



Missionary Evangelism to Corrections

Sharing the gospel & Christ's love with those in corrections since 1982

I was in prison and you came to visit me. Matthew 25:36b

We want to thank all of you who submitted your testimonies and helped write Christmas cards for inmates this year. You are able to bless over 440 inmates, corrections staff, and intercessors. Each received a Christmas card with a verse a personal note and some testimonies inserted. We hope these bless you as much as they did us as they were being written out.

The Love of Christ DONE

How can we understand the love of Christ? I'm still trying to understand His love. This is the problem...we can never know, in terms of completed knowledge (like learning how to drive a car/you learned it and now you're finished with driving school), His love but we continually strive to know His love. It takes work it takes faith...it takes curiosity. Knowing the love of Christ is not a magic occurrence but it begins with a desire to know. What is it that draws Christians to Christ? Are they lunatics? Why do missionaries risk their lives and the lives of their families for the sake of Christ? Why, when Christ walked the earth centuries ago does He continue to influence people and entire countries (U.S.A. coins say "In God We Trust") today? Where is He, when tragedy strikes? Does He exist?

My prayer for you this Christmas, get curious: open your mind. Don't stop until your answers to questions like these are satisfied. Use A reliable source for the answers to your questions (where many a searcher goes wrong!!!); a respected bible teacher and of course, what else makes sense but the bible itself as a source of knowledge about Christ? There is a great website, "Desiring God" where you can read or hear Sunday sermons. Read books written by trusted Christian scholars and be careful about who you trust. There are few I would recommend but I would recommend John Piper...

Enjoy your journey; it will be profound if your mind is open to learn.

Merry Christmas my friend!

~Melody

DONE Back in 2008 I was introduced to Christ and accepted him as my Savior. He has freed me from a 38 year drug and alcohol addiction and a life of Criminal Activity. He has softened my heart to learn and experience forgiveness, love and hope each and every day. To know I am never alone and that we all can start fresh to change our lives no matter what our past has been is very comforting. Each and every Christmas since 2008 has had extra special meaning not just for me but for my family as well. Happy Birthday JESUS!!!!

~Sheryl

How this Christ Who We Celebrate at Christmas, Helped me DONE

Many years ago, Christ filled the emptiness of my heart with His love. I have had many catastrophes in my life and God helped me to learn to let Him carry me through those times. Even today, I realize that it is only through Him that my strength comes. I am so thankful for the relationship I have with Him. He is my strength, He is my joy and He is my life.

MISSIONARY EVANGELISM TO CORRECTIONS

"The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 4: 18-19

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I met Christ through my Grandpa. I will never forget that summer evening when I was a young teen. I followed my Grandpa outside one evening. After observing him silently gazing at the western sky, I stated, "Grandpa, what are you doing?" He said, "I'm praising God for this beautiful sunset He created." I snickered, and in my teenage know-it-all voice said, "Grandpa, you're totally blind. You can't see the sunset!" And Grandpa turned to me and said, "Ahh, but I remember the beautiful colors and the majesty of His Creation! I remember and I daily give thanks."

My Grandpa inspired me to always look daily at God's Creation, thank him and give praise to His Son's life, death and resurrection on this Earth. There is such joy in this simple act of faith.

May you find this joy from Jesus this Christmas season!

~Jeanne

How this Christ we celebrate at Christmas helped me **DONE**

For many years I struggled deeply at Christmas. I was depressed, angry at the many hurts of my past. I felt left out because I thought Christmas was really about having beautiful decorations, the most wonderful loving family gatherings, everything just perfect. You get the picture. I could never make those things happen. Our family was a mess and trying to have a nice house left me feeling empty.

Well when I finally started to really understand who Jesus really is and why He came to this earth, things began to change. Jesus is God and became a man at Christmas to show us what God the Father is really like. Jesus came to set captives free. That means free from sin that holds us captive. Jesus set me free from the punishment our sins deserved in hell. He came, lived, died and gave Himself to pay that punishment instead of me paying it. When I put my faith in Him and trusted in His sacrifice for me, I now had His Spirit inside of me. My sins were forgiven. I had sinned greatly throughout my life so that was good news. Jesus also came to bind up (mend) broken hearted people. I was brokenhearted because of the many abuses I experienced. My trust in anyone had been shattered. God helped me to understand that He could be trusted; He could heal my broken heart through His perfect love. Because He forgave me completely, He could give me the grace to forgive others. It didn't mean that the sin done to me was right or ok, but it meant that I was made right, shame taken away, restored, accepted, included because of my relationship with Jesus. I could let God deal with those who hurt me.

Now Christmas is so meaningful to me. Not because my family is perfect (it's still a mess) but I know that God can heal them too and I pray for that. I don't have the perfect house, but now I'm grateful for all that I have and try to share it as best I can with others. I try to include others who maybe feel excluded or left out. I tell people about how to be "included" and "accepted" by God through faith in Jesus. These things give my life great purpose and meaning especially at Christmas but throughout the whole year and I can have this peace, joy, and unfailing love no matter what circumstances I'm in. I hope and pray you will find Jesus and the real meaning of Christmas. He can change your life too.
God Bless you

~C.A.

How this Christ, who We Celebrate at Christmas, helped me; DONE

Actually, I grew up in a family where talk about Jesus Christ was part of our natural conversation, as was going to church and learning about Him there. However, there had to come a day when I would have to make a personal decision to receive Him as my savior, by simply believing that He was God who became man, being born of a human mother, but whose father was God...and that He came to show us how to live, but more, His ultimate reason was to die on the cross to pay for all the sins, the wrongs I have done. All of us sin, but to get to heaven, those sins need to be paid for, and Jesus became our substitute by paying for them when He died on a cruel cross. I accepted Him and that fact and was on my way to heaven. But meanwhile, there is a life that must be lived, and it is full of sin and temptations to do wrong. One day, I was involved in a life threatening accident, where everything changed for me. I realized that Christ Jesus wanted to be my partner and live His life through me, even as a paralyzed person who' must spend the rest of life here on earth, in a wheelchair. But I am free, knowing He continually forgives me of each sin when I confess them as they arise, and also that I can represent Him here on earth now, since He is up in heaven now - in the world where I find myself, with family, friends, and acquaintances. He gives me joy in the midst of all pain and frustrations that is unexplainable.

~~Dale

HOW I MET THIS CHRIST WE CELEBRATE AT CHRISTMAS DONE

WHEN I WAS 21 YEARS OF AGE, A SENIOR IN COLLEGE, SOMEONE INVITED ME TO A BIBLE STUDY THROUGH A NON-DENOMINATIONAL MINISTRY CALLED NAVIGATORS. AT THE TIME, I WAS VERY DEPRESSED AND WONDERED WHAT MY PURPOSE ON EARTH REALLY WAS. I HAD CALLED OUT TO GOD AND THIS INVITATION TO ATTEND THE BIBLE STUDY WAS, I'M SURE, GOD'S RESPONSE TO MY PLEA. AT THE BIBLE STUDY I LEARNED WHAT THE BIBLE SAID ABOUT MY SIN. I WAS A LOST SINNER, HEADED FOR HELL, AND IN NEED OF A SAVIOR. THEY THEN WENT ON TO EXPLAIN HOW JESUS CHRIST CAME TO DIE FOR MY SINS AND THEN ROSE FROM THE DEAD PROVING HE WAS GOD. THEY FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT GOD LOVED ME AND HAD A GOOD PLAN FOR MY LIFE. THAT NIGHT, I GOT ON MY KNEES, REPENTED OF MY SIN, AND ASKED JESUS CHRIST TO COME INTO MY HEART AND LIFE AND TAKE OVER. MY LIFE HAS NEVER BEEN THE SAME. I AM NOW 63 YEARS OLD, AND BY FAR THAT HAS BEEN THE MOST IMPORTANT DAY OF MY LIFE. I LOVE JESUS CHRIST AND HOW HE HAS CHANGED AND CONTINUES TO CHANGE MY LIFE TO HIS GLORY. MY SALVATION VERSE IS 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17- "THEREFORE, IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST HE IS A NEW CREATURE. OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY. BEHOLD ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW."

HE LOVES YOU. MAY YOU COME TO KNOW HIM, TOO

~SUE

HOW THIS CHRIST WHO WE CELEBRATE AT CHRISTMAS, HELPED ME. DONE

BOTH MY HUSBAND AND I GREW UP IN CHRISTIAN HOMES, HE AS THE SON OF OUR PASTOR. MY FATHER WAS THE JANITOR IN THE CHURCH!

WE WERE BLESSED IN OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE, AND, BEING SINNERS IN SPITE OF OUR HERITAGE, WE BOTH WERE

CONVERTED AND BAPTIZED EARLY IN OUR LIVES. WE BECAME INVOLVED IN THE CHURCH YOUTH WORK AS VOLUNTEERS AND WE BOTH TAUGHT SUNDAY SCHOOL. THAT BECAME A STEPPING STONE FOR OUR ENTERING INTO MINISTRY.

IT SEEMS SO VANILLA AND PLAIN TO THOSE WHO SEEK OTHER EXCITEMENT. YET OUR LIVES ARE FULFILLED AND WE ARE CONTENT, AND OUR CHILDREN ALSO FOLLOW JESUS.

WE KNOW THAT OTHERS HAVE A HARDER PATH THAN WE HAVE HAD. WE SEEK TO HELP THEM FIND CHRIST THROUGH CONTINUING MINISTRY IN THE JAIL AND OTHER PLACES AS WE GET OLDER.

MANY BLESSINGS TO YOU. MAY JESUS REVEAL HIMSELF TO YOU IN GREATER MEASURE. ~~~~INGRID

How I met This Christ who we celebrate at Christmas **DONE**

Actually Jesus met me. As He promised, Jesus was and is there for me, when I reached out in my darkest hour. By asking Him to show me a different path than the one I was on and opened up my heart to receive the truth. Jesus opened my spiritual eyes and ears to hear His truth. Jesus was born to take away our sin at the Cross so we may live. Hallelujah! Merry Christmas!

~Mark

How I met Christ: **DONE**

Merry Christmas to all. Over thirty years ago at the age of 15 my life was dramatically and forever changed. I want to let you know that Jesus is real and desires a relationship with you. Take it from me, if you give Him full control of your life, this Christmas will be the best ever. There is no greater gift than Christ himself. May you trust Him always. God bless your friend in Jesus. ~~~~Jeff

How I Met This Christ We Celebrate at Christmas **DONE**

I met God on an August 2006 evening in my garage wasted out of my mind. I believed that Jesus is the son of God, but wasn't sure about who he was or if I even wanted to know him. I was separated from my wife who has had a spending addiction for all 11 years of our marriage; I hated myself and everyone around me. I was at a point in my life that I realized that I wasn't in control of anything in my life and if you had asked me if I had a problem with chemicals I would have said no way maybe at one time but I am doing much better now. For the next 3 years I studied the bible every day and God taught me who Jesus is and to worship honor and appreciate the forgiveness that he has made available to me. Jesus also brought me through the twelve steps and seemingly effortlessly freed me

from a 27 year dependence on chemicals. Today I can say that Jesus is becoming ever more King and Lord of my life!

John 8:32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

The only way to know the truth is to read the Bible and for God to reveal it to us. 2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

... May God bless you this CHRISTmas and bring you into his family!

~Brian

How I met This Christ who we celebrate at Christmas **DONE**

I met Christ because I prayed a prayer one evening for someone special to enter my life before my parents died. Odd that I prayed because I did not really believe in God, nor did I know Jesus as my Savior. However, God was faithful and gave me a life mate so close to the specifics I set down that he often reminds me he is an answer to prayer!

But God didn't stop there. My parents died within a year and a half, of my meeting and marrying this man and gave us our first child, a daughter. Then, you may be surprised to learn, this man was already a Christian and through him I learned to look for God and His efforts to enter my heart. We were married nearly six years before I gave my life to Christ, 41 years ago. Through my husband's gentle leading, & Christ's presence, I have grown and matured in my faith.

My Christmas wish is that Christ be with you. He is there at your side if you don't know him; he wants to be invited into your heart. If you do already know Christ the King, please ask him how he would like to see your life develop to serve him no matter where you are. Merry Christmas and a 2013 that is blessed by a stronger faith and walk with Jesus.

~Judy

How this Christ, who We Celebrate at Christmas, helped me **DONE**

I'm so happy to call this Christ my heavenly father. Some people ask why do bad things happen to good people and why does God let bad stuff happen to us? I asked myself that when my little 8 day old daughter died. Many people said how can you not blame God for that? I did not blame God I rejoiced in the feeling knowing that He wanted her to be in Heaven more than I wanted her here on earth. So now she is my Angel looking down and protecting me all my days on earth! YES I am the lucky one! Also remember God does not give us more than we can handle. If HE brings you to it, he will bring you through it! Remember that HE died to save YOU from Satan. What a wonderful gift! I just love the Christmas season even though December is my daughter's birthday and death month all in one but then we get to celebrate Jesus' birthday and what a great day that is! May God bring you lots of peace and Joy this Christmas season all next year! Sending prayers your way that 2013 will be wonderful for you and may you let God speak to you every day! Merry Christmas!

~Yvonne

(From Scripture we know that people do not become angels, however this is the way Yvonne worded her assurance that her child is with God and can see us)

How I met Christ: **DONE**

I remember it so clearly; I was invited to a youth group meeting on Tuesday Feb. 4th 1997. I was far away from home because I had made some poor decisions in the previous year. That night the youth instructor taught a powerful lesson. I don't remember everything he talked about but I do know that it hit my heart and changed my life forever. I went home that night and began to cry out to God and ask him to forgive me for all of my sins. I made a promise to the Lord Jesus Christ; that I would live for him all the days of my life. The Christ we celebrate during Christmas is the same one who saved me, set me free, called me to preach and made me a Pastor in His Church. Wow, I am so glad to have a relationship with Jesus Christ!

-David

How this Christ We Celebrate at Christmas Helped Me **DONE**

I am grateful to Christ for coming to earth as God to save mankind. God was gracious enough to send many people into my life to tell me the truth of what the Bible says about mankind. There we learn that "all have sinned and fall short". I used to think I was a good person. But as the years went by it was evident that I was not a good person and the sin in my life caused much trouble for me and others around me. When I finally began to read and study the Bible I realized we have all sinned and needed the grace of a savior who could take our sin and give us His righteousness so we could be right before God. So I thank Jesus for doing that for me. I believe He is the way, the truth and the life and that no one goes to the Father God except through Him. I am thankful to now know this and believe this and my life is completely new as I live and depend on Him. Merry Christmas!

~Jeannine

How Christ Helps me **DONE**

I find Christmas to be very meaningful because I'm getting to know better and better the one whose birth we celebrate—Jesus Christ. Each year, through the Bible and the wisdom of other Christians, I'm learning to trust Jesus. He can be trusted because he is God and man at the same time. He is the King who protects and provides for those who are a part of his kingdom. He loved me so much that he gave up his life for me. His death paid the penalty for my sins, and his resurrection guarantees my future resurrection. And his wise instruction in the Bible gives me guidance for living everyday life. So he's worth singing Christmas carols to! May you come to know the Christ of Christmas this year.

-Dave

How I MET CHRIST **DONE**

I was saved in July of 1977 after a 12.5 year marriage ended in divorce of May 1977. When Jesus came into my life, He brought me out of the dark deep muck and mire of a life without Christ to a life filled with His light, Love, Peace, Joy, and a Gladness I had never experienced in my life before.

I am ashamed of my past life and feel like I can't express or be thankful enough for what Jesus did and has done for me. He accepted me where I was at, loved me, and accepted me into fellowship with Him making me one of God's children when I felt I didn't deserve to be accepted. Through His Holy Spirit Jesus Christ made me a new creation in Him. The devil was trying to destroy me, but Jesus had something much better for me! Jesus means everything to me!

Trust me! No one can love you like Jesus! No one can comfort, give wisdom, and guidance like Jesus! No one can know you like Jesus! There is not one thought or action that Jesus is not aware of in your life and through it all He knows what is best and can give you the best for your life!

I am thankful to have the opportunity to celebrate Jesus' birth and also remember what Jesus did for me on the cross. For me these occasions are inseparable. There is no one else who has loved me as much! Jesus is the Best!

There is no way in which I can thank Jesus for all He has done except through doing my best to share Him with those whom the Holy Spirit connects me with.

Jesus Loves You Too!

Have a Very Merry and Blessed Christmas!

~ MINISTER Connie

How I met this Christ we celebrate: **DONE**

Twenty eight years ago I was a criminal and a very frustrated woman. I thought there were things this world could offer me to make me happy. I had quite a bit of those things. I still did not have a clue as to why I was here, where I belong, or how to be a success. In fact I believed that I had pretty much blown my chances and felt like an absolute failure at life--and certainly felt that I had greatly fallen short of ever pleasing God, even if I knew how. I decided to end my life and apologized to God for having blown it.

Before I could make that happen, I was "led" to the State Theater on 7th and Hennipen where I thought maybe I could try auditioning for the musical--one last stab at being successful at something. A woman named Grace met me there, and told me the parts were all given out, but knowing I needed hope and the Lord, she talked me into helping backstage til the next musical. I was given such love and acceptance there that I had never thought I deserved, and this theatre, which was really Jesus People Church after all, was where Christ met me and cast me in His ongoing road show, as His newest sister---with many roles to play over the next many years!

I listened to the truth all that week in 1984, and decided to believe it. It would take a book to describe how He utterly changed me and rearranged my whole life and outlook! I know He had a better idea than me bowing out of this world early.

~Vicki

How Christ Helps Me **DONE**

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a child is given and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, prince of peace.” Isaiah 9:6

May the peace of Jesus rule in your heart from now and forever more. Remember, God did not give us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. 1 Timothy 1:7

~Pastor Tim

HOW THIS CHRIST, WHO WE CELEBRATE AT CHRISTMAS, HELPED ME **DONE**

CHRIST'S BIRTH AT CHRISTMAS HAS GIVEN ME THE NEW LIFE AND I FOUND IT, WHILE STILL YOUNG IN A BIBLE CAMP. I WAS BROUGHT UP IN CHURCH, SANG IN CHOIRS, BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS MUSIC, TAUGHT MY CHILDREN ALL THE BASICS, BUT JESUS DIDN'T BECOME REAL AND CLOSE TO ME UNTIL I HAD BEEN TESTED OR HAD GONE THROUGH VARIOUS TRIALS. NOW I AM IN LOVE WITH HIM AND HE IS MY LIFE. HE LIVES IN ME AND WITH THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, I ASK FOR HIS WISDOM AND GUIDANCE DAILY. THIS DID NOT COME OVERNIGHT, BUT WITH STUDYING HIS WORD. HE IS CALLED THE WORD OF GOD IN JOHN 1.

WE HAVE MEMORIZED MANY BEAUTIFUL PROMISES AND LIVE BY THEM. WE START THE DAY WITH ROM 12:1-2 "I URGE YOU THEREFORE BRETHREN BY THE MERCIES OF GOD TO PRESENT YOUR BODIES A HOLY AND LIVING SACRIFICE, ACCEPTABLE TO GOD AS YOUR SPIRITUAL SERVICE OF WORSHIP, AND DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND TO PROVE WHAT THE WILL OF GOD IS-THAT WHICH IS GOOD, ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT."

WE LOVE JER. 29:11 "I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU, SAITH THE LORD, PLANS FOR WELFARE AND NOT CALAMITY TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE AND A HOPE." PROV. 3:5-6 "TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL THINE HEART AND DO NOT LEAN UNTO THINE OWN UNDERSTANDING, IN ALL THY WAYS, ACKNOWLEDGES HIM, AND HE WILL DIRECT THY PATHS."

CHRIST'S BIRTH LED TO HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS AND THE GOSPEL IN I COR. 15 WHERE PAUL STRESSES HIS DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION AND THE BEAUTIFUL RESULT OF THAT SUFFERING HAS MADE MY LIFE MEANING AND I WANT TO BE HIS AMBASSADOR AND TELL THE GOOD NEWS TO THE WORLD.

~LIL

How Christ Helps me **DONE**

I have been awed by the Christmas story for over 42 years. I never get tired of reading about it or hearing it. I'm not a big fan of all the hoopla or the over marketing that goes into it, but I love the little known, almost secret things, that continue to thrill me. The whole story of His birth is so full of wonder and anticipation. My favorite part is Mary's response to the Angel and the invitation that God was giving her. I have come to see that as an invitation He gives to all of us. Those who say yes to God have *the capacity to quietly believe* that the things that God has spoken deep into their souls will be fulfilled. No need for bells and whistles, just a simple journey of taking one faithful step after another. It was this particular aspect of Mary's character that Elizabeth celebrated when Mary arrived on her doorstep. *Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord. I continue to listen to God and be amazed at all that he does with my simple trust in Him. I pray that this Christmas you will hear His voice and receive His love and have a "Yes" in your heart for His invitation to you. I pray God's blessings and peace to you this Christmas ~ Susan*

How this Christ, who We Celebrate at Christmas, helped me **DONE**

Before I met Christ, I was lost, broken, and hopeless. Because of my drug and alcohol use I lost everything I loved and gained everything hated. I lost my job, my identity, my freedom, and my family. I gained the streets, woman, drugs, three felonies, and prison. While being in prison my wife divorced me, because of my lifestyle. But then there was a big turnaround in my life, God the father begins to reveal some things to me, and one of those things was that I took life for granted. I took my job, my family, and my freedom all for granted, and because of that it was all taken away. Now I begin to read books to pass time and one of those books was the Bible. It was called free on the inside Bible, and the Lord begin to speak to me. He took me to the book of Galatians 5:16-22 and began to tell me exactly how I was living. I was living in sexual sin, impure acts, and wild living. I was living in adultery, I partied seven days a week, I worshiped other Gods. Woman and drugs was my God. It gets drunks and takes part in wild parties. I went from drinking on the weekends to drinking every day, and I was a bar hopper sleeping with lots of woman. (A Whore) But then God spoke to me and begin to hold me accountable, and the Spirit of the lord came up on my body, and a voice sad to me, do you believe, and I say yes I believe, and that was the day I was transformed by the Holy Spirit in a jail cell, and my life haven't been the same since. Today I am a deacon in my church, the Lord has restored my marriage, and we remarried June 30th 2012. The lord has given me a Janitorial Business; I have a full time relationship with my children and grandchildren. The Lord is the head of our house hold and we continue to have a personal relationship with him. Today I am a servant for the Lord. Until next time may the Lord grace and peace be with you and your family. Amen
-Billy

How Christ Helps Me **DONE**

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me". Luke Chapter 4 verses 18 and 19

I love to think of the Spirit of the Lord upon me personally. God's spirit within me personally at all times and in all places. I hope that you already know our Lord but if you do not you need to know that he is always there. You also can open yourself to his presence. You also do have access to him at all times. As we think about Jesus birth as a baby and celebrate it at Christmas time let us open our hearts to the infant Jesus and feel his gentleness and kindness.

When no one else seems to understand me, I simply draw closer to God's spirit. You can do that too. Rejoice in our Lord who understands YOU & I completely and loves YOU perfectly. As he fills YOU & I with His love, that love can then overflow into the lives of others. Jesus was born into this world and we celebrate His birth on Christmas. No matter what our circumstances we can accept him and share in his love.

2 Corinthians chapter I verses 21 and 22 helps me to know this. "But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment."

In the book of Mathew the 6th chapter the 34th verse we read "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today". I try to lead my life with this in mind. I ask God's help each day so that my faith can be strong enough to have the faith in him and let him take care of me. I feel if I do the best I can in what ever circumstances I find myself He does take care of me.

I like to think of the day of Jesus' birth and how God used the common people to bring his son into the world. Joseph and Mary and the shepherds were very common people. If he can use them I think he can use you and me as well.

Have a blessed Christmas.

~Joyce

Merry Christmas to You, you are blessed! DONE

Let me tell you about this Christmas that you hear so much about from my stand point. It's the birth of the Son of God, Jesus! This is the one whom has saved me from my own demise.

Back in 96 my life had totally fallen apart. Even though I owned my own business and things were going fine there on the outside I was slowly destroying myself on the inside. I didn't realize there was another part of me that was doomed for destruction cause of the path I was on. My health was deteriorating quickly; I had sleep-apnea, and wasn't doing anything to control it. I also was into coke and meth, as well as drinking and smoking. But that wasn't what sent me into a tail spin. The real damage came when my wife at that time had asked for a divorce and I emotionally wasn't prepared for anything like that. My heart was crushed, I mean the pain was excruciating, I thought I was going to die. This caused me to take a look at my entire life as I knew it. I was totally out of control; I mean is I had no control any more. I remember going outside in my front yard and falling on my knees and crying out to this God, saying if you're there, take me and do something with me cause I can't do this life the way it is anymore.

Well my story isn't over yet. He is still taking care of me and transforming me. He has given me a new life, and not that everything is hunky dory, but I know where I stand with him. I now have a personal relationship with the one who created me, the one that created me with a purpose in mind. I have had many trials that have been challenging my faith, but this is what helps me to grow. The challenges I face I face with knowing that the King is with me, and there is a purpose for what's taking place.

In the last couple of years I have gone through a divorce, given up my home, and let most of what I owned go. And less than a year ago I went through some medical issues that should have left me for dead, yet I am still here, because the King is with me, and because he has given me some promises that haven't been full filled as of yet.

Let me just say if God is for me, who can be against me! You Can Do This!

Merry Christmas from the King's Kid Michael

"How this Christ we celebrate at Christmas helped me"

He saved me in every way. He has saved me from my sin thru his death and resurrection for ME personally even if I was the only person on this planet. He is also changing me each day to be more and more conformed to his image by the power of his resurrection which is a historical FACT. This Christmas I pray you have a real personal encounter with the Christ of Christmas. God Bless You. ----Luke

Hello,

I met this Christ we celebrate at Christmas 27 years ago, He has so much changed my life, Is all I did is confessed my sin, and invited Him to replace all that in my heart. Jesus has been the best decision I have ever made in my life, I began to read the bible, the bible is like a mirror, you really do see yourself as you read , our goal is to be like Him, so He had to clean me up and change the things that I thought were important, for the things that He desires, He changed me from the inside out, all because I let Him, I will tell you today, no one loves you like He does, the bible tells us in Eph.3 : 17_19 Gods love is total, it is so deep, so wide, nothing compares to it. I have found that whatever you behold you become. If you take anything from this, know He sees, He cares, and He has the power to change things. He loves you and wants to change your life. O He is such a good God, PS 34:19, He delivers us from all our troubles, and He does. He has made such a difference in my life; I know He can do the same for you. I will sign off by saying Merry Christmas to you, God bless you, and may you come to see how great our God really is for yourself, invite Him in today, get yourself a bible and let Him change you. You will see there is no one like our God.

~Ginny

About 30 years ago my husband visited the State Prison in Honolulu where his brother was serving as chaplain. While visiting with some of the men who were serving life sentences, my husband came to realize that even though he knew about Jesus, he did not truly know Him. These inmates were able to share about their faith in Christ and later my husband also came to know Him as Savior. He then shared his new faith with me and I also became a believer. I still praise the Lord for the inmates who loved Jesus enough to share their faith with my husband.

~Diane

This is the wife of the man who started MEC!

How I Met Christ

I was a mess. I was using drugs and drinking continuously. I had a friend that was trying to reach out to me. He was a Christian and stood by me no matter what I did. My friend was killed in a military accident. At his funeral the pastor talked about this Jesus and the forgiveness he offered. That day I met the Christ we celebrate at Christmas.

-Troy

How I Met Christ

I accepted Jesus as my Savior when I was at Bible camp when I was about 10 years old. I am so glad that Jesus goes with me wherever I go and is with me in whatever I am doing. I can continually talk with Him as I go about whatever I am doing. I don't know how people can be without Jesus in their lives. No wonder there are so many people in the world that are crabby and not pleased with their life.

I Hope this Christmas brings you a new start in your life with Jesus in the center because it will make a difference in the New Year. ~Linda

How I met and Christ Helped Me

..I discovered that those places are called corrections because they are there for a wakeup call and I needed to hear it. As Jesus said in John 8:32 "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."

God has given us all freedom to choose and do as we decide to do but there are laws made so that we can all be safe and continue in our Journey through life as happy and good persons. I want us to wake up to the call on our life to be MORE and walk into all things as a part of living where we are to grow and flourish.

Sometimes I get involved in things that are momentarily satisfying but actually are corrosive and destructive to me, as well as other persons in life. I hope you please hear being in a Prison or Jail as a call from your creator to walk out of the old and into the new way of life. God has allowed all these things to happen for a reason and now let's see what we can do with all of it to create MORE good in life.

-Walt

How I met Christ & How He Helps Me.

When I was a child I used to cry myself to sleep most nights. I was the youngest of seven and thought I was always in the way and no one cared about what I had to say or what I wanted to do. I was often teased, and although it may have been in good humor I took it as hurtful. We had a new pastor who preached about salvation and mother, feeling that life was hard & that she could use God's help, knelt in the kitchen of our very small house which was under construction, and asked him to save her. She had a little lamb that she used to teach Sunday school and I wanted it very badly but she would not give it to me. I was in a fire with third degree burns to my head and when I was in the hospital she gave me the lamb. I accepted Christ and talked to Him, about all my problems, but felt like it was "me and God against the world". I had a relationship with God through several moves and our family even served as staff at a Christian camp.

Throughout high school and college I relied on Him to help me emotionally. I tried Physical Therapy because it sounded good, but could not pass the physics course. During a quiet time I felt God called me to be a Nurse. Because of not trusting people or fear of authority, I was dishonest, putting my best foot forward and hiding what I did not know. At the end of a four year program which took me five years to work through, I failed one 12 credit course, was told I would never make a good Nurse and all of my hopes and dreams seemed unattainable. I realized at that time, that because I was trying to take care of everyone else and not spending time talking to God or listening to Him, our relationship was almost nonexistent. Life was hired and I needed God. I recommitted to Him and got baptized.

The next year I finished a practical nursing program, got married, worked, and conceived a daughter. Soon we took in my husband's sister's children for six months, moved and had a son. There was stress in my relationships and although I was going to church it was not a healthy one and I was not receiving but almost always giving. I wondered about first Corinthians 13 and where the love was. Counseling helped me to look at some things I had buried in my emotions when I had tried to forgive people but had not dealt with the pain those experiences caused. I learned how to be honest emotionally and to grieve and to balance giving and receiving. Going to the same person consistently was essential in helping me be closer to God and to others. It helped me not to be so distant with men. A sponsor and a prayer partner helped me be able to trust healthy women.

Eventually God led me to work in jail ministry. He helps me and all of my relationships.

~~~Karen

### My Relationship With Christ

I grew up with great parents, in a family with three older brothers and an older sister. I grew up going to church and learning about Jesus Christ. I thought it was a Christian, and maybe I was, and maybe God what are forgiven me because of

my innocence or my causal relationship with Him. But in my mind, I wasn't a Christian; or rather I wasn't living for Christ. I was the good kid who obeyed my parents, did chores and was kind to people I met But I was fake. You see, I grew up learning how to be two-faced. I was kind and nice and did the 'right' thing when people were around, but I was secretly living only for myself. I acted out of a selfish desire to appear 'good'. I wanted people to think it was a great person, at least a good person, but when I was alone, I was a self-centered monster. I think I had good intentions, but I really wasn't focused on God. I wanted to please Him, and even work hard at doing good things, but I didn't put an effort into praying, or seeking a real relationship with my proposed savior Jesus Christ. With my laziness, I allowed the center of my life to revolve around my own desires, and allowed myself to fall, rather than to chase after God with my life. You see, even though I was a 'kind' person who really didn't get into trouble, knowing God and being a Christian isn't about the things you do or how bad they are. The evil things I did sins, which in God's eyes are as evil and detestable as the 'worst' things people can do. Olsson's are equally as bad in God's eyes. By his grace though there is hope.

I had been going regularly to Youth Group at my church, but really hadn't given God my all. One weekend, another Youth group held at the retreat in our building, I was invited to join in the activities. I was fourteen.

After worship, their pastor talked about our relationship with Christ that put everything aside to follow Him & chase Him with everything a person has. I had heard about this my whole life, and had even tried to do so, but I knew I had a choice to make. I wasn't living entirely for Him, and I decided that enough was enough; I would give my life to God and seek Christ with all that I am. Since then I have been living as much as I can for Him, but it is a continuous and conscious decision any given day to follow Him. As we all do, I haven't quite been able to do that, and I still fail God by sinning from time to time.

But He has saved me by His grace, and the sacrifices Jesus Christ made for me makes up for those failings of mine, as long as I continue to talk with Him and seek Him. I've learned that if I don't constantly seek Him & pray regularly, I can easily fall back to my selfish habits.

Later when I was 18 years old, my doctor diagnosed me with Bipolar disorder, which was confirmed by a psychologist. That was a long and difficult struggle, where I questioned reality and what I knew and believed. However, I continued to pray, being honest with God about all my feelings and disappointments. He helped me to learn to rely on Him, as He is the most real thing in the universe. Over time, and with a lot of God's help, I have grown, been gradually healed, and I now have a life essentially un-disturbed by bipolar disorder. I am back to my usual, if not entirely normal, self. God has helped me to grow, rely on Him, and find peace from the uncertainties and problems of our life in this world. I've found that constant prayer, intentional decisions to seek God, and Godly friends, are essential to living for God, especially good friends. I have grown up with a group of guys in a bible study who were always there to encourage me, to pray for me, and generally keep going in the right direction. I was lucky to have a good family also. That constant encouragement and reminders from brothers and sisters in Christ is what helped to where I am today.

~ John

### *My Relationship with Christ*

*Christ is always with me, even in my darkest moments. I can hear Him say "I am with you always even unto the end of the world". I reply, "Oh, thank you Christ. Do you mean even when I've broken so many of your commandments?." His reply "I love you with an everlasting love".*

*As tears flow down my cheeks, I thank Him once again for coming at Christmas time to be our Savior, Lord and King.....and we are remembering His never ending love for us this Christmas season Thank you, Christ Jesus, for coming to offer yourself for our sins.*

*I'm incredibly full of joy because Jesus Christ hears my prayers and acts on them. What a God we serve.*

*Hallelujah for His never ending love for me, and for my peace of mind and heart. Thank you Baby Jesus, thank you, Heavenly King Jesus Christ. Thank you for walking with me daily and in every situation. Glory, Praise and Honor are yours forever as Baby Jesus and as victorious King Jesus, our Lord and Savior, every Christmas and every moment of my life.  
Love, Eloise*

#### MyTestimony!

I was born in Germany in a secular home. Religion had little impact in my family. We went to church occasionally to satisfy the religions obligation. After the war my parents divorced and both remarried. My mother married an American soldier. In 1958 he was transferred back to the US and my mother asks me to join her. I did. This is how God brought me to Amerika. One year later, I was standing on a street corner and 'watching all the girls go by' [having no thought or curiosity about Jesus Christ] when suddenly two men came towards me. They stopped and asked me, if I knew Jesus Christ. I laughed them off and said, 'HE IS LONG DEAD!' They responded with, "No, He is alive and wants to come into your heart." I asked them what they wanted from me and they said, we want to pray with you to receive Jesus. One of them took a coin and banged it on the show window and said, "Imagine that I wanted to give you this coin but you would be behind this glass and it was in the way. I could not give it to you, the glass is in the way." The same thing is true with God. He wants to give you eternal life, but your sins are in the way. Jesus CAME AND BROKE THE WINDOW. I understood the work of Jesus Christ for the first time and prayed with them. Jesus DID COME INTO MY LIFE THAT DAY AND CHANGED ME FROM THAT TIME FORWARD. That happened 53 years ago and I love him today more than before.  
~Helmar"

#### How I Met This Christ We Celebrate at Christmas

I started using drugs at the age of 13 when my parents were divorced. From then until my early twenties I used chemicals to avoid pain in life. If this worked, what else is out there? Going through withdrawal and a treatment center in New York, I knew I could go onto the street and get anything unwanted to me feel better, but I also knew I would be going back to the same relationship and employment problems. I had always make fun of anyone or anything having to do with God. The thought occurred to me, What if you are wrong?" I realized I could be wrong about God. If you are there, help me! As I called out, even though I did not know who He was, the Holy Spirit met with a warm presence that lasted for a couple of hours. I reasoned that my choices had not gotten me very far and it would be wise to do whatever God asked me.

My counselor asked me to go to Minnesota for another treatment. "She's crazy, I thought - I'm not going. It's cold there and they have a football team that cannot win a Super-bowl!" But as I walked out of the office God reminded me I had told Him I would do as He asked. I went and while there, one of the patients told me about the Christ and I started reading the New Testament. When I read it, I realized this was the grace and mercy I had received when I did not deserve it.

In the last 32 years, God in Grace has helped me to follow the 12 steps, become a counselor, start my own business lead a jail ministry, become a director at two treatment centers, maintain a home and raise a family.  
~Saul

## HOW CHRIST HELPED ME

JESUS HAS HELPED ME AND MY FAMILY MANY TIMES. HE KNOWS OUR HEARTS DESIRE AND CARES ABOUT THE

LITTLEST DETAIL. ONCE I WANTED TO BUY SOME NICE PERFUME. IT WAS VERY EXPENSIVE AND CALLED BEAUTIFUL. I WAS 20, BUT COULD NOT AFFORD IT, SO I GAVE UP THE IDEA. I RETURNED TO COLLEGE AND STAYED WITH A FRIEND FOR THE WEEKEND BEFORE COLLEGE BEGAN AGAIN. WE VISITED HER FAMILY AND THEY GAVE ME A WELCOME BACK GIFT SINCE I HADN'T SEEN THEM ALL SUMMER. I HAD ONLY MET THEM ONCE OR TWICE AT THIS POINT. I WAS AMAZED THEY EVEN GOT ME A GIFT. THEN I OPENED IT UP, AND IT WAS THE EXACT PERFUME I HAD BEEN WANTING. I FELT IT WAS A GIFT FROM THE LORD JESUS BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO GET ME ANYTHING AND OF THE MILLIONS OF GIFTS THEY COULD HAVE GOTTEN, THEY GOT ME THE EXACT THING I WAS HOPING FOR. ONE OF MY LOVE LANGUAGES IS GIFT GIVING AND I KNOW THE LORD KNOWS THAT. I THINK HE WAS SHOWING ME HE LOVED ME BY GIVING ME AN EXTRA SPECIAL GIFT.

ANOTHER TIME I NEEDED A JOB AND MY ROOMMATE KEPT ENCOURAGING ME TO INTERVIEW FOR THIS ONE POSITION. SHE KEPT NUDGING AND NUDGING. I ASKED HER WHY. SHE SAID, "I DON'T KNOW, JUST TRY FOR IT." I DID AND I GOT THE JOB! ANOTHER TIME LOOKING FOR A JOB, 2 DIFFERENT PEOPLE I KNEW CAME UP TO ME AND SAID, "THERE IS A JOB AT NORTH HEIGHTS, TRY OUT FOR IT." I DID AND GOT THAT ONE, TOO. I LOVED BOTH JOBS. 5 YEARS LATER I WAS PRAYING ABOUT STAYING AT THE NORTH HEIGHTS JOB AND I FELT LIKE GOD TOLD ME I WAS SUPPOSED TO LET GO OF IT AND HE HAD SOMETHING ELSE FOR ME. HOW KIND THAT HE EVEN CARED! I QUIT AND THAT SUMMER AT A PRAYER GROUP, SOMEONE I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW SAID, "DO YOU WORK WITH CHILDREN?" I SAID YES, BUT I QUIT AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE LORD HAS FOR ME NEXT. SHE SAID, "LET'S ASK HIM" AND WE PRAYED. SHE SAID SHE FELT LIKE HE

SAID I WAS TO REST IN HIM AND HE WOULD BRING ME A JOB. I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO LOOK THIS TIME. I PRAYED LATER ABOUT IT BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE RESPONSIBLE AND I HEARD HIM SAY, "JUST LIKE I BROUGHT A JOB TO YOUR HUSBAND, I'M GOING TO BRING A JOB TO YOU." SURE ENOUGH, LATER THAT WEEK, I GOT A JOB AND I LOVED THAT ONE, TOO!" ANOTHER TIME WHEN I WAS LET GO FOR A JOB, I WAS ON MY WAY TO AN INTERVIEW. WHILE I WAS IN THE CAR, I HEARD THE LORD SAY, "I'M GOING TO CHANGE THIS INTO A BETTER INTERVIEW." I WENT IN AND STARTED WITH ONE INTERVIEW AND ENDED WITH A DIFFERENT ONE AND GOT THE HIGHER PAYING JOB. IT'S AT THE PLACE I WORK NOW. HE IS SO FAITHFUL AND IT'S SO AMAZING HE CARES FOR THESE DETAILS IN OUR LIVES!

THE LAST THING I WANT TO SHARE, EVEN THOUGH THE LORD HAS HELPED ME MANY MORE TIMES THAN THIS, IS THAT GOD HAS REALLY HELPED MY DAD. HE WITNESSED A MURDER ONCE AND GOD PROTECTED HIS LIFE. DAD ALSO STRUGGLED WITH DEPRESSION MANY YEARS. HE TRIED TO COMMIT SUICIDE TWICE. BOTH TIMES GOD SPARED HIS LIFE. DAD ALSO HAD GANGRENE DUE TO DIABETES, AND HE HAD SURGERY AND HIS FOOT HEALED UP! LATER, DUE TO NOT TAKING CARE OF HIS DIABETES AND GETTING A STAPH INFECTION SEVERAL TIMES, MY DAD WAS ON HIS WAY TO HEAVEN. BY THIS TIME IN HIS LIFE, A LOT OF HIS EMOTIONS AND STRUGGLES WITH HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD HAD BEEN HEALED AND RESOLVED. HE STILL HAD SOME STRUGGLES, BUT HE WAS AT PEACE AND KNEW THE LORD LOVED HIM AND WAS WELCOMING HIM HOME TO HEAVEN. THE DAY HE WENT TO HEAVEN, HE SAW JESUS IN HIS ROOM! HE SAID TO MY MOM, "LOOK, THERE HE IS! THE LORD JESUS!" LATER THAT NIGHT HE WENT TO HEAVEN. I'M SO GRATEFUL I GOT TO BE WITH MY DAD AND THAT HE SAW JESUS ON HIS

WAY TO HEAVEN. THAT'S A REALLY HUGE WAY THE CHRIST HAS HELPED ME!

MAY JESUS BLESS AND HELP YOU RICHLY AND MAY YOU SEE HOW MUCH HE LOVES YOU. HE IS NEAR THE BROKEN-HEARTED AND GIVES YOU JOY AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. HE NEVER LEAVES YOUR SIDE AND HE IS STRONG IN YOUR WEAKNESSES. THE LORD BLESS YOU AND CAUSE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON YOU AND GIVE YOU PEACE!

~~HEATHER

**Matt 1:18** Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

We all know the story of how Jesus came into this world, to set mankind free. BUT, see at the last part of this verse, it says (of the Holy Ghost) -- it is always the Holy Spirit that brings the power of God into His Word, in this world. I love the Holy Ghost who Jesus sent to earth after he died, was resurrected and went to heaven.

Has the Holy Spirit birthed the Word of God into you???

**John 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

Father spoke, the Word went forth, the Holy Spirit moved, and what the Father said, came forth. (It is in the book of Gen. Check it out) Just as when you speak, your word goes out and does what it is sent forth for, and to do. Speak things that agree with God's Word, good things come your way. Speak things that are contrary to Gods Word, good things cannot find you. Without the Word, nothing much good will happen in our lives. That is spoken of in the following verses.

**Gal 6: 7** Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Myself, and you also, were called into His Kingdom for a purpose—to speak His Word into yours, and others lives (are you ??)

Where ever we are in Him, at a low place, or in a higher place, there is always a place to climb higher, and to be used to help others that are not as far (into) Him.

We celebrate Christ-mas, not just to get and give gifts, but to celebrate the gift that Father gave to the world, that is the gift of salvation to mankind. He is counting on you and me to tell others about the reason for the season. As We look and think on what we have just read, may His richest blessings overtake you. Amen.

~Leon

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