

LINES ON A PRISON WALL

Pacing back and forth in his prison cell, Leo D'Arcangelo was deeply disturbed - who wouldn't be, facing what was ahead of him? As a boy of eleven, he had picked a lady's handbag on a crowded trolley car. That was the start.

Five years of stealing followed before his first arrest at sixteen in a Philadelphia department store. Shortly after release he started mainlining heroin. Then began the seemingly endless arrests: November 1954, for use and possession of drugs, January 1955, for picking pockets. Shortly after, in Los Angeles, Leo was arrested for jumping bail.

As he paced in his cell he noticed a few lines crudely scrawled on the wall: "When you come to the end of your journey and this trouble is wracked in your mind, and there seems to be no other way out than by just mourning, turn to Jesus, for it is Him that you must find." This started him thinking: "This is the end of my journey. What have I got to show for it? Nothing except a lousy past and a worse future. Jesus, I need your help. I've made a mess of my life and this is the end of the journey, and all the crying isn't going to change my past. Jesus, if you can change my life, please do it. Help me to make tomorrow different." For the first time Leo felt something besides despair.

Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:3

of peace.
Psalm 37:11
The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance

MAKING CONTACT — GOD'S WAY

One day a pastor was called from a children's party at the Sunday school to visit a young woman whose world had collapsed into an acute depression following the death of her husband in an auto accident. She had withdrawn from everyone and shut herself in her bedroom with the blinds pulled, and was non-communicative with everyone including her children, for she said they reminded her of her dead husband.

The minister left the party in a show of confetti which the children had thrown at him. He brushed it out of his hair and from his coat as he prepared to call on the depressed woman. When he arrived at the woman's house, he entered her darkened bedroom, told her who he was, but there was no response. He could make out her form lying motionless on the bed. He tried to carry on a conversation with her, but she was unresponsive. He reached out to touch her hand but it lay lifeless in his. So he just sat with her in the dark silence for a time. Then he decided to act. He wanted to see the woman face to face, to read Scripture and pray. So he turned on the bedside lamp. The woman blinked and stared at him blankly. As he took out his Testament which he carried in his handkerchief pocket of his jacket, and opened it, confetti fell from it all over the bed. After an anxious and flustered moment, the minister burst into laughter. That did it. First a smile appeared on the woman's face, and then she broke into quiet laughter. She reached out her hands to the minister in the joy of resurrection. They prayed together and she left her darkness to return to the light.

The day I decided to commit my life wholly to God I scooped up everything I could see above the level of my consciousness and offered it to Christ. I felt free, but then came up an old resentment. I was filled with discouragement and I thought I had not given my life to Christ at all. But I learned that we continually commit ourselves and our problems day by day as they are revealed to our own consciousness. Keith Miller