



October 2019,

Dear Supporters, Volunteers, and Friends of Life's Key Ministry,

I've decided to dedicate the entire letter this month to a single inmate response. It came to my desk with the most recent batch of mail, literally as I was deciding which responses to include. I think it is a fantastic representation of the type of person this ministry aims to serve. It's not a letter of appreciation. It's not a letter of Christian victory. Rather, it is an honest account of struggle and a cry for help and understanding.

One of the very interesting things is that this is not a new student. He has done more than most, completing 63 courses over the past 3+ years. Not only that, he has done extremely well, averaging 94%! And yet only now did he feel led to open his heart to us. He has the knowledge. What he needs now is some direction and encouragement, which we will provide in the form of a personal response and prayer. How humbling it is to be given this task from the Lord! We do not take this responsibility lightly.

“If the Lord delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm;  
though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand.” - Psalm 37:23-24

*“Good day all. I've been wanting to write to you all for a while but keep putting it off. As I do your Bible study, I try to answer your thought questions on the back, but most of the time what's going through my mind is something way off track. So this is the reason for my letter today, to give you all an idea so you can try to help me in these subjects. I'll try my best to get my point across.*

*I'm doing the lesson 'Preach the Word' and it got me thinking. How can I preach if I still have sin? Let me explain. I can't break the cycle. I still have anger, hate, and retaliation. The way the correctional officers are and how crazy the law is really makes me hate all law enforcement. And for anger, I just lost my mom back in March, so now both of my parents are gone. To make matters worse, my own blood (aka my children) have rejected me. I write to state how sorry I am but get no return letters. And when I sleep, I still think about my crime, and not in a good way. In an evil way. I try to re-enact my crime to see if there was a way that I could have gotten away with it. Everyone tells me to pray and talk it over to God, but I have, HARD, and every time I try to close my eyes, one of the three subjects comes up. Anger, hate, or retaliation.*

*I have 10 more years to go and I can say I'm no better off than when I first got here. I hate living like this, but I don't want to get out and act out and come right back in. Without family support, I have no one else to talk to about some of my mental health problems (anger, hate, etc). I'm not sure if I should try to work on one at a time, but to me they are all the same sin. I feel like a hypocrite! How can someone see the light when they live in the dark?*

*I feel so low that I have even given up on personal health. I live as a don't care type of person, unsure how to turn it around when everything around me is dark. And before you all say God has the answer, ok true, but how can someone know the answer if he can't hear God speak? I know that you all are not mental health doctors, but something told me to write to you, so maybe you have something for me to help me get back on track. I also know that you are not here to have pen-pals, but all I'm doing is answering your thought question a little longer!! So if you wish to reply, great. If not, I understand as well. Thank you.” - Michael (New York)*

For HIS Glory,

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