

just as i am

"and when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, 'live!' yes, I said to you in your blood, 'live!'" eze 16:6

that how God found us all, in our blood struggling to live. i know because that's how He found me. every since the fall we are all born into condemnation. we know Father God has mercy on the young up to the age of accountability, but we are all born into a sinful world and sin forces all to make a decision between good and evil, light and darkness, between life and death. "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way." isa 53:6

i have recently started correspondence with a new prisoner. i believe he wants to truly know Jesus but he obviously strayed from the path. now i am left wondering this question: on what kind of ground has the seed been sown, by the wayside, stony places, thorns or good ground? i obviously refer to the parable given by Jesus in matthew 13. will his initial faith be choked out, distracted or finally mature and bear fruit.

we all must come just as we are, but if we struggle just to live just a changed life, we will fail. we must live an exchanged life - ours for His, "that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" 1 cor 2:5. then the proof will be in the pudding, as they say.

one, there will be inward evidence. we will have a song in our heart, a melody that gives us the song and

appeals to the inner spirit. other religions have their mantras and almsgiving but they have not a song like paul and silas did in their jail cell.

two, there is upward evidence. here we find an attitude of gratitude; gratitude of being rescued from what we so richly deserve. "giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." eph 5:20

thirdly, there is outward evidence. it will manifest itself in our relationship with others, our conduct mirroring our Lord's submission, lacking any air of superiority. "let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself." phil 2:3

we have a beautiful example by Christ as God incarnate stooped to wash His disciple' feet. we all know how paul eagerly desired to be washed all over, something i would probably have done as we. for Jesus had said, "if I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." john 13:8 following, "and when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the mount of olives." matt 26:30 they left with a song in their heart; a song even death could not mute.

at the end of the letter from my new found friend he asked: "what's after this life, linda? where do we go after this life?" my answer must be: into eternity. which eternity will be determined by each of us. i only know Jesus said one would be outer darkness, filled with weeping and gnashing of teeth. the other promising, "eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have

entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 1 cor 2:9 we all have this tiny space of time called life to determine our eternity. is any sacrifice too much?

"not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." titus 3:5 it's the conviction and guidance of the Holy Spirit that will lead into the presence of our Creator.

the question, asked and answered: "what shall we do, that we may work the works of God?... this is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." john 6:28-29

i pray we all find shelter under the shadow of His wings.