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## Jesus In Prison

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Interesting title, isn't it? But isn't it realistic? I mean, when most believers think of Jesus, where do they LOGICALLY think He is? Obviously, in the church. But while that is true, we miss the spiritual truth of the title. I'm not talking about "religious" places... I'm talking about prison. Can I, as an inmate, honestly say that Jesus is in prison, or to be more direct, HERE, at USP Tucson?

I've written many essays about the problems here, and I make no light issue of it. Yeah, I know it's prison, but mainstream society has no idea of the physical, mental and even spiritual abuse the staff puts us through. How the government can assemble a group of God-less people, who think that they're better than inmates simply because they're not inmates, and have them make prison life difficult simply because they can get away with it, all this is beyond me.

It really had me wondering, where is God? Where is Christ, Who said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you". And then you add in the guys here; some of these guys have no fear-or respect- of God in them. Guys, prison is a VERY negative place, all around you are hurting souls, anger, grief, resentment and disappointment. Most inmates have effectively given up on a fair justice system, a country who



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gives second chances... and a God who answers prayer.

You'd be hard pressed to find Jesus in here... and if He WAS here, they'd probably throw Him in the SHU (Special Housing Unit) on some trumped charge...

A little overboard...maybe not...

Anyway, all this can have you wondering, "Where is God"? or "Why has God abandoned me"? Kinda reminds you of that scripture, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken me" (Psalm 20:1). I assure you, most of these guys here at USP Tucson WERE believers, but when they lost their case, they gave up on God.

And let me be clear for a sec, just because a guy lost his case doesn't mean he was guilty. There's a very deceptive reason why Federal courts win over 97% of their cases... don't get me started on the wickedness of that.

Still, many gave up on God and Jesus, when they arrived here at USP Tucson ( or any prison). So, by forsaking God, we the inmates didn't bring God into the prison. Now, don't lose me here; God is everywhere, but I'm talking about bringing God in YOU, into the prison. I was determined to bring God, and Jesus, "kicking and screaming" in this prison. If I'm gonna do time, so are They because I need them. Now, I know that's over the top, because I don't need to DRAG them here. They WANT to come. God hasn't forsaken these guys,



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regardless of what they think. But too often, guys think that some person in a black robe in a courtroom that wouldn't know the Bible if it glowed in brilliant neon, could really determine your life.

Yeah, right.

When the judge gave me my time, I laughed in my spirit and said to myself, "We'll see about that. I got a better idea". I believed that calamity wasn't the final blow; that God is still in control. The problem is that most people give up, and "accept their fate". So they put Jesus out at the gate of prison, and the prisons are filled with despair.

I wasn't gonna play that game. Jesus was coming in with me. When I entered the prison, I believed that God had not forsaken me. He was with me, no doubt. But most guys don't have Christ; maybe they did before, but under such circumstances, they gave up. It's like having a coupon whose redeem date has expired. It's no good anymore. So why keep it?

When I was in county jail, I came across a frightening truth about God, inmates, Christians and prison. I share this with you because I'd like to think I've developed some insight and clarity on the subject, concerned just as much for inmates as anyone else. Yet, society teaches that prisoners are worthless, and no doubt many officers and staff treat us as such (mainly because they're godless).



What did Jesus say about the Good Shepherd? That which you do to the least of His people? How about what Hebrews is said about the prisoners? Let's crack open a few scriptures to set a foundation of what the Bible has to say about prisoners:

Hebrews 13:3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them- those who are mistreated- since you yourselves are in the body also.

There seems to be a demand to remember the inmates. True, at this period of time many Christians were being severely persecuted, so it does pertain to them, but the Word applies to ANYONE in prison.

Matthew 25:32-45 paints a clear picture of those who serve God, and those who are biased in who they choose to help. "When I was in prison" (verse 36 & 43) tell us that Jesus was talking about "the least of my brethren". And as the Good Shepherd, as Jesus described in Luke 15:1-7, He talks about the one who leaves the 99 that aren't lost to seek the one that is. And when he finds it, he rejoices when he returns it back to the fold.

So, what am I saying?

God is the Shepherd (as is Christ). Inmates are one TYPE of lost sheep. Christians, with Christ in their hearts,



are supposed to seek the lost... and we KNOW where some of them are... in PRISON. So, what's the problem?

Luke 10:2 The harvest is truly great, but the laborers are few...

If you had a 100-acre field full of ripe strawberries, wouldn't you want to pick all those strawberries before it goes bad? Those strawberries don't stay ripe forever; you're on a timeframe. If you only have 3 employees, it's possible that you're not going to be able to pick all those strawberries in time. You need more help. A LOT more help. Why? Because the harvest is great, but the laborers are few.

See how this applies spiritually?

Millions of people in prison have given up on God, and Christ, and live with no hope. Federal prisons aren't based on anything godly, so don't expect prisons to rehabilitate these guys. Heck, when our Chapel has Wiccan and Druid services on equal terms with Christians, THAT is a serious warning sign of a government that clearly has abandoned God.

So the very few believers in prison struggle to make sense, because most ministries on the outside minister at a very safe distance. I've learned, and experienced, that most churches operate with a "safety pole". They'll minister to you at the length of the pole, coming no closer. Kinda like that quote, "I wouldn't touch you with a 10-foot pole"; but



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actually they would... but only with a 10 foot pole.

But the Good Shepherd actively goes looking for the lost. He doesn't call out once or twice, then hopes the lost sheep finds his way back, like Little Bo Peep's sheep. He goes after the sheep, looking for the one who is lost, to bring it back. Most believers, although with good intentions, won't, or can't do this. So the laborers are few... very few. So God has to find laborers, and ironically, the best ones may be in the place you'd least expect... in prison.

There is no doubt there are churches and ministries that do tremendous work in the name of the Lord for inmates. I know quite a few. But for every one I've gotten true help from, there's about 10 that do the least... if even that. Many churches don't want to be bothered by inmates.

A couple of years ago, while in county jail, I wrote to a small church in eastern North Carolina for advice and support. That church wrote me back, telling me (off a bad assumption) that they don't give money to inmates ( I didn't ASK for any), then said I should talk to the church I came from before I got locked up, and when I get out, to seek to become a productive person in society. These so-called Christians were too busy thinking I was trying to hit them up for money, refused to minister to me, and insulted me by telling me that I need to become a productive person.

I wrote an editorial in the newspaper, and thank God,



the REAL Christians stepped up! While I was feeling disheartened, several people and churches wrote to me to encourage me that not all churches are like that. I actually ended up getting support, prayers and Christian material from sympathetic people who wanted to show the love of Christ.

And that was great, but we need that from the inside... even moreso. So if it's critical that Jesus DOES live here, in the prison. How? By inmate believers that live according to the love of God. I'm not here to condemn anybody, although I can argue prison abuse. But if Jesus is here, then the first fruit is LOVE. We, as believers, must have a constant action of compassion. We gotta care about one another. But who can God send, if no one wants to go?

So, is Jesus here, in the prisons? Sure He is. But we limit His grace and presence because we're not walking in love for one another. Sadly, it won't come from staff; most could care less about inmates (a few do, thank God). So it comes down to us, the inmates. Do I care enough to try to make USP Tucson a better place than when I got here? Am I able and willing to bring God on the scene, to pray for individuals, help others and try my best to walk in love? If Jesus lives in me, then yes, this can be done.

Even if I don't get support from other ministries, churches and ministries, Jesus is indeed here. I've already gotten many testimonies to prove it, some of which you've read, some forthcoming.



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But I gotta wonder, if I can have many testimonies, as ONE believer, imagine what would happen to this prison if even a handful of believers rolled up their sleeves and started praying intently for us?

So, Jesus IS here, in prison, but not locked up. He's here to do exactly what He said in Luke 4:18, which applies to every believer; preach the gospel, heal the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind. He's just looking for laborers.

Stay tuned, there's a LOT of testimonies I can't wait to share...