

***Psychologists tell us that more people suffer from the effects of loneliness than any other malady. Though there is very little privacy behind prison walls, there is also very little companionship, friendship, and trust. Where can a friend be found? Jesus promises, “I am with you always.” (Matthew 28:20)***

## **Together in Prison**

*“Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.” (Hebrews 13:3)*

When I was in prison, so many people were “prisoners by my side.” And they showed me the reality of Jesus Christ’s life in them.

Chuck Colson was my fellow prisoner. We had a prayer group that grew from the two of us to seven to 35, and we saw tremendous answers to our requests to God. We experienced a warm and vital fellowship in the midst of the despair of prison.

Then Chuck was released, but he didn’t forget me. But he and many others kept coming back. And when I was released, they didn’t abandon me. They were waiting for me with a place to live, a job, and plenty of encouragement.

When I think about how much that support meant to me, I want to pass that same sharing and love on to others behind bars.

Peter,\* released from federal prison

**PRAYER:** Lord, thank you for fellowship, for the unity of your family. Thank you that we are never alone, but have brothers and sisters by our sides wherever we are.

## **He Lifted Me Out**

*“You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.” (Isaiah 26:3)*

Some years have gone by since my release from prison, but I still have a vivid picture in my mind of my experience there with loneliness.

The feeling was very foreign to me; I thought that it was impossible to experience such misery. My heart was broken and my mind was lost. Everyone and everything around me didn’t even seem to be there; nothing could fill the emptiness that I felt so deeply in my heart. Finally, I knew that God was the only possible answer to my pain.

### **For Further Study:**

Psalm 23  
Psalm 56  
Matthew 28:19-20  
John 14:16-21  
John 15:9-12  
Romans 8:35-39  
Philippians 4:11-13  
II Timothy 4:16-18  
I John 1:3-4  
Revelation 21:3-4

He came and lifted me out of the snare that my adversary had laid for me. He reached down when I could not reach up. Now my life is full – my cup is running over. The Lord is my comfort and my constant companion.

Donna,\* released from prison

**PRAYER:** Dear Lord, help us to realize that some of our greatest times of devotion to you come when we are the loneliest. Amen.

## **My Best Friend**

*“Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.” (Psalm 55:17)*

Since I am a prisoner in a maximum security prison, my lifestyle is harsh compared to the world outside these walls. But I know that Jesus, my “best friend,” is always at my side. But, as often happens, when I am not conscious of his presence and am preoccupied with the little busy things of life, I don’t speak to my friend. So I neglect the greatest privilege and power – prayer.

That is a tragedy. If we ever needed to repent of our prayerlessness, to turn our lives over to God, it is now. I ask myself, “How often did I speak to Him today? Did I speak to Him not only to ask, but also to thank Him, and praise Him for who He is?”

Bill,\* incarcerated

**PRAYER:** My dearest Friend, when I forget to speak to you, speak to me until we speak together. Amen.

*\*Names have been changed*