

Ol' Nate's Corner

PEACE GODS PEACE THAT'S WHAT I REALLY WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU ALL. I KNOW I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE THAT FEELS SO AT PEACE WITH LIFE. EVEN THOUGH THINGS AREN'T HAPPENING AT THE PACE I WOULD LIKE THEM TO, I HAVE TO ADMIT AND GIVE THANKS THAT THE THINGS I HAVE PRAYED FOR ARE BEING MANIFESTED. I HAVE TO REMIND MYSELF TO LOOK AND SEE WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE, IS DOING AND IS GOING TO DO. HIS TIMING IS DEFINATELY DIVINE. MY PATIENCE IS NOT, NOR ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT ME. WITH THAT SAID, I NEED TO SHARE THIS AAHH! UHHMM! WHAT A WONDERFUL FEELING HAS JUST COME OVER ME!!! GODS PEACE. THERES NOTHING LIKE IT OR CAN COMPARE TO IT.

ONCE AGAIN, THE HOLIDAYS ARE UPON US AND THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT GOD'S PEACE. SOME OF US WILL SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY, SOME OF US WON'T. THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT IS (INSIDE THERE AND OUT HERE). I URGE ALL OF YOU TO REMAIN FOCUSED ON THE LORD, AND THE PLANS HE HAS FOR YOU DURING THIS TIME OF THANKSGIVING AND CELEBRATION. ABIDE IN HIS REST AND LET HIS HOLY SPIRIT FILL YOU WITH HIS PEACE. HE HAS TRULY OVERCOME THE WORLD. (JOHN 16:33) AMEN AND AMEN. GOD'S PEACE BE WITH YOU ALL.

JAIL-HOUSE RELIGION

"The Real Thing" or "A Cheap Imitation" ?

By Stephen Canup, former inmate, now Prison Minister for Freedom in Jesus Ministries

"Jail-House Religion"—How many times have we heard that phrase? It's usually in a mocking way. Is it the "real thing" or a "cheap imitation"? Can someone really find God in a jail or prison? Is God close enough to us here to hear our sincere cry? Can we really be heard by Him as we commit, or re-dedicate, our hearts to walk with Christ? What does God say about people like us in His Word? Can He actually use a convict, who turns his life around, to advance the cause of His Kingdom?

We know what "society" says and thinks about us – they call us misfits, outcasts and career criminals. For the most part, they despise us. They think that we are worthless, dangerous and not capable of changing our ways. They are ashamed of us, afraid of us and would like to forget us. When they put us in jail we are "out of sight, out of mind". We are at the very bottom of the social ladder – like the bottom of a dark empty well with no ladder to climb out. How low can we go and still find God?

When we are as low as we can go, and think that the only "light at the end of the tunnel" is a train headed our way, what do we do? When we finally wake up one day and realize we are sick and tired of being locked up again and again because of our own stupid actions, wrong decisions and addictions, who do we turn to?

Isn't this the time and place that makes the most sense to cry out to God? Think about the story of "The Prodigal Son" – he was eating, sleeping and working among the pigs in the muck and mud. The Bible says in Luke 15:17, that he finally "came to himself", saw the error of his ways, desired forgiveness, and turned back to go home to his father. Sometimes, God uses the worst of conditions at the bottom of our own miry pit to get our attention. Psalm 118:5 says, "In my anguish I cried to the Lord, and He answered me by setting me free."

In Luke 19:10, Jesus said He "...came to seek and to save what was lost." The religious leaders of the day wanted to know why He ate with and ministered to "sinners". Where are there plenty of us lost sinners? Locked up. Jesus is seeking to save us! In here we are sober and in our right minds. We are "still". If we listen, we can hear Him here!

SEEK THE LORD

God tells us if we seek Him (look hard for Him), we will find Him! It does not matter where we are, how old we are, what our problems are – if we seek Him, He will be found by us.

Is. 55:6-7 "Seek the Lord while He may be found: Call on Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. ⁷Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon."

Jer. 29:11-14 "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹²Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and will bring you back from captivity..."

In other words, when we seek God with all of our heart we will find Him – even when we are locked up.

**2011 PRISON MINISTRY SCHEDULE
DECEMBER**

FELLOWSHIP RIDERS

UNCHAINED LIFE MINISTRIES

DECEMBER

10-11 ROACH - CHILDRESS
17-18 HAVINS - BROWNWOOD

UNCHAINED PRISON MINISTRIES

DECEMBER

4 HAVINS - BROWNWOOD

**(WE ARE WORKING ON GETTING
THE SCHEDULES FOR 2012 AND
WILL START POSTING THEM AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE.)**

Malta Farms – Slaton TX 806-828-1016: This is a faith-based long term residential program for new believers exiting local correctional facilities, specifically Lubbock Co. Jail

Faith Ministries – c/o Vivian Washington PO Box 31772, Amarillo, TX 79120 – They write inmates and actively pray for them as the inmates send in their prayer needs

Burkes Supervised Living Center – Travis County and surrounding counties – Toni Taylor Director, 512-926-6311, 2612 Wheless Lane, Austin TX, 78723 – Supervised living for probation, parole, substance recovery, MHMR, handicapped – they do charge for living there (\$500 per month at time of pamphlet publication) – will take supervised sex offenders

Simple Acts Ministry – Lubbock TX, Attn: Bob Hawes PO Box 6601 Lubbock, TX 79493 www.simpleactsministry.org – Their ministry helps those who are coming out of incarceration and their families with support, setting up a house, financing cars, and Christian mentoring.

Exodus Ministry – 4243 34th ST Lubbock, TX 79410, 806-791-3673- They provide Bible Correspondence Studies

ARC4Angels Ministry – PO Box 823, San Marcos, TX 78667 – They offer free Bible studies, training guides for daily struggle issues, a pastor ordainment program for those who are spiritually mature, newsletters 3 times per yr. Laura Oaks is the current Administrative Pastor and she is an active prison reform activist.

Freedom In Jesus Prison Ministry - Don and Donna Castleberry, Steve Canup PO Box 939 Levelland, TX 79336 - They do weekend crusades in prisons and provide a newsletter, Bible studies, and Bibles.

Word of Hope Bible Study Ministry - PO Box 93490, Lubbock, TX 79493 - They send out Bible lessons and also will send inmates a free Bible when they request it. Large print Bibles are available also.

**"To be a Christian means to forgive the
inexcusable because God has already
forgiven the inexcusable in you!"
C.S.Lewis**

hope for the weathered

Faded, broken, graceful lines were still visible as a token of the painting's original magnificence. Hundreds of years earlier a master artist had taken up a brush and woven with paint this dreamy scene from a simpler day.

Now worn and weathered, the painting faintly echoed its former brilliance. Through the cracks and chips it gave silent testimony to the skill of its original artist.

Wind, rain, heat, admirers—with each touch glory departed. Centuries after its creation, I stood as a new admirer under the old park arch that had served as the artist's canvas in China.

I felt a surprising connection with the old painting. There was something familiar to me about its fate.

I too felt weathered.

Pain, conflict, disappointment, sin—with each touch glory had departed from my life. Parts of me were only a faint reflection of what God had originally intended. Other parts were so worn by my choices that I could not even imagine what "magnificent" would look like.

My thoughts drifted to the future of the painting on the arch. New artists could attempt to restore it, but its original artist could no longer take up a brush. Only one could truly return the painting to its intended magnificence. Only one saw the painting in his mind and felt the painting in his soul before others could see it with their eyes. That one master artist was long dead.

Ah, but there ends the similarity between the painting and my life because my Original Artist—He still lives! He still remembers His master design for me, and for you!

Our Creator is able and willing to restore the faded and broken portions of our souls. Hope exists for the weathered and worn because our Original Artist lives! ~abc

**God's Timing
By Steven M. Saless**

"The Lord isn't really being slow about His promise, as some people think. No, He is being patient for your sake . . ." 2 Peter 3:9

It doesn't take very long to discover that God's timing is not always our timing. It's easy to question and wonder why you've been waiting for your breakthrough for 15 years and your neighbor got their breakthrough in 15 minutes! In the Bible, Abraham waited 20 years for His promise, and in the upper room they waited about ten days. I don't know how long you'll have to wait, but you've got to understand that God has your best interest at heart. He is being patient for your sake. He's aligning things and waiting for the exact right moment! If you'll just continue waiting with the right attitude, then at the right time, God will bring it to pass.

Remember, God is always working behind the scenes for your good. Just because you don't see any changes taking place doesn't mean they aren't happening. Keep standing, keep believing, keep hoping because you're breakthrough is coming for your sake!

From last month:

Can you answer all seven of the following questions with the same word?

1. The word has seven letters....
2. Preceded God...
3. Greater than God...
4. More Evil than the devil...
5. All poor people have it....
6. Wealthy people need it....
7. If you eat it, you will die.

The answer is: NOTHING

From last month:

The Puzzle

Adam God made out of dust
But thought it best to make me first.
So I was made before man
To answer God's most holy plan.
A living being I became,
And Adam gave to me my name.
I from his presence then withdrew,
And more of Adam never knew.
I did my Maker's law obey
And never went from it astray.
Thousands of miles I go in fear
But seldom on earth appear.
For purposes wise which God did see,
He put a living soul in me.
A soul from me God did claim,
And took from me the soul again.
So when from me the soul had fled,
I was the same from as when first made.
And without hands, or feet, or soul,
I travel on from pole to pole.
I labor hard by day, by night,
To fallen man, I give great light.
Thousands of people, young and old,
Will by my death great light behold.
No right or wrong can I conceive,
The scripture I cannot believe.
Although my name therein is found,
They are to me an empty sound.
The feat of death doth trouble me,
Real happiness I'll never see.
To Heaven I shall never go
Or to Hell below.
Now when these lines you slowly read,
Go search your Bible with all speed.
For the my name is written there,
I do honestly to you declare.
The answer is one word and appears
only four times in the King James
Version of the Bible.

The answer is a whale.

In salvation, God enters the hearts of his Adam & Eves. He permanently places himself within us. What powerful implications this brings. Did Christ sin? No, though encircled by sin, he kept it out. Can we say, then, that where Christ is, sin is not? So, if Christ lives in you, what doesn't live in you? You got it...sin! "When God lives and breathes in you (and he does, as surely as he did with Jesus), you are delivered from that dead life." (Roman 8:11 The Message) You can change your family tree from that of Adam to God. And when you do, he moves in. His resistance becomes your resistance. His Teflon coating becomes yours. Sin affects you but never infects you. Sin may, and will, touch you, distract you, but it cannot condemn you. Christ is in you and you are in him and "there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1) Let your constant prayer be this: "Lord, I receive your work. My sins are pardoned." Trust the work of God for you and then trust the presence of Christ in you. Take frequent, refreshing drinks from his well of grace. You need regular reminders that you are not fatally afflicted! You will occasionally sin. And when you do, remember: sin may touch, but cannot claim you. Christ is in you! Trust his work for you. ~Paraphrased from Max Lucado

Exciting News!

The Stone Tablet now has its own website address:

www.stonetabletnewsletter.org

Now you can give your family and friends on the outside this address to view The Stone Tablet. We have been asked about sending past copies and unfortunately, we are not able to do so at this time. However, since we will be posting The Stone Tablet on line, you can have someone on the outside go on-line and get past copies to mail to you.

Also, don't forget to have your family and friends go to

www.texasparolereform.org

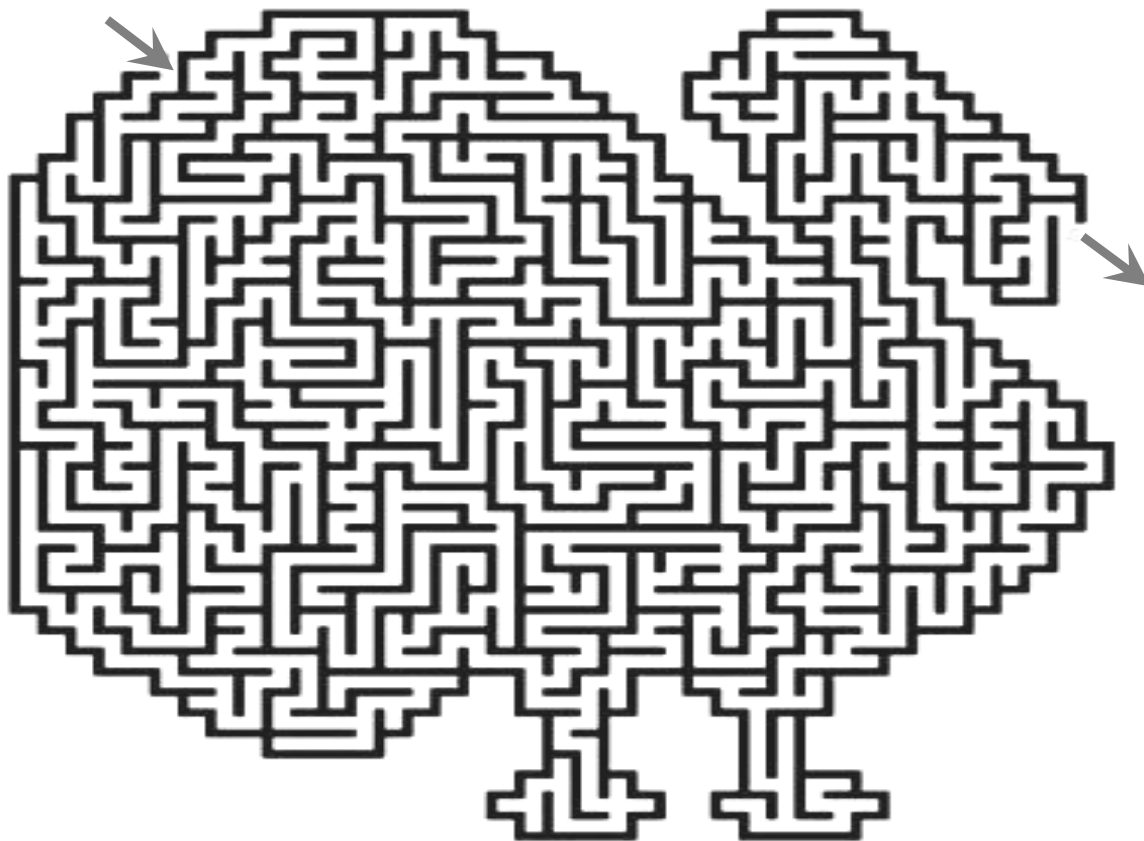
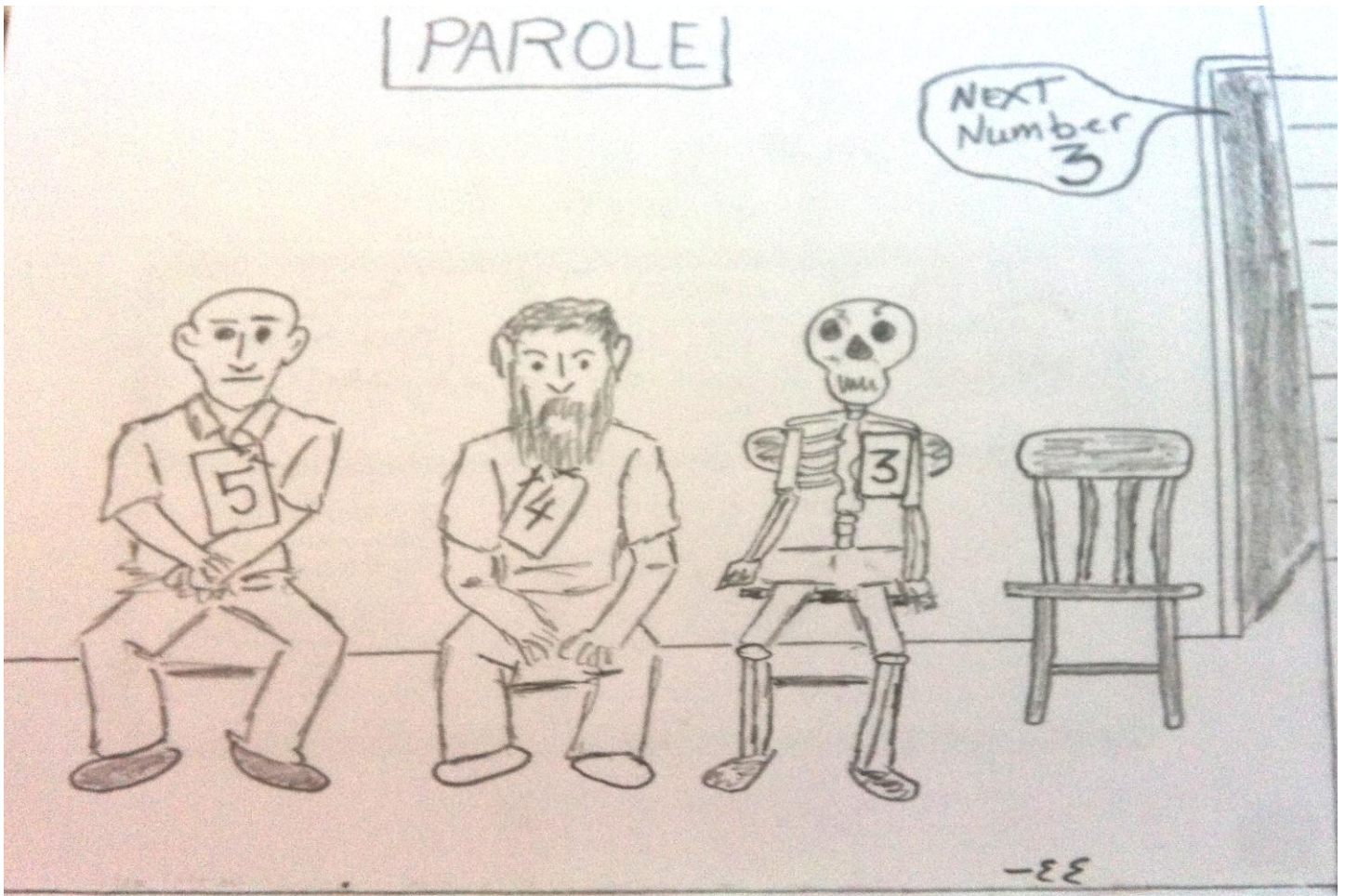
to get the information to contact their congress person about the need for parole reform.

Receive Christ's work on the cross. Welcome the energy of His Spirit. Say yes to His lordship over your life. Accept His unending, unfailing love. Thank Him for His grace, mercy, and blessings!



Happy Thanksgiving!





Answers to October trivia questions:

1. A
2. B
3. D
4. A
5. B
6. D
7. A
8. C
9. B
10. D
11. C
12. B
13. D
14. B
15. B
16. C
17. C
18. A
19. C
20. D

"Give **thanks** to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." 1 Chronicles 16:34

ODDS AND ENDS

We send our thanks to KP for sending us a copy of the ECHO. It has the new criminal justice legislation from the 82nd Legislative session. It appears that there were just over 20 bills that were passed that apply to the criminal justice system--not many that have a lot to do with our concerns (I think). Here are a few of note: HB200-Release notifications must be electronically transmitted and anyone who was receiving SSI or SSDI benefits before their incarceration and who have not been incarcerated for more than 12 consecutive months shall have their release from incarceration reported to US Social Security by TDCJ. HB417-TDCJ is required to inform any wrongfully incarcerated person of how to obtain compensation for that wrongful imprisonment and for those that are entitled to that compensation are entitled to group health insurance just like a TDCJ employee. I am not sure that I understand HB1770 but it appears to me that it allows the TDCJ the ability to pay for post release housing for offenders in their county of residence if there is not a residential correctional facility there. The owners of the structure may have to have a public hearing to get the structure approved for that use. That might open up the opportunity for more post release facilities. HB 2735 is interesting in that it requires the Parole Division to issue a summons for a hearing before a parole panel instead of issuing an arrest warrant for an administrative violation if the person has been out on parole for more than 3 years. This does not apply to anyone who was required to register as a sex offender and a few other serious crimes. As I said, there are a few other laws but most of them appear to be administrative or presentencing type issues. If you can, get a copy of the September issue of The Echo.

I also want to thank new subscriber RB for sending articles from The Echo! Way to go to our "not roving" reporters! Hee Hee (Sorry, I couldn't resist)

RF, I got your letter very late for some reason. The way you have been moving I'm not sure you will get this ST. It sounds like you might actually get out soon. We will keep your mom in prayer! We are glad you enjoyed the ST while inside. You will see in this issue somewhere that we should have our website up so that everyone can continue reading it once they are released!

LS, Thanks for the time sheet. We will put you in our prayers and your time sheet in our files. Congrats on cleaning up. Keep up the good work. Also thanks to JW for his time sheet.

DI sends an interesting twist to the whole working in TDCJ and having to buy clothes from commissary: "Now let me think this through. You make the Tee Shirts, without pay, and I send my money from the outside to your TDCJ account so you can buy a tee shirt that you made, without getting paid, so that TDCJ makes \$\$\$\$." DO WHAT????? Wait am I paying taxes too? Good grief this is confusing!" Thanks DI!

WC, thank you for your letter. In regards to Jan, she is mom and her son is my brother. It is because of the two of them and relationships that we built together that we started the ST. You are right about her son being setoff several times. As a matter of fact, he just received his third setoff. We have not received the official reason yet but have been told that it was due to the severity of the crime. As we all know, that will never change even though he is way past his 50 percent time served. I have not seen his time sheet recently but I guarantee you that with all of the supposed good time and work time (with no bad time, missed days, etc.) he has served at least double the sentence. That's disappointing!

SH, I do remember you being in Lubbock CTY. It is good to hear from you. Congrats on your accomplishments. We will be praying for you and all the gals on your unit. The list of names you sent has been added by to our mailing list and should have received this newsletter also. Hang in there sister!

Thank you JKB for sending me some scriptures on forgiveness. You actually sent me one that I expected to see a lot sooner. Mark 11: 25 "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." You also use Col 3:13 "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Thank you for sending this. These are commonly used when talking about the forgiveness or asking for forgiveness issue. Let me point out a couple of things with these two verses. Obviously Jesus is speaking in the first one. Pay close attention to the wording of both and also notice the timing of both. In Mark, Jesus placed the load of forgiveness in the listener's hands. If they did not forgive then the Father would not either. First I would ask, are you sure you forgave everyone of everything, no matter how large or small? I guess if you don't you lose out. Right? That seems a little tough. I'm not sure I've done that even though I have tried really hard. Then Jesus died for our sins. He took the load on Himself. He took that forgiveness issue in his hands. That is why Col 3 is worded like it is. That verse says that He forgave us so therefore

we should forgive, not that we forgive so He can forgive us. That is a vast difference. Here again I remind ya'll that it is truly Jesus plus nothing. He did it all!

I like your use of the dictionary to define forgiveness and that definition really supports your 1Corinthian 13:5 that says not to keep a record of wrongs. The dictionary definition is "To cease to feel resentment against (an offender)." By the way, that leaves no room for holding even a fraction of thought about the offense even if it were to remind yourself that you forgave. Hope that helps everyone a little more. Still up for discussion!

Thanks RRB for the thank you! As always it is good to know that everyone enjoys the ST even if that is all you have to say.

WT commented about the book that my good friend Jerry Nislar wrote and that we are going to start sending out this month. Hopefully about 150 of you will receive it this month and then more of you as time goes on. I congratulate all of you for your studies into the scriptures and special thoughts and prayers to the guys studying at the Lynaugh Bible Academy. I remind each of you that you should question and pray about everything you read and study whether it comes from me or anyone else. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate teacher.

Thanks to RB for pointing out that we did not have the zip codes on a couple of the ministry addresses in the ST. Sandra fixed that in this issue.

Turkey day is right on us and I wanted JL to know that the turkey leg is my favorite part also! Be sure to contact us when you get out. We will be praying for you and your family. When you get out you will be able to get the Stone Tablet from our new website.

Here are some answers to some bible questions in the Sept. issue for MM. Remember that the answers for the quizzes are in the following month of the ST.

Who killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day?

Benaiah, son of Jehoiada - 1 Chronicles 11:22

Who was the man that killed 600 men with an ox goad?

Shamgar - Judges 3:31

Who was the first drunkard to be talked about in the Bible?

Noah - Genesis 9:20-21

Two lawyers are mentioned in the Bible. What are their names?

Gamaliel and Zenas - Acts 5:34, Titus 3:13

What Bible Character cooked his bread on cow dung?

Ezekiel - Ezekiel 4:15

In what two books of the Bible does it talk about men drinking their own urine and eating their own refuse?

2Kings and Isaiah - 2Kings 18:27, Isaiah 36:12

TN sent a letter that was very good but I am going to hold it until next month so that I can investigate how the medical issue works if you do not have enough money in your account. His case looks really messed up. I put this in here to let him know that I will be praying for members of his family that are ill. I know what it is like to have those concerns as my brother is also incarcerated and I know that one of his concerns is the health of our parents.

Why don't we all take a moment and pray for each other and our families!?! AMEN!

Well, I've come to the end of another Odds and Ends. I am particularly moved this time for some reason or another. I am not sure if it is because my brother was setoff for the third time and I know that he has worked really hard to obtain a legitimate shot at parole. (I know that his is not the only case because there are 150,000 of you in the system here in Texas. Some working hard, some not.) I am not sure if it is all of the thank you letters we received. (I read several to Sandra and she commented "That sure makes it all worth it, doesn't it?") I am not sure if maybe I'm just a big baby sometimes. Not really sure but I know one thing for sure--Sandra and I love all you guys and pray the best for each of you. Please keep us and all the guys at The ROC in your prayers. Until we meet again, either through these pages or maybe on the street sometime, be blessed and keep your heads held high!

Brother Don