

FREE Prison Ministry Inc

Faith Resources Empowering & Encouraging the incarcerated

July 23, 2025

Dear friends,

Greetings once again! "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ" (Eph 1:3 NIV). We hope this letter finds you well and rejoicing in the blessing that is yours in Christ Jesus, our Lord. God continues to provide for the ministry with the needed funds and resources to serve you. We received 33 boxes of books in the past week! We have a fundraiser this week and we know God will provide for our every need.

For the newcomers, you should receive an Unavailable Book List each time you order. You can use this list to update your catalog. You will have a better chance of getting what you want on your next order if you do that. You can order once a month. There's typically still a lot of books available several months after the catalog's release, so we want to encourage you to order monthly.

We hope you will find something in the catalog that will strengthen and encourage you on your journey of faith. Be blessed!

From Jeff:

My grandson has become interested in chess. He lives in another state, so I have been sharpening my skills with a Chess app on my phone. The app offers daily puzzles which present game situations and you must determine the right moves. I am not a novice chess player. I can beat the intermediate bots the app challenges me with most of the time. But the puzzles sometimes require me to sacrifice my most valuable piece to win the game two or three moves later. I cannot see the path to victory. I must trust that app's game plan is in my best interest.

The title of the puzzle today was "Win the Race that Matters". I think the apostle Paul would say "amen" to that. He used racing imagery on multiple occasions (2 Tim 4:7-8; 1 Cor 9:24-27). The Christian walk is a grueling race. Jesus said we will have trouble, but he also said not to be discouraged because He has overcome the world (John 16:33). It is easy to get discouraged if we are relying on our own abilities, but we have the Holy Spirit living inside us, guiding us into all truth (John 16:13). We must trust He has our best interest in mind in every situation just like I have to trust the Chess app. Even though we may not see what He has in mind, He will lead us to victory!

Christ came that we may have life, and life abundant (John 10:10). The abundant life is here and now. It does not consist of material possessions. There is a peace and contentment that comes from having a relationship with Jesus Christ. There is great comfort in knowing we belong to the king of the universe; He calls us by name; we are under His protection; and we will live with Him forever. To experience the love the Father has for us brings great joy even in the most trying of circumstances.

Life can get you down if you let it. In the past few months, I have just come out of an extended stay in the valley. I felt disconnected and discouraged. I stuck with my spiritual disciplines, but my prayer-life was a struggle. It wasn't until I started focusing my prayers on praise instead of myself that things started turning around.

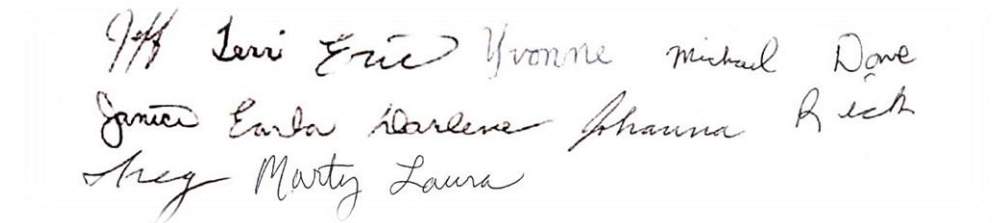
We have an enemy who does not want us to experience abundant life. Christ has defeated him, but that does not prevent him from doing us harm if we believe his lies. God does not want us to limp across the finish line. He wants us to sprint! I think I should start practicing my happy dance (hopefully I'll be given some rhythm at that moment)! If King David can dance before the Lord, it must be alright (2 Samuel 2:14). I don't think there

will be any penalties for excessive celebration like in the NFL! Of course, this will be after I bow in homage. I won't be celebrating my accomplishment, rather I will be celebrating that I am in the presence of my Lord, my Savior, and my King.

If we are going to win the race that matters and grasp abundant life here and now, we must change our thinking and our actions in turn. The writer of Hebrews puts it this way, "... let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us" (Heb 12:1 NIV). Lots of things can hinder our walk, but none more so than our thought-life. Our actions flow from our thoughts (Rom 8:5). Paul admonishes us to renew our minds (Rom 12:2). We have the transforming power of the Spirit within us, but we must choose to change the way we think. "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Phil 4:8 NIV).

Are you living the abundant life? If not, how is your thought-life? It is my prayer that you and I will take every thought captive to Christ (2 Cor 10:5) and sprint to the finish line. "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31 NIV). Trust in Him and His strength!

The FREE Prison Ministry team,



Placing an Order

- Please provide the book number and some portion of the book title.
- You can receive up to five books per month. Please provide alternate selections.
- You may receive only one Bible and one reference book per request. Some categories are restricted to one book (see category name). Exceptions will be made based on the condition of the book.
- You may enroll in a Light & Life Home Bible Study if you so desire.
- If you would like a birthday card from us, let us know.

Mail your book requests to:

FREE Prison Ministry Inc
PO Box 999
Bloomington, IL 61702-0999

Mail your Bible Study material to:

Salem Church
Light & Life Home Bible Study
4925 E. 1250 North Road
Gridley, IL 61744