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The Voice of Triumph, Inc.

A 501(c)(3) corporation

Post Office Box 177
Delano, TN 37325

Telephone
(423) 338-8275
Email: gneillministries
@gmail.com

Website:
www.go-to-jail.org
www.geneneill.com

Beloved in Christ —

This letter—though it will arrive in your mail early in March—is really going to be about something closely related to Easter, which doesn't arrive until April 9th. (I'm sure you've noticed the stores have been filled for weeks with not only Easter cards, but a variety of Easter goodies and gifts for adults and children alike.) But this newsletter is about something that was on our hearts—Gene's and mine—for all the years before he joined that innumerable caravan of saints in the heavenly Jerusalem.

From the beginning there has been no more effective weapon in Satan's arsenal than the Word of God itself. Slew foot has turned it and twisted it and used it to his own advantage since he sidled up to Eve in the Garden of Eden and slyly perverted the truth by using God's own words, "Did God say. . . ?" (*Gen. 3:1*) When the truth was, *No! God did NOT say. . . !*

Having been successful in causing the Fall of the entire human race as a result of Eve's disobedience, Satan even offered the "bait" to Jesus: "*IF you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from the pinnacle of the Temple; for it is written, 'He will give His angels charge over you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'*" *Matt. 4:5,6*

When Satan failed to deter Jesus at the beginning of His ministry, the profiteer of man's fall *went right to the Cross and again perverted the Word of God as Christ hung in the balance – by convincing someone way back somewhere a couple of centuries ago that - ! – God turned His back on His own Son as He died on Calvary—because (supposedly) God cannot look on sin. And this is the part of the Scripture that the deceiver used this time:*

"Thou who art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity; . . ." (Hab. 1:13). And right there he stopped without finishing the verse.

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And this is the remainder of that same verse: “. . . why dost thou look on faithless men, and art silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?”

And that’s the entire verse. The scripture was a question. And Habakkuk was not the only prophet to ever ask it. But it was never intended to refer to Christ!

His awareness of the righteousness of God is the foundation upon which Habakkuk bases his question: *God, how can you, who are holy and pure, tolerate watching as evil men afflict those who are more righteous than they?* Habakkuk, though aware of the sins of his own people, the people of Israel, still could not understand why God was about to use the far more evil Chaldeans to punish them (circa 586 B.C.).

Back to Calvary: Having failed to deter Christ from the Cross, Satan once again turned to the scriptures! And in his most clever – and deceitful effort yet – he convinced some man or woman, way back when, that God – *who is infinite Love* – had turned away from

His Son on the Cross - the most crucial moment in all of human history! Yet the scriptures tell us this never happened; indeed it could NOT have happened, unless we doubt the personal spoken words of Christ himself, who only a few – a very few – days earlier had testified to His disciples that —

“Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.” John 16:32

“I am not alone, for the Father is with me.”
Not just at this moment, not just once in a while, not just when things are going good. But always and forever.

And moreover, doesn’t the Word also say, *“The eyes of God are in every place, keeping watch upon the evil and the good.”* Pro. 15:3

That is to say, since God is Omniscient—all-knowing and all-seeing—He cannot possibly fail to see, hear and know all things, both good and evil. He cannot close His eyes or stop His ears or He wouldn’t be omniscient.

When His Son cried out from the Cross near the end of His life, *“Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”* – which means, *‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’*, it was not because His Father had turned away. *The righteousness of God forbids such a thing. The love of God forbids it! And His omniscience makes it impossible.*

At the very moment when Christ was most completely human, His body wracked in intolerable pain, seconds away from suffering a mortal death, He cried out to His Father. But don’t ever let anyone tell you His Father – for any reason – turned away from His Son. *Because He didn’t.*

If you listen quietly, even now, you can practically hear God shouting, *“I NEVER turned my back on my Son! For not even the magnitude of all the sins of the world overwhelms my holiness or my love. To say that such a thing is possible is to impugn my very nature. And why would you further afflict my Son in His sufferings by telling Him I turned away from Him? I tell you,*

*‘Look upon Him!
BEHOLD THE LAMB!’*

“It is finished!” John 19:30

“Come now all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matt. 11:28

2023

This prisoner’s genuine humility and gratefulness were touching:

“I wrote you about a month ago asking for some spiritual books. I just received them and I wanted to reach out and personally thank you. This is my first time in prison and your books were truly a blessing. I would very much appreciate more if you could send them. But if not either way I appreciate you and the work you do. Your prayers would be greatly appreciated and I will pray for you and the good work you do. I pray for your books to help and give people hope in God like it did for me.”

And this man’s letter, too, was a joy to read. You help us do so much good in this lost world today—thank you!—

“Thank you for your books I’m Gonna Bury You and Prison to Praise. I really thoroughly enjoyed reading them. I loved Gene’s encouragement: ‘When your prison cell seems a little tight, and when the food is not all steak and champagne—take heart! Rejoice!’ . . . To tell the truth, my cell is a ways too small, but I can’t complain. It is what it is. I can confess to you I am not a fan, I am a follower of Jesus Christ. . . Thank you for your support for inmates.”

This prisoner sent a wish-list of books, some even I have never heard of. But the books you help provide are stepping stones on the pathway to a better life:

“Thank you for your reply and for Power in Praise. Wow! What a great book. I read it then sent it home to my wife. I could use more Christian reading material. Here is

my ‘wish list’ you could say, but I will be grateful for anything you send. . . .”

I didn’t expect his introduction; but then fewer and fewer prisons these days have a “church” within their walls:

“Dear Pastor, Thank you so much. I received my Bible and the book you sent me. I feel so blessed to have a pastor and a church family out there. Being in a place as I am, it is very much a blessing from above. I will cherish my Bible and read and study it every night. I want to ask that you pray for me. This is a very dangerous place. . . .”

BIBLES, bibles and more bibles and books:

“I’m writing you requesting a Holy Bible per the pastor at this jail I currently reside in. I have nothing, no money, no one to ask for help except you guys and God! Anything you send me will be greatly appreciated. . . .”

“I was saved a long time ago but I back slid from the Lord. Now I’m back living like I should. I’ve been locked up 35 months, don’t know for how much longer. I would love a study bible if possible and Gene’s autobiography so I can study the Word. God bless. . . .”

“I requested a Bible and you sent it, so first off thank you for that. I’d also like to request the book I’m Gonna Bury You. If you could send that I would also greatly appreciate it. Thank you very much.”

GOD IS —

**“Unheard because our ears are dull,
“Unseen because our eyes are dim—yet
“He walks on earth—the Wonderful,
“And all our deeds are done for Him.”**

Arise, my soul, arise; Shake off thy guilty fears; The bleeding Sacrifice In my behalf appears; Before the throne my Surety stands, My name is written on His Hands. My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice I hear: He owns me for His child; I can no longer fear: With confidence I now draw nigh, And “Father, Abba, Father,” cry.” Charles Wesley

This is my favorite letter this month and this is the same Florida chaplain who experienced knee deep water in his chapel from storms two years ago:

“I went to the chaplain today and had a talk with him about me changing my life and giving it to our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave me some inspiring things to read, and your brochure was the one that touched me the most. I would like to know your journey you took and what you went through, so can you send me a copy of your book titled ‘I’m Gonna Bury You’ by Gene Neill. It says you all will send me a free Bible too so if it’s not too much to ask can you send me a King James Study Bible? Please. Thank you and have a blessed day.”

A similar letter comes from a different prison in another state. I couldn’t help but notice that the chaplain didn’t wait for this convict to come to him. Bless him—he went to the inmate, with something to help:

“Our chaplain brought me a pamphlet about Jesus loving convicts, and I loved reading it. It is very touching, especially in here. I would love to have a Bible and your book I’m Gonna Bury You. Thank you!”

Not long ago we sent a couple of boxes of books to a chaplain in Montana. The chaplain appears to be doing a great job ministering to the inmates personally. Almost every week brings a letter from someone:

“. . . I am currently learning more about the Word of God and was hoping you would be able to send me a book that would help me learn more about God and our Lord Jesus. I would really appreciate it. Thank you and God bless.”

In 2011 McNeil Island Prison (Oregon) - the oldest prison in the Northwest and final island-based prison in the nation - was closed after 136 years. But years before it did, Gene boarded the ferry one morning to minister to the inmates there. Today six prisons are situated not far from McNeil. We regularly get letters (such as this one) from one or the other:

“I’m not sure exactly when I actually invited Christ into my life. All I know is my life changed somehow in the summer of 2019 while I was reading my Bible—the first chapter of the book of Job. I’m still learning. It’s definitely easier said than done. But Job says ‘Blessed is the one God reproves’ and ‘despise not the discipline of the Almighty.’ I found your name stamped in the Bible and would appreciate more materials.”

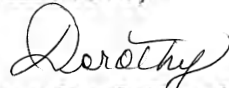
I’m quite sure God loves this type of “sponges” —

“My name is Stormy and I’m currently incarcerated in jail. I will be here at least another year. . . . Jesus grabbed a hold of me in early 2020 on a cell floor in the state of Nevada and never let go. I’ve been a sponge for His Word ever since and can’t get enough. I came across your address and was curious as to what you do for a jail/prison ministry. Do you have Bible studies or just literature? Thank you for your time.” †

O! Almighty Father, help us!

AS THE YEAR rolls on, HELP us to carry by faith those burdens which you have assigned to each one of us. HELP us to place on you all our own vain strivings against the things of earth that would pull us down and away from you. HELP us to realize our true battles are not with flesh and blood, but with Satan and his trickery. HELP us not to be drawn into battles that are best left to your broad shoulders and loving kindness. HELP us to bear one another's burdens in the love Christ has shown to us. HELP us to learn how to lay our burdens at your feet and never pick them up again. HELP us to realize that when we give all things over to you by faith, they truly become YOUR responsibility. The fight is yours. And You have never lost a battle fought by faith.

In His love,



Dorothy & Family

**HERE ARE A FEW OF THE PRISONS AND JAILS INTO WHICH YOU HELPED US
TAKE THE LORD'S GREAT LOVE AND JOY THIS MONTH—**

**Glen Helen Rehabilitation Center, Devore, CALIFORNIA
Federal Correctional Institution, Tallahassee, FLORIDA
Fountain Correctional Institution, Atmore, ALABAMA
High Side Center, Cranston, RHODE ISLAND
GRCC, Central City, KENTUCKY
BarryTelford Unit, New Boston, TEXAS
Santa Rosa Correctional Center, Milton, FLORIDA
Indiana State Prison, Michigan City, INDIANA
Paul Rein Correctional Center, Ft. Lauderdale, FLORIDA
Southwest Virginia Regional Jail, Haysi, VIRGINIA
Montana State Prison, Deer Lodge, MONTANA
Suffolk Correctional Center, Riverhead, NEW YORK
Bledsoe Correctional Center, Pikeville, TENNESSEE
Cross City Correctional Center, Cross City, FLORIDA
Denver County Jail, Denver, COLORADO
Wichita County Jail, Wichita Falls, TEXAS
Roswell Correctional Institution, Hagerman, NEW MEXICO
Whiteville Correctional Center, Whiteville, TENNESSEE
DeKalb County Jail, Decatur, GEORGIA
Federal Correctional Center, Pekin, ILLINOIS
R.M.C West Unit, Lake Butler, FLORIDA
Rockville Correctional Center, Rockville, INDIANA
Gwinnett County Jail, Lawrenceville, GEORGIA
John Goode Detention Center, Jacksonville, FLORIDA
Morgan County Correctional Center, Wartburg, TENNESSEE**



GENE NEILL
Founder

THE VOICE OF TRIUMPH

Post Office Box 177
Delano, TN 37325

- DATED MATERIAL -
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

THE WAYS OF THE SERPENT

Who can tell from which way a snake has come or which way he is going? So it is with Satan.

Interestingly, God cursed not only Satan because of he beguiled Eve in the garden of Eden, but serpents in general: “. . . Cursed are you above all cattle and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go and dust shall you eat all the days of your life.” Gen. 3:4,15 And so they do to this day. They move sideways, forward, to and fro, back and forth. They strike without warning, while moving or stationary, coiled or uncoiled. Their colors, the shape of their head or their eyes are all devious and deceptive. If you’re not really paying attention, it is easy to mistake the poisonous for the non-poisonous.

Did you notice that three times *Satan switched tactics* with Eve in the Garden, slithering up to her with *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the “opportunity”*—or so he said—to become like God.

Jesus even likened His enemies—the Pharisees—to a brood of vipers (Matt. 12:34). For like Satan, they were insistent in their repeated efforts to trap and trick Him, *even though they knew He “was a teacher come from God for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”* John 3:2

Down to this very hour we are warned in scripture to be wary of Satan, his trickery and deceit, *casting all our fears on “the God of all grace, who has called us to his eternal glory in Christ. And He will himself restore, confirm, strengthen and establish us.”* I Peter 5:6-10