

# PRAISE News

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## BLOCKS

By Merlin Carothers

Imagine a child playing with blocks. Picture this child placing one block on the floor and then another on top of it. He says, "See, I'm going

to pile the blocks clear to the ceiling!" The child thinks he is putting each block exactly on top of the others, but actually each one is a little off center. Imperfection causes the pile to eventually collapse.

Consider one of God's promises such as, *Ask and it will be given to you (Matthew 7:7)*. This seems clear enough. It rests firmly on God's Word. How could we go wrong if we ask and expect to receive? Then we add verse eight, *Everyone who asks, receives*. That too seems simple enough, but is it? Experience tells us that everyone who asks from God doesn't receive all he prays for. Therefore, the "everyone" must mean those people who are already in a specific category.

Here is an illustration of what I mean. If we are talking about the people in our family we might say, "Everyone loves mashed potatoes." The hearer knows we are referring to the "everyone" in our family. The "everyone" in Matthew 7:8, must have previously accepted Jesus as Savior. In addition, the "everyone" is assumed to be one who "abides" in Christ.

*If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you (John 15:7 RSV).*

Bible promises must be placed, in a sense, on top of one another and be based on the foundation of God's

requirements. Promises must also be claimed by Christians who are seeking for *God's will* to be done rather than their own. Jesus told His disciples in *John 5:30: By myself I can do nothing: I judge only as I hear, and my judgement is just, for I seek not to please myself but He who sent me*. When we claim God's promises for no other reason than to get what we want, we are destined to have our pile of promises (blocks) come crashing down.

Sometimes Christians are devastated because they earnestly tried to push themselves into believing certain promises. They piled the promises higher and higher without realizing they were getting each promise a little off center. From their own perspective they were doing exactly what they saw in the Bible. We must keep our feet firmly planted on the Rock which is Christ, so we won't slide into error and unbelief. If we are slow learners, it may take years of walking with Jesus. During this time, I recommend that we *concentrate on seeking God's will*. Once we more clearly understand His will, we are ready to believe and receive more of His promises.

In the meantime, we have a powerful tool. We can believe that He is supplying all our needs (see Philip-  
pians 4:19). Not *will supply*. He *is supplying*. He is now providing exactly what we need. He isn't withholding blessings because we are not perfect. His goal is to help us learn what He wants us to learn during our brief time here on earth.

(continued on page 4)





# WHAT DO YOU NEED?

By Mary Carothers

A friend of mine recently shared a learning experience in her life. After

working very hard on a project, she waited expectantly for her employer's praise for work well done. Instead, he began to point out areas that would need improvement next time. Well, she thought, constructive criticism is good; when he's through, he'll surely praise me for all my hard work and effort. But when he finished offering his advice, he simply went on to other work.

Disappointed, she walked back to her desk thinking, "He could have at least *mentioned* all my hard work."

Later that evening, she labored over an elaborate dinner for her husband. Pleased with the results, she waited for his compliments. Instead, he didn't seem to even notice it, eating hurriedly in order to get to an important meeting. As he left, planting a hasty peck on her cheek, he said, "See you later, Honey." Not a single word about the dinner. Moments later, she dissolved in tears. "Oh, what's the use?" she wailed.

"Nobody appreciates my work." Turning to God in her hurt, the Holy Spirit began to minister to her.

*I will supply all your needs, my child. Your employer and your husband are only human. Neither they nor any other person can ever meet your deepest needs. I love you with an everlasting love; only out of my limitless love can all your needs be met.*

She began to realize that as she looked to people to meet her needs, she was susceptible to being hurt. But as she looked to Jesus to meet her needs, He would never forsake her, nor hurt her. His love, His tender mercies, would be with her forever. She could safely trust Jesus to supply *all* that she needed. As the **rock** of her life, she would have a firm, stable foundation upon which to build.

Now she's learning to do all that she does as unto the Lord, rather than unto people (Col. 3:23). When she does her best at work or at home, she is growing in peace. Whether anyone else notices and appreciated her work, she knows Jesus does. She is learning that praise from Jesus for work well done is far more valuable than praise from people - who are, after all, only human.



## THE FOUNDATION OF PRAISE

has received gifts IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

AC, Ruth Ellen & John  
Dad, Mom & Brother  
By Mary Ellen Smith  
Westpoint, TN

Sammy L. Carruth  
By his wife, Norma  
of Norco, LA

*Our loss is Heaven's gain!  
Our prayers are with those who loved them.*



HAVE A BLESSED DAY!  
SUNDAY, MAY 7<sup>TH</sup>



# PRISON TO PRAISE REPORTS OF PRAISE

My husband and I read *Prison to Praise* years ago (and re-read many times) and it changed our whole perspective – and in many ways our lives. Over the years we have given many of your books to others. Thank you for your faithfulness in continuing the Foundation after Merlin went “home”. **Lynne, NY**

I wish to express our sincere appreciation for the *Prison to Praise* books you sent to us. The inmates are very happy to receive any reading materials and we know your books will help them grow in their faith. **Chaplain, Correctional Facility, NY**

This letter is long overdue. In the early 70's my wife was trying to convince me to give my life to the Lord ... it was a real battle. She would leave books laying around hoping I would read one of them. One night I picked up *Prison to Praise*. Having just completed Airborne training at Ft. Benning, my interest was piqued. A few days later I was on my knees while my wife led me in the sinner's prayer and my life has never been the same. It's been almost 50 years and we are still serving our Lord Jesus Christ. I look forward to seeing Merlin in Heaven and thanking him for helping me to meet our wonderful Savior. **David, NJ**

I just finished reading *Prison to Praise* and WOW! I really enjoyed it, and it was a true blessing.



**Richard, State Prison, FL**

Many lives have been changed while reading *Prison to Praise*. One woman accepted Jesus after reading your book and is now a part of our worship team.

**Chaplain, County Jail, GA**

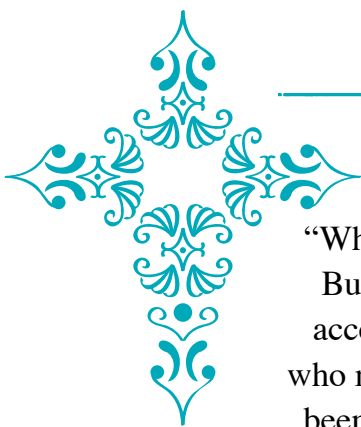
I have been a pastor for 57 years and have learned more about praising the Lord from Merlin's books than from anyone else. **Joseph, TX**

*Prison to Praise* spoke directly to me. So many of Merlin's life experiences related to me: Army service, deployments, and arrest. Even though the book is only 106 pages it took me some time to finish it due to it bringing me to tears. I was only able to absorb so much. It has changed my life and has brought me into a closer relationship with the Lord – and for that I thank you!

**Adrian, State Prison, CA**

I was saddened to hear about Merlin's passing. Reading *Prison to Praise* was a blessing and it made me realize that I really need to change my life and do better for myself and my children.

**Charles, County Jail, OH**



In looking through past *Praise News* I found this article that Merlin wrote and was blessed by it and hope it blesses you too.

“When I wrote *Prison to Praise* my goal was to help people to learn to praise the Lord.

But to my surprise, and great joy, God's plan was to also use the book to lead many to accept Jesus as their Savior. Let me tell you of a recent example. Yesterday I met a man who ministers regularly in a prison. When he first began going, he met a prisoner who had been a medical doctor, and was very bitter and angry about being in prison. But he had read *Prison to Praise*, which had been provided by one of you! He accepted Jesus as his Savior and began to praise God for the rotten mess his life was in. Today he is filled with joy and even teaches a Bible class. He tells the younger men, ‘Don't wait as long as I did to make Jesus your Lord and Savior’.

One prison chaplain told us, ‘Men will read *Prison to Praise* who have no intention of reading anything religious, but then, many of them accept Christ into their hearts.’ There are people in the world that no other book could reach. When you and I supply *Prison to Praise* to hurting, lonely people we are sowing the seed, and God will inspire the growth.”

(continued from page 1) “But,” you may ask, “What about new Christians who so often experience answers to their prayers?” To me that is comparable to the benevolent father who holds his fingers on the child’s pile of blocks. The father keeps the pile from falling to encourage the child. Eventually the father stands back and lets his offspring learn the importance of stacking blocks correctly.

God often loves us so much that He forces us to learn, even when we cry out to Him in anguish. We want to have everything perfect today, but He wants us to be prepared for all eternity by the lessons we learn today.

If you don’t receive a miracle from God today, don’t be discouraged. Learn today what you need to learn, and maybe tomorrow will be exactly the right day for your prayers to be answered. (Reprint from May 1995)



*On Monday May 29<sup>th</sup> let us remember those who have defended the people and interests of America*

## PRISON TO PRAISE SPECIAL

*Go into all the World and preach the Good News to every creature (Mark 16:15 NKJ).*

These are “Not for Resale” copies and this *Prison to Praise* special does not apply to the Giant Print or Spanish versions of *Prison to Praise*. This offer is available through the month of May - while supplies last! For credit card orders call 1-800-PRAISE1 (1-800-772-4731). Shipping applies to one U.S. address. Please call (760)741-2755 for foreign rates or for additional shipping information.

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