

OUR FATHER'S PERSISTENT LOVE MINISTRIES, INC.

LIFE TESTIMONY OF
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"WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT"

Greetings my friend,
I must begin by saying that what you are about to read is a true story and one of shocking proportions. The title is..."WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT?". You will see how God, in His love, reached down into the deepest pits to bring a wretched sinner like me to the saving faith in His Son Jesus Christ. As I share with you, my friend, I pray that God would search your heart through His Word and that you also would come to know the saving faith in Jesus Christ. I never thought I'd be where I am today; none of us can ever really be excluded from the theoretical question..."WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT?".

As a boy growing up, I had a father that was not a church going man, yet he had strong morals. My father was a strong role model. He always taught me how to do things around the house. If anything needed to be fixed, we "didn't" call the repairman. No, no! We got out the tool box and learned how to be the repairman. I remembered clearly though how I didn't want to learn how to work. I understand now what my Dad meant when he said that if I want to be somebody, I had to learn how to work (electrical wiring, brick masonry, carpentry, etc.). The Word says..."Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6). My father was a mechanic and the kind of man who sought independently to take care of himself. The Word teaches us that we need to..."Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path." (Prov. 3:5-6). As I previously mentioned, my father didn't know the ways of God, but he still raised me to know right from wrong.

As I entered my teenage years, I began to rebel against my Dad. Don't think for a minute that he spared me the belt...He didn't. God's Word says..."He that spareth the rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him diligently." (Prov. 13:24). You would think that I would have learned a lesson or two from those spankings, but nooooo... As soon as the welts and the pain went away, I'd get right back into trouble. My father was very strict and didn't want us out on the

streets late at night. So I began to sneak out of the house anyway. The Word says..."Do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good character."(1 Cor. 15:33). I didn't want to hear that. I wanted to do my own thing. I knew that I would have to pay the penalty when I got home. When God calls "us" home, there is also a penalty of eternal damnation to be paid for our sins and choosing to do our own thing. Jesus paid the price for us. God's Word says, "...His(Jesus') visage was marred more than any man..." because..."He was wounded for transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."(Isa. 52:14b, 53:5-6).

Soon after that, I began getting high on weed, started drinking, and partying on a more frequent basis. My father wasn't aware of this, and I don't even want to think how broken my backside would have been if he would have found out. But..."WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT?...that there were a pair of eyes watching over me, and are also watching over you even now. God's Word says..."Nothing is hidden from God's sight, but everything is laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give an account."(Heb. 4:13). Even though my father could not punish me for my disobedience, because he wasn't aware of it, God knew and punishment was on the way. My father would warn me of the consequences if he caught me doing drugs, but I continued to use them because I believed I would never get caught. I wonder...do you think you will never "get caught" for your sins? Well, I was wrong, and at the age of 16 I was put in jail for auto theft. God's Word says..."He that being often reproveth hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."(Prov. 29:1).

After eight and a half months, I got out and was really terrible. I thought that because I had been in prison I was cool. When I was released, my father got transferred in his job and we moved to North Carolina. I couldn't get back into school so my father told me to get a job...but what did I do? I began to break into houses! This put a terrible strain on my father who was desperately seeking to establish himself as a good citizen in a new neighborhood and not having his oldest son breaking into houses. God judged me again and I got arrested and did another 2 years but got out again. My father got me a place to live and it wasn't even 3 months later and I was back breaking into houses again! During all those burglaries, I could have easily walked into someone's house and gotten blown away, but..."WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT?...that God even watches over us even in our sin. His Word says..."Oh give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good, for His mercy endures forever."(Ps. 136:1).

This time the judge gave me 4 years and once more I got out and my father, as always, was there for me again. I still sought to do my own thing and began to get high again, drink, run around with women, cheat

and steal. God's Word says..."The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."(Jer. 17:9). "Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and madness is in their hearts while they live and after that they go to the dead."(Ecc. 9:3)...and oh how I can testify to you today that I was on my way to the dead!! Where are you on your way to? God declares..."We all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God", and that "the wages of sin is death"...BUT..."the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."(Rom. 3:23, 6:23).

His word had me pegged and for the next ten years, I would be in and out of prisons, but ..."WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT?"...that I would still be here today to tell you about it! That in itself is a miracle of God's Grace in Jesus! The truth is that I never knew the truth about what a sinner was. All I knew was that I wanted to please myself and as long as Willis got what he wanted, it was okay, and the heck with everyone else. Little did I know that "I" was the one on the way to Hell, where God's Word says..."their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."(Mark 9:42-48). Well, as I said, to hell was where I was going. Not only had I broken man's law and been punished, I had broken God's laws and was awaiting His eternal judgement. God's Word says..."But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."(Rev. 21:8).

But God knew something I didn't, and..."WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT?"...that all those years that I was in prison, God was preparing me for His eternal kingdom. I remember now, all the times that I was locked up and how God would faithfully send His servants throughout the week and on Sundays to sow His Word into my heart and that He could eventually, to His glory..."reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." All those years I was going back and forth to prison, God was planting His Word in me so that on March 5th 1995, He could give me eternal life in His Son Jesus Christ! God had sent Jesus, 1900 years before I was born, to pay for all the sins I had committed. I have good news for you also. Whoever you are, and whatever you have done, you too have sinned sometime along the way. The good news is that Jesus was crucified for you and bore your sins upon the cross...died and was buried...and He rose again from the dead that you might repent and receive forgiveness also. God's Word says..."without the shedding of blood there is no remission (of sin)."(Heb. 9:22).

On Dec. 6th, 1994, I stood before a judge and received a 50 year sentence with a 20 year stipulation for a number of armed robberies and carjackings. During this time, I was a beat down person. Outwardly, I seemed to be holding up well, yet inwardly God was breaking me. A couple of days before Christmas of "94", I remember a rather gleeful fellow with a warm smile upon his face come to my cell

with a bowl of food. I thought nothing of it until he asked me to go to services with him. I said that I would. I remember after a couple of more times with him asking me in the yard, I finally went.

The best way I can put this is that God had that day set aside for me. That was the first day of the rest of my life, because all of the Word He had placed in my heart through His servants all those years in and out of prisons had finally paid off!! There was a bishop who preached a sermon and once it was over he asked if anyone wanted to receive Jesus in their heart. At first I didn't move, but then I stood for prayer and the Bishop pointed right at me and told me to come over to him. So in obedience to the older gentleman, I went to him and asked Jesus to come into my heart. Oh my friend..."WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT?"...that joy and peace could ever be possible and "IN PRISON" no less! And..."WHO WOULD'VE EVER THUNK IT?"...that for 30 years of this poor man's life, that God would have cared for me in that..."while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for me?"

My friend, that same gift is for you today, "for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God"(Rom. 3:23). I urge you today to put you trust in the Savior Jesus Christ. It's been quite some time since I put my faith in Christ, and I have watched dozens of brothers put their faith in Him and receive new life. The Word says..."If any man be in Christ he is a new creation, behold the old is gone and the new is come."(2 Cor. 5:17). Do put your trust in Jesus. He is more than enough! He was sent just for you, my friend. The Word says..."This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."(1 Tim. 1:15). Repent and turn from your sins and say this simple prayer with me in your heart...

Oh God, I have messed up my life beyond repair and I don't know how to get myself together. Time after time I have tried to do what is right, but have failed. I confess, oh God, that I am a sinner and I believe you sent your Son Jesus into the world to save sinners. I need to be saved. So by faith I receive your Son into my heart as a free gift. I receive the Holy Spirit to teach me and guide me. I repent of all my sins. In Jesus' name...Amen!

YOU TOO?

WHO WOULD'VE EVER "THUNK IT?"...

If you prayed this, begin to read the Bible, it is your food. Read these verses and be assured of your salvation: 1 John 5:11-13, Romans 10:8-10. True faith believes, trusts, and acts on God's Word.

P.S. Please feel free to write to me. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have and I love to encourage people and to share...

God bless you!

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Praise the Lord!