



# We Can Live New Lives!

## Easter Newsletter 2024

I looked into the eyes of the man on the other side of the glass, past JR's missing teeth and scars and the crude tattoos that prison life had left on his face, and saw the tears flowing down his cheeks. The words of Jesus were no trite platitude to JR when He said; ***"Come to me, all of you who are weary and heavily burdened, and I will give you rest!"*** (Matthew 11:28) They are a powerful, living call to receive His love, to be healed and set free!

These are not the words of a teacher from an Ivory Tower somewhere. Jesus speaks with tears of His own, knowing the agony of cruel piercings and smashing blows that made His blood flow onto the cold stone pavement. They carry all the compassion and love that drove Him to offer Himself freely, body and soul, as a substitute for all that you and I deserve! ***"Your sins are forgiven!"*** No government or philosopher could say these words to JR! Or to me! But that's what we need to hear!

We long for the loving embrace of our forgiving Father, and that's what Jesus has accomplished for us! We are not only set free from the burden that pulled and held us down, but we are raised up with Jesus into a new and eternal kind of life, a pure and holy and bright and healthy life. No more white-knuckled human effort, trying with gritted teeth to be good enough, only to end in inevitable, inescapable failure, again!

***"We also may live new lives!"***

JR saw hope as he looked into the eyes of his Savior, calling him to step into a life he had never known, but always longed for! A love he had never seen, but knew he needed in the depths of his soul! And so do we!

He was looked down on and passed over,  
a man who suffered,  
who knew pain firsthand.  
One look at him and people turned away.  
We looked down on him,  
thought he was scum.  
But it was our pains he carried,  
our disfigurements,  
all the things wrong with us.  
We thought he brought it on himself,  
that God was punishing him  
for his own failures.

But it was our sins that did that to him,  
that ripped and tore and crushed him  
— **our sins!**

**He took the punishment,  
and that made us whole.**

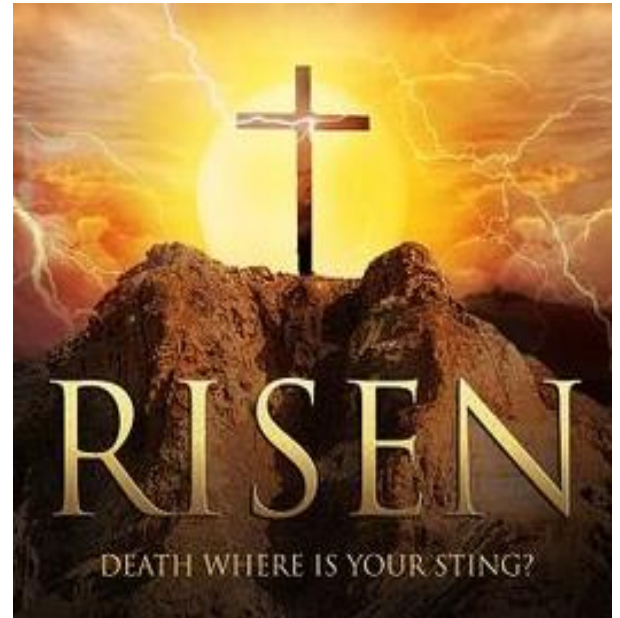
Through his bruises we get healed.  
We're all like sheep  
who've wandered off and gotten lost.  
We've all done our own thing,  
gone our own way.

And GOD has piled all our sins,  
everything we've ever done wrong,  
on him - ON HIM!

Isaiah 53:3–6, The Message

And just as Christ was  
**raised from the dead**  
by the glorious power of the Father,  
now **we also may live new lives!**

Romans 6:4 NLT



Thank you for standing with  
us to carry hope to the least  
of these!

May our Glorious Risen  
Savior bless your Easter  
celebration richly,  
and may His Resurrection  
life transform your walk and  
your witness for Him  
all year!

*Jan and  
Roxanne  
Carlisle*