

eBlessings International Daily Devotional Archives

enrich, inspire, encourage, bless, and empower spiritual warriors for end-time battles prepared with the guidance of the Holy Spirit for spiritual growth and victory!

Devotionals Designed to Empower and Grow Our Spirits

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Each One! Bless One!

You Make a Difference!

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....and with all his problems, he hopes for betterment for those less aware or fortunate. A microcosm of the reality we all bear....as we stride, and strive, toward something "better"...

"There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor."

JOB 3:18 (KJ)

"For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners."

PSALM 69:33 (KJ)

"Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:"

PSALM 146:7 (KJ)

"To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."

ISAIAH 42:7 (KJ)

"That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places."

ISAIAH 49:9 (KJ)

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering

of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

LUKE 4:18-19 (KJV)

My Shawshank Redemption – 2. (continued) Ironically, it wasn't until I found myself in trouble (for being too friendly with a nurse), that I was transferred to the state prison in [Los Angeles County](#), host of the [Prison Honor Program](#).

Suddenly, my lack of cognitive stimulation and productivity was turned on its head. There was such a wide array of self-help opportunities to choose from, I didn't know where to start: yoga, creative writing, critical thinking, painting, and many other classes and activities.

I also experienced a different type of peer pressure. My first day out, I was approached by a succession of other prisoners, echoing the same guidance as the first guy: "We don't 'bang' here; we don't play [prison] politics, racial or any other kind; and we respect every one, including the guards." That speech has been an indelible part of my daily living for the past six years.

I later learned that the program was initiated in 2000 by other reform-minded prisoners. Prisoners who also had an avid desire for inner growth and change. With the support of open-minded staff, peer-instructed classes were allowed, using inherent individual talents to sharpen the masses.

To my amazement, not a single class was racially segregated. Everyone interacts and we've come to understand one another better. On the yard, all races play and exercise together, a freakish sight after years of being programmed the other way. Graffiti is nowhere to be found, replaced instead by colorful, creative murals and other works of art.

Since I've been here, racial riots, rapes, work stoppages, and the wide range of other wickedness are all memories of the past. I believe this is the only facility in the states that can make such a positive claim.

The success of the Honor Program cannot be denied. According to a study conducted by prison staff, the [Honors Program](#) saved the [CDC](#) (and taxpayers) more than [\\$200,000](#) in its first year alone. Meanwhile, weapons infractions decreased 88 percent, and violence and threatening behavior dropped 85 percent.

In a state that features one of the nation's highest recidivism rates – two-thirds of California's offenders return to prison within three years – such tangible evidence of behavioral correction is welcome indeed.

The secret to this is that it is a completely volunteer program. To our dismay, our success has earned only partial and inconsistent support from the institution and past secretaries of the department at headquarters in Sacramento.

Sadly there is still a school of thought that doesn't believe in incentive-based programs or rehabilitation. For members of this camp, continuation of the failed model is sufficient. They want the stick and nothing but the stick. Sadly, the violence, deaths, and costly court interventions don't help them see the light.

My hope is that the new secretary of the department, [Matthew Cate](#), will see the light and help move corrections out of the shadows of the dark ages. It would be a shame to see such a proven success – and a single tree that could yield a much fuller set of branches – go by the wayside.

CHRIST REHABILITATION IS POSSIBLE

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[Pelican Bay Prison](#)

[California Department of Corrections](#)

[Honors Program](#)

From the Christian Science Monitor

Thanks Ken