

IN THIS ISSUE:



Your Letters
p.2



Word
Search p.3



NFL to
Prison p.4

Riding Free After a Bumpy Road

by E.G. Andrews

Excitement fills Shane Rubash's voice as he describes his weekend plans.

"My son's season opener for baseball is today, and I'm heading to see him!"

For Shane, baseball has always been more than just a game. Throughout Shane's childhood in Monroe, Washington, his dad struggled with alcoholism. To take his mind off the abuse and neglect, Shane escaped into baseball.

Starved for attention his dad couldn't give, Shane struggled with anger and self-doubt. He overperformed at everything just to feel a sense of worth. But that was exhausting, and he couldn't keep up. He ended up dropping out of high school at 16. By age 20, attempting to build the



Shane used to be stuck in the cycle of drugs and prison, but now he's free, and the only cycle he thinks about is his Harley.

happy home life he always wanted, Shane had a wife, a child, and financial burdens he wasn't ready to handle. "We were kids pretending to be adults," he admits.

Desperate for relief from stress and the heated arguments with his wife, Shane turned to drugs. Meth helped him detach from reality—until the police

caught him with drugs and a firearm in the house. Shane was sentenced to 18 months of straight time.

By release day, Shane's marriage had crumbled into

divorce, but he left prison sober. He went back to work again and stayed out of trouble for the next decade. Then one day, his new girlfriend brought home something surprising: a bag of meth.

Shane thought, *Is this really happening?*

Within a few weeks, he and his girlfriend were not only using but selling, and their relationship grew more toxic and abusive. After many fights, Shane's fourth no-contact order was a felony. His freedom was gone again.

Sitting in jail, Shane felt hopeless. But then he received a fateful visit from an old friend who was a Christian.

"I felt like God told me you were in jail," she told Shane. "I want to tell you that God has forgiven you."

That's when Shane broke down crying. He knew something needed to change, and he knew he couldn't do

Continued on page 2

Photo by Bret Doss

VIEWPOINTS: A Conversation About Respect

with Mark Freer and Chad Prince, as told to S.L. Ray

Inside Journal asked a retired security director and a former prisoner about the importance of respect behind bars.

Here's what they said.

Mark, Retired Security Director

I spent 34 years in the correctional system at five different prisons. In any prison, respect is what makes the environment tolerable for everyone. It's really a two-way road between inmates and staff.

When there was an issue between an inmate and an authority figure, it was usually due to lack of communication. When I worked with officers, I always told them, "You've got to put yourself in the prisoner's place, and understand the stress they are under."

And I told inmates, "Remember that my officers are coming into this whole other world inside this building, but they don't get to leave all their problems behind. Many of them will come in grumpy, tired, or upset." Don't judge people until you have time to get to know what they are like on most of the days they are working.

When there is a conflict, it's good for everyone to take a step back and settle down, then work out the problem instead of getting distracted by anger. It's when the emotion starts rising, and the officer invokes their authority and the inmate rebels against it, that things start to go haywire. If you're having a hard time managing the issue, the officer can say, "Let's talk to my supervisor," or the inmate can say, "Can we have a conversation together with my counselor?" It helps to involve a neutral third party.

Respect is a learning process for everyone in a prison environment. Many people

come into prison already having issues with authority. Some of those issues are well-deserved; there are some problems in our society with people abusing authority. That turns people very negative, very fast, at a very young age. But I hope we can get prisoners to stop and realize the whole world is not that way. We can break the cycle and work together as people.

The best way to earn the respect of officers is to understand what they are trying to accomplish ...

The best way to earn the respect of officers is to understand what they are trying to accomplish by enforcing policies and

Continued on page 2



When prisoners and correctional officers work together and respect each other, it's more peaceful and less stressful for everyone.

Photo by Prison Fellowship

Letters to the Editor

Michael, Florida

I recently read an Inside Journal and it made me cry, and at that point I knew I needed a change in my life. I've been here nine years and was giving up on life until reading that little ad that said, "Are you fumbling in the dark?" (Winter 2018 issue). And my heart cried out yes! So here I am broke and defeated. ... I need help badly spiritually. Thank you for placing that little ad where my eye would catch it.

Dear Michael:

We're so glad you came across Inside Journal, and that it inspired you. Please keep reading, and keep believing things can get better. Keep asking God to light your way in the dark times.

Cole, Illinois

As I was sitting in my cell, a man had come to my door. It was the chaplain of the prison. We talked a little and ... he showed me this newspaper called Inside Journal and told me to read it and he'll come back soon to discuss more. I really enjoyed what I read, which was the Fall 2017 issue, and he came back and had a great conversation about the people out there doing what they can and how certain people come out of the darkest holes into the light. How do I go about getting more information about the newspaper, and the Bible study, and Angel Tree?



Studio-Annika/GettyImages

Dear Cole:

Thank you for sharing your story. Inside Journal comes out four times a year: Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall. Be sure to check out each edition for special offers and free resources. You can also keep asking your chaplain for information about Angel Tree and Bible studies.

Thomas, Delaware

I felt privileged to have read something that welcomed any

and everyone with open arms. I just read the Winter 2018 edition and must say that it's refreshing to open a paper from an inmate's perspective. ... I'd like to say thank you from the heart for shining light on this inmate's brief but dark holiday.

Dear Thomas:

We pray Inside Journal continues to strengthen and encourage you. Stay strong, and keep your eyes fixed on Jesus. ■

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

At Inside Journal® (IJ), we receive many letters each week from prisoners asking for subscriptions to our newspaper. We are grateful for the interest and support of our readers—however, because of limitations on our staff and budget, IJ is only available in bulk shipments to your chaplain, programming coordinator, or a volunteer who visits your facility. Chaplains, to set up these shipments for free, please contact our editorial staff at P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146-1790 or insidejournal@pfm.org.

Viewpoints

Continued from page 1

procedures. Sometimes the rules may seem petty, but you can't take it personally. It might not do any harm if one person gets away with breaking a rule, but if the officer makes an exception for you, he has to make it for everyone else, too. Then we'll all have a real problem.

The job of the COs is to maintain the level of security needed for everyone to live and work in a safe environment. When people give in to negativity, the prison environment becomes like a jungle. No one wants that chaos. But when you show respect, act with integrity, and hold yourself like a man, you make the environment better for everyone. That's the kind of environment where people can make real changes in their lives, so they never have to come back. That's what we all want.

Read the rule book closely—and then follow it.

Chad, Former Prisoner

I did my time at Louisiana State Penitentiary, otherwise known as Angola or "The Farm." I had to learn how to have the respect of both staff and my fellow inmates to make the most of my sentence.

Having respect for authority in prison isn't about your intentions, although that

is important. Other people can't read your mind—they can only observe your words and your actions.

One of the easiest ways to show respect is with your language around officers. "Yes sir, no sir, and right away sir" will go a long way. It's also best to avoid cussing, complaining, and questioning their authority. Officers are just trying to get through the day the best they can. If your words are respectful and encouraging, it will make their job easier and they'll see you as helpful and compliant. But if you are routinely showing disrespect, you are worsening the environment for others, and you won't give the officers much choice but to exert their authority.

Your actions can also show respect. One of the best things I learned early on was to read the rule book closely—and then follow it. Officers generally won't have sympathy for prisoners who violate a policy or procedure, and then claim they didn't know it was wrong.

How you relate to your fellow inmates will also influence how prison officials view you. If you stay away from negativity, that will help you stay in the staff's good graces. It won't take them long to see you as a helper instead of a troublemaker. Also, do your job well and don't act lazy. When they see you being cooperative, respectful, and resolving problems, they'll recognize you as a leader, and you'll have less tension in your day. ■

Riding Free

Continued from page 1

it alone. He prayed, *God, if You're real and You can change my life, come change me.*

Awakened to hope

In the quiet before dawn the next morning, Shane couldn't sleep. He dusted off a Bible and started

searching for answers. By the time he transferred from jail to prison, he was reading Scripture for hours on end. He showed up to every church service he could find, but he still wanted more.

Shane applied for the Prison Fellowship Academy™, a faith-based program that takes people through a process to

confront their issues, be transformed from the inside out, and take responsibility for making better choices. Through the Academy, and with the help of caring volunteers and the program curriculum, Shane began to deal with his lifelong attempt to escape from problems rather than resolve them.

"We faced addiction, anger,

pain," explains Shane, whose favorite classes covered topics like finances and parenting. As he developed good habits and grew spiritually, he began taking steps to make amends for his past, however possible. He wrote an apology letter to his ex-wife. He tried to reach out to his estranged children, who finally started answering his phone calls and began to realize their dad was a changed man.

Through it all, Shane received guidance from Academy volunteers like Bill. "He was always ready to answer our questions and help us tackle hard things," Shane says.

For Shane, the Academy became a safe place to belong while behind bars.

Then graduation day came, and he was put to the test.

Playing by God's rules

Released in 2016, Shane wasn't sure how to feel when his mom came to pick him up. He was excited and equally nervous. But he knew he could trust God in the face of the unknown.

Shane connected with a church, where pastors and

other church members helped him find work and supportive friendships. Now working for a Christian employer, Shane rents his own apartment and plans to buy a house someday. He also enjoys helping with services at a local Gospel mission twice a month, serving the homeless, and mentoring three former prisoners. And he hasn't totally left the Academy behind: he keeps in touch with other graduates on the outside, and Bill is still his mentor today.

"I had a lot of struggles, but God covered me."

On the drive to his son's baseball game, Shane shares how thankful he is for his second chance at life. "I had a lot of struggles, but God covered me," he says. "All these things I wanted so badly when I was younger, God gave me in His time. I just had to be obedient and humble. It's not about me. It's about what God is doing in me." ■



Photo by Bret Doss

Shane once sought escape from the pressures of his home life on a baseball diamond. Now, he loves to spend the weekend watching his teenage son, with whom he's rebuilding a relationship, play ball.

The Good Kind of Fear

by Grayson Pope

A friend of mine did time in the '80s. He was awaiting his transfer from a county jail to prison when an older man he admired said to him, "You're about to go to prison. If you want to survive, you're going to have to earn respect. Here's how you earn it: be honest, work hard, and never complain. If you do that, you can earn respect."

While he was incarcerated, my friend did exactly what the man said. Before long, he was earning respect from others. But he still had insecurities. In fact, the more my friend worked at being respected, the more he worried about what everyone thought of him. Would he make a mistake that ruined the respect others had for him? Would he become a target? Worrying about these things filled his days with anxiety.

Respect is often based on fear. If you're a fan of a professional football team that isn't the Patriots, you respect Tom Brady when your team is down by three, there are only two minutes left, and the Patriots have the ball. Even if you don't like the Patriots, you respect their ability to dominate on the field.

More seriously, there may be people on your unit that no one messes with, not because they are well-liked, but because they know how to intimidate—or worse.

But is that the only way to do time? Watching your

back and earning or showing respect based out of fear?

Respecting God—a healthy fear

The Bible tells us there's a better way. Matthew 10:28 says, "Don't be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

So, are you just supposed to cower before God instead, hoping a lightning bolt isn't headed your way?

No. The Bible talks about different kinds of fear. There's the kind you usually think of—the fear you experience when a threatening person or situation confronts you. It's fear that makes you comply with someone's demands to avoid getting hurt. The Bible

says that God's perfect love, demonstrated through His Son Jesus, casts out that kind of terror.

But there's another kind of fear—the loving, respectful fear that a child has for a good, loving, and committed parent. A child who loves and respects his parent wants to do everything he can to please him or her. He fears the consequences of disobeying his parent—not because he fears the punishment, but because he doesn't want to disappoint or hurt the most important person in his world.

When the Bible talks about fearing God, it's referring to this loving type of fear—fear rooted in respect and love for God the Father. So, a man with a healthy fear of God is not terrified of Him. He



Spending all your time worrying about others' opinions is exhausting. Instead, you can spend your time in peace and grace.

mediaphotos/Gettyimages

TIRED OF WALKING ON EGGHELLS?

Replace your anxiety about gaining the respect of others with a loving, respectful fear of God. The Bible says, "Fear of the Lord leads to life, bringing security and protection from harm" (Proverbs 19:23). So how do you shift your focus off others and onto God? Start with a simple prayer:

Lord, You are stronger and more powerful than any person, no matter how intimidating. I want to receive Your grace and forgiveness. Make me new from the inside out, and teach me how to love, serve, and respect You. Amen.

If you'd like to learn more about God's love, Inside Journal wants to connect you with a partner organization that offers a free correspondence Bible study. Write to "Walking on Eggshells," c/o Inside Journal, P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146-1790. You can also get an Inside Journal NLT Life Recovery Bible (limit one per person). To receive a Bible, write to: Tyndale House Publishers, Attn: Inside Journal Bible, 351 Executive Drive, Carol Stream, IL 60188 with your name, prison ID number, institution name, and address.

understands that while God can destroy the body and soul, He doesn't want to. In fact, God "wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).

Respect is earned, grace is given

The truth is that God is full of grace. He loves you so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, who willingly sacrificed Himself and died for everything you've ever done wrong. All He asks in return is that you put your faith in Him.

In our world, gaining someone's respect can come at a cost, and often takes effort. But God's grace does not need to be earned—it's free and available to all who believe in Jesus.

My friend spent eight years behind bars worried about what others thought of him. And his stress didn't end with his sentence. After several years struggling to earn the respect of people on the outside, he found

himself back in prison for four more years.

But during his second sentence, my friend decided to fear God instead of people. He decided to accept God's gift of grace, and let that relationship determine his values and actions. He spent those four years at peace with himself and his fellow prisoners.

What if you did the same? What if, instead of fearing other people and their opinion of you, you were unconditionally loved and accepted by an all-powerful God?

Being respected and respecting others is important, but as my friend learned through his anxieties, you will never find peace by focusing only on the respect of others. True peace comes from the Lord. If you fearfully respect God, and accept the never-ending grace He freely offers, you'll find what you've been searching for all along. ■

GET EQUIPPED IN GOD'S WORD!

Free Bible Correspondence Courses—Enroll Today!

ALL YOU NEED IS A BIBLE, A PENCIL, AND A WILLING HEART.

In the last 17 years, more than 32,000 students have taken our courses.

- Receive Lessons in the Mail
- Earn Certificates of Completion for Each Course
- Build Spiritual Strength, Character, and Endurance
- Receive Personalized Comments and Encouragement (trained volunteers review and respond to each lesson)



Upon completing the 35 self-paced lessons, you may earn 6 credit hours at Berean Bible Institute, Slinger, WI. Bereanbibleinstitute.org



Please enroll by writing us at the address above and be sure to include:

- Your name and ID#
- Institution Name
- Institution Address
- City, State, ZIP

Our lessons are also available for download at www.prisonmission.org

Word Search: Important Qualities

How many of the words below can you find in the puzzle? (Words are hidden left-to-right, right-to-left, upward, downward, and diagonally)

Respectful, Valued, Honesty, Worth, Helpful, Humble, Obedient, Reasonable, Decent, Kind, Useful, Sympathy, Good, Favor

Y A U Q I D H L D T Y D T B E
R N Z A E F U U Q N H S O X O
A M Y C Q F M F Y E T Z U O M
C S E E U I B E W I A K K U G
W N R Q F V L S H D P S C B I
T P E L E Q E U C E M G L D L
T A S V A L U E D B Y H Y U W
N D P R O V A F I O S T F O D
A Q E I L X H L E T S P R F N
U Y C B L Y K F R E L T G U I
L E T N Z B S Y N E H S D X K
J U F I P R S O H X U P W D M
N G U V D T H F D Z B V S Z G
C Y L E L B A N O S A E R R D
R Q P W Q S P E X M V G G R R

NFL Player Learned Respect the Hard Way

by S.L. Ray

Tyrus McCloud once played linebacker for the Baltimore Ravens. Today, he works with prisoners and their families as a field director for Prison Fellowship. Inside Journal spoke with Tyrus about NFL life, prison ministry, and the lessons he's learned about respect and relationships.

Inside Journal: Did you always dream of being a professional athlete?

Tyrus McCloud: I grew up in a poverty-stricken, drugs-and-crime neighborhood, raised by a single mom with six kids. I never liked sports. I was a thief. One day, the high school coach [caught me stealing] and told me I was going to get expelled, but if he could mentor me, then he'd save me from getting expelled. When he started teaching me football, I realized it was going to be a new world for me. That opened my eyes to the possibility that I could get out of my old neighborhood.

IJ: In pro football, how important was respect?

TM: You had to earn respect of your teammates in order to be great, so it was very important. I couldn't function without my team. They were like family—we all experienced the same pressures.

IJ: What kinds of pressures?

TM: In the NFL, you can't show weakness, you can't show fear. That's why you hear all these tragic stories of guys in trouble for domestic violence or substance abuse, or guys committing suicide. What



Tyrus McCloud, left, poses for a photo with Prison Fellowship's director of communications, Jim Forbes, at a recent Angel Tree Sports Clinic.

Photo by Prison Fellowship

makes us similar, everyone in this world, is that we all have emotions, fears, insecurities, broken relationships. But when we're taught not to express those things, everything builds up on the inside. Men who are taught to not show emotion or fear aren't able to deal with life's issues in a healthy way.

IJ: Just how much pressure was there?

TM: Pressure beyond comprehension. Seeing the Nike endorsements, the commercials, things like that paint a different picture—but the truth is, we were constantly concerned about losing our jobs. After I tore my PCL (leg ligament), the fear of someone coming to take my job while I was in rehab was overwhelming.

That's the pressure to be a tough guy—smile and pretend like we have it all together.

IJ: How can men escape the "tough guy" pressures?

TM: Being able to share your fears and your past mistakes is key. When I started mentoring kids, I decided to share my failures, not my strengths. I could've walked in and said, "I played in the NFL, I've got a wife of 20 years, house, two kids, and a dog," but that's only showing the good side. Truth is, I wasn't very faithful to my wife at the beginning, I wasn't a very good father at first, I didn't know how to control my alcoholism—those things are the truth. Am I still fighting? Yeah. But because you know the real me, you can talk to me and we can help each other.

IJ: How did you transition from pro sports to prison ministry?

TM: Like so many other retired players, I went through depression, alcohol, thought about suicide, beat myself up for years. Then ... I went through this spiritual rehabilitation period, trying to find my purpose in life. I was working with young adults to mentor them. Then someone said, "I think you'd be great at prison ministry, and God is calling you to this." Well, prison was the last place I wanted to go—I have a brother who's doing a life sentence, and two other brothers who've been in and out of prison. [Taking a job with Prison Fellowship] was probably the biggest step

of faith I've ever taken in my life.

IJ: What similarities are there in the culture of pro sports and prison?

TM: Many NFL players have similar stories: they come from single moms, poverty, abuse, and their goal in pro sports is getting out of that rough life. When you hear stories from prisoners, it's often the same. But in both places, if you respect each other, it empowers you to take ownership of your life.

IJ: And how do you define respect?

TM: My definition of respect is wrapped up in one word: experience. I'm a firm believer your experience teaches you to respect what you're up against. In turn, whatever culture, community, job, relationship, or situation you find yourself in, you will receive respect based on the experience you present.

IJ: What advice can you share for readers who want to maintain respectful, healthy relationships?

TM: You can be angry all you want. But at the end of your life, people will remember you as an angry man. Or you can leave a legacy. What do you want people to say about you when you're gone? ■

NEWS + NOTES

Fighting Cancer From Within

Soledad, Calif.—The men inside Correctional Training Facility of Soledad, California (CTF Soledad), participated in the third annual Relay for Life cancer walk on June 23, called "Fighting Cancer From Within." This year, men inside CTF Soledad donated more than \$15,000, which is \$5,000 more than they were aiming for.

The Balanced Reentry Activity Group and The American Cancer Society helped organize the event. Participants walked around the central yard to raise money that will help celebrate and save lives affected by cancer.

Over the past three years, this event has raised

more than \$40,000 to help support Relay for Life of Salinas. Some of those donations were raised by men behind bars. Their family and friends contributed the rest.

According to one Prison Fellowship volunteer who helped some of the prisoners ask for donations, these men love being a part of the event and contributing to a cause much bigger than themselves.

Prisoners' Children Find a Safe Space

Los Angeles, Calif.—Twenty students have their eyes fixed on the man in the front of the room. It's lunchtime on a recent Wednesday at Venice High School. The man is assigning a writing prompt to the students who have one

thing in common—someone in their family is or has been behind bars.

Prisoners' family members sometimes experience an unfair stigma, and they can't always share what they're going through. The organization sponsoring this writing workshop, POPS (short for "Pain Of the Prison System"), battles against this stigma and works to create a safe place for students with incarcerated family members. The organization was launched in 2013 by editor and author Amy Friedman and her husband Dennis Danziger—the man giving the writing prompts—who is also a playwright and novelist.

Students attending POPS meetings are equipped and encouraged to write their stories as a restorative process. Writing stirs emotions and creativity and allows the students to

bond with one another. The organization hopes to bring POPS to as many U.S. high schools as possible.

Meanwhile, students at Venice High School who thought they had to hide part of their lives are finding a safe space every Wednesday at lunchtime. ■

ANSWER KEY: Word Search

Y A U Q I D H L D T Y D T B E	DECENT (diagonal)
R N Z A E F U U Q N H S O X O	FAVOR (right-to-left)
A M Y C Q F M F Y E T Z U O M	GOOD (diagonal)
C S E E U I B E W I A K K U G	HELPFUL (diagonal)
W N R Q F V L S H D P S C B I	HONESTY (diagonal)
T P E L E Q E U C E M G L D L	HUMBLE (down)
T A S V A L U E D B Y H Y U W	KIND (up)
N D P R O V A F I O S T F O D	OBEDIENT (up)
A Q E I L X H L E T S P R F N	REASONABLE (right-to-left)
U Y C B L Y K F R E L T G U I	RESPECTFUL (down)
L E T N Z B S Y N E H S D X K	SYMPATHY (up)
J U F I P R S O H X U P W D M	USEFUL (up)
N G U V D T H F D Z B V S Z G	VALUED (left-to-right)
C Y L E L B A N O S A E R R D	WORTH (diagonal)
R Q P W Q S P E X M V G G R R	