

**MASTERLIFE  
MINISTRY,  
INC  
NEWSLETTER  
FEBRUARY 2021  
www.MasterLife-  
Ministry.org**

MASTERING LIFE IN CHRIST

**NCFMP students and  
MLM, Inc have  
overcome a COVID  
Christmas, enter  
into this edition and  
see what God is  
doing!**  
.....

## **A Jesus "Thang"**

Biblical history tells us that King Herod tried to *kill* Christmas. A children's classic illustrates a Grinch that tried to *steal* Christmas. In 2020, COVID-19 tried to *destroy* our Christmas. But in NCI Unit 1-C Block, Christmas 2020 was alive and well. Love, joy, and peace ruled and good tidings of great joy came to every man --- scripture fulfilled for this holiday! Once again, MLM, faithful friends and the NCFMP men rose up to the occasion. Ask them how they were able to do it, they will tell you it was a "Jesus "Thang", you got to know Him to understand it". No King, no Grinch, and no COVID could stop them! This edition is full of testimonies that were impacted 2020 MLM Christmas Party.

## **Convinced**

**By Dayton Pitter**



My name is Dayton Pitter aka Daylah, I have been labeled by the state of North Carolina as one of the highest ranking "Bloods" in

North Carolina. I have been incarcerated for 18 years, most of which has been in "close" custody status. After completing the STG "security threat group" program, I was transferred to my first medium custody camp, Nash Correctional, where I have remained for the past 3 years. This has been a different experience to say the least allow me to explain; I am in the block where they brought in the seminary program men and this past holiday really showed me something that really did not think was possible --- it showed me that men from all ethnicities, religions, organizations, or groups can coexist together and flourish. This past holiday really showed me the benefits of the NCFM program. Because one of the brothers, James Benoy, MasterLife Ministry, and the Field Ministers sponsored a special event for everyone in the dorm. I got "caught up" in the midst of it all. I am convinced, these guys will bring some positivity to this prison environment. With the world with

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From MLM (A Jesus Thang) .....	1
From "The Yard" (Convinced) .....	1
Nash News Reporters .....	2
NCFMP.com .....	4
MLM Christmas Party: Testimonies .....	6

### INDEPENDENT ARTICLES

TIME WITH TIM .....	9
A LITTLE IRON .....	9
STILL IN THE FIGHT .....	10
MOMMA ALWAYS TOLD ME .....	10
TIME TO REFLECT .....	10
WHY NOT ME? .....	10
GENTLE INSTRUCTION .....	10
MASTERING LIFE IN PRISON CHAPTER 4 "AM I A HYPOCRITE? ....	12
NEWS AND RESOURECES .....	15

the way it is now with COVID-19, racism, police brutality, and us being here together doing positive things and shine a light on

the dark world --- peace.   
Daylah  
.....

# NASH NEWS REPORTERS



## The Day That I Went Away By Durwood "Disco" Thorpe

On Thursday December 24, 2020, I left Nash

Correctional for a whole day! This was one of the most extraordinary days I've had locked up in a while. Before my mom died back in 2015, she made sure that she would come see me every week. Those visits were good, healthy, and needed. Since she passed away, a day is just a day. Then COVID-19 came and made days worse than what they were. Gloom set in, frustration set in, tension was at its highest.

But for 24 hours, that just went away. Keep in mind that I'm a Muslim and in my religion, Islam, we don't celebrate Christmas. I celebrated a day away from Nash, away from COVID-19, away from all problems. The seminary school (James Benoy and others) for the past 4 years have gotten together and created a full day of activities for the guys in their block to enjoy. I had heard about this project in the past and how everyone had so much fun for that one day. So now, for the first time, I got to experience it firsthand. And it was off the chain (in simple terms – it was great). I got a chance to play Bingo, a game that I had not played in ages. I got to play Trivia Challenge. This game was introduced to Dash by Caddell Kivett and Mark Mercer. Then there was a Talent Show afterwards in which the guys showed off their talents, be it singing, rapping, dancing, speaking spoken word or two testimonials that had guys (yes us tough guys) shedding tears. To end the night, there was like an award show that recognize guys for their actions in an everyday setting. I even recognized (along with Fred Washington) as being that wise old man that would give you a good advice if need be.

However, what really got close to my heart, was the last presentation of the night. James Benoy presented me with his 15-year-old Army hat. We both collect hats that we have done time with (mine an old hat of 22 years). These hats are monumental, because first, they don't issue them anymore and secondly, it just something about old hats that me and Benoy just never could give up. Oh, and

for the record, his is in way better shape than mine.

So, you say, what's so special about this day? This day was special because everything, and I do mean everything, was organized by the guys on the block (no staff involved). If it wasn't for count time and chow call, you wouldn't even know they were there. It was a wonderful experience for me. Thank you Benoy, Thank you Kivett, Thank you Mercer, Thank you everyone who had a hand in this project (those who helped along the way) for a wonderful day away from Nash.

### Durwood "Disco" Thorpe, Nash

Various scripture passages from KJV, NKJV, ESV, NASB, LIVING BIBLE, and others

## "Take That", Prison! By Caddell "Monty" Kivett



For the last four years, on Christmas eve, I've been blessed to be part of something that has brought joy, inspired change, built bonds between men with diverse backgrounds and established a new tradition right here at Nash Correctional. The new tradition: all-day block party for 80 men.

This started in 2017 when the inaugural class of the North Carolina Field Minister Program arrived at Nash from different prisons across the state. The men of the program had signed on, seeking a 4-year degree from the newly conceived prison Bible college, the only one of its kind in the southeast.

Among those men was James Benoy, and with him, he brought a Christmas Eve celebration – a tradition he had established years before as a part of a MasterLife discipleship program. At Nash, James recruited men for different tasks during the celebration. Volunteers would decorate, cook, serve food, snacks, and drinks, give out prizes and perform other duties – a wide range of ways to be involved in service of their fellow men. When James told me there would-be trivia involved, I found where I fit in.

Anthony Smith also arrived at Nash about four years ago. He too is a student in the Field Minister Program. Anthony is an

upcoming playwright who uses his story crafting ability to spread a positive message of love and unity. He has written several plays since arriving at Nash, productions performed for the entire camp. As well, he has been a major contributor to the last four years of Christmas Eve block parties. Anthony's contribution? He's hosted an all-inclusive talent show where men of the block could share their talents, passions, appreciation, and aspirations with others. Some men sang, while others danced, and some simply shared what was on their hearts. But each man who stood in front of their peers – shared themselves. Anthony would come to call this segment the *Christmas Café Talent Show*.

So, here is a typical Christmas Eve rundown: Early in the morning men would decorate the block and tables with holiday décor. A team assigned to cooking would prepare a meal for the entire block. Free coffee and snacks would be available all day, at a table setup near the microwave. Also, at noon, drawings for prizes started, and that went on every 30 minutes, lasting all day. Bingo cranked up next with a wide range of prizes for those who took part. This year's bingo was called DeLah (Mr. Pitter) and James Benoy and was the first example of the inclusiveness of the day. On Christmas Eve at Nash, men came out of the woodwork to get involved and serve their fellow man! Bingo was hugely popular, and we only took a break to eat and hand out drawing prizes.

After dinner (what the camp served) we drew names for random seating for the remainder of the day's events. Over the years we've discovered that random seating found guys that might never get to know each other, now seated together to work as a team, for the team Trivia and Games, which would start soon.

However, before the team games could start T-Black (Jamaar Springs) had a message to share. With everyone's rapt attention he told the Christmas story (not the one with Ralphie, not the one with Santa) about the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. T-Black made it clear, to enter the Kingdom simply confess with your mouth. Along with the message, the team of cooks distributed the good meal: burritos!

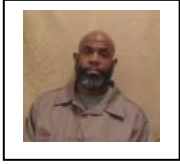
Now, with diverse teams in place, it was time for Trivia and games. For the last 3 years I have hosted this team event, along with James Benoy keeping score and announcing challenges. But this year we added a new host Mark Mercer. With



# NCFMP.COM

## Jesus in the Midst

By Jesse T. Bracey



Greetings, I want to say thank God for His mercy endures forever and His grace is sufficient. Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah! Men and Brethren, God is good and worthy to

be praised. We had our Christmas party here at Nash on Christmas Eve and it was a blast, glory be unto God. As you all may know I tested positive for the COVID on December 1 along with others, and the numbers piled up afterwards, but God. I experienced multiple symptoms, but God kept me through it all. Sadly, two residents lost their battle to this virus, and we will forever share our memories with them. As a community, we were galvanized and seeing compassion come to life was really amazing. I remember the night we tested positive, Bro. Benoy was told the Christmas Party may be off and understandably so, because at the time no one knew what to expect. However, we were able to come together and man did God show Himself in a major way.

I got up around 6:45 to find men working, cleaning, cooking, and coming together to construct Bro. Benoy's vision. The atmosphere may have been polluted with the virus, but the infectious grace, mercy, and the love of God was overwhelmingly more potent. Hallelujah! Some men were still feeling the symptoms, but that day, it was like we were lost in the moment. I can truly say that Immanuel "God with us", was manifested that day to the realization of many. I have been a part of many MasterLife Christmas Parties dating back to 2015 at Caledonia, but this one was made to be special, and special it was. The circumstances from the outside would conjure up thoughts of it being impossible to celebrate the birth of Jesus in the midst of precarious circumstances, but when Jesus is in the midst, all things are possible.

I would like to express thanks first and foremost to God for giving us the reason to celebrate Christmas, Bro. Travis and his wife, Bro. Benoy, all donators, supporters, and the MasterLife Family for praying for us. Without a collaborative effort from all of us, this great day would not have happened. Also, I have to say thanks to

our staff here at Nash for allowing this event to go on and bless so many. THANKS!

Finally, I want to say Happy New Year to all of you and to the church at Caledonia I send a special warm "I love and miss you dearly". Hello to Bro's Gizmo, Mr. Lee, Jolly, Luke, James "Elder" Garner, Greg, Tim Jones, Rodney Williams, Devon Gulley, Kenny Morris, Bro. Walt and Sister Lili, Mrs. Roberta Joshua, Bro. Warren Stephenson, Bro. Crane Jackson, Rev. Robert Farmer, Bro. Otis Quick, Bro. Roddy, Bro. Matt and all whom I may have served in one way or another. "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him" (Nahum 1:7).

**Love you in Christ, Bro. Jesse T. Bracey, Nash**

## Broadcasting Jesus With A Smile

by James Benoy



Hello to all my MasterLife brothers and sisters. I pray that God blesses you all, filling you

with His Spirit, and strengthening you in the inner man, as you navigate the storms and battles within this fallen world. Most of all, I pray that during all your struggles God will continuously remind you that "this too will pass": whatever battle you go into you will come out - whatever storm comes, it will go - every flu, cold, or COVID-19 virus will run its course. And the Christian must remember that, come what may, we will stand victorious at the end of it all.

In the meantime, I ask you, what are we [Christians] broadcasting to the world as we journey through COVID-19, lockdowns, election madness, government overreach, and injustice after injustice toward every group of people on planet earth?

What is the Christian broadcasting? Are we preaching the word of CNN and MSNBC? Are we helping CBS News spread the latest doomsday report? Are we preaching the "they say" message? "They say" this and "they say" that. Are we joining in with the cries of the worldly folks who expect man to fix it all? Or are we broadcasting what G-O-D says? Are you preaching what thus saith the Lord? Question: How many times have you responded to trauma and drama by saying "fear not?" God said "fear not"

some 365 times in his Word! If you want to broadcast something during these trying times broadcast that" FEAR NOT saith the Lord. Repeat what God says about it. Imagine a lighthouse in a great storm; a fire truck in New York during 9-11 attack; a police force during a dangerous hostage situation; a hospital during the flu season. What do these broadcasts during the calamities of life? Are they pulling out their 'woe is me' picket signs; their doomsday report; their divisive jargon? No! No! No! They are broadcasting safety, strength, shelter, hope, and relief for others. They recognize that trouble is a part of life, and they have a job to do in it.

Christian, you know that sin and brokenness are a part of living in this fallen world; diseases, viruses, and injustice is what it is; and according to God's Word, these things must happen and will grow worse. Therefore, why are you dismayed? What are you really broadcasting to the lost? I will tell you what you are broadcasting - that you are just as lost and confused as the rest of the world - you are captive by fear and do not believe that God is steering the ship, and all is well.

My brothers and sisters, God is in the lighthouse, God is in the firetruck, God is in the hospital, and God is in you! We must stop broadcasting how big the problem is and start broadcasting how big our God is. I am talking about Jesus Christ, the visible image of the invisible God, the one who all things were created by and for. The one who came, lived a perfect life, died on calvary's cross, who was buried in a tomb, who resurrected - on the third day, and has promised to return for all who put their trust in him for forgiveness of sin and eternal life. He will make things new - there will be no more sickness, no more dying, no more crying, and no more lying. We will not have to fight injustice; He will annihilate all injustice and right every wrong. So, trust Him today - you do not have to broadcast what the devil is doing or glorify the ungodly acts of the world - just broadcast the simple truth - Jesus will fix it; He is the solution, the Victor, the One who will right it all. Point them to Jesus and smile

**James Benoy, Nash**

**Nash  
Correctional  
MasterLife  
Christmas Party  
By Fred Washington**

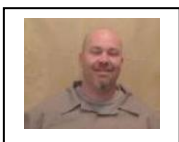


I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, praying that you had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The year 2020 will always be remembered by non-believers and believers alike as the year of the coronavirus, social distancing, mask wearing, family separation, sickness, and death. Yet! Jesus is still Lord, and He has restored most of us from the wages of sin. The block I am located in at Nash had 120 COVID cases over the Christmas and New Year holidays. Nevertheless, the God of the Christian worldview touched the hearts of the authorities here to allow MasterLife to have a social distancing Christmas party that started around 9 a.m. and ended approximately around 11 p.m. Hallelujah! Hence, believers and non-believers celebrated Christ's birth in prayer, testimonies, and a short recitation of the birth of Jesus. The most memorable joy I have in mental review of these events is watching the love, joy, kindness, peaceful coexistence of all the participants as we played trivia games designed for the prison population, watched the talent show and the excitement, surprise, happiness and joy that interrupted a year of corona quarantine semi-depression, as everyone in the block received at least one or more gifts. I give thanks to Jesus Christ's blessings from Heaven and the church, MasterLife, with Travis working in society and James Benoy's God given talent in administrating the development, organization, and implementation of the greatest celebration of Christly love to a mostly lost prison population. Today is January 6, 2021 and my MasterLife study group was still beaming with joy over the 2020 Nash MasterLife Christmas party. An old dog with new tricks (Jesus and the Word of God).

**Fred Washington, Nash**

## You Be Christmas

By Loren Hammonds



So, we had COVID-19 does that stop Jesus? I'd rather think surely not because He is God and is ultimately in control over all things.

This year has been a tough one with trying times to say the least. For the past three years I have been involved in every Christmas party here at Nash as MasterLife displayed God's love toward all. However, this year was most rewarding. Why? COVID-19 took a lot out of me. I felt death

creeping at my door and for the first time was truly scared. Yet, in those moments when I called out to God, I realized that He is the only hope anyone will ever need. Despite all this I just felt beat and wore out. Just did not feel like celebrating Christmas whatsoever, until James Benoy said something that ignited a fire in me. He said "Hambone, if you want to see Christmas, you got to be Christmas!" Everywhere I looked was people cooking, fixing tables by decorating them. Others were passing out cookies and coffee. Some were simply spreading the holiday cheer. With all the energy I could muster, God gave me the strength to get up, go to work and decorate two tables with my fellow brother Tim. Before long I started enjoying his company in the spirit of Christmas. Earlier I mentioned that this was the most rewarding of the MasterLife Christmas parties. Allow me to elaborate: T-Black started the night off with a powerful message on the birth of Christ, as I looked out, everyone was attentive to his very words. You literally could hear a pin drop. Before long others, who you would not otherwise see, got up and spoke, began to tell of how good God truly is to them. Yes, it is good to give away gifts and presents but the greatest gift of all is that of Jesus Christ our Lord. And this Christmas many told of how he changed their lives and spoke of Him. For that I say is The Reason this Christmas is so memorable and special. Thank you MasterLife family for your support. May God bless you beyond measure.

**Loren Hammonds, Nash**

## Overlooked: Even Now, Hope Exists

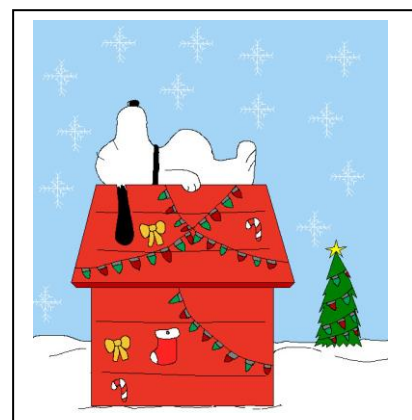
By Charles Anthony Ball



Even now, in the midst of a pandemic stretching around the globe, we had ourselves a Merry Little Christmas. Even now, in the midst of Unit One Code Red Quarantine, we enjoyed a Merry Little Christmas. Even now, in the midst of sicknesses and canceled events. We flourished in our own Merry Little Christmas. We thank the financial providers, from both within and without the prison. We thank the planners, organizers, participants, and package donators for all they put in. Above all, we Thank God, for without His goodness none of this would have been possible.

To my fellow brothers behind bars, I would like to point out a few points of Hope often overlooked in our telling of the Christmas story. Often, when we tell of the birth of Christ, we rush straight to Luke chapter 2. But in so doing, we miss much of spiritual benefit which proceeds. One example is the Song of Mary found in Luke 1:46-56. Notice in verse 48, Mary mentions her "low estate" (humble and poor) and also "all generations shall call me blessed". We as prisoners can relate to her "low estate", and when God performs miracles in our lives, we too are often called blessed. Likewise, in Matthew chapter 1, we often skip to verse 18 about the birth of Christ. Once again, we miss the hope in the genealogy of Christ. Ruth is found in His genealogy, and many know her story from the book of Ruth, yet most do not recall that as a Moabite, she was forbidden to enter the Assembly of the Lord (Deut. 23:3). Yet here she is. Matthew does not shy away from King David's sin, indeed he draws attention to it, by calling Solomon's mother, "wife of Uriah", instead of Bathsheba. King David coveted, committed adultery, then murder to hide his prior sins. Just prior to Ruth, Matthew lists Rahab, who we recognize as the prostitute from Jericho. Matthew's point is to show the reader that God works through men and women, Jew, and Gentile, and yes even us and our sinful pasts. So, let this Christmas and all future Christmases be a time of hope. Hope found in Christ Jesus, no matter who we are, where we are, or what we have done in days gone by. Hope. Even Now, Hope.

**Charles Anthony Ball, Nash**



MasterLife materials is copyrighted by LifeWay Press, Authors Avery T. Willis, Jr., and Kay Moore. Thank You!

# MLM CHRISTMAS PARTY TESTIMONIES

## Hesitant No More

By Jose David Rodriguez-Basquez



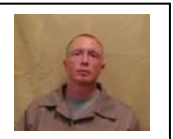
I was really hesitant about the MasterLife program when I first encountered the groups here at Nash. That hesitancy vanished when I saw

the level of love, care, and Christ-centered devotion found in the MasterLife sponsored Christmas party. For that one day, prison stops being prison. Instead, Jesus came and makes a group of weary, angry, and hopeless prisoners, and turns them into people willing to share their lives and open their hearts to each other. The Christmas party changes the narrative of prison and brings people here face to face with Christ. God be thanked and praised for what is done here.

**Jose David Rodriguez – Basquez, Nash**

## Beautiful Joy

By Anthony Butler



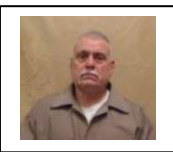
Even though we were quarantined; that did not stop/prevent the beautiful joy of Christmas from coming to us here at Nash.

Thank you for blessing us and for all the deep-hearted prayers!

**Always & God Bless, Anthony Butler, Nash**

## Appreciation

By Tim Phillips



On December 24, 2020, my good friend "Ben Wha" (James Benoy) invited me to a MasterLife Christmas Party and I kindly accepted. I had heard

of these parties before, but I wasn't sure this was for me seeing how I prefer to keep to myself and mind my own business. However, after more reassurance from my old buddy Wha, I eased on out of my cell to check things out. Once I got out there, I was glad I did.

Dayla and Wha kicked off the day with BINGO. Seeing how I haven't played

BINGO in 50+ years, it was fun, plus the prizes he gave to the winners were nice and I enjoyed seeing the guy's faces light up when they won. I was seeing a side of these guys I had never seen before.

That afternoon, "Mighty Maynard" or "M&M" (Mark Mercer) hosted a Trivia Contest. It turns out being old is an advantage when it comes to trivia and my team and I won the Grand Prize. I would have never guessed it possible! Later on, that night, we had food served and a Talent Contest, I ate so much and laughed so much my sides were sore the next morning. It was the best Christmas I've had in the 18 years I've been incarcerated.

Let me tell ya, my Ol' Buddy Ben Wha (James Benoy) and the guys from the MasterLife Program put together a Christian event that was second to none. It was obvious these guys had put a lot of work and time (with no help from staff) to make the event go as smooth and well as it did, not to mention the cost of such a grand event (thanks to MasterLife Ministry, Kyle Triplett, and others). It was very clear to everyone; these guys are hardworking laborers for the Lord. I highly recommend to everyone, if you get an opportunity to participate in a MasterLife Program event, jump on it.

**Tim Phillips, Nash**

## Doggone Good Time

By Ruby Carmon



The MasterLife activities I experienced here at Nash was the best time I experience since I have been in prison (14.5 years). The games like Bingo, Trivia, and the Talent show, was very enjoyable. It's amazing how men of every ethnic can get together in prison and have a doggone good, no, have a very good time. The trivia game was the best part for me. Every man strained the brain to answer a lot of good questions. "the cherry trees in Washington DC, what country gave them to the US?" they are one of my favorite trees. The talent show was very impressive. The talents in prison opened my eyes. No matter what line of work there is, it's in prison. Sooo amazing. I want to thank MasterLife for the exciting time of the holidays. The answer to the question (Japan).

**Ruby Carmon, Nash**

## Free For A Day

By Daniel Powell

My name is Daniel Powell, and I was in the 2020 MasterLife Christmas Party at Nash Correctional, Unit 1-C block. It was an unforgettable humbling experience for a lot of individuals because usually around the holidays it's like a roller coaster ride dealing with our thoughts and emotions being away from love ones and enduring our incarceration time. Especially since we are on quarantine from the pandemic affecting us. I just want to say Thank You to each and every person that helped decorate, host, feed, and entertain the masses of Unit 1-C block because you made me feel blessed regardless of my surroundings. Also, I want to give a shout out to those inside and out that helped this Christmas be worthwhile because you not only made it possible for us to be ourselves and obtain a peace of mind, but you also helped us be free for a day. Thank you!

**Daniel Powell, Nash**

## The Best Christmas

By Gregory S. Parker



I've been down for ten years now and most of it has been spent here at Nash Correction. The last Christmas I had on the

outside was in 2009, the last time I felt what Christmas was like. Christmas wasn't the same anymore year after year until I came across a family of Christians in Unit One C Block. Nine Christmases had gone by and they were all the same - the word "Christmas." A lot of us were moved around in Unit One due to Coronavirus that hit us pretty hard in December 2020, and some of us passed away due to that. This family of Christians gave me back what I had forgotten about Christmas, and I almost passed it up. I accepted the open arms, and it was the best day of all my ten years of being locked up. They had an all-day party for Jesus the day before His birth, a lot of fun games, prayer, love, and food. The family of Christians gave a lot of us back what we had lost in time, what Christmas really meant to us.

**Gregory S. Parker, Nash**

P.S. They gave me back Christmas, thank you! God is Good!!

## God Showed Up and Showed Out

By John Reese



I first want to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for blessing all the supporters and making this possible during the COVID-19 crisis that we are going through. I also want to

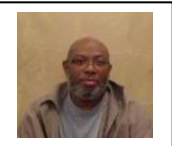
thank James Benoy for his hard work and dedication.

This Christmas was a very special Christmas. We were being locked down because we tested positive for COVID-19, but that did not stop James Benoy and the other guys that helped him. We threw one of the best Christmas parties I have ever seen. There was so much food, cookies, games, and fun; we didn't even think about what was going on around us or our problems - being in prison or COVID-19. It was a blessing seeing all the laughter and smiles on other guys' faces, seeing them enjoy themselves while being in prison and away from their family. God showed up and He showed out. I will never forget this Christmas. Thank you for making this possible.

John Reese, Nash

## Eyewitness

By Mitchell Robinson



My name is Mitchell Robinson, everyone calls me Mr. Pete. In all my 28 years of incarceration I have never experienced anything such as a

MasterLife Christmas Party. The love, fellowship, and the sharing really blew my mind. Over the years I always looked at Christmas as just another day until I met James Benoy. My mother used to tell me sometimes God works through people and this year I witness that because I was blessed to feel love and be a part of the Christmas Party that I didn't know existed in prison. Since being a part of the Christmas Party and being around MasterLife and the NC Field Ministers. I have experienced so much love that I have decided to join a MasterLife group and begin seeking the Lord. I am not all the way there, but a work in progress but people like Goode, Tony, and Benoy accept me. James Benoy I want to say thank you for MasterLife and making this Christmas one I'll never forget. To all the MasterLife

supporters I want to say thank you, God Bless and keep helping people like myself get stronger in God.

Mitchell Robinson, Nash

## God Didn't Forget About Me

By Antonio L. Ripley

My name is Antonio L. Ripley, and I attended the Christmas Party 2020 in Nash Correctional Institution, which was a blessing to be a part of. Some of the guys I knew while others I just met. I enjoyed their company and to be able to celebrate our Lord and Savior's birth. I was distressed because I tested positive for COVID-19. I was scared given I know I suffer with threatening cardiovascular problems, along with bronchitis asthma. However, being a part of such a celebration enriched my heart and it blessed my heart as well. I was able to leave COVID behind and enjoy the party. I was able to smile and I was able to enjoy the joy of Christmas.

I was able to share the joy to where the Lord had placed my biological family back in my life. I was adopted and all major help had died off before my beloved mother could bring everything to fruition. She went on to be with the Lord, so I was left with limited resources when it came to searching for anyone.

I never gave up and never stopped praying and finally on... the day before Thanksgiving, I was introduced to my biological family. My biological father has gone on to be with the Lord. However, my biological mother is alive and well.

I have two biological sisters and a host of nephews along with a niece. So, I had a beautiful adopted family who loved me and wanted the best for me. I never wanted for anything growing up and had all the love in the world. We had more than one could ask to be blessed with.

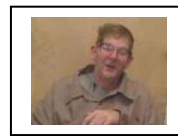
Now here I am blessed all over again to have my beautiful biological family enter into my life. I thought maybe this would never come to pass. But God didn't forget about me and I am grateful.

Now finally I have all the support in the world and I now have the help to help with my wrongful conviction. I am better than blessed. Thank You Jesus.

Antonio L. Ripley, Nash

## For You're Never Alone Because Yahweh Cares

By Charles Pilgrim



I know you're going through a really difficult time right now. But you can really be assured that Yahweh also knows about it too now. I wish

there was really something that I could do to make everything alright for you, but since I cannot really do that, I just want you to really know that I am praying for you now.

Sometimes we may really wonder why things like this happen in life, and I really do not have any of the answers. But I really do know this much now that Yahweh will not let you go through this by yourself, because Yahweh will be with you all the way through the good days and the bad days.

Yahweh will always be there when you need Him the most because Yahweh really wants so much to comfort you really in your time of need. Yahweh will always give you the hope and also the courage you need to carry on day by day. And Yahweh will also always give you the strength to handle whatever comes next!

And if there is ever anything I can really do for you, please let me know. Because I really want to help you in any way I can, so please remember For You're Never Alone Because Yahweh Cares! And so, do I!

Charles Pilgrim, Nash

## Never Doubted

By Richard Constantineau



COVID 19 hit Nash hard last fall. I tested positive on December 1 along with about half of our dorm. The staff

here were caught completely off guard and were ill prepared to deal with the situation, but we never doubted that God was in complete control. The virus took two guys from us, one in the first week and then Mr. Renfro on Christmas Day. Both had chronic health issues but that doesn't make it any less real. We were told that all holiday celebrations canceled but God provided a way. By the middle of the month most of us were feeling much better

and after being moved to isolation and quarantine areas three times, we were finally back in our places in C-dorm. Brother James Benoy and several brothers from the seminary began to organize our dorm Christmas party. It was terrific and nearly everyone helped decorate the dorm and participated in the various events. We began with Bingo at noon on Christmas Eve Day with door prizes then on to the Trivia Challenge that evening. Then the Talent Show later, including numerous testimonies lifting up Jesus and giving God the glory all the while.

This is my third year participating and being a witness of things that are possible with God even in prison. We should never forget that with God anything is possible. It is my prayer that this holiday celebration of the birth of our mighty savior spreads to other prisons including yours.

Thank you, God, for your unfailing love and abundant provisions.

**In Christ Jesus, Richard Constantineau, Nash**

**Masterful Moves**

**By Sharoid Wright**

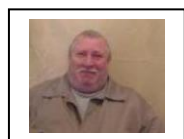


The Christmas party was a blessing. James Benoy and the fellas put it down. I enjoyed the bingo, raffle drawings, and trivia. I think it boosted the fellas' morale. To God be the glory, and I thank you so very much. And the ministry throughout the day was beautiful to me, the brothers preached Christ with just the right touch. I know it was just the masterful moves of the Holy Spirit.

**I send my love, brothers, Sharoid Wright, Nash**

**I Will Always Remember**

**By Wayne Cabiness**



Once in a while, things come about on this Christmas at Nash Correctional 2020, I was one of many that got to share a truly blessing. The MasterLife Ministry done that for me and my fellow inmates, it was a time of joy and made one feel like everything of being in prison was a bad dream for them hours passed by our minds was elsewhere we could laugh and be normal. I guess I'm trying to say. A lot of guys doing what no one, would think could

happen. The tables were full of inmates' games like Bingo went on for 5 or 6 hours with prizes that was given through MasterLife, it was a full day of fun from Talks, Trivia games and Talent shows to the whole block being fed. All this was the blessing I enjoy and when I think back in the years to come, I'll always remember this Christmas at Nash, I want to thank all the guys for coming together to give us a Christmas that will be remembered. Benoy, the founder of MasterLife, made the day happen after weeks of lockdown from COVID-19 until taking charge and bringing everyone together, I'm looking forward to what comes next. Anything is possible. I thank God and all His works through everyone. God is Good, always.

**Wayne Cabiness, Nash**

**Trying Harder**

**By Alfred Perry**



Well my name is Alford Perry and I can say that the Disciples' Cross, MasterLife is a book of knowing the Bible because if you don't know it,

MasterLife will teach you a lot more than you intended to learn because it has taught me more things that I never knew and it did that in the days we were having our Bible School, and because when I do something like homework that means that have to do it and get it right but a lot of things I can't get right because I just don't know the answer and I think I do but I don't get mad even when I get it wrong, that makes me try harder or better on the next one because I know God knows the answer and He teaches me all of them but in time I will know the truth then I will be happy. I mean very happy and this book has changed my life because I used to be a Bible reader and a writer until my friends told me we should make a Bible School every day after 6:00 pm countdown I said ok and it was just 3 of us at that time now it is 7 of us and I feel better too because I can learn more every day and we don't even worry about the time because I guess we stop when we end the day in the book but we don't try to rush that because it's something to learn.

**Alfred Perry, Nash**

**I Got It to Share**

I first would like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for upholding me through all my situations. Praise Jesus!

Brother Benoy ---

It is a blessing for Him to be here.

That is a light for the world to see.

Godly mans, lives for Jesus Christ.

I had a great time in the Lord with him.

Jesus is Lord of my life every day.

Jesus is with you all and behind you all the way.

Keep living for the Lord.

May Jesus fill your home with love and peace this Christmas.

And every day.

God bless you all. From your Bro in the Lord Jesus Christ,

**By Timothy Martin, Nash**

I wanted to write and thank you for the MasterLife program. I am currently in Maryland on the eastern shore for violation of parole. I was at Pamlico with a lot of great guys. Some of I went through MasterLife twice with Brian (Fish) Crouch as our leader. He taught me a lot and how to go on and teach MasterLife here in Maryland and even at my church in North Carolina. Things are so different here in Maryland prison. There is so much violence and hate. I still push through speaking of Jesus to anyone that will listen. I have had three cell mates so far in 4 months and each with a new situation to try and break through to them and let them know about Christ and what He has done for me. It is tough sometimes, but God has done so much for me that it is the least I could do to lift Him up and His kingdom. So far the Lord has led two of my cell mates to their knees and are leading them as He has for so many of us. Praise the Lord!

In closing, I would like to say hi to the many brothers I left behind at Pamlico. I may be gone from there, but my prayers are still with you all. Every brother there has touched my heart and I will never forget you. I will be getting out in June and you will be hearing from me. Thanks again for the program. It has changed me and given me a mission to spread our Lord's words.

**All love through Jesus Christ, Dennis Jackson, Maryland (from Pamlico)**



# INDEPENDENT ARTICLES TIME WITH TIM

## Jesus Brought Me Through By Tim Jones



I am still alive, and I am so very thankful, because even though I am prepared for death, I must admit that I love life and am not ready to experience the death journey until,???. At the start of the month of November the COVID-19 virus made its way here to Anson Correctional, and it is still taking many men and women down now six weeks later. Every dorm here has felt the effects of this virus and as is the norm when all of mankind faces a crisis beyond their control, the call for help has gone out to God. Of course, not everyone that have called out for help has called out in the name of Jesus, because the truth is, there are only a few of us still willing to stand in boldness to speak that name out loud in a world so very anti-Christ. I can personally testify that when I was suddenly awakened out of my sleep three weeks ago gasping -desperately for air as a result of the Covid-19 virus attacking my lungs that are already compromised by my C.O.P.D condition that makes breathing difficult on a daily basis, the name of Jesus was the only name that came from my lips! Many gods were called on here at Anson during our bout with this deadly virus, but I am so glad that the grace and mercy of God that is given to men in the name of Jesus was extended to us, because without it this virus would have been used to usher a lot of unsaved people into the arms of death. I am reminded of the story of Paul on a ship being brought before Caesar and finding himself in a crisis beyond his control. Here he was a prisoner on a ship with many men that were unsaved and afraid of the storm that threatened their lives, but Paul full of faith in God and his ability to keep him safe even in the midst of a storm used this opportunity to make known the God he served. Because the Lord had a mission for Paul and had told him that no harm would come to him, all those on board the ship were protected from harm as long as they stayed on the ship with Paul. Many times, we can find ourselves in similar situations where other people who don't really know God or have a true relationship with Him will reap the

blessing and protection the Lord gives us as His children simply because we share the same space or are in the same place as they are at the time. Of course, it's only because of His grace and mercy and for His glory that He does things like this and allows me the opportunity to express to the world just how awesome He is. This Covid-19 virus has been something unlike anything this country has seen in the modern era and the way it spread here at Anson really put us all on alert. We've had many have to be transported to the hospital and placed in ICU and sadly we've had a couple of deaths, but the name of Jesus has been proclaimed in the midst of it all. Yes, I am so thankful to still be alive after being so physically close to taking my last breath, and the blessing that the Lord bestowed on me I continue to make known to everyone here. I don't know all the other gods that were called on here during our Covid-19 battle, but I can sincerely say that I CALLED ON JESUS and He brought me through to continue my mission of making disciples and sharing with the world the message that Jesus saves! My prayers will continue to include all my brothers and sisters affected by his virus, but I encourage everyone to take every opportunity to name the name of Jesus because only through His name is there victory. I hope that everyone had a blessed Christmas and that you all will be safe and well in 2021. "Keep on Mastering life through being doers of the Word and not just hearers only".

**Love you all, Bro. Tim**

## A Little Iron

By Cory Thompson



Song of Solomon 2:17 "My beloved is mine and I am my beloved's"

I just think that is a wonderful verse, I wonder - could you say that?

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It has been a little while since my last entry, so much has been going on. I lost my wife earlier this year; she was battling stage 4 metastatic breast cancer and she passed on the operating table due to blood clots. A trying time it has been, but I'm making it through. No doubt she's run a great course and kept the faith while battling. She's my hero. Please keep our children and me in your prayers. But the Lord is seeing me through. You know I'm

just so thankful to God for saving me and loving me enough to die for me, cause man if it had not been for Him, who knows where I'd be. I praise God for the MasterLife staff, its program, and all our brothers and sisters who have been impacted by it. Before I share a little message of encouragement, I would like Bro. Tim Jones at Anson to know that Sir, I've been praying for you and trust me I read your articles quite often. I enjoy them, it's like being in the cell with you like old times. I enjoyed "the skunk." Amen. Keep up the work in faith; you've been a blessing to me, and I miss you - after all you're the one who introduced me to MasterLife.

But guys and gals there's a song I remember being sung at church, "Well I said I wasn't gonna tell nobody, but I couldn't keep it to myself what the Lord has done for me!" We are guilty of high treason if we don't share our testimonies of what the Lord has done for us in our lives. I ain't got time to be cute, cause like who are not afraid to go out as Christ told us and tell of the good news, you may never know who is willing to hear a word from you. It reminds me of seeing someone drowning and they're in need of a life raft and I've got one, but I refuse to give the help he needs to save him. Whenever I get the opportunity to witness, I do. God never disappoints. Sometimes Ol' Satan will try and keep us silent because he knows the impact our testimonies have. They're not for us per say, they're for other people. I'd rather obey God than fear what man has to say or think about me. David declared in Ps. 119:31 "I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O Lord put me not to shame." Just say that. I am not ashamed of the gospel. Everybody likes good news, don't they? Prov. 19:7 says, "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." I encourage you guys to stay in the Word, in prayer, in fellowship. What I'm hinting at is as Prov. 27:17 says iron sharpens iron. Each entry is like iron to me. You guys make me laugh; Benoy - Nash, Tim Jones - Anson, Mr. Fred Washington - Nash, Bro. Joaquin Melendez love your testimony, Bro. Derrick Pope - Harnett, AJ I just love November's issue with the drawings, wow what awesome talent. I can draw a mean stick figure myself, lol. Praise the Lord for all the articles and testimonies. I pray for so many of you all, if I miss one forgive me, God knows my heart. I am doing okay here at Tabor. This pandemic is affecting us here as well, but God is still so merciful

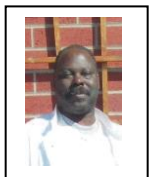
to me. This is just another wake up call. It is high time people tighten up the reins and continue to be about our Father's business. I pray that more of our family members and friends get saved. Time is short. Love you! Aren't you glad you're saved? Amen!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

**Cory Thompson, Tabor**  
.....

## Still in the Fight

By Robert Burgess



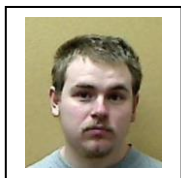
I send you greetings from CP Central Prison where I'm housed at right now. I didn't get busted back; my health has taken a turn, so I had to come here for treatments. I'm

still keeping God first in my life. I finally picked a book I got one year after we went through a MasterLife program, it's called "The Purpose Driven Life". All these years I've had it and one day I just started to read it, something I should have done a long time ago. I'm following the way they ask you to one chapter a day for 40 days. I got the newsletter and started reading the stories from Tim, Benoy and others I know and took some classes with and it made my heart glad to see them still in the fight and still helping others. Though there is no other way to go but being a man that God can use in places like this. When I think of you guys, I think of 1 Peter 4:9-10 in my reading. That's when I thought of you all the most. You are good men of God and I'm glad I got to know you personally, my brothers in Christ, my MasterLife brothers all ways. I thank God for you all.

**Yours in Christ; Bro. Robert Burgess, Scotland**  
.....

## Momma Always Told Me

By Cody Startt



Growing up I was a mess, I had the "do what I want" attitude. I wanted to fit in and be cool, so I started hanging out with people that was partying. Then I

started partying and doing drugs because I thought I was cool. I started getting into trouble and not listening to my parents or anybody with authority, I got sent to a couple of group homes. Still chose the same lifestyle when I got out. My mother always told me to turn to the Lord, like always ignored that subject. As I got older,

I was still acting the same way, do what I want attitude, with the drugs, and got myself in some serious trouble facing 30 years. But the Lord had me, he was watching over me because I only ended up with 11 years. It took me sometime but in 2018, I finally asked Him to be my savior. He has worked a lot of miracles in my life. The Lord is great. If you haven't asked Him to be your Savior. It will be the best choice you could make.

**God bless you; God is always here for us. Cody Startt, Marion**  
.....

## Time To Reflect

By Theodore Guyette



God is going to make it better. Thanks for the MasterLife Newsletter. It is heartwarming to hear what God is doing in so many people's lives.

It has been a real roller coaster ride these eight last months. Being under quarantine condition will make you or break you, to me it has been a blessing in disguise, if you will.

I was at Mountain View CI. Eighty percent of prisoners shipped to other prisons, COVID-19 precautions? Prior to that another prisoner was organizing MasterLife study group but I want to give a shout out to Brandon for his time and efforts in organizing the study group. I was quarantined at Southern Correctional for 14 days – it was a blessing. Where I could focus on my relationship with God. It seemed; God warmed my heart each day in quarantine.

I had time to reflect on scripture and approach some people and share my spiritual journey with them. I was able to pray for them and be truthful to them – during this time of reflection, I could feel the Holy Spirit's warmth, healing the hurt and pain that has been buried for so many years – since I was a young boy – to the present.

All I needed was the willingness to let go of the pain and hurt, so God could remove it from my heart.

Trusting in Christ (best thing I ever did) as my Savior and having faith in God's word. The one verse that led to this peace was James 5:16 - Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

I have meditated on the verse for years; God has finally brought it to my heart and given me peace. John 14:27 - **Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**

I enjoy MasterLife newsletter some very beautiful Art – the talents God bestows.

I will keep MasterLife in my prayer and all Christian brothers.

**Faithfully In Christ, Theodore Guyette, Mountain View**  
.....

## Why Not Me?

By Robert Simmons



For a while now I've found myself going through a lot and asking God "why me?". I become frustrated and often feel like

giving up. I pray but only hear silence. Silently, I cry out to God. I plead for help, but no help comes. I ask God why these blues. Everyone tells me "just be patient". How can you tell someone that, who has been incarcerated since the age of 15? I turn my radio on and drown them out. All trust God wait on the Lord. I didn't want to hear any of it. There was this song playing, the words said "why not me? I'm the perfect person to go through this storm! All this long I've been asking the wrong question. I should have been asking "WHY NOT ME"! as I look back through all the storms I was never alone. As I look back through the fire, now I see, all the while someone was with me in the fire. It was Christ. God never said he would keep the storms of life away, but He did say He would never leave me, and He hasn't. So, I welcome the storms. It's easy to praise God when things are good, but we must praise through our storms because the god we serve is mightier than the storm. I am the perfect person to go through the storm. THANK GOD FOR THE STORM!

**Robert Simmons, Harnett**  
.....

## Gentle Instruction MasterLife Brothers

The Lord blessed me by coming into my life and forever changing the course I was headed in 2012. Many challenges immediately came in the way. Friends, family, and the convicts I was surrounded by didn't take a liking to my newfound

faith. Honestly, it felt as if hell was being unleashed on me. But the years in this walk taught me a lot. Christ has taught me a lot. The old friends vanished, and God blessed me with brothers in Christ. My old worldly girlfriend left me, and God placed a godly woman by my side. As far as family, my mother got saved, my sister has a child with one on the way after being told she'd have none, and I Meet new brothers everywhere I go. God is good!

All of my growth is attributed to God and the faithful men He has placed around me. Men willing to invest time into me and teach me the Word. Not being afraid to tell me what I need to hear versus what I'd like to hear. These men have been few though. You see, we live in a time where we are more concerned about feelings rather than Truth and Righteousness. So, we avoid speaking out on sinful behavior. Even worse in some cases it creates a Pharisee complex where some believers are so far above reproach that they bypass these beaten and left for dead in a ditch. Yet there is a balance in all of this.

It is our Biblically given responsibility to "instruct those who oppose themselves" (2 Timothy 2:25). Now some people neglect the previous verses in this chapter and venture off the bark at the first sinning Christian they can find. But this approach is far from a means of edification and repentance on behalf of the person in the sinful state. Verse 24 of the same chapter says this, "And the servant of the Lord must not strive (be quarrelsome), but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient..."

Upon approaching any believer caught up in sin, we must first come with a spirit of meekness. Willing to be patient and above all seek godly edification in this endeavor. Ephesians 4 speaks much about this in our dealings with fellow brothers. We are each at different stages of our sanctification process. So, some things that come easy for others may not be so for someone else. Nevertheless, this instruction is imperative towards our growth.

Let's continue what Paul was telling Timothy.  
V. 25-26 "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves if God perhaps will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth. And that they may recover themselves out of the snare

of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

We must make it clear that "our" instruction doesn't change anyone. God is the one who changes us. Yet this doesn't take away from our responsibility to plant and water so He may give the increase.

An often response from one caught up in sin when one approaches them is anger and pride. Which may be why Paul expressed why one would have to be patient. I hear a lot of men throw out the common defensive phrase "The Bible says you can't judge me." Sadly, that is unbiblical. Even so my response is "I'm not here to judge, I'm here to encourage you." Love does cover a multitude of sins. Scripture says a lot about living a hold, blameless life. To the glory of God of course. But for some reason many stray away from that Truth. They choose to "overlook" sin or are simply too timid to approach someone laden in sin. But is not the purity of the Church of utmost importance? For when the world looks at us as the representatives of Christ, many times we are the cause for their opposition towards Christianity. I can't tell you how many times I've seen a new face in church in which faithful men have planted seeds in to only see them leave due to sinful behaviors in the choir or congregation. They leave discouraged or offended due to our disobedience. And this shouldn't be. Or to be turned away from church members who treat them with love behind church walls but neglect them in the yard where the real love and encouragement is needed.

In short, we need a Church family that cares. Who frowns upon sin but speaks out in meekness against it? Some people may still choose to remain rebellious and Scripture has a solution for that as well. But most of the time the flock is malnourished and stray away due to brothers (shepherds) who don't care.

I'd like to share a testimony on this.

Upon my arrival at Harnett, I was informed by a volunteer from the youth camp I began my time on that there was a fellow brother in Christ there at Harnett. I went searching for him and I've heard so much in the past of his love for Christ and leadership at previous prisons. I found that man, shortly after the gossip started. From "Christians" mostly. They told me of the "sins" this man was involved in, but I ignored them. I did as

compelled. I loved the brother, encouraged him, we worked out, fellowshiped, and prayed almost every day. And not once did I ever mention his sin. I prayed about it and God told me what I needed to do. Give him love, the Word, and be an example. Months passed by and this man was on fire again for Christ. The Lord's doing of course. But still some "Christians" were on the prowl trying to shame his name to me even after this man repented. It made me think how long this poor brother was neglected by the very men who were shaming him when they could have been encouraging him. This man before I left was leading a MasterLife course on the yard and I even got to see the brother give a deep testimony on the yard before I left. Praise God! Needless to say, what we do (or don't do) matters. What kind of believer are you? One who loves, instructs, and encourages? Or are you a timid individual, afraid to step out and do as you are called to do? Perhaps you are the Pharisee, too righteous to lend help in time of need? May I encourage you all to rise up and be the faithful stewards God called us to be. Gently of course. (2 Tim. 2:2)

**Anonymous, Harnett**



Hello to all MasterLife Group Leaders --- we need your testimonies from your group members and could you send me an update on how your group and location is doing. We need your input to encourage our brothers and lift up the Lord!

## MASTERING LIFE IN PRISON CHAPTER 4

If you have been following our newsletter closely, then you have probably come to the realization that we are publishing chapters from James Benoy book, *Mastering Life In Prison*. The introduction has been printed in our volume 10 issue. This includes his testimony, the history of MLM, Inc., and the purpose of MLM, Inc.

Chapter 1: "Change" was published in Volume 12. Chapter 2: "Strongholds and Worldviews" was published in Volume 13 and corrected in Volume 14. Chapter 3: "The Gospel" was published out of order in Volume 11. And now we are publishing Chapter 4: "Am I A Hypocrite?" in this Volume 15.

To recap where we have come from and where we are going in this book, Chapter 1 we examined the idea of "Change" and admitted that we desire change in our lives. Chapter 2 opened our eyes to the realization that something is blocking us from the change that we most need, which is Jesus. And what is blocking us is our belief system, my world view, my ideology concerning Christianity, God, and Jesus. We went on to understand that our belief system was developed by information that we received and believed, information taught to us by influential people. Then we came to the conclusion that information could be wrong. This leaves us with a faulty belief system. So, we were willing to re-examine the Gospel Message. Now, in Chapter 4, we will discuss an area that many Christians get "stuck" at. The question of the hypocrites.

### Am I a Hypocrite?

Joe quit coming to church because he couldn't stop sinning—he thought he was a hypocrite. Over some years, Joe turned into a scoundrel of a man, the meanest man in the neighborhood; even his own family knew that he was a sorry rascal. One day the preacher came to his house and asked, "Joe, why don't you come on back to church sometime?" Joe responded, "preacher, I ain't gonna be no hypocrite, I'll come back to church when I get my life straightened out!" Well, Joe died. His family went to the preacher and said, "preacher, will you speak at Joe's

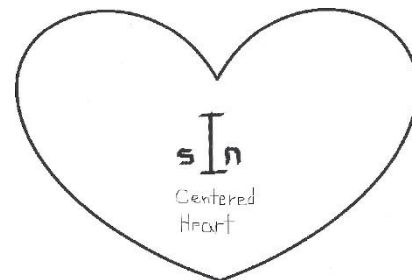
funeral? We don't have anything good that we can say about Joe." The preacher assured them, "I know just what to say." So, the service began, Joe's coffin was stretched out there in the church, the preacher got up and proceeded, "well folks, one good thing about ole Joe was he was a man of his word, he said that he would come to church when he got his life straightened out—here he is all straightened out!"

How many of you have ever felt like a hypocrite because of the sin in your life? Maybe when you were a new believer and first started going to church you would get out of church and do something or say something totally sinful. You tried to stop, but you failed time and time again. You began to think, "I must be a hypocrite." You are not alone! In fact, this issue might be a central reason for the decline in male attendance in the church today. Think about it for a moment: a man gets saved, begins reading the Bible, praying, and going to church; however, he cannot seem to "live out" his faith at home in front of his wife and children. He doesn't want to be a failure or hypocrite in front of his children, so in an attempt to save face he finds a reason to quit going to church. I believe the same thing happens behind these fences; men will get saved, begin reading, praying, attending church, they come back to the dorm and find themselves cussing, or arguing with the C.O., or watching a trashy TV program. They try to quit time and time again, but they cannot seem to get the victory. Meanwhile, "The Hammer" Christian is constantly condemning them and beating them with *"the Bible says this, the Bible says that, I don't understand why you keep doing that stuff"* On top of that, the prison's "Compromising Hustle-man Christian" comes to him saying, *"don't listen to "Hammer" he'll beat you up; you're good man, you can use your "cheap grace card" and live like you want to, just don't forget to ask God to forgive you before you go to sleep at*

*night."* Finally, there is the "Spirit-filled isolated Christian", who would never associate with you until you prove yourself, that you are genuinely worthy of Christian status. What does this new believer do? He's tired of the hammer, he doesn't want to be the compromising hypocrite, and he cannot get the discipleship that he needs from "Spirit-filled Christian." So, he puts the Bible in the back of his locker and gets away from it all. His defense is *"God know my heart"* and like Joe and many of us, he affirms that he'll go back to church when he gets his life straightened out.

There is good news—You are not a hypocrite! However, you are in real war with a real enemy, an enemy who comes to kill, steal, and destroy. Kill you influence, steal your joy, and destroy your testimony. GI Joe always said, "knowing is half of the battle." The illustration below will provide enough Biblical truths to help you understand what is happening to you; so, you can get over the hump and confidently advance forward in this Spiritual war.

This presentation explains: the nature of the man that we were before Salvation (natural man, slave to sin), what happened to us as a result (separated from God), the nature we possess as Christians (Spirit-filled man, slave to righteousness), the war that exists between the two (war), and the solution that brings [victory] over sins in our lives.



The heart represents our life. The Bible describes the nature of the person that we were before Salvation as the "natural man." The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they

are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). Furthermore, the "natural man" is a slave to sin and an enemy of God (Rom. 5:10, 6:20; Jam, 4:4). Before Salvation we love to do the things that our flesh desires. We live an "I-Centered-Life." An "I-Centered-Life" is a self-centered life, which is equivalent to a sin-centered life. It is all about I, me, and my; what I want to make my life happy. This part of us is referred to as "the flesh." Our flesh is our master and we live accordingly. Some of the things the flesh demands of us go unnoticed, however, the flesh demands control as soon as we wake up in the morning. Every morning when we wake up the flesh begins to cry out for control: wash my face, brush my teeth, feed me; it demands food, coffee, the TV schedule, and the newspaper. Most of these things are not bad/sin, however, they demand our immediate attention and distract us from any inclination towards God. As we live out our lives, we pick up a variety of fleshly desires, cravings, and ideas that become dear to our heart. We live by what the big "I" wants. The Bible confronts us with the reality that the I-centered natural person is unsaved, enslaved to sin, and an enemy of God (Rom. 1: 18-21; 5:10, 6:16; Jam. 4:4).

"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5: 19-21).

"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15:19).

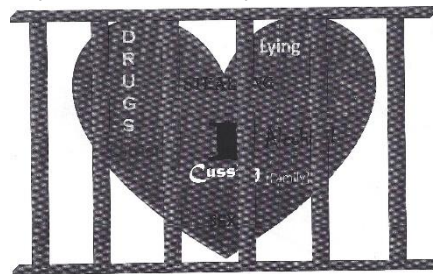


For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in

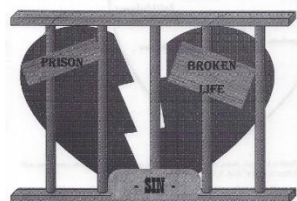
lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries (1 Pt. 4:3).

This was our life before we got saved: I-centered, sin-centered works of the flesh. Are you surprised to see family, career, and ministry in the heart of the sin-centered life? One may argue that they were "good people" who lived a selfless life. They may give examples of the good things they do or the sacrifice they make for their church, careers, and families. However, even these acts of self-sacrifice bring one a sense of self-gratification/self-fulfillment. They were done for self—not Jesus. The "I" is still in the center of this person's heart. Do you have anything that takes precedent over Jesus?

Needless to say, sin leads to prison. For some the prison is emotional, physical, and mental. However, for our context, sin led us to a literal prison. My sin led me to a physical prison of drug addiction and eventually to incarceration. Yet, although prison is a bad place to be, it helped me come to my senses.



Prison humbled me. Just as Jonah was trapped in the belly of the whale, I was trapped behind these bars. And like Jonah, it took me a few days before I broke down and cried out to God from my prison, Though I was broken and sick of myself, my mind continued to fight in agony. But finally, in my brokenness, I cried out to God from the depths of my soul. *God, I am sorry, please forgive me, you can have my life, take this pain from me, and give me peace of mind.*



Did I fix myself first? Did I get my life "straightened out" first? No, God forgave me, saved me,

and put His Holy Spirit inside of my heart right in the middle of my broken mess. I became a Spirit-filled child of God at that very moment!

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law" (Gals 5:22-23).



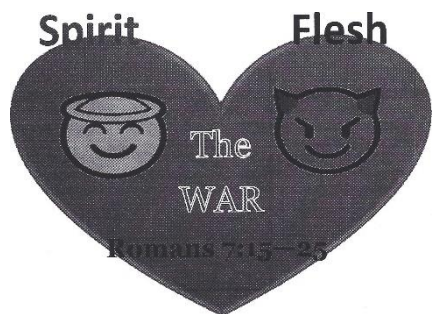
The awesome feeling of newness is amazing; the love, the joy, and the peace that floods the soul is indescribable. Like a dream that you never want to wake up from, However, if one is not properly disciplined/trained, it is difficult understanding how to maintain this feeling of a Christ-centered heart. This was the origin of Joe's problem; Joe thought that because he was a Christian now, that he would be able to stop struggling with sin. No one taught him what was going on inside of him, how to overcome, or how to maintain a Christ-centered heart Joe never learned "what's next" in his Christian walk. Joe never understood that there was a war being waged inside of him, a war between his old behaviors and the new nature given to him by the Holy Spirit. As a result, he did not know how to appropriate the power to overcome.

The fleshly desires do not disappear when we get saved. There is a battle going on in our heart. The nature of the Holy Spirit of Jesus and our flesh. Think of it this way: if I died and I could give you my spirit, then you would have my personality and your own personality living inside the same heart, using this illustration from perspective. the Holy Spirit has a personality. "The fruit [personality] of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness,

goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23). While the works [personality] of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outburst of anger, selfish ambition, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries... " (Gal. 5: 19-21). These two natures live within the same human heart and are at war with one another (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:15-25). The Apostle Paul describes this:

"For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will *not to do*, that I practice. Now if I do what I will *not to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—it is through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:15-25).

Imagine if you have two dogs that are constantly fighting one another; a good dog and a bad dog. You want the good dog to win the fight. What could you do to give the good dog the winning advantage? Simple, you feed the good dog and starve the bad dog,



In light of this illustration, how do we feed the Holy Spirit and starve the flesh? How do we get food into our heart? Through the senses we are able to feed and starve what is in our heart.

Our senses help us relate to the world around us. They also cause us to think and feel certain ways. In return, our thoughts and feelings affect our choices/actions. For example: if you look at a sexually explicit picture, that image enters through the eyes. If you do not cast down the image, it will cause the body to physically react. As a result, one could easily slip into sinful behaviors. A picture image on a piece of paper entering through the eyes can move your body to act out ---- a piece of paper!

Likewise, our hearing is another avenue by which we feed the nature of the flesh or Spirit. Have you ever been sitting in the chow hall eating and someone will start complaining about the food? Soon, others are joining in the complaining. Before you realize it, you yourself are participating in complaining. What you *heard* caused you to feel a certain way, a feeling that led you to choose to sin. All because of what you listened to.

I had an experience recently with music. One night I was lying on my bunk, flipping through the radio station, when a song came on, a song that I had not heard in years. The song took my mind back to an Apex Middle School dance in 1985. As I listened, I began to think of the girl I was dancing with and every detail of that night. Over thirty years have passed since that dance; yet the emotions that I felt from hearing one song on the radio caused feelings of guilt, shame, and regret.

Even the sense of smell, taste, and touch affects how we think and feel. For instance, you are hungry, and you walk into the house and *smell* something good cooking on the stove. You have been standing out in the freezing cold and come inside where you *feel* the warmth of a fire. The senses have a tremendous impact on our minds and emotions,

Now, not only have we learned that our senses affect our thoughts and emotions, but they also feed the desires of our hearts. Therefore, since we now

have a new nature who resides in our hearts "The Holy Spirit", we can learn to feed this new nature. What can we do in order to strengthen our Spirit-man? Listen to preaching, replacing secular music with Christian music, and substituting TV time with Bible study, are just a few ways to starve the flesh and feed the Spirit-man.

In conclusion, struggling with sin in one's life does not make them a hypocrite, it does prove that they are in the battle between the flesh and the Spirit; God has given us all the power needed to overcome this war. (Romans 13: 14; Ephesians 6:10-18; Romans 6:12-13). There are some things that we can do to fight this battle, however, we do not quit. Remember Joe: The defeated Christian is the one who quits.

**Adopt-A Lifer** is designed to help support a "lifer" (someone doing a life sentence or a long sentence) in his ministry, in prison. Basically, you can be a co-laborer to him and an encourager through letters and some financial support. Be a Brother, Sister, Father, Mother to these men.

**MasterLife** teaches some very important skills for witnessing. It also teaches the men to start a relationship with Jesus without the religious hang-ups; it simplifies Christianity, and it creates an atmosphere that brings the church men and lost men together, thus tearing down barriers.

**Mastering life** in all areas of bible study, scripture memory, fellowship, witnessing, serving, behavior, relationships, the church, the community, the world.

**MASTERLIFE MINISTRY, INC.**

TRAVIS MILEUR  
PO BOX 21

PRYOR, OK 74362-0021

[MasterLife.Ministry@gmail.com](mailto:MasterLife.Ministry@gmail.com)

[www.MasterLife-Ministry.org](http://www.MasterLife-Ministry.org)

# NEWS AND RESOURCES

1. Art incredible contest will not be held due to the lack of entries. There must be a minimum of 10 entries for us to proceed. We will hold over any art that has been donated until we receive the minimum number of entries.
2. North Carolina Field Ministers: according to the latest reports, the NCSMC senior class participants will not graduate in May 2021 as first expected. Due to COVID-19 outbreak at Nash Correctional, the final semester has been postponed until the fall. This will leave them finishing in December 2021.
3. In addition, the senior class has been informed that they will be deployed in groups of 4-6 men. Their projected prison assignments will be Polk, Foothills, Piedmont, and Warren Correctional.
4. MasterLife Ministry, Inc. hopes to print a special edition newsletter from some of the NCFMP men. A newsletter that will set the record straight as far as who they are as NC Field Ministers.
5. What's up with those tablets?
  - We cannot confirm when the tablets program will be implemented statewide. A GPL company spokesman predicted within 2 years, that statement was made July 2020. Although there has been no indication or rumor of cancelation of the program, we must keep in mind that this is a pilot program. And a pilot program can be canceled easily. Nevertheless, the inmates appear to be enjoying themselves, with the tablets, especially since many are receiving stimulus checks.
  - So, what do tablets do? They have several functions. GTL phone function that comes with a free pair of headphones with a microphone, a messaging system, game apps, books, music, religious apps, and even TV and movie apps. Thousands of movies and a full TV programming.

- Although there are several free functions, for the most part it is expensive. They charge by the minute, 3-4 cents/minute. But spending \$5-\$10 a day is easy to do.
  - There is much to be said, positive and negative, about the tablets. I'll stick to the positive. For me the greatest benefits are: I can communicate with my family without having to argue and fight in the wall-phone line. Finally, I do not have another inmate controlling what I watch on TV. I can choose for myself. 😊 That's worth whatever the cost!
  - As for the state's benefits: Income for operation, they have a new babysitter, they can use it for behavior modification, and disciplinary action.
6. Stimulus checks: Most of us know that inmates are receiving stimulus checks. \$600 to \$1200 checks have been received by many. If you have not received yours yet, it is because the paper forms through the snail mail system are backed up terrible. What should you do if you have not received your payments? The IRS has instructed anyone that has not received their checks to file it on the 2020 tax returns 1040. On line 30 you put the amount \$1800 if you have not received these checks. If you use the paper form and snail mail system you might be waiting a long while, so if at all possible, you might get someone to file it online for you. But first have them create you an email. Second, put the mail on the tax return and then fill out your tax return and submit them. The email enables the IRS to accept your claim and gives you a projected date of delivery of the check, they will let you know by email in 24-48 hours when the check will be sent. The person filing for you must have your name, SSN, date of birth, and address to mail the tax return. Make sure you trust this person that you are giving this information.

## Corrio Messaging

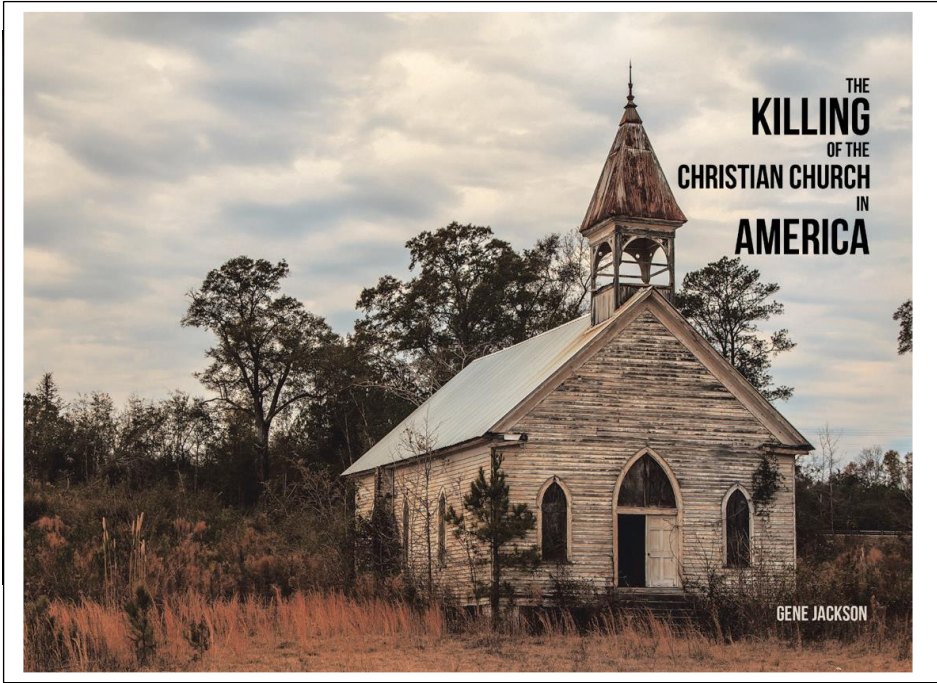
More than two million adults in the US are incarcerated in federal and state prisons, county jails and detention centers. Half of all prisoners lose touch with their friends and family while in prison. This is not only bad for their mental health but it can be devastating for their families (especially those with children) and friendships. The problem is fundamental inasmuch as prisoners are generally at odds with the daily schedules of their families and friends which makes staying in touch really difficult. Moreover, family and friends can't even call an inmate, never mind leave messages. And technical restrictions make it impossible for inmates to access outsider voicemail. Our service means that they can exchange voicemails and text messages with their families and friends in both directions, drastically reducing the amount of worrying and stress on both sides. As a result, ties with families and friends are strengthened and the prisoner has stronger family and social ties when they are released and are much less likely to reoffend. Corrio Messaging, our launch service, is a voicemail, text and email messaging system for inmates, their families and friends. Each inmate is given their own phone number to call to get voice and text messages from family and friends. **In the future, needed services such as money transfer and mental health/crisis counseling will be added not only as a compliment to Corrio Messaging but to take full advantage of the communications platform Corrio Messaging is built upon.**

Corrio Messaging effectively eliminates frustration and stress of schedule conflicts caused by the differences in real-life schedules of inmates and their families and friends but retains the personal and intimate nature of a phone call. This is especially important for children with incarcerated parents.

Corrio Messaging does not replace or interfere with existing inmate telephone system (ITS) infrastructure but rather, works in conjunction with it and like any call from a prison or jail, is carried on the public switched telephone network (PSTN). All existing inmate telephone system (ITS) security protocols and recording are untouched and in fact, are enhanced by reports specifically designed by Corrio to give corrections officials and jail administrators surveillance measures beyond call recording and throughout the national Corrio Messaging network. Moreover, the Corrio Messaging system has numerous built-in safety and security restrictions and options designed to prevent misuse of the system.

<https://corriospc.org/>

Please look up Brother Gene Jackson's new book!



The Gift – Kenny Whitley

**Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
PRYOR, OK  
Permit # 8**

**MASTERLIFE MINISTRY, INC.**  
PO BOX 21  
PRYOR, OK 74362-0021  
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED