

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

WILLIAM MACDONALD



Developed as a study course by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

Doing Time With Jesus

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Published by:

Emmaus Correspondence School
(A division of ECS Ministries)
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website: www.ecsministries.org

First printing 1985 (AK '85), 1 UNIT

Revised 2005 (AK '05), 1 UNIT

Reprinted 2007 (AK '05), 1 UNIT

Reprinted 2010 (AK '05), 1 UNIT

ISBN 978-0-940293-41-0

Code: DTWJ

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Scripture references noted as TEV are from Today's English Version.

Printed in the United States of America

INTRODUCTION

A correspondence course entitled *Born To Win* first appeared in 1977. Since then it has been used in many prisons in the English-speaking world. We have no way of knowing how many have come to saving faith in Christ as a result of its lessons. Men and women who considered themselves born losers suddenly realized that they were born to win.

But these new converts face real problems as they seek to live the Christian life inside. As a result, there has been a call for a follow-up course that would help believers cope with these problems. *Doing Time With Jesus* is designed to fill that need.

Lessons You Will Study

1. Right Expectations and Loneliness 7
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STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

Course Components

This course has two parts: this study course and the exam booklet.

How To Study

This study has twelve chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapter through at least twice, once to get a general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one chapter per week.

Exams

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions.

How Your Exams Are Graded

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

1

RIGHT EXPECTATIONS AND LONELINESS

Right Expectations

The moment a person is saved, God forgives him all his sins, and the convert becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Salvation doesn't put a new suit on the man, but puts a new man in the suit. Old things have passed away and all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

But does that mean that the believer can get out of prison right away, or get an appeal, or an early parole? It's important to take a realistic and intelligent view of this whole question. In doing so, we must distinguish between divine forgiveness and the consequences of sin in this life.

As far as God is concerned, the case is closed. He has justified and pardoned the one who believes in Jesus. But, this does not affect sentences that have been handed down by judges in a criminal court. A good illustration of this is found in the story of one of the thieves who was crucified with the Lord Jesus. At the last moment he put his faith in the Savior and received the assurance that he would be with the Lord in paradise that very day. However, he still had to pay the death penalty for his crimes (Luke 23:39-43).

If the judges and parole boards released everyone who professed to be born again, there would be such a rush of pretended conversions that the prisons would be emptied. Unfortunately, many have made a false profession in order to obtain leniency, only to return to crime and prison and thus bring dishonor on the Lord's Name. You can hardly blame the judges and parole boards for being suspicious and cynical. They've been conned so often.

Some men and women think that when they have received Christ as Savior, God owes them something. They act as if they had done the Lord a big favor by becoming Christians and that now it is His duty to get them released—immediately if not sooner. Others think that they can manipulate God by going to chapel services, doing Bible study courses or using a lot of God-talk. By doing these things they suppose that they obligate the Most High to help them beat their case or get out sooner.

Let's get the record straight. God doesn't owe anyone anything. If we got what we deserved from Him, we'd all be in hell. We didn't do God a favor by trusting His Son, but we did ourselves an enormous favor. We got all the benefit from that deal.

There's no use trying to manipulate God as if He were a heavenly puppet. He knows when we are being sincere and when we are only putting on a religious act. Our motives should always be pure. We should not attend services, or study the Bible, or witness to others so that God will have to do us a favor in return. We should do these things because we love Him and because we want to do what pleases Him. When we think of all the Savior did for us, we realize that we can never do enough for Him.

The Apostle Paul is a good example for all of us. He spent quite a bit of time in prison. In fact, five of his letters were written from prison—Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon and 2 Timothy. And why was he in prison? Because he had done something wrong? No, but only because of his faithful testimony for the Lord Jesus. He suffered for doing what was right and not for breaking the law.

And what was his attitude? Did he think that God was somehow obligated to get him out? Did he try to twist God's arm? No. He accepted his imprisonment as part of God's will for him and determined to serve God inside with the same zeal that he had displayed outside.

Instead of referring to himself as a prisoner of Rome, he wrote, "Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus" (Philemon 1). He was content in spite of his circumstances: "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content" (Philippians 4:11).

As a result of his imprisonment, some members of Caesar's household were saved (Philippians 4:22). He rejoiced that his confinement resulted in further progress for the gospel; he used it as an opportunity to preach to his guards, and everyone else he could (Philippians 1:12-13). His letters have no smell of a prison about them. Instead, they are filled with thanksgiving,

joy, peace, and a love for others. His single, great ambition was that Christ might be exalted in his body, whether by life or by death (Philippians 1:20). After a life of faithful service for the Savior, Paul finally was forced to lay his head on a block in Rome and was executed.

Like him, let us serve the Lord with pure motives. If God sees fit to release us from unpleasant circumstances, let us use our freedom to serve him with all the love and devotion of our hearts and with all the strength of our bodies. If not, let us bloom wherever we are planted, living to the hilt for him, and glad to have it so.

Loneliness

When some people in Chicago noticed that they had not seen an elderly neighbor for days, the police broke into her room and found her dead. On the table was a diary. Four days before she died, she wrote, “No one came.” Three days before, it was the same, “No one came.” Two days, again, “No one came.” Then the final entry, “No one came.”

When we think of loneliness, we think of being alone. But loneliness is more than being alone. You can be surrounded with people and still be lonely. One of the loneliest times I can remember was once when I was in New York City with its seven million people. I certainly wasn’t alone. Hundreds of people going to work were pushing and shoving all around me, but as far as I was concerned, nobody cared, nobody was interested. The absence of communication, of fellowship, or friendship made me unspeakably lonely.

A person doesn’t have to be “inside” to know what solitary confinement is. Patients in hospitals, nursing homes, and retirement homes often feel that their relatives have deserted them. The death of a loved one can lead to terrible loneliness, and so can an unwanted divorce. Men in the armed forces and businessmen away from home suffer the pain of loneliness. Old folks who have no relatives or friends know something about it.

It’s no sin to be lonely; even Jesus was lonely at times. On His final trip to Jerusalem, He experienced the loneliness of outrunning the disciples in zeal for God. He was eager; they were dragging their feet (Mark 10:32). In the Garden of Gethsemane, He tasted the loneliness of an agony that His disciples could not share (Mark 14:32-42). On the cross He knew the terrible loneliness of being forsaken by God and deserted by His friends (Mark 14:50; 15:34).

It isn't always possible to avoid loneliness completely. Sometimes through circumstances beyond our control, we find ourselves cut off from our friends. Sometimes God calls us to deny ourselves the pleasures and comforts of married life and to live as a single person. In such cases we can learn to live with loneliness, accepting it as one way in which we can share the sufferings of Christ. As we have mentioned, He knew what it was to suffer from loneliness.

But even if we can't avoid loneliness completely, there are ways we can minimize it. One way is to keep busy (Ecclesiastes 9:10). Whenever we are given the choice between working or loafing, between going to school or wasting time in the day room, we should always choose work or school.

Then it is important for us to keep our minds occupied. Many do this through the regular study of the Bible. And in reading good books, books that do more than entertain, books that help to build Christ-like character. Someone said that an idle mind is the devil's workshop—and that is true.

Another way to beat loneliness is to think of others rather than of self. People who keep busy helping others don't have time to feel sorry for themselves. If we sit around and wait for others to pour out their lives for us, we can develop a king-sized case of the blues. But if we determine to live for others each day, we can escape being bored and depressed. Just writing a letter of encouragement, comfort or thanks has its own reward. It was when Paul was in prison that he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and 2 Timothy. These letters show that he was more concerned for others than himself.

We can triumph over loneliness by determining to be optimistic and thankful (read Ephesians 5:20, Colossians 1:12; 2:7; 3:15-17; 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; 2 Timothy 4:18). Pessimism and complaining have never yet cured a case of loneliness. They have only worsened it.

Finally, we can realize that the Savior is with us all the time. Years ago there was a man named Brother Lawrence who worked in the kitchen of a monastery. He practiced the presence of God, that is, he was constantly aware that the Lord was with him whether he was scrubbing pots or worshipping in the chapel. Those of us who have received the Lord Jesus as our Savior can also know that we are never alone. Even if our relatives and friends forget us and give up on us, we can claim the Savior's promise, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5) and "Lo, I am with

you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). We don’t necessarily feel His constant presence with us, it is a fact that we accept by faith. The Bible says it is so, therefore we believe it.

A German immigrant sat with her children in a railway station in New York. Another lady noticed the misery on her face and stopped briefly to talk to her. The German lady told her that her husband had died on the trip to America and had been buried at sea. Now she was going to Iowa, and she found it very hard to travel in a new land all alone. The stranger pressed some money into the woman’s hand and said softly, “Alone? Why Jesus is with you. He will never leave you alone.” Ten years later the German woman said that that word gave her the courage to go on. She said, “It kept me strong and happy through my many troubles.”

(When you have completed this lesson, take Exam 1)

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EXAM BOOKLET AK '05 (1 UNIT) DTWJ

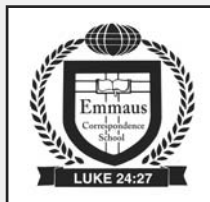
STUDENT NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: _____

INSTRUCTOR



Exam developed by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

MULTIPLE CHOICE

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue
- B. green
- C. yellow

 B

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

RETURNING THE EXAM

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

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Revised 2005 (AK '05), 1 UNIT

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ISBN 978-0-940293-41-0

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Printed in the United States of America

CHAPTER 1 EXAM

RIGHT EXPECTATIONS AND LONLINESS

EXAM GRADE

Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.

Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

1. When a person is saved,
 - A. he becomes a man with a new suit
 - B. he is forgiven by God
 - C. he does not have to suffer the consequences of sin in this life_____

2. The Apostle Paul was put in prison
 - A. for murder
 - B. for theft
 - C. for preaching the gospel_____

3. Romans 11:35 teaches that
 - A. God doesn't owe anyone anything
 - B. we do Him a favor by trusting Jesus
 - C. He knows when we are being sincere_____

4. Paul referred to himself as a prisoner of
 - A. Christ Jesus
 - B. Caesar
 - C. Herod_____

5. Paul looked upon his imprisonment as
 - A. a waste of time
 - B. an opportunity to reach his guards and Caesars household with the gospel
 - C. the worst thing that could happen_____

- 6. In Mark 10:32-33, on His way to His death, Jesus walked
 - A. ahead of His disciples
 - B. behind His disciples
 - C. with His disciples_____

- 7. One way to minimize loneliness is to
 - A. spend much time in inactivity
 - B. wait for others to comfort you
 - C. think of others rather than self_____

- 8. We know that the Savior is always with us
 - A. by our feelings
 - B. because the Bible says so
 - C. neither of the above_____

- 9. On the cross Jesus was
 - A. forsaken by God and man
 - B. never lonely
 - C. supported by His disciples_____

- 10. An idle mind is
 - A. a sign of wisdom
 - B. a cure for loneliness
 - C. the devil's workshop_____

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

How have you responded to times of loneliness?
