

FALL NEWSLETTER

Serving Incarcerated Youth Since 1985

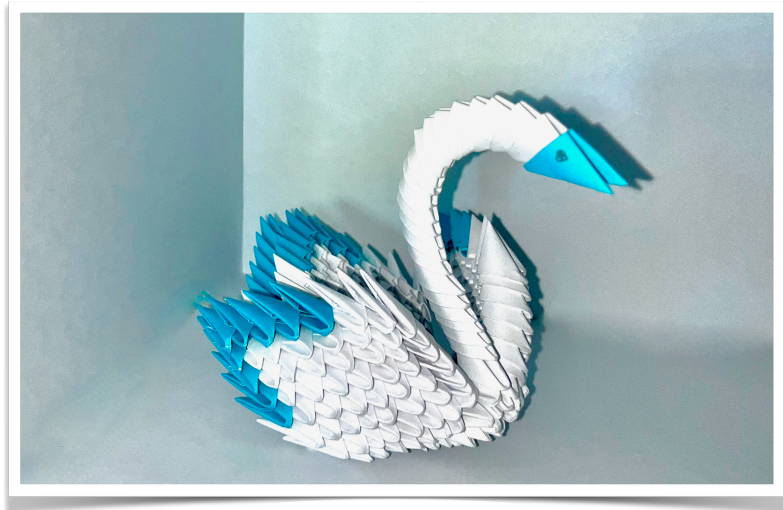
A Special Gift

A couple months ago I met Brian at the YGC Bible Study and then started meeting one on one with him as well. At our second session, he came out of his room with an amazing piece of art. I have been given many excellent drawings over the years but nothing like what you see in the photo. Brian is known at the facility as the origami guy and learned to cut paper into small pieces with thread (not scissors).

At age 15, Brian walked with his older brother to the United States from Guatemala. He was eventually placed in a foster family in Pasadena but ended up in Orange County Juvenile Hall at age 18.

Brian will be released in the middle of October and since he is an undocumented adult, he will have to find a place to live on his own without any identification or funding. Street Light Church may have a home open by then or another person I know runs sober living homes and may allow him to live there.

Hopefully, Brian will stay in touch so I can provide updates in my upcoming prayer newsletters.



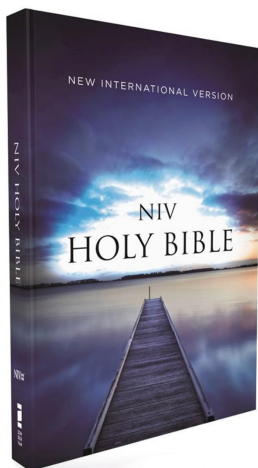
Truth Will Set You Free

One morning I was sitting in our church service and read on the handout, "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32) It sounded like just another verse in the Bible but little did I know the truth God was getting ready to show me.

It's crazy that all 18 years of my life, I thought my father was the man I called dad at home. I have been in Juvenile Hall for several months and have a 707 hearing coming up. A few weeks ago my parents and I were interviewed for the report. My attorney came to visit at Control and dropped off a copy for me to look at. Back in my room, I opened the report and read the first line. It was a quote from my mom that took me by surprise. It said that my biological dad had left my mom shortly after I was born. For the first time in my life I found out the man married to my mom is not my real dad. Shock led to anger as I realized that I had been lied to all these years. A few days later I called my mom and begged her to tell me the truth. She kept denying it and thought I would disrespect my stepdad by saying, "You're not my dad so why do I have to listen to you?"

A couple days went by and the more I thought about my childhood, I began to appreciate all my stepdad had done to treat me like I was his own son. I learned that the person you call dad is not the one who got your mom pregnant, but the one who raises

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I knew little to nothing about the Bible and the Christian life. So coming to Juvenile Hall ended up being a blessing. I remember going over to the bookshelf in Unit Y and the first book I got was a copy of the New Testament. A couple weeks later in Unit Z, the whole Bible I requested was delivered. After my quarantine was over, I transferred again and started attending the church services and bible studies. I signed up for discipleship and started meeting with Chaplain Rick weekly until I was released.

When January 1st came around, I had read the New Testament through three different times. So I decided to start from the beginning and read the entire Bible all the way through. There were a lot of new things I learned from the examples of those who walked with God hundreds of years ago. In the middle of June I finished reading all sixty-six books and was given a certificate by the Protestant Chaplaincy Ministry.

I was able to meet Chris' dad after his release and when a friend of mine had two free tickets to an Angel Game, Chris and his dad got to go to Angel Stadium for the first time.

you. Knowing the truth set me free from wondering why my younger brothers were always treated differently.

One of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:12 says, "Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you." My real dad is not around to honor but God showed me I can obey this command by honoring my stepdad who is. Today I am choosing to be thankful for what I have instead of complaining about the way things were.

FC

God Is Protecting You

My vocational teacher (Mr. Wells) is a firm believer and walks with the Lord in all he does. So I shared with him how I had seen the Santa Muerte (Death Saint) in a dream twice in one week. Each time I would scream for help and wake up the person in my cell. Mr. Wells told me I was fighting a spiritual battle. There has been an emptiness inside, like something is missing in my life. He prayed for me and told me to start living for the Lord. After we talked for awhile I went to get hot water to make coffee.

I ran into another inmate tattooed from head to foot and felt led to introduce myself. He was carrying a bible so I decided to tell him about my spiritual battle as well. His name was Ray and he told me that someone in my family is super religious and would tell me to pray but I would just brush them off. Having never met him before, I was surprised that Ray knew about me. He also said, "The last time you were out, someone was trying to kill you and you are in prison because God is protecting you."

Ray was absolutely right and I stood there amazed and in shock. How did he know? So I asked him, "Is this you talking or is this God speaking through you?" "The Holy Spirit wanted me to share this with you," Ray said. Chills ran down my back and I instantly felt happy. God's presence was there with me. I proceeded to pray with Ray and since that day I have not had any other nightmares. God is real and you need to be aware that he is there calling you.

Damian - Substance Abuse Treatment Center

PACIFIC YOUTH CORRECTIONAL MINISTRIES #003

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Thank you for reading my latest newsletter and for your part in helping keep me full-time on the mission field.

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