

Grace Freedom News

Changing lives through the Gospel and Biblical truth

August – December 2009

"If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

Issue #4

Dear Beloved in Christ,

It is my prayer that this letter finds you doing well. Our Father is always faithful in all things and circumstances. Please let us continue to trust Him to take care of us and not be shaken by the storms of life. I saw the need to express my gratitude for your contribution to Grace Prison Ministries through your prayers and financial support. Your prayers and contributions are bringing glory to God, salvation to the lost, and edification to believers. This is not just the mission of Grace Prison Ministries; this is the mission of the church (the body of Christ). We are here to bring people of all nationalities and ethnic groups to God and build them up in Christ; therefore making disciples of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). You have shared in this ministry with your prayers and support. Thank you so much.

Our Father is committed to missions throughout His word. We see Him using individuals like Noah, the twelve disciples, Apostle Paul and others to reach the lost with the gospel and build them up in Christ. Throughout the epistles we see the church in action to clearly preach the gospel and disciple lost people everywhere. Throughout Acts we see missions involving team work from believers. We all have different gifts and talents but we are to bring them together in the power of the Holy Spirit to reach the lost and dying world.

Grace Prison Ministries doesn't just focus on evangelizing the lost but to build them up in Christ. So that they can make disciples through evangelism and teaching truth to the new convert. It is about multiplication!

We also must share the love of Christ through meeting some physical needs of those we reach with the gospel. My beloved in Christ may nothing stop us from fulfilling the great commission. Let's continue to pray, rely on the Holy Spirit, and teach the truth that will set those in Satan's grip free. Again, thank you for your partnership.

Yours in His service,

Keithian L. Starling

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Dear Grace Prison Ministries,

The Correctional Development Center Staff would like to give thanks to Mr. Keithian Starling and Grace Prison Ministries for their untiring love and devotion that they have dedicated to our offender population.

Mr. Starling is very committed and has a great rapport with the offender population as well as staff. His services here have been very commendable. He has went far and beyond the call of duty in making himself available not only to this institution, but other institutions as well. What a Blessing! to have a young man so committed to the cause of Christ and one that is so gifted in the area of teaching God's Word. Thank you for your service.

Wayne D. Fleming

Chaplain/SCC Complex

Bible Encouragement

Overcoming Testing by Faith

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (James 1:2-3)

These were the words of the half brother of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Jewish Christians scattered all over the world because of persecution. The word trial means "a putting to proof by experiment or a test." The faith and character of these believers was being tested through trials. Trials are designed to give you an opportunity to apply what you know about God and His plan for your life.

It would be wonderful if after we have trusted Christ as Savior if we never have problems. The truth of the matter is that we will have problems. Our Lord Jesus Christ told us this in John 16:33. God allows trials to make our faith stronger and develop character in us. Some of you are facing trials now. May you find encouragement through knowing that God is faithful in His promise to you.

God in His grace has provided everything we need to overcome every test of our faith and character so that we may continue to advance to spiritual maturity. The Word of God learned and applied is the key to overcoming trials and enjoying God's peace.

It is important that we study God's Word on a consistent basis so that we can learn the many promises He has provided for us to claim when we're facing trials.

Promise:

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Roman 8:28)

When problems arise in our lives we can pass the test by using what we have learned from scripture and then patiently wait on God.

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord. Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare. (Ps40:1-5)

On our journey to spiritual maturity (Christ-likeness) we will have persecutions, problems, trials, adversities, losses, and disappointments. We can rest knowing that our Father has a plan for our lives and allows trials for a reason. In His hands every trial he sends or permits is designed for our good.

Joseph was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers. No matter what Joseph went through he maintained his faith and love for God. The end result was that many were blessed through Joseph and God promoted him (Genesis 37 -50). God is faithful to His people and His promise. What would you have done?

Abraham was tested by God in Genesis 22. God had given him a promise many years in the past. His faith and character was tested.

The Promise:

I will make you a great nation. (Genesis. 12:2b)

Then the word of the Lord came to him (Abraham) saying, "This man will not be your heir; but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir." And He (God) took him outside and said, "Now look towards heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." (Genesis 15:4, 5)

God promised Abraham not only a son but to raise up a nation of people through that son. Abraham looked forward in faith to the promised seed.

The Test:

Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. (Gen 22:1-3)

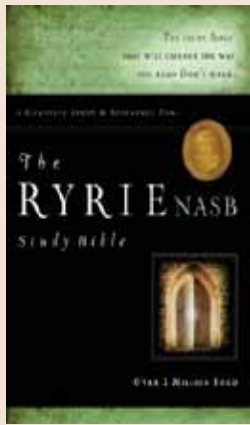
Abraham was tested and passed the test. We see him in the "Faith Hall of Fame" in the book of Hebrews. The author of Hebrews tells us what was going through Abraham's mind when he was being tested to offer up his only son Isaac:

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead. (Hebrews 11:17-19)

Abraham knew that God had a plan for his son and that He promised him descendants through that son. He trusted God with his son's life believing that God could raise him from the dead and fulfill His promise.

It is only when we begin to apply the principles we have learned that we grow to spiritual maturity and enjoy God's happiness. Imagine walking into a first grade classroom and noticing a forty year-old man sitting in the classroom because he was never able to pass previous exams! Many will think that he has a mental disorder. We have in our church today Christians who have been saved forty years but still face problems with doubt, fear, and panic. Under pressure

Need Study Bibles!



Grace Prison Ministries is in need of study tools for students who have completed both the Discipleship study and the Basics Bible Study through correspondence courses. These students are now ready for more advanced training and are in need of a bible such as the Ryrie study Bible that contains additional features that will help them grasp the truths of Scripture.

Please remember this is a grace ministry and operates entirely on voluntary contributions. We do not solicit money. When you contribute you have the opportunity to share in the dissemination of the Word of God.

they fail to apply the promises of God, fail to think the truth of sound doctrine. Therefore stress fills the soul. What is your response to the outside pressure of life? Do you fear and panic? Do you act independently of God's Word to find happiness? Are you trying to solve your own problems by using human solutions such as relying on the details of life? Or do you relax and claim promises by faith and bear under the trial waiting on the Lord? Do you think of the power, love, and faithfulness of God when in adversity?

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)

James is commanding the Jewish Christians to rejoice in trials. Pick your head up! There will be many trials in the Christian life but we are to rejoice always and not be filled with grief and sorrow as those without hope. We can expect a change to come because of God's love and faithfulness to us.

We rejoice because we know God is on our side and because of what He is producing in us through the trials. He is teaching us to trust Him and patiently wait on Him. Faith is like gold, it stands the test of fire. True faith in God endures no matter how hot the fire. Patience means steadfastness or endurance in the face of difficulties. The sustaining power of the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to remain in the adversity no matter what. The Holy Spirit enables us to recall the doctrine in our soul and by faith we claim God's promises. Do you believe that God is all powerful and can handle your problem? Do you believe His promises?

Promises to claim:

The Battle is the Lord's. (1 Sam 17:b)

Stand still (in faith), and see the salvation (watch the deliverance) of the Lord. (Ex. 14:13b)

Fear thou not; for I am with thee. (Isa. 41:10a)

For nothing will be impossible with God. (Luke 1:37)

Delight yourself in the Lord; He will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37: 4-5)

Faith-Rest

1. Think a promise.
2. Claim that promise by faith.
3. Think of how God can solve the problem.
4. Relax and wait patiently because God is in control.

Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful. (James 5:7-11)

"A great Italian who was renowned for his cheerful endurance of trial, when asked how he had learned such patience replied: "First, I look within me, then without me, afterwards beneath me, and last of all, above me." He looked within and saw such guilt and unworthiness that whatever blessings balanced his afflictions, they were more than he deserved. He looked without and saw those who had far many more problems than himself, and this made every complaint a piece of sore ingratitude to him. He looked beneath and saw the earth, into which his body would soon be lowered, and when all of life's trials would be over once and for all. He looked above and saw by faith his home in Heaven, and this made the light affliction but for a moment, not worthy to be compared with the glory waiting to be revealed. The fourfold look silenced all murmuring, and produced calm submission to God's will."

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Letters from the inside

Dear Brother Keithian,
I want to begin by thanking God for blessing the world with your ministry. I have made vast improvements since the Lord has blessed us with you as the leader of our church. You have always answered in truth any questions that I've had, and showed me where in the bible to find the answers. The gospel that you have preached to us is the true gospel and I am amazed at how the truth alone has kept me consistent. I've also learned some bits and pieces of the Bible in Greek. This spiritual battle we are in is impossible to win without God and knowing His Word accurately. Brother, on the behalf of the entire Criminal Justice Center we want to say "Thank you"!
Inmate,

Criminal Justice Center
Nashville, Tennessee Jail

Mr. Starling,
Thank you for coming to speak with us. It has made a strong impact on our lives and our outlook on life itself is more positive. I was wondering if you could go to my home on the outside to speak the Word of God to my family.
Thank you and God bless,
Clinton County Jail
Frankfort, Indiana

Mr. Starling,
Thank you for taking time to come speak to us. The words were both uplifting and encouraging. I appreciate your testimony and bible studies. I trusted in Christ as my Savior before your visit, but was slacking in applying righteousness into my way of living. Your visit encouraged me and has given me hope. Thank you. With God's help I believe I can become a better person. "I may not yet be the man I should be or the man, with Christ's help, I some day will be- but thank God I'm not the man I used to be!" - Martin Luther King Jr.
Your brother in Christ,
Clinton County Jail
Frankfort, Indiana

Pastor Starling,
Hello. I am an inmate at the Tennessee Prison for women. I just wanted to write you and tell you I was really blessed today from your sermon on "Temptation". It was also very encouraging to hear your testimony. I had my share of falling flat on my face. I sold drugs, used drugs, and looked for love in all the wrong places. I'm thankful that I have found the Lord Jesus Christ. You inspired me today to do exactly what Matthew 6:33 tells us to do. I pray that I won't be 50 years old still sitting in a first grade desk. I want to grow and mature in the Lord. Thank you for caring enough to come and teach us about God, His Word, and how to apply it to our lives.
Inmate,
Tennessee Prison for Women
Nashville, Tennessee Prison

Mr. Starling,
Thank you for coming to speak to us. It really helped me understand more about the Word of God. I'm just starting in the Christian walk. Thank you a lot for your help in my walk.
God bless you,
Inmate

Dear Mr. Keithian,
I just wanted to write you to tell you how much you inspired me on you visit here in Frankfort. Thank you. I feel so great that my life is changed and that I want to follow Christ and our Father in heaven. God has sent a great example to us by using you to do a good job for Him. Someday I will be able to be used by God. Thanks again, Keithian.
Your brother in Christ,
Inmate
Frankfort, Indiana Jail

To whom it may concern,
I just wanted to send a very big thank you and God bless you for what you done in the jail on Oct. 15 & 16th. I am a Lay minister and teach a class for the men and women called S.A.F.E. (Setting Addicts Free Eternally) there on Wednesday and Thursday nights. We also do women's church every Thursday. It was such a blessing to hear their feedback. Many of them realized that it was a move of God that allowed you into the jail. I've been there two years and that is the first I've heard of anyone being allowed in. Praise God!!!
Blessings,

Keithian,
I loved your presentation. I was moved and inspired. I'm looking forward to going through the bible lessons you send and learning and growing in the Lord. I would like for you to send my wife lesson 1, she is incarcerated too. I am sure that both of us can grow from your studies.
Your brother in Christ,
Inmate
Frankfort, Indiana Jail

Hello Family in Christ,
I pray all is well with you and yours. I'm blessed by the grace of God and by being His child "Hallelujah!" I am still locked up physically, however, due to our Lord Jesus Christ and His work I'm free within. I know and understand that His will for my life is the best thing. I am looking forward to getting out of here and being part of Grace Prison Ministries. Thank you for being my friend.
May God continue to bless you.
In Christ,
Inmate
Correctional Development Center (Male)
Nashville, Tennessee Jail

Keithian,
I want to thank you for your words of encouragement. I enjoy talking with you and love your classes. Please try to make it longer. We gain so much needed knowledge from your teaching. Thank you for your prayers for me and my family. I praise God for bringing you into my life. I pray for you and your family. I love you, brother, and may God continue to bless you.
Inmate
Nashville, Tennessee Jail

Dear Keithian,
I want to thank you for coming to the Clinton County Jail to share God's word and your testimony. You inspired me with the knowledge that you've been where I am. I know that with God's help anything is possible! I really enjoyed the study and will be anxiously awaiting the next bible lesson. You are a great man of God. I will be praying for you. Once again, thank you and God bless you.
Inmate,

Clinton County Jail
Frankfort, Indiana Jail

Dear Keithian,
It's hard to believe you've been working with our men for over a year now. I am grateful for your willingness to come into CCA prison and disciple the men in our program week after week. You have been a great partner of Men of Valor Ministry and what we are trying to see accomplished in the lives of incarcerated men. The men in Jericho look forward to your coming into our unit every Wednesday morning. You have a God-given ability to communicate the Truth of God's Word in a way that helps men not only understand it, but also to have a desire to implement it in their lives.
As long as the Lord allows, I hope you will continue to share your life and all that God is teaching you with us. We pray God's richest blessings upon you, Keithian. We are blessed to have you as part of our team for fulfilling the great commission!
In Christ,
Curt Campbell
Men of Valor
Program Manager
Nashville, Tennessee Prison

Please...

Give Thanks: (Col. 4:2, 1 Thess. 5:18)

1. For the love of God in providing salvation through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross
2. For the power of the Holy Spirit at salvation
3. For the Bible
4. For Pastor-teachers who study and teach the Word of God
5. For local churches as classrooms to learn God's Word
6. For evangelist who sacrifice their life is to take the gospel of Christ to the lost all over the world
7. For those who support missionary activity and the dissemination of the Word of God
8. For the gift of freedom
9. For the knowledge that Jesus Christ controls human history
10. For His grace in meeting our needs in the devil's world

Pray for others: (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

1. For peace for our nation
2. For our President- wisdom and divine guidance
3. For Congress- salvation of the unbeliever's and divine viewpoint as they make decisions
4. For our military- protection
5. For provision for those desiring full time work in the mission field
6. For spiritual revival among believers
7. For more positive volition in the prisons
8. For the spiritual and physical needs of those released from prisons
9. For believers who are persecuted for their faith
10. For unbelievers- circumstance to direct their attention to Christ.

Pray for Grace Prison Ministries:

1. For good health, wisdom, and guidance for Keithian
2. For more laborers
3. For more partners
4. For our existing partners-that God will meet their needs

5. For more open doors for the Word
6. For transportation to get ex-prisoners to church
7. For property and resources to build a transition house for homeless ex-prisoners

Grace Prison Ministries: Overview

Grace Prison Ministries is incorporated in the State of Tennessee as a Christian, non-profit organization. We are a non-denominational ministry focusing on changing the lives of prisoners through evangelism and sound Bible teaching. We endeavor to restore individuals one by one, thereby making a positive contribution to our neighborhoods and our society.

Our Mission:

In obedience to the command of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations... teaching them to observe all that I commanded you..."

– (Matthew 28:19a, 20a)

We have the following objectives:

1. Evangelize the unbeliever with the simple grace gospel: salvation by "faith alone in Christ alone." With this in mind, our primary job is to make the gospel as clear as possible, without gimmicks and without imposing our personal views on anyone. Rather, we leave the gospel matter between God the Holy Spirit and the person. Our duty is to present the gospel and leave the decision "to believe" or "to reject" solely to the individual.
2. Assist those who have responded positively to the Gospel in the following manner:
 - a) Encourage and help them form study groups.
 - b) Teach them sound Bible doctrine, provide Bibles and doctrinal materials such as Bible teaching on CD, and written literature which will enable them to fulfill the command to "grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18a); thus enabling them to re-enter society as productive citizens and good role models.
 - c) Assist those who possess the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher to obtain study Bibles and resources to help them prepare so they may

- minister effectively to others both during their stay in prison and upon release.
- d) Direct believers upon release to a doctrinally sound local Church or study group.
 - e) Direct the poor but positive believer, with a teaching gift, to acquire seminary training.
3. To assist inmates, upon release from custody, who are homeless and jobless.
 - a) Network with employers to assist with jobs so they can become self-sustaining.
 - b) Direct those released from incarceration to grace-oriented transition housing where Bible doctrine is the cornerstone of a structured environment.
 4. To assist the needy as God provides and directs us. These may include but are not limited to:
 - a) Provision of food.
 - b) Provision of clothing.
 - c) Assistance to those who are associated with Grace Prison Ministries when needed.
 5. Occasionally hold crusades in prisons that we have visited inviting guest evangelists and pastors. Giving those who have the call, to serve the Lord in prisons, an opportunity to serve.

6. To write periodic reports to update our associates regarding our ministry.

Financial Policy: Grace Prison Ministries offers its services free of charge. We do not solicit funds but operate entirely on voluntary contributions. When understanding the need to reach lost souls with the Gospel and sound Bible teaching motivates you to contribute, you have the privilege of giving and sharing in the dissemination of the Word of God. This is a grace ministry.

Grace Prison Ministries Recent & Planned Schedule

Frankfort, Indiana	October 15 – 16, 2009 – Clinton County Jail
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida	October 22 – 23, 2009 – Broward County Youth Detention Center
Nashville, Tennessee	October 30, 2009 – Tennessee Prison for Women
Little Rock, Arkansas	December 20, 2009 – Hearts Journey Church
Bossier City, Louisiana	December 20 – 22, 2009 – Bossier City Youth Detention Center Caddo Detention Center

Keithian Weekly Prison & Jail Ministries (Nashville)

Monday 1:00pm – 2:00pm	Correctional Development Center
Monday 7:00pm – 8:00pm	Discipleship class/training class (AGBC)
Wednesday 8:30am – 10:00pm	Correction Corporation of America
Thursday 6:00pm – 8:00pm	Criminal Justice Center (Juveniles)
Friday 8:30am – 9:30am	Criminal Justice Center

Biography

Keithian L. Starling is a native of Albany, Georgia and grew up in a single-parent home in a poor neighborhood of drugs, gangs, and violence. Keithian was so far behind in his work to pass the eighth grade. Due to constant incarceration, he dropped out of school. He turned to a life of drug dealing, partying and crime. He spent most of his young adult life incarcerated.

In 2000, while incarcerated in Albany, Georgia, he prayed and asked God to reveal His ways to him and a few days later he had the privilege of receiving books by R.B. Theime Jr. from Ernest Smith of Lost & Found Ministries. Mr. Smith is a member of Albany Bible Church. These books opened Keithian's eyes to salvation—by grace, through faith—and how to live the unique spiritual life through the power of the Spirit and the word of God. When he understood the doctrine of "Faith alone in Christ alone, the confession of sins & keep moving, faith-rest, the filling of the Holy Spirit, and other doctrines taught by the late R.B. Theime Jr., he became a lover of truth and burdened for those suffering for lack of truth. Keithian started teaching the doctrine he was learning to the inmates and the jail guards. When he was released from prison in 2003, he continued his pursuit of doctrine at Albany Bible Church where Pete Daughtry is the pastor-teacher.

From 2003-2006, while attending Albany Bible Church, God opened doors for Keithian to visit schools, prisons, jails and youth detention centers presenting the gospel and basic procedures to living the Christian life.

In 2004, Keithian got his G.E.D and started attending a community college. He then sensed the call by God to enroll in seminary through extension at Tyndale Theological Seminary in order to be a better trained minister of the Word.

From July 2004 to August 2006, Keithian worked for Nanze Spings Water Company as a salesman. While working at this company his daily route brought him in contact with many who needed the gospel. This kindled his desire to do full-time mission work. He began to see what the Lord meant by "the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few."

In August 2006, Keithian moved to Nashville, Tennessee to partner with Moses C. Onwubiko, founder of Grace Evangelistic Ministries. While working for Grace Evangelistic Ministries and reading many letters from prisoners all over the world, Keithian sensed the call by God to go back into the prisons, jails and detention centers, taking them the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and sound Bible teaching. Therefore he incorporated Grace Prison Ministries.

Currently, Keithian teaches weekly at two Nashville jails and one prison. He travels to youth detention centers, jails and prisons in Georgia, Tennessee, Louisiana, Florida and wherever God opens the door. Keithian shares our Lord's heart for the lost, and especially for prisoners. He has already walked a mile in their shoes and knows that the only way for them to change is by becoming new creatures in Christ and renewing their minds. The grace and love of God has transformed his life and now he is reaching out to share the truth that set him free.



"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who strengthened me, because he considered me faithful, putting me into service...It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all". (1 Timothy 1:12, 15)