

Faith Tested

"You're going to UPS Tucson...that's a penitentiary."

These were the words told to me in a holding cell in Raleigh, North Carolina as a shockwave of fear drove through my heart. I had just been sentenced, and while waiting in that holding cell with several other inmates, each wondering where they would be sent. Some closer to home, some further away. Some to high security prisons, some to lesser. Of those of higher security, penitentiaries were the worst.

Why me? Why am I going to a pen? I don't have a murder charge, never been in any gang or anything violent. Why am I being sent to a pen? I was the only guy in the holding cell destined to go to a pen... I was almost as good as dead.

The guys looked at me, wondering what I could possibly do to be sentence to a penitentiary. I looked like a guy that had graduated from college... because that was true. I was not the "stereotypical inmate", yet there I was, destined to go across the country, from North Carolina to Arizona. Why not Butner, not far from Raleigh? I would have been closer to home; why put me thousands of miles from home?

Fear ran throughout my body, wondering just how long I would live. So much for trusting God. So much for prayers. So much for writing all those essays in county jails for over a year, sharing with inmates that God saves, that Jesus Christ

saves. So much for all that... rubbish!

What was the point in all that? What did I accomplish other than just a dead end? From 2001-2010 I wrote online on numerous prison support sites and blogs for people with loved ones in prison. Over 8000 pages in that period of time, to help those with loved ones in prison. One of the phrases I constantly used was "there must always be hope." I firmly believed that you can't give up on your loved ones.

But in most of these posts, I had not incorporated God's word in it. Surely, I believed in God, I had for a long time. I know God can do the impossible. But in my blogs and posts, I encouraged the reader as best I could, having had experience in prison. Because I LOVED to write, I was always sharing something about prison, or life after prison.

But in late June, early May of 2010, I made a bold declaration, something I firmly believed in. I said, on my next-to-last blog, that "if people would make Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior, then appeal their case to Him, He could- and WOULD- deliver their loved one from prison.

Two weeks later I ended up in county jail, and eventually sent to a Federal Prison in Tucson, Arizona.

to be continued...

~~Where did I miss it? What did I do wrong? To be sure,~~

My apologies for responding so very late; as a writer, I'm always trying to find venues to send my works. From prison, it can be very difficult, between locating venues or getting them safely sent out the prison. USP Tucson often acts like a 'gatekeeper' with our mail, even with mail clearly able to be sent.

As I mentioned, I love to write. I arrived here at USP Tucson on December 7th 2012, and a week later, began to write a journal. From then to now (Dec 19th, 2015) I've written almost every day. I've also written over 100 short essays (2-8 pages) about prison, and my faith.

My hope is to get readers who want to know what goes on in the mind of a writer in prison. I can't give the hard-core stories that most prisoners share. Most of what I share is based on a much more relaxed atmosphere - where violence is rare...

(Irony that I say that, as of this moment, we're on institutional lockdown because an inmate was killed Friday. I assure you, that is VERY rare here)

So much of what I write deals with my faith, and the people I live with. For this reason, I am not too picky of who writes me. Originally, I thought I could write to Christian sites, ministries and churches for support and correspondence, but I've found that a prisoner is much more likely to get compassion from "average" people than "religious" people. Not that I've given up on my faith, because I haven't; but I've received letters from gay people more than "religious" people.

I enjoy having people write to me; it encourages me to share more. I'm always writing, and I try to type my works on the word processor (the "NEO" by Alphasmart) and send them out to people, ministries, churches and potential blog sites.

Anyone interested in my previous writings before I was incarcerated can google my blogs ("Prison 101" or "Prison Chains Broken") or google my name ("Nolaw96" or "Nolaw 97") on Blogspot or Wordpress. I've written about 8000 pages between 2001-2010, much is still online. I also wrote sports blogs too.

I am open to anyone who wishes to write to me concerning my journals and essays. Right now, I've got about 1000 pages right now, ready to share.

Enclosed is a part of one of my first essays, "Faith Tested". It's only 2 pages of the 4; I sent what I could during our 3-day lockdown. I would love to contribute much more, and welcome letters from any person, race, or sexual orientation. I only ask that the letters are kind.

My thanks for reading my letter, and hope to hear from readers soon.

Fred M
"Masonic"
"Nolaw"

PS: "Nolaw" is an acronym of places I've lived. Would be glad to write on that if anyone is interested.

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