

1.

I am currently a part of MASS Incarceration in the State of Texas where their top financial revenue's are football, OIL, and the Prison System. In Gatesville, Tx., Most residents earn a living in the many Prisons located in the City alone. But lately there has been a shortage of workers for the Texas DEPT. of Corrections. Working Conditions are not the best and they treat their officers only a little better then they treat the offender.

I cant complain, In 3rd World Countries they have it WAY worse, No running water, Food has to be provided by your family, Extreme violence, No medical, terrible Conditions. Are Conditions here are bareable? Yes.

The time a person does depends on how you choose to do your time. The hard way or the Easy way. I have done both. When I started my time I did a whole year in Closed custody for refusing to work in the fields which to me being from up North - Seemed ALOT Like the Slave days.

Getting up Early before even the Sun rose - We turned out by Squads depending on how much work needed to be done that day. We would sit in rows back to back in our Squads while the field boss took Count. We would stay like that until it was light enough to go outside of the Gate where Acres of fields lay waiting to be cultivated by no machines Only manual labor.

Are Only tool was an aggie which we carried over our shoulder and marched with our deuce to our destination which might be half a mile away.

We would be in rows all facing the same direction - Working as a Single Unit - We would raise our aggies over our heads and Chop, Step, Chop, Step, until all the grass was clear. If you did not chop all your grass - You would get a write-up or a case. This is where I ~~ted~~ tended to get cased up... for not chopping all my grass. So I decided to Refuse work and not even try - I'll get that case for staying in a warm bed then. Going out in the Early mornings to work the fields.

I was hard headed and being pridetfull, I did not want to be told what to do and now I see, that this was important, because I was out of my element and God wanted me to trust in Him with all things. At that time - I only relved on myself, but I learned quickly that God would never leave me or forsake me through it all.

Like the military has to break a person down to build them back up. Prison is alot like that. Everyone has their own experience with Prison - All I know is mine. Even when I don't understand why I can't get into this or that - Or why do I have this job instead of that one - Or why do ladies half my age get to lay up all day, and not work at all. Im 15 Years in, I see Parole in 2028, Working and taking Classes to better myself has made this time fly by.

I haven't made Close friends, but I've made friends. Seen people Go home, Seen People Come back, Heard of Others Go out only to die in a World they weren't prepared to meet.

I have a Love for the movie Shawshank Redemption. Morgan Freeman plays the part of a inmate who commits a Crime in his youth, but isn't released until he is a Old man.

4.

Morgan Freeman Gets Out to go to work bagging Groceries at a Grocery store and lives in a half way house.

I think how strange it is to come back into a world that has left you behind - So much change over the years, decades, technology.

Alot of us who do bigger numbers are Clueless on what to do when we are out. Just using a phone is complicated, OR Going to the Grocery store where its Self Check Out, Pay with your phone,,, WHAT???

Even these newer Cars are extra, all electronic, computerized. The whole idea can be a little intimidating.

We recently received our tablets - Wow, what a huge difference this device makes for us offenders. It has been our link to the Outside world and at first, I didn't want to have anything to do with it - Now I cant stay off it.

Yes it makes money for Securix, but it also has opened doors for us as well.

Having more access to our families and In here... Family support is sooo important.

Now that Covid has been on the decline, we are able to get Ministry Groups in the Prisons again.

5.

With these tablets, We Can Watch Church Groups all over the United States. Podcast are available, music, movies, TV Series, And Education all available on our tablets. I wish this was available sooner. Texas Seems to Get everything Last, There wasn't Even a phone System till 2010.

These buildings are ancient, built in the Early 1900's. There use to be a Boys Reform School here which Closed down in the 1970's Before I was born. I heard Stories and read books on the Reform School here in Gatesville, Tx. No Reform School has A Good story and I doubt anyone who survived a reform school can say anything positive about their Experience. They say the Spirits of them little boys are Still present in these Old buildings. Sometimes I do believe they are. Im Currently at a Unit that only housed the Colored boys, In the times of SEGREGATION, the Colored boys were kept at the Riverside Unit.

Mexicans and Whites could be housed together but blacks had to be housed seperately. The Secrets this Place holds.

The Hilltop Unit and Mountain View Unit are the Oldest Units - Built around 1904.

6.

Mountain View is also where Death Row is and is Maximum Security. Hilltop is where Youth are held until they reach their 18th Birthday and can be placed in General Population as an adult. A Girl I know came in at 13 years Old and She has been here over twenty years already. I would like to think that the Youth of today could escape a life behind bars, but in the State of Texas - There's no discrimination, Come One... Come All.

Oh the SAVING GOES, "Come on Vacation - Leave on Probation." I came to Texas to meet family I never knew. And five months after I arrived, I found myself staying longer than I had planned. My host, T.D.C.J. I don't know where I'd be if I hadn't ended up in prison, but sometimes when we are on self-destruct mode - Prison can be a savior in disguise. Slowing us down to see what's really important in life. And if your spiritual - Prison can bring ya to a point where you realize there is a God, and He will walk with you in the valleys as well as the mountain tops. He is an all knowing God that knows your pain, your thoughts, and everything about you. When you surrender to Him and His will for your life, you will have a Peace you never had before.

7.

Most of us have trust issues, but God, we can trust with all things. He has brought me through the fire time and time again. With God I have a new found Hope in my future, I have peace of mind, I have Compassion, I have Love. When things are spiraling out of Control around me - I don't have to spiral with it. My focus is on God and where He wants to use me for His Purpose.

God is still working on some things, but I believe soon I will be able to be released into Society, and make a difference. To be part of a Solution, Instead of being the problem.

Transformation can happen, even in here, but you have to want to change, you have to see the dysfunction in your life and learn to deal with things in a healthy manner. God can help with that change, if you let Him in. Prison is my past, but it's NOT WHO I AM.

Sho'ri Eggum #1564936
Gatesville, Tx.