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# Finally Free From the Crushing Weight of Grief

by Joanna Breault

From her earliest days, Chanda's attitude toward life was simple: "It's me against the world."

She was bullied for her weight as a little girl and got into fights. When she was in second grade, she was kicked out of school for the first time.

But those childhood struggles were minor compared to Chanda being violated by her mother's boyfriend when she was 12—and the betrayal she felt when her mother would not stand up for her.

Before she started eighth grade, Chanda was removed from her mother's home and sent to a girls' home. Her life spiraled from bad to worse. She started down a path that included



Photo by D. Corby, 2021

By the time Chanda was only 24, she had already been through a lifetime of pain, drama, betrayal, and abuse. She had no idea her most painful grief was yet to come. But thankfully, she eventually found true peace and a new sense of purpose.

running away, drug addiction, exotic dancing, being trafficked to Florida, a dozen arrests for prostitution and dealing crack, and three prison sentences—all by the age of 24.

Chanda didn't want to think or feel anything.

"That's what I had been searching for my whole life," she says of her desire to numb her pain.

During her third time behind bars, she heard the good news of God's love for her and accepted Jesus as her savior. After release, she joined a

church where she sang in the choir and worked as the pastor's secretary. Chanda was amazed when she learned that the associate pastor had feelings for her—even though he knew about her past.

She said was glad "a man of God could take interest in me after all of that," and they got married.

**Broken dreams**

Chanda worked two jobs to make sure she and her husband had all the things she thought a preacher and his wife needed: a Cadillac, nice clothes, and fancy hats for Chanda. But a lot of their money was also going to her husband's drinking habit—and, Chanda discovered, to another woman.

Although her marriage was a mess, Chanda was overjoyed when she learned she was pregnant. She gave birth to a daughter, Kachandra. Three months later, the unthinkable happened—little Kachandra died due

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## 6 HABITS of a Lifetime Learner

..... by Cherise Bopape .....

Full is often considered back-to-school time. Well, going back to school doesn't just need to be reserved for kids. You too can be a student! Studies show that "lifetime learners" (people who continue to take classes or learn new things throughout their lives) have better mental and physical health. Reading can improve sleep and reduce stress, learning can contribute to longer lifespan, and higher education leads to better intellectual understanding in your old age. An added bonus: If you have kids, they might feel inspired by your desire to educate yourself this fall!



### Here are six healthy habits of lifetime learners:

**1. Find and focus on your end goal.**

Figure out what you want to learn and why. Then when you're tempted to doze off, skip a day, or quit, remember your reason for learning. Walter Blissit regretted not being able to financially support his wife and daughter during the eight years he spent behind bars. But he was determined to provide for them. He decided to earn his HVAC and personal trainer certifications while incarcerated. By keeping the end goal of his family's security in mind, he was able to stay focused even on hard days. Walter was released and is now an HVAC technician who provides for his family.

**2. Determine your learning style.**

You learn by what you see, hear, read, write, and do. Determine what works best for you. Are you a visual learner or an audio learner? Do you prefer studying in a group, listening to lectures, or doing your own research? Would you remember key points from a role-playing exercise but have trouble understanding your notes? Do charts and pictures help you remember what you've been taught? Everyone's learning style is a little different. Embrace yours.

**3. Get a mentor—and be open to changing.**

Mentors guide and strengthen you—that is, if you let them. Find someone

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# Letters to the Editor



**Kayla in New Mexico**  
You publishers made my day! I needed a laugh! Lol! I decided, out of the blue, to read your Inside Journal “Mental Gymnastics: 7 Activities You Can Do in Your Cell to Keep Your Mind Sharp” [Spring 2021] ... I’ve decided to go with #3 (“Write with your non-dominant hand”) and chosen to try to see if I could actually write completely with my left hand. [The rest of this letter was written using her left hand!]. Thanks [from] a new reader.

**Dear Kayla:**  
Glad you had fun with this, and thanks for the left-handed letter! Practice always helps us improve!

**Shabriel in New Mexico**  
My dad has cancer right now, so [prayers of] healing and restoration for him, and also prayers that we become closer in [God] and lean on his wisdom and

**Finally Free**  
Continued from page 1

to reactive airway disease. At first, Chanda threw herself into work to deal with her depression. Then on what would have been Kachandra’s first birthday, Chanda returned to using crack after six years of being clean. Drowning in grief, Chanda fell deeper into addiction than ever before. She stopped caring about her appearance and sold drugs to fund her addiction. After seven years of darkness, Chanda was arrested

knowledge instead of our own. ... I am one of God’s sheep that lost their way, but I do know that He left the 99 to find me. I have the right tools; I just need to utilize them. I am very excited to finally get home and go back to my Celebrate Recovery group so I can keep continuing down the path He’s shown me and be the woman He is calling me to be.

**Jodi in Virginia**  
I am incarcerated and have cancer. I’m currently receiving chemotherapy and hope to have surgery as well. I really want to get closer to God in any way I can. Thank you so much for your help and for all you are doing to help others.

**Dear Shabriel and Jodi:**  
It sounds like you both are already getting closer to God by seeking His presence and His wisdom. We will be praying for the health of Jodi and of Shabriel’s dad.

in 2007. This time, she faced life without possibility of parole. Chanda prayed to God, telling Him, “[If] I have to spend the rest of my natural life in prison, don’t let it be in vain.” Chanda was given a five-year sentence, and she promised God that she would use the time wisely. She read her Bible constantly, entered treatment for her addiction, and began attending a faith-based accountability program called Genesis One. Eventually, Chanda realized it was okay to

## 6 Habits of a Lifetime Learner

Continued from page 1

who exhibits the qualities you want to see in yourself. Look around. Some of you fellow prisoners may be good potential mentors.

A strong mentor is often someone who is good at:

- Avoiding hypocrisy.
- Staying out of trouble.
- Having a job.
- Going to classes.
- Doing things to better themselves and being good examples.
- Being productive and not lounging on their bunks all day.

### 4. Figure out the subjects you want to learn.

There’s always something to learn, so keep a list of topics or activities that interest you. Would you like to get your GED? Do you want to learn more about the law and your parole rights? Have you always wanted to learn to play an instrument? Find out what classes are available or what books are in your library. Some facilities have a choir, some have scriptwriting classes, and some teach trades, such as welding.

### 5. Commit to a timeline and a routine.

If you’ll be taking a class with a start and end date, tell yourself you won’t skip any classes. If you’ll be learning on your own through library books, commit to a certain number of hours per week or for a certain number of months. Start your day with something inspiring—a devotional, a prayer, a quote. And end your day with something relaxing, like gentle stretches or reading. Be intentional about setting up a well-ordered life—one that promotes learning instead of chaos.

### 6. Find creative ways to learn.

Not all learning happens in a classroom or a book. Look for opportunities to grow as you perform your daily activities. Perhaps you’ll learn the meaning of a trendy word by listening to a new song. Maybe you’ll read the nutrition label on a commissary snack to learn how much fat it contains. Whatever you do, dig deeper, ask questions, pay attention to your surroundings, and read, because learning is always “in season.” ■

*Cancer is a hard battle. Find your strength in Jesus.*

**Patricia in Missouri**  
I am writing because I am in desperate need of a large print Life Recovery Bible. My eyes are bad. ... I am a Christian but have a lot to learn about my Lord and Savior and my addiction.

**Shannon in Michigan**  
I’m writing to say thank you so much for the gift of a Recovery Bible. My bunkie needed a Bible, so I passed it on to her. I was already blessed with a Bible. It’s the little things in life that matter, and when in prison, it’s everything. Thank you to whoever Charles is and God bless you all.

**Dear Patricia and Shannon:**  
Please see the ad on page 7 for information on how to receive a free Inside Journal Life Recovery Bible—and our new companion Life Recovery Bible Workbook! To learn who Charles Colson is, please see page 6.

Sincerely,  
The Editorial Staff ■

express her true feelings to God. “I learned He could handle my anger, and if I would just surrender my pain to Him, He would be able to use it,” she says, “but He can’t do anything with it if I don’t give it to Him.” Grief repurposed Chanda was released from prison in 2009, eager to start a new life of fruitfulness for God. She earned her associate, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees. For several years she served as the Oklahoma City area director for Genesis One, the program she

attended as a prisoner. Chanda also works in an Oklahoma prison as program counselor at a Prison Fellowship Academy®. Chanda now honors her daughter in healthy ways. On Kachandra’s 13th birthday, Chanda started a girls’ night for teenage girls at her church. She invited them to hang out and ask any questions they have without fear of judgment. On Kachandra’s 18th birthday, Chanda incorporated her own nonprofit, starting a transitional house for

women called The RAFT. “Because I don’t have kids, they’ve become my children,” she says of the young women she reaches. “I just want to encourage them.” As Chanda looks back on the twists and turns of her life, she has a message for those coming along behind her: “No matter how far we go, God can completely turn your life around. He doesn’t care how angry you are at Him—He has a purpose for your life.” ■

# Don’t Worry, Be Present

by M.M. White

**B**ack in the late ‘80s, a song hit the pop charts. Its message was simple: “Don’t worry. Be happy.” The artist sang,

*In every life we have some trouble  
But when you worry,  
you make it double  
Don’t worry, be happy  
Don’t worry, be happy*

We all know life can have its happy moments. And plenty of them. We also know life doesn’t always serve up cheerful melodies. Life can be hard. Life has its trouble. And nobody wants life’s trouble to “double.”

That’s probably why you may have been told to “make the most of your time,” “live in the now,” and “don’t worry about the free world” while you’re behind bars. That’s all great advice—and easier said than done.

There’s so much in life we don’t control.

Sometimes the bad decisions we made or the problems we didn’t manage well can lead to devastating consequences, even prison. That makes it hard not to think about the “what if” and the “if only.” Replaying those thoughts can keep you stuck in the past.

And of course, while you’re on the inside, life is still happening outside. And you can’t control that, either. Children are growing up. Loved ones are passing away. Friends are getting married. There are all kinds of life events like these and more going on out there while you’re living within these walls (not out there). Birthdays, graduations, weddings, and funerals don’t wait until you can be there. And that can make you feel cut off from the future.

How can you possibly not worry about the past? How can you not worry about the future? How can you instead

just be content in the present?

*“Don’t worry about tomorrow”*

The Bible talks a lot about this. Several verses mention the idea of the past being behind you (“the old life is gone, a new life has begun”—2 Corinthians 5:17), and several more talk about not worrying about the future. Matthew 6:34 says, “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.” By the way, that doesn’t mean tomorrow is sure to have worries, or that those worries will have a hold on you. It just means today is all you need to focus on right now. Be present. Be content.

Paul writes in Philippians 4:11–12 that

contentment is about where your heart is. “I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation.” Paul had found a life of peace and joy once, by faith, he had said yes to Jesus Christ as his Lord. When he had said yes to letting Jesus into his heart, Paul began to experience the unconditional love, comfort, and care of Christ, all of which gave Paul strength to live through difficult times. He found—on the inside—a security in Jesus Christ that kept him from worrying.

You might say, that’s great, but I’m not like Paul. You might be surprised! If you get a chance, try to read more about Paul in the New Testament book of Acts. There you’ll see

Paul in his days before meeting Jesus. He went by “Saul” back then, and he was an enemy of believers in Christ. He was known to hunt them down and abuse them. He was even an accessory to murder. If Jesus can change him, Jesus can change any of us.

Here’s something else you may not have known: Paul actually wrote about being content from prison! Being in chains and on lock down didn’t keep Paul from finding a new way to experience life. Instead of worrying, he learned to trust God’s love, which he received in his heart through his faith in Jesus Christ. You too can have in Jesus what Paul found: the One who can give you happiness and peace on the inside to deal with what comes on the outside. ■

## ARE YOU LIVING IN THE NOW?

Are you upset by the past? Worried about the future?

There are too many things in life that we have no control over—most things, in fact.

And if we let things get to us, worry can take its toll. Thankfully, we can cast our cares on God. In the Bible, 1 Peter 5:7 says: “Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.” And Isaiah 41:10 says: “Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.”

The Bible doesn’t say to never plan ahead or to never learn from your past. It’s human nature to want to control the future or dwell on the past. Worry, especially over things that are truly troubling, is a common emotion. But if you accept Jesus in your heart as your Savior and are ready to fully surrender your life—your worries, your fears, your desire to control—over to Him, He can replace your fear with His peace. Maybe not overnight, but in time.

Not sure where to begin? Start with this simple prayer:

*“God, I want to live in the moment and not worry about things outside of my control. I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Please replace my fear with Your peace. Amen.”*

Want to learn more about Jesus or have other comments? Write to us at “Don’t Worry,” c/o Inside Journal, P.O. Box 1790, Ashburn, VA 20146-1790. Need a free Bible or Workbook? See our ad on page 7.

# FALL BACK QUIZ:

Fall is the season when daylight saving time ends and most states set their clocks back one hour (“fall back”). Here’s a quiz on topics relating to fall. See how well you know your stuff. Answers on page 4.

1. Which two states don’t observe daylight saving time?
2. “Spring ahead, fall back” is a mnemonic (pronounced “nuh-mahn-ik”) memory device used to remind people whether to set their clocks ahead an hour (in the spring) or back an hour (in the fall). Can you think of another memory device like this?
3. University of Chicago researchers have found that people born in the fall have the highest chance of what? A. Having freckles; B. Being night owls; C. Living to 100 years old; D. Being tall.
4. How many pumpkins are used in the average container of pumpkin pie spice?
5. Fall sees more what than any other season? A. New relationships; B. Weddings; C. Babies born; D. Divorces.

# FLOODLIGHT

A Video Program of Hope and Inspiration

This past year has been hard for everyone, and in the isolation of a pandemic, it's easy to feel forgotten. But even in the midst of COVID-19, which caused many facilities to shut doors

to volunteers and programs, God was still making a way to bring encouragement and hope inside. That's how Prison Fellowship's Floodlight® was born.

Floodlight is a free video service created

especially for men and women in prison and currently used in virtually every state. It provides videos through partnerships with top content providers and through original productions created by Prison Fellowship.

Every month, Floodlight viewers can see inspirational stories from returning citizens, hear words of encouragement from believers on the outside, enjoy music and drama, learn and practice leadership skills with

the Global Leadership Summit faculty, or come together for a virtual Hope Event™. Viewers can also find thoughtful and practical Bible studies. Programs are available in Spanish and English.

## Here is a program guide of this fall's lineup\*:

SEPTEMBER		OCTOBER	
<p><b>A New Day 1</b> <i>Original Documentary • Prison Fellowship</i> Walk through the steps, hurdles, and successes of Prison Fellowship Academy® graduates upon their release.</p>	<p><b>Heart Over Head with Craig Groeschel</b> <i>Leadership • Global Leadership Summit</i> Explore the power of emotions in leadership and navigate those emotions of the heart.</p>	<p><b>Serenity Prayer</b> <i>Bible Teaching • The Skit Guys</i> Have a blast with Tommy Woodard and Eddie James, better known as "The Skit Guys." Long-time best friends, these two jokesters teach God's Word using comedy, drama, and talking action figures.</p>	<p><b>The Bible for Grownups with Andy Stanley</b> <i>Bible Teaching • North Point Ministries</i> Watch Andy Stanley give a fresh approach to the Bible (four-part series).</p>
<p><b>I'm Not OK, but Jesus Is with Louie Giglio</b> <i>Bible Teaching • Passion City Church, Louie Giglio</i> Be encouraged to hang on in the face of real depression (six-part series).</p>	<p><b>It's Not Supposed to Be This Way</b> <i>Recovery • Proverbs 31 Ministries</i> Learn more about addiction recovery with Proverbs 31 Ministries founder Lisa TerKeurst (four-part series).</p>	<p><b>From Giving Up to Giving Her All</b> <i>Personal Story • Prison Fellowship</i> Hear Angela share her powerful second-chance story, finding her way through addiction and recovery.</p>	<p><i>*Although this guide contains actual content playing in Floodlight-equipped facilities, it is meant to serve as an example of the types of programming available. Content may vary and is subject to change. ■</i></p>

To learn how your facility can access this free Floodlight platform, ask your chaplain or prison program manager to email [floodlight@pfm.org](mailto:floodlight@pfm.org) for more information.

## QUIZ ANSWERS

from page 3

1. Arizona and Hawaii. The United States officially adopted daylight saving time as part of the Uniform Time Act of 1966. Before that, states could come up with their own times. Iowa once had 23 different start/end dates! The 1966 law brought order to the country's chaotic clocks, but it didn't require all states to comply. Arizona and Hawaii eventually opted out.
2. There are so many! Here are some good ones: Never Eat Shredded Wheat for the directions, clockwise from top (North, East, South, West); My Very Energetic Mother Just Served Us Nachos for the planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune—though in this memory sentence, "Nachos" used to be "Nine Pizzas" back when Pluto was a planet); i before e except after c, and when sounding like "a" as in neighbor and weigh.
3. C. Studies show that people born in September, October, or November are much more likely to live to 100 than people born in other months. Studies also show that although October babies have the highest risk of disease (with May babies having the lowest), October-born people are less likely to commit suicide or suffer from depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder. One small study even found that those born in October and November were better athletes.
4. Zero. It is typically made from 3 tablespoons ground cinnamon, 2 teaspoons ground ginger, 2 teaspoons ground nutmeg, 1 ½ teaspoons ground allspice and 1 ½ teaspoons ground cloves. But no pumpkins.
5. A. More people go from "single" to "in a relationship" or "engaged" in the fall than any other season. Some scientists think this is because both men and women experience a higher level of testosterone in the fall.

# FROM THE INSIDE OUT: Serving Time, Not Just Passing Time

by Richard Swiger

How are you passing your time? After spending 15 years in the prison system, I can tell you that many incarcerated men and women waste their days doing nothing worthwhile. Some will say this is because there is simply nothing worthwhile to do. That's a bunch of garbage!

Take a brief moment to examine yourself. What are you doing with your time? Are you making the necessary changes to get out and stay out? Or even if you

don't have a release date set, are you using your time to become a person of purpose right where you are?

There's an old saying: "If you keep doing what you've always done, you'll keep getting what you always got."

One prisoner named Al is a great example of this. He has served 20 years and doesn't have much to show for it, other than sleeves of tattoos and a spades card game so tight he can beat anyone in his pod. As part of his daily routine, he spends his mornings ironing the sharpest patterned creases

into his state shirt and then running down the stairs to the dayroom to claim control of the TV remote so he can watch Jerry Springer. He occasionally gets sent to the hole for getting caught stealing from the chow hall. But his attitude never changes. Prison is a big joke, and he's not going to turn soft like those "holy rollers" over in the chapel. It's the same thing day after day.

Let me ask a question to those of you who are sick of doing time: If you were to die today, what would you most regret? Consider all

the gravestones you have ever seen. What are some of the most common inscriptions? "Here lies so-and-so: faithful father, brother, and son." But do you ever see: "Here lies so-and-so: spades guy," or "Here lies so-and-so, who wished he could have watched more TV or ironed better creases or gotten one more chicken sandwich from the chow hall"?

When I was incarcerated, I had a lot of time to think about the choices I made. I had rejected God's authority over my life and decided to live my own way.

Often, it seemed that overcoming the obstacles and challenges set before me would be impossible. But then I examined my life and committed it to the Lord. Every day, I had to choose whether to wallow in my self-pity or to begin the difficult process of preparing for my freedom.

You all have the same choice. Which will you choose?

*After his release from prison, Richard Swiger began to work for Prison Fellowship, where he now serves as the Ohio field director. ■*



## ACTIVITY FILL-IN FUN: A Thanksgiving to Remember!

1. adjective (describing word)
2. a prisoner's name
3. word/phrase of outburst
4. adjective
5. animal
6. prison staff name
7. adjective
8. color
9. plural noun (person, place, thing, or idea)
10. verb ending in "ing"
11. emotion
12. plural noun
13. beverage
14. adjective

It was a cold and \_\_\_\_\_ November day. When I woke up, I heard \_\_\_\_\_ yell, "\_\_\_\_\_!" That's when I realized it was Thanksgiving! That meant the cafeteria was going to be serving \_\_\_\_\_ .But it also meant \_\_\_\_\_ would be in a \_\_\_\_\_ mood! Still, this Thanksgiving felt different. The yard was covered in \_\_\_\_\_ snow, and the hallways were filled with \_\_\_\_\_. The warden was even \_\_\_\_\_. I was so \_\_\_\_\_! When it finally came time to eat, the chow hall ended up serving plates of \_\_\_\_\_ and glasses of \_\_\_\_\_. It was the \_\_\_\_\_-est Thanksgiving ever!

# Did You Know?

## Who is the founder of Prison Fellowship?

**C**harles “Chuck” Colson (1931–2012)

was a Republican political operative who boasted that he would “walk over my own grandmother” to ensure the reelection of President Richard M. Nixon. When Nixon got into hot water (and was eventually impeached) for a scandal referred to as Watergate, Chuck knew he would be in deep trouble for taking part in the scandal. When the threat of prosecution haunted him and his family, a close friend gave Chuck a copy of *Mere Christianity*, a book by popular British author C.S. Lewis that explores and defends the core beliefs of the Christian faith. The book sparked a series of conversations and encounters that led to Chuck’s conversion. Shortly after becoming a Christian, Chuck pled guilty to obstruction of justice and served seven months in Alabama’s Maxwell Prison. While there, he promised that when he was released, he would never forget the men at Maxwell. “Bull!” fellow prisoner Archie said. “Big shots like you get out and forget little guys like us.” But Chuck stood by his word. In 1976, he founded Prison Fellowship, which is now the nation’s largest Christian nonprofit serving prisoners, former prisoners, and their families, and a leading advocate for criminal justice reform. ■



Photos courtesy of Google Images

## RECIPE CORNER CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER BROWNIES

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (16-oz.) bag of vanilla wafers
- 1 (10-oz.) packet of cocoa
- 2 (14.4-oz.) boxes of graham crackers
- 1 (18-oz.) jar of peanut butter
- 1 large (16-oz.) glass of tap water
- Optional: Mixed nuts, trail mix, or M&Ms

Break one sleeve of graham crackers (typically nine crackers total) into dime-size pieces and set aside. In plastic baggie or large empty chip bag, crush wafers and 5 sleeves of crackers into a fine dust. Mix in cocoa, peanut butter, and water (adding a little water at a time until gooey; you may not need all the water); stir (or knead) the mixture. Add dime-size pieces and any optional ingredients, being careful not to grind them up. On plastic surface, roll out mixture to 1/2- to 3/4-inch-thick layer. Allow to set. Cut into 2-inch squares. Makes around 20–30 squares.



## CHICKEN JALAPENO RANCH BURRITOS

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (8-oz.) box of rice (or precooked rice packet)
- 1 can chile lime ramen soup
- 1 (4.5-oz.) chicken breast
- 1 container of jalapeno cream cheese
- 1 pack of tortillas
- 2 (1.5-oz.) servings of ranch dressing
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 lid from a peanut butter jar (for measurements)
- Optional: hot sauce

In microwave-safe bowl, place 1 lid full of rice and 1.5 lids of hot water. Microwave until rice is cooked (go 30 seconds at a time to avoid overcooking). Afterward, in a separate bowl, microwave 1/2 block of ramen (noodles only, no seasoning) in water based on package directions. Drain water and allow noodles and rice to cool. Place cooled rice and noodles in large bowl. Mix in cream cheese, ranch dressing, garlic, and half the chili lime seasoning packet. Gently mix in chicken. Place mixture on tortillas. Add hot sauce (optional). Fold into burritos and serve warm or cold. Makes 4 burritos.

(Both recipes taken from Arizona State Prison Complex’s “Tonto’s Cookbook,” L. Anderson, Managing Editor/Writer)

Not all ingredients will be available at all facilities. Be sure to comply with your facility’s rules and regulations whenever cooking.

## DAILY DEVOTIONAL TEAR-OUT

Tear out this daily devotional and start each morning and/or end each night saying it and praying over it. You’ll be amazed how a healthy spiritual habit like this can bring encouragement and focus to each day!

# A New Leaf with Jesus

by Faith White

Fall is the season when leaves change colors and nature prepares to rest for the winter. This gradual transformation isn’t just for trees and wildlife, though. People also need time to reflect, grow, and reform. And incarceration, with its extra downtime, is the perfect place to reflect on what you might want to change in your life.

To face your future, you might need to start by looking at your past. Look at it closely. What has already begun to change? What still needs to change? Wherever you are, whoever you are or once were, NOW is a time for change and new beginnings with Jesus.

### 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 SAYS,

“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”

This verse means if you have accepted Christ as your personal Savior, then you belong to Him! And your old unhealthy life is behind you, and your new healthier life is ahead of you. God is already working in your life—in big ways or even in small—for your good.

Know that you are made a new person full of life, love, and redemption.

Just as the leaves change colors and animals reset, we are constantly changing, evolving, and turning over a new leaf when we call upon Jesus. Look for Jesus in the big and the small things, pray for new beginnings, and trust Jesus’ power to transform your life just as He transforms the fall trees. Say the Corinthians verse out loud as the first thing you do every morning and the last thing you do every evening.

## NEED A BIBLE?

Get a free Inside Journal Life Recovery Bible!

NOW WITH A WORKBOOK!



## WRITE TO:

Tyndale House Publishers  
Attn: Inside Journal Bible  
351 Executive Drive  
Carol Stream, IL 60188

Include this information to make sure your Bible or Workbook get delivered:

- ✓ Your complete name and prison ID number
- ✓ Your facility name
- ✓ Your facility address for prisoner parcel delivery
- ✓ Whether you want English or Spanish\*

\*Bibles and Workbooks are available in English or Spanish. You can order a Bible and Workbook together, or separately. Limit one order per person.

## BEING RELEASED SOON?

Check out the Colson Scholarship started by Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship. The Colson Scholarship is available to eligible returning citizens who want to attend Wheaton College.

To learn more, visit [prisoninstitute.com/colson-scholarship](http://prisoninstitute.com/colson-scholarship). Or to get more tips and tools for a successful release, ask your chaplain to email us at [insidejournal@pfm.org](mailto:insidejournal@pfm.org) to order our free Inside Journal Reentry specialty edition.

### Who Is Eligible?

Applicants must:

- Be a Christian
- Be a U.S. Citizen
- Have a felony record (Note: Felonies must NOT include sexual offenses, arson, or repeat violent offenses)
- Be out of jail or prison for at least one full year by April 1 of the application year
- Be established in a local church
- Be accepted into Wheaton College undergraduate or graduate school

# News + Notes

## Spring and Summer Round-Up

Prison Fellowship hosted a Hope Event like no other in Columbia, South Carolina. Hip-hop Grammy-winning hip-hop artist Lecrae and formerly incarcerated artist Jeff Walker, also known as SWAAG, headlined.

Lecrae, a frequent partner with Prison Fellowship, also performed at the Prison Fellowship Second Chance® Month Gala held in April, with a keynote message delivered by Bryan Stevenson, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice

Initiative and author of *Just Mercy*.

“I’m already accepted by God,” said Lecrae. “Because if you live for other people’s acceptance, you’re going to die from their rejection. When you realize you’re already accepted, you don’t really have to get extra bent out of shape over somebody disrespecting you. Because it’s like, Man, I’m already somebody.”

Angel Tree sports camps, such as the Dallas Cowboys event in June, gave kids an opportunity to receive encouragement and

practice skills on the field with top-tier coaches and athletes. NFL player Kenny Clark, a former Angel Tree participant and frequent partner with Prison Fellowship, also hosted a camp in June with hundreds of kids.

Angel Tree camping is a chance for children to get away from the challenges of having an incarcerated parent—a place to have fun in the great outdoors, make new friends, and meet caring adult counselors. Prison Fellowship partners with camping organizations to provide scholarships so that Angel Tree children can attend Christian summer camps.

At camp, children

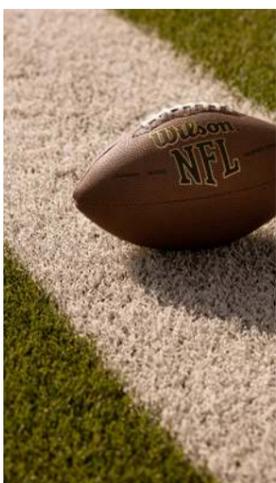
like Mike encounter the love of Jesus and discover hope for the future. One Christian camp in Missouri has become like a second home. “Camp introduced Christianity into my life,” said Mike. “I love that place. It’s like a home away from home. I have good friends there [that] I actually count as family. I think about them all the time.”

This summer, thousands of children across the country attended summer camps and experienced the love of God in the great outdoors. Mary, the grandmother of two Angel Tree kids who attended camp, said about her grandkids’

experience: “They have talked about it constantly and already asked to go again next year. They both loved all of the activities—many of them neither had ever done before (horseback riding, archery, etc.). They were excited to meet new friends and talked about the staff being so nice and fun to be around.”

To learn how your child can participate in Angel Tree sports camps or Angel Tree camping, your child’s caregiver can contact Prison Fellowship’s call center at 800.206.9764. ■

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**703.478.0100**

Editorial Manager:  
**M.M. White**

Editor in Chief:  
**Stacia Ray**

Writers:  
**Cherise Bopape, Joanna Breault, Richard Swiger, Faith White, M.M. White**

Designer:  
**L. Cockrell**

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