

WHY ME? HELP AND HOPE FOR THE HURTING: FACTOR THREE

We Reap What Christ Sowed – The Cross/Chapter Six: APPENDIX C (A PARABLE)

Imagine a courtroom occupied by a just judge and a criminal who is guilty of behavior that is worthy of death. The end result of the interaction is a sentence on death row in a large penitentiary where everyone is awaiting the same fate. The guilty individual isn't there for long before he realizes that the warden of the prison is more corrupt than any of the inmates. This makes life in that institution anything but easy. In addition to the human element, the accommodations are less than luxurious, the food is mediocre at best, with the specter of death creating an atmosphere of gloom and doom throughout.

Suddenly one day, an announcement comes across the PA system. The governor of that state has proclaimed a pardon for every prisoner on death row. The only requirement for experiencing it would be a formal acceptance of the offer. Some respond with laughter, thinking the proposal is too good to be true. Others deny the need of it, refusing to believe they are guilty of any crime. Still others reject the offer because they deserve to die and believe they are unworthy of an acquittal. But a small minority of the inmates accept the governor's gracious gift. However, upon acceptance, they learn of a contingency. Even though they are no longer on death row, they must serve a sentence in the prison proscribed by the chief executive himself. Only then will they be given a complete release from their imprisonment and experience the fullness of the freedom contained in their forgiveness.

They are now faced with the responsibility of coping with life in the penitentiary with all its negatives, as pardoned prisoners who are awaiting their release. What a difference! They now view their fellow prisoners who haven't yet accepted the offer with compassion, doing everything possible to persuade them in making the right decision. The evil warden no longer has the same influence over those who are looking forward to their freedom. In anticipation of that day, their cell doesn't seem as small and the food tastes good enough. While under no illusion about the prison being a palace, each pardoned prisoner possesses the incredible assurance of no longer being on death row. As a result, all of them are ready, willing and able to make the best of it, until they finally experience their freedom, in all of its fullness.

THE REMAINDER OF THIS STUDY IS DEVOTED TO HELPING EVERY PARDONED PRISONER
"MAKE THE BEST OF IT."

Prior to the next major section of our study: "Why Me? Help and Hope for the Hurting;" which will consist of "Three Promises That Encourage the Hurting;" we will take a six-week break, for the purpose of sharing a four-part exposition entitled: "For The Time Will Come." That will be followed by a two-part study, entitled: "The Remnant Reformation Resistance." My hope and prayer is simply this: that many of you will eventually find it to be a blessing (Isaiah 41:10-13).