

Dear Friend,

This month our message comes from one of our volunteers, sister Leslie. If you would like to share with our readers how you deal with a loved one or friend being incarcerated please email us your testimony. We will go through the ones we receive and use some for the Newsletter. Please limit your testimony to one page and include a picture of yourself if possible.

Have you ever heard the Footprints in the Sand poem? A woman dreamed about walking along the beach with Our Lord, and when she looked back at many times in her life, she saw two sets of footprints. Yet, when she looked back at the lowest and saddest points in her life, she only saw one set of footprints. She felt abandoned by God when she most needed Him. Yet, when she asked the Lord about it, God said that He had been carrying her through her tests and trials. The one set of footprints were those of our Lord.

Now, think of a time in your life that you felt as if you were walking through the desert. Perhaps you felt the devil tempting you, as Jesus experienced during his forty days and forty nights in the wilderness. Perhaps you felt abandoned by those who love you including your Lord and Savior. Perhaps you feel that stark loneliness and abandonment as you walk alongside someone you love who is serving time. One definition of a desert is a desolate or forbidden area. As a verb, desert means to withdraw from or leave usually without intent to return. Truly, when we feel that our loved ones and our God have left us, we find ourselves in what feels like a desolate place.

However, we are not alone. The Old Testament name for the Messiah is Emmanuel, which means God with us, and indeed, God is always with us. When you feel that ache of desertion and loneliness, open your heart and allow God's love and light to shine into you. Cry out to Him for help. "He turns a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water." Psalm 107: 35

In my life, I have found myself in situations that I knew I could not handle on my own. When I cried out to God for Him to carry me through, I experienced great things that I could have never done on my own. I believe that God's challenge to us when we are in the desert is to be obedient to Him so that he can carry us through—leaving His footprints, not ours.

"Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:11-13

Yours in Christ,

