but sometimes earthly examples help us understand our Lord. The most difficult experience I have ever faced is being in prison and away from my mother and two daughters. But my family has forgiven me for hurting them so much. They are loving and caring, visiting me, and writing to me. I have learned that even though I’m in prison, I have many gifts from God to be thankful for – not only the miracle of eternal life, but the miracles of family love and unity.

Sherry,* incarcerated

PRAYER: Dear Lord, thank you for what you are doing for me through my loving family. Help me to be what you want me to be. Amen.

**Names have been changed*