

PRAISE the Lord for:

- ★ Great news from the USA. Last year (2016) a total of 550 prisoners received Christ. Each prisoner is followed up with discipleship material through Crossroad Bible Institute
- ★ A positive trip to New South Wales and Canberra for Carl. Many great opportunities to speak and share with churches about how to use the Challenge newspaper for evangelism
- ★ The ongoing discipleship of prisoners throughout the 252 prisons in South Africa. Prisoners are taken through four discipleship booklets which help to establish them in their faith.
- ★ Continued speaking opportunities for Carl and other staff, to promote and develop the work both in Australia and overseas

TREASURES OF DARKNESS

From time to time as we read the Bible, we come across verses that seem somewhat strange like **ISAIAH 45:3**, "I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places."

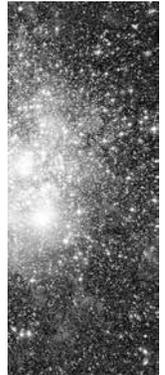
I asked myself the question, "How could there be treasures in darkness". Immediately I thought of occasions when I have gone through some trial, battle or testing. At the time I certainly didn't think there was any treasure to be had.

However, hindsight is a wonderful thing: someone has said it is nearly always 20/20 vision. After looking back on a time of trial invariably I discovered that I had learned some very important truths about God – His person, His character, and important truths about myself – the true nature of my own heart, along with my own inadequacies and fragility.

So what can we learn from the darkness of trials and testing that dot our Christian walk from time to time?

1 **Darkness helps us put things in their right perspective. In fact as we go through the darkness of physical suffering, the agony of mental suffering or some injustice, we can see things more clearly.**

When I first started travelling to Australia's eastern states to promote Challenge newspaper, I went by bus, which took a long time. However, as we rolled along at night all the internal lights were off which allowed the opportunity to look at the night sky. Out on the Nullarbor Plain there is no ambient light source. As I looked up at the sky, in the midst of the darkness I saw the most amazing array of stars you would never see in the city.



So it is in the darkness of trial, agony of suffering and burden of heart, we see in a new way the depth of God's love in enabling us to go through the darkness. Even in this process God uses the situation to reveal the brightly shining stars of His wondrous character. How wonderful it is to discover a love that never fails, that never lets go, and in rebellion a love that pursues until we are back in the everlasting arms of the Everlasting One.

Continued over

Challenge Direct Deposit details :

BSB: 066162 (Commbank)
Account: 00900455

WWW.CHALLENGENEWS.ORG

PLEASE TURN OVER

Contact us by phone (08) 9453 3311
Email: info@challengenews.org

PRAYER needed for:

- ★ Increased effectiveness of the paper in Australia. We would love to see our distribution double
- ★ Continued funding to assist and grow the prison edition of the paper for USA. Sponsorship for each edition is vital and needed. There are in excess of 10,000 prisons in the USA that are home to more than 2.4 million people - what a mission field!
- ★ The Trezona family as they continue to promote and develop Challenge in USA. Pray for the growth of main edition of paper plus open doors as Andrew makes vital contacts
- ★ The World Hope prison ministry team in South Africa as they facilitate teams going into prisons to share Jesus. Also for their endeavours following up prisoners with discipleship material and getting them involved in prison church

2 Whilst looking out from that bus at the stars in pitch-black darkness, I found that it put mankind and God in their right perspectives.

I was taken by the vastness of God's creation and the puniness of humanity. I found myself in the darkness gaining a new appreciation of the majesty, glory, authority and power of God. So even in the deepest darkness we are able to see that God can deliver us no matter what.

3 Also seeing the vastness and wonder of God's creation allows us to see ourselves for what we are.

Job, after going through what can only be described as horrendous suffering, gained a new perspective of himself and God. Job 42:5-6 *"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes"*.

When Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord he gained a new perspective of himself. Isaiah 6:5 *"...Woe is me, for I am undone! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."*

Once we see the glory, majesty, authority and power of God it has an enormous impact on how we see ourselves. The word undone literally means shattered. Isaiah, and we, are shattered by seeing God as He truly is. Unfortunately, we only gain these treasures as we go through times of darkness. Nevertheless, even in the darkness we can know God is with us.

CARL CARMODY, EDITOR CHALLENGE

Ongoing supply of testimonies

If you would like to share your testimony through the printed page please email carl@challengenews.org for further information

MY RESPONSE

Post to: Challenge Literature Fellowship, PO Box 978, Cloverdale WA 6985

Name: _____

Address: _____ Post Code: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

With God's help I would like to be a partner in supporting the ministry at Challenge in the following way(s):

- Prayer: Please send me updated prayer information
- Financial: Please receive my:
- Monthly Quarterly Yearly One time contribution of:
- \$50 \$75 \$100 \$200 Other: \$ _____

To be used for _____

Please make cheques payable to **Challenge Literature Fellowship**

Credit Card: Visa Mastercard

Expiry Date ___ / ___

3-digit Credit Card Security Code ___

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____