



BETWEEN 6:00 AM—9:00 AM: ONCE WE OURSELVES WERE INSIDE AND LOOKING OUT

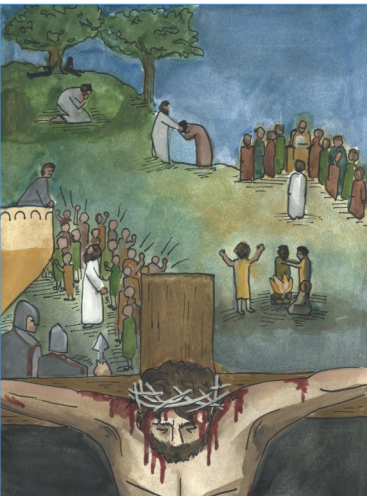
You’ve probably flown by the building at 70 MPH without noticing it. It’s on the right side of Hwy. 87 when you’re heading north. It’s down an embankment and super easy to miss — especially when you’re keeping your eyes fixed on the road. It’s Santa Clara County’s Juvenile Hall. Right now, 45 kids live behind those walls because there’s “probable cause” to believe that they committed a serious crime. We’ll talk about it today at the 7:00 PM Joel Moment and what we can do to help.



This is a prayer guide, and prayer get flowing when we remember that all of us were once captive and corrupt. Let’s start our Wednesday walk with God with some honest reflection on our previous spiritual incarceration. Here’s a verse to consider.

Rom. 11:32 For God has consigned all to disobedience...

“[Co]nsigned” is a polite word meaning to “catch by enclosing or to confine within limits,” that is, to “imprison.” Here’s the context. Paul explains in Romans 11 that people are born locked up — all humanity, all skin colors — stuck in a prison of disbelief and bad behavior. See, rather than obeying God, our human race put God *on* a box — making him into an shiny idol (or sick idea) and nailing him to a stand (Rom. 1:23). So God put us *in* a box, broken and trapped by our raging and unnatural impulses. Paul makes the same point in Romans 1, where he writes three times that God “*gave [us] up*” because of our pride and disloyalty. In ancient Greek, this verb (paradidomi) was used as a technical term for police and court officials delivering offenders into custody.



But our confinement was compassionate, temporary and purposeful. God became our warden to repair and release us. Let’s finish the verse.

Rom. 11:32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

God’s desire is to redeem all Sin-shackled people — Jews and Gentiles alike — from the cells of our own making, and empower us to offer him the love obedience we failed to give him in the beginning. But first a Pardoning Person had to come and pay our death sentence himself. Now that baptized believers like us are forgiven and free (yet enslaved to God — Rom. 6:22) let’s sing to our risen Messiah with the help of Chris Tomlin’s version of the song “Amazing Grace.”

[Verse 1]

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I’m found
Was blind, but now I see

[Chorus]

My chains are gone, I’ve been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy reigns
Unending love, amazing grace

[Chorus]

My chains are gone, I’ve been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy reigns
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My chains are gone, I’ve been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy reigns
Unending love, amazing grace

[Verse 2]

’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

[Verse 3]

The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures

BETWEEN 9:00 AM — 12:00 PM: THERE ARE TWO GOVERNMENTS WORKING SIDE BY SIDE IN JUVENILE HALL

There are two governments at work to help the teenagers in Juvenile Hall. They are the State of California and the City of God. Both administrations are part of God's plan. Civil government and law are ordained by God to suppress chaos and restrain evil. Consider this passage from 1 Peter.

1Pet. 2:13-14 *Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme,¹⁴ or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.*

Imagine how crazy life would be without legal codes, law enforcement officers and corrections. The Reformer Martin Luther wrote: "If there were [no law and government], then seeing that all the world is evil and that scarcely one human being in a thousand is a true Christian, people would devour each other and no one would be able to support his wife and children, feed himself and serve God. The world would become a desert."



What's more, our California law has a compassionate purpose regarding youth who commit crimes. In fact, the statutes (laws) governing juvenile justice are located in the California Welfare & Institutions Code, not the Penal Code. Honestly, when I read about the rehabilitative purposes, I feel proud and thankful for our law — and praise God for it. Section 202 says:

"(a) The purpose of this chapter is to provide for the protection and safety of the public and each minor under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court and to preserve and strengthen the minor's family ties whenever possible, removing the minor from the custody of his or her parents only when necessary for his or her welfare or for the safety and protection of the public. If removal of a minor is determined by the juvenile court to be necessary, reunification of the minor with his or her family shall be a primary objective....it is the purpose of this chapter to secure for the minor custody, care, and discipline as nearly as possible equivalent to that which should have been given by his or her parents....(b) Minors under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court who are in need of protective services shall receive care, treatment, and guidance consistent with their best interest and the best interest of the public. Minors under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court as a consequence of delinquent conduct shall, in conformity with the interests of public safety and protection, receive care, treatment, and guidance that is consistent with their best interest, that holds them accountable for their behavior, and that is appropriate for their circumstances. This guidance may include punishment that is consistent with the rehabilitative objectives of this chapter.



There's wisdom, humanity and balancing of important interests in this statute (i.e., safety of the public and reshaping of the young person). Let's pray for all officials who work in the juvenile system, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, counselors, probation officers, police officers, etc.

1Tim. 2:1-2 *...I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,² for ...all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.*



Ask God to help them carry out their functions in a way that accords with law and justice. Pray for Judge Julia Alloggiamento. Last year she conducted the annual Judicial Inspection of the Juvenile Detention Facility by personally visiting Juvenile Hall. (California law requires this inspection every year.) She found it to meet the legal standards. If you're interested in reading more about Juvenile Hall, please visit https://www.sccscourt.org/court_divisions/juvenile/juvenile_home.shtml. That's also where you can find Judge Julia Alloggiamento's report.



Let's intercede for the three judges in the Juvenile Justice Courthouse: the Honorable Franklin Bondanno, the Honorable Katherine Lucero and the Honorable Maureen A. Folan (not pictured).

Let's also lift up those who put on the various programs related to Domestic Violence, Mental Health and Substance Abuse in Juvenile Hall, the Ranch, the Main Jail, Elmwood Men's and the Correctional Center for Women's.

BETWEEN 12:00 PM 3:00 PM: THE SECOND GOVERNMENT GETS TO WORK

Martin Luther wrote colorfully about the Jesus Administration that is at work in Juvenile Hall, the “spiritual [government] which fashions true Christians and just persons through the Holy Spirit under Christ.” He wrote that “both [governments] must be allowed to continue [their work], the one to make [people] just, the other to create outward peace and present evil-doing. Neither is enough for the world without the other.”

John Calvin wrote also about the “two governments to which mankind is subject...the first...which rules over the soul or the inner man, and concerns itself with eternal life.”

Jesus’ people are officials in God’s Kingdom, entrusted with a different kind of power. Their weapons are supernatural — love, truth, friendship, mentoring and prayer. These officials — the chaplains and their volunteers — visit inmates, provide literature and help them.

Tonight at the 7:00 PM Joel Moment, you’ll meet **Rev. Ra Amen** of Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy of Santa Clara County. He serves as the Juvenile Facilities Chaplain. He’ll share about the work he does along with many volunteers.

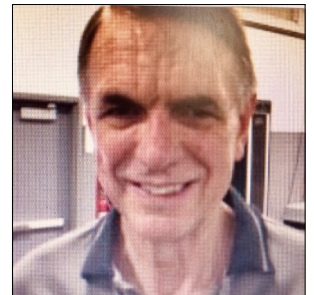
Here’s a testimony from my old friend named **Ward Wildanger** who used to serve with Rev. Ra at CIC before he and his wife **Nancy** moved to Iowa City to be close to grandkids. You might know **Ward** from AWANA. He used to lead worship.



Darren,

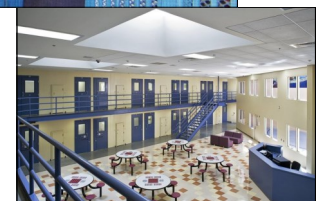
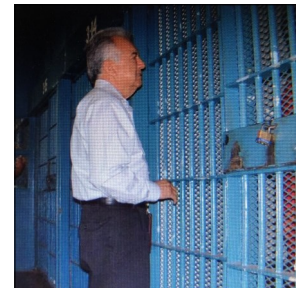
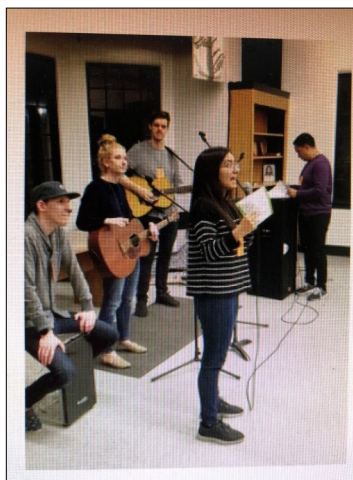
...When we were able to have the Bible Study, it was always an amazing experience! We would always feel discouraged while driving there. On the way home, we would feel encouraged and energized after seeing what God had done.

When we started going there, we would prepare object lessons, etc....for the boys. Eventually, we just started photocopying a few pages of the Bible and we would read through it together and talk about the passage. This method was dramatically more effective than our clever lessons and it was also less work! I guess that the Holy Spirit can work better through His Word! We would always photocopy from a Bible.... we would not print them on a computer. We wanted the boys to see that the Bible is a real book and not just something on the internet. The boys were always respectful, interested, and knew much more about the Bible than they realized. They were always amazed when they found out that we did not get paid to go to Juvey. Other than the driving, it was easier than teaching Sunday School for teenagers.



*Please say hello to **Ra** for me!*

Look at each picture below. Imagine how these incarcerated people feel. Remember that they’re our neighbors (Lk. 10:29). Lift them up to God. Also, imagine how the volunteers feel and what their needs might be (e.g., insecure, intimidated, inadequate). Mention them to the Lord who hears, cares and acts.



BETWEEN 3:00 PM—4:00 PM: Join the Joel Moment Prayer Gathering. Go to Zoom.com and enter Meeting ID and Password.



3:00 PM Prayer Gathering



ANNA SEITZ *[She'll lead us in Chris Tomlin's version of "Amazing Grace." You can find the lyrics at the bottom of page 1 of this Prayer Guide.]*

EMILY THIMBLEBY *[She'll share about her upbringing, how she came to faith and how God is helping her to be a fragrance for Christ in her neighborhood and at Ellis Elementary School.]*

Prov. 3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.*

Prov. 3:6 *In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

Col. 2:6 *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,*

Col. 2:7 *rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*



7:00 PM Prayer Gathering

ROSALIE BANTA *[She'll read a Psalm that describes the experience of an anguish person in confinement.]*



Psa. 142:1 *With my voice I cry out to the LORD; with my voice I plead for mercy to the LORD.*

Psa. 142:2 *I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him.*

Psa. 142:3 *When my spirit faints within me, you know my way! In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me.*

Psa. 142:4 *Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul.*

Psa. 142:5 *I cry to you, O LORD; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living."*

Psa. 142:6 *Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me!*

Psa. 142:7 *Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name! The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me.*

REV. RA AMEN *[What an honor to have this special guest! Ra will share about his life, faith and ministry as the Juvenile Facilities Chaplain with Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy.]*





GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #1 (7 min.): Rom. 3:23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*

WE WERE guilty and enchained, all of us. We were cramped and condemned because of our rebellion. Yet as we sang last Sunday at Church on the Grass, the wonderful grace of Jesus reached us:

*Wonderful grace of Jesus reaching to all the lost
By it I have been pardoned
Saved to the uttermost
Chains have been torn asunder giving me liberty
For the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me.*

Take time in your group to praise our Redeemer. Remember your cell and fetters and take turns thanking him in your own words.

GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #2 (7 min.): 1Tim. 2:1 *...I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people...This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,*

Let's pray for all kinds of people, the needy, the happy, the ill, the hungry and outwardly content and the beaten down. Let's pray for those in trouble and for those in jails and prisons. Let's pray for the Ellis Elementary School Community where Emily Thimbleby is investing. Say, "Help these people to know you and have eternal life. Show us how we can help them."

GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #3 (7 min.): 1Pet. 3:8 *Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.*

Let's ask the Lord to unite us in truth so we can live together in deeper love. Reality is confusing and it's easy to be divided and argumentative about political and racial issues. Let's pray for wisdom and oneness in our families and church.

BETWEEN 5:00 PM-10:00 PM: CHURCH FAMILY PICTURES AND MEMORIES.

You have to love Google photos. What technological magic! It helps us remember the past. That's good. We're supposed to be first-rate remember-ers, especially when we're facing an uncertain present (Deut. 7:18). I just got a Google prompt that said "6 years ago" this week. Here's what popped up! **Dr. Richard Ho** and his friend Raymond playing the I-hu *exactly six years ago today, Feb. 2, 2015*. Wow! I love this guy. In fact, he and I just made a coffee date to catch up! I can't wait for the day when guests from our neighborhood again play table tennis, do dance classes and learn musical instruments on our campus.



Google gave me this picture also. Here's **Erin Gates** teaching in LOL, our middle school ministry, on Jan. 27, 2017. Erin's still going strong in the race of faith. By the way, next week at both the 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM Joel Moments, we'll hear from a youth ministry pillar at Valley Church, a woman who has served for many years. She's fun, wild and focused on faith development in teenagers. Some of the girls she mentored are now discipling other girls. I think it's supposed to work that way. I know I read that somewhere (2 Tim. 2:2).

