

Gideon's Army

*"I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited me;
I was in prison and you came to Me."
(Matthew 25:36)*

Jail & Prison Ministries

November 2011

Your Dream, Your Vision

by Sandy Valdez

As you read this month's newsletter, you will see many comments and even feel emotions. This month we pay a special tribute to the founder of Gideon's Army, the late Larry Juedes. This issue is in his honor and dedicated to his family.

Everyone has a dream and maybe even a vision. Here's an encouraging story for you:

Joseph was a dreamer. His dreams were so real that he just had to tell others about them. Not everyone was as excited about his dreams, but that didn't keep him from believing what was in his heart. When opposition came and his family turned their back on him, when he was falsely accused and thrown into prison, he kept on dreaming. His life did not take the route he had expected, but God was working behind the scenes until those dreams became a reality.

I want to encourage you, no matter what route your life has taken, no matter who has turned their back on you or what anyone else has said about you, those God-given dreams in your heart are still in the making.

Your part is to keep believing, keep forgiving, and keep following your heart, all the while being obedient to God's word. Stay in faith and God will take you from the pit to the place He has waiting for you. He'll order your steps and fulfill those dreams and desires He has placed within you. When we commit our ways to Him, He gives us the desires of our heart (Psalm 37:4).

In his book "Believe It!" Joel Osteen says that learning to walk in the destiny God has for you is a process. "The first step is to get a vision, a clear picture from God that you can see. The next step

is to trust Him, to believe in faith that it will happen. And then finally you take a step of faith and live out what God has promised, no matter what your circumstances or people around you have to say."

As you take steps toward your dream, your vision for the future, remember what the Lord tells us in Jeremiah 29:11; He knows the plans He has for you. Trust Him to guide you. Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you (Matt. 6:33).

As Gideon's Army takes steps to make Larry's vision of a transitional facility a reality in Dodge County, we are trusting God to open those doors that need to be opened and to close the ones that need to be closed. In His time and in His way.

We hope you enjoy our tribute to Larry.

In Christ,

Sandy



Larry A. Juedes, founder of Gideon's Army

He Lived It!

by Pastor Cedric Hill

What impressed me most about brother Larry was his absolute, consummate desire that everybody be saved, and the quite way in which he did it. I never knew such a quiet voice could sound so loud!

Larry Juedes was a righteous man, not just because he was a child of God but because he practiced what he preached. But if the righteous would barely make it in, where in the world would the sinner be? Larry made me look at my own life and want to get it together.

There weren't a whole lot of smiles, but there was a whole lot of love. Larry loved his family and wanted each of them to receive those who had messed up because they themselves had messed up. He wanted his kids to realize that we all need forgiveness because we all, like sheep, have gone astray (Isaiah 53:6).

Larry had a way of making the Bible real because he lived it better than he spoke it, which gives credence to what the Bible says: "But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22). If I could be just one quarter of the man that Larry was, you could change my name to Cedric the Great!

Larry Juedes was a great man of God. In fact, he was a son. And I'm proud to present myself as one of his brothers. Glory to God!

A Full Life

by Larry Steel

What will be remembered of you when you're gone? Larry truly had a heart of walking in the power of Jesus Christ and discipling new Christians. That is so true of the Great Commission and how he so had a burden of what Jesus said in the parable of the sheep and goats. "I was in prison, and you came unto me..." He was definitely committed to leading and teaching the weekly Bible studies on Thursday afternoons at the Dodge County Jail.

I first met Larry at Full Life Church when I began coming there in January 2008. I always called him "Larry #1" and told him I was "Larry #7,652." He'd laugh, but he would be Larry #1.

After we began getting to know each other more and more, we learned that we each had very similar ministry interests and involvements. And when he asked me if I would like to take over the jail ministry Bible studies after he was diagnosed with the cancer and needed to go to Omaha for treatment, I acknowledged it would be an honor to fill in for him. (He was truly a humble man in Christ, knowing I would be faithful on his behalf. What a man of God he was!)

Sandy Valdez called me and got the information needed to get me approved through the Dodge County Jail. As I began to fill in for Larry, you could see the ongoing genuine interest they had for him, both the Sheriff's Dept. staff and also those incarcerated. After filling in for Larry for quite a period of time, he began to bounce back and would resume the jail ministry Bible studies. It was a joy to help him during that year and a half. We also became elders together at Full Life Church in January 2010, serving the Lord in the spiritual needs of the lives of those very special trophies of God's grace.

In his closing weeks and days on earth, I'd go visit and pray with him in his apartment, even at the time in his life when a walker was so very much needed; I got him my mother's walker for him to use, and he was so grateful for that blessing.



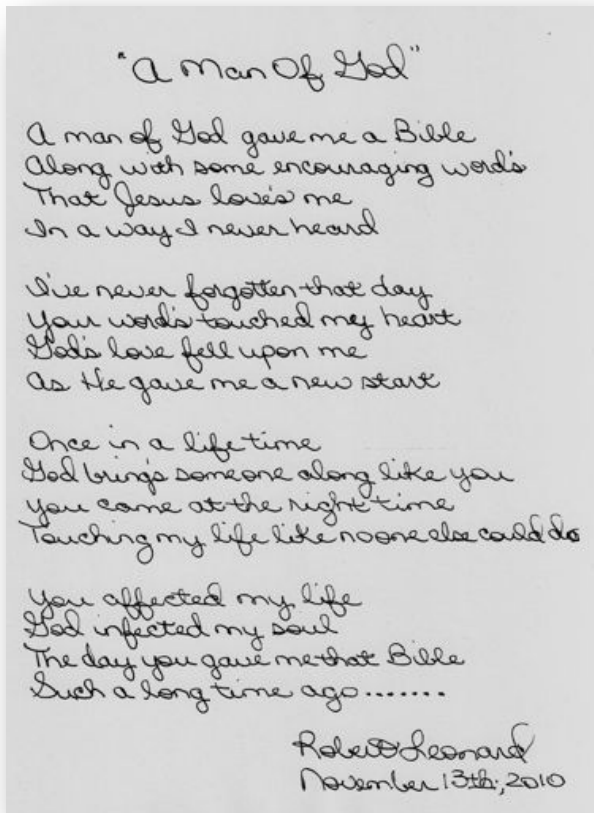
Larry had a heart burdened for discipling men and women in God's word. Thus, like Jesus said in the Great Commission, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end..." And for Larry, that was on Friday, November 12, 2010, when Jesus called him home to be with Him in glory!

'Bye for now, my brother in Christ. Larry S.



*"O Chaplain! My Chaplain!
Our fearful trip is done.
The ship has weathered every rack
The prize we sought is won."*

Originally written as "O Captain! my Captain!"
by Walt Whitman (1819-1872).



Robert met Larry while serving a jail sentence in Fremont, Nebr. He wrote this poem the day after Larry's "flight home." He and his wife, Lisa, are the editors of the newsletter.

Remembering Larry

by Don Atwell

For several years, Larry and I were partners on Sunday afternoons at the Bible study at the Dodge county jail. If I had to pick out something about Larry that was remarkable, it would be the fact that he really was not very remarkable at all. What I mean is he didn't seem to be really talented in music or speaking. He wasn't a flashy orator and he never seemed to wow anyone with his deep theological insight. What he did do should be instructive to all of us:

1. He loved God. Among other things, this was demonstrated in the way he'd get choked up talking about God's love for us and by the fact that he . . .
2. Loved those that were incarcerated. The fact that he spent so much of his time with them, praying for them and serving them is certain-ly evidence of this fact. As an old D.C. Talk song says, "I don't care what they say, I don't care what you've heard, the word love, love is a verb."
3. Larry was Larry. He never pretended to be smarter or better or tougher than he was. What you saw is what you got. How God is able to work when He doesn't have to deal with our pretentions!

The Bible is full of weak, ordinary, unlikely people that allow God to work miracles through them. Gideon is just one example. As the Apostle Paul points out in I Corinthians 1:26-27, "Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong."

How fitting that the organization founded by Larry be called Gideon's Army. How many men and women are today walking in faith because of Larry's testimony? I'm convinced that number continues to grow even after he is gone. What measure of success can top that?

Till We Meet Again



Larry Allen Juedes

March 11, 1947 – November 12, 2010

*Beloved Brother,
Thank you for your faithful service
To your country, Your city,
and your God.
Your devotion to inmates
And your perseverance
Have earned you many crowns.
You blessed us with your
gentleness and warmth.
And your small army,
Mighty in the Lord,
Will carry out your mission
To open a transitional facility
Where ex-offenders can hear the
Word of God
And see His love shining
through the windows
of
Larry's House.*

A Daughter's Love

Larry Juedes was a father, a friend to everyone, a giver, a lover, a prayer partner, and so much more. He gave of his time, money, love and more, even when at times he didn't have it. Here is a piece of a song I wrote about my father.

*The way you see into my soul
and look behind my eyes.
I don't have to hide my feelings
I don't have to wear a disguise.
To share your tender heart
the warmth of your smile
And the courage of your wisdom,
for this I'd walk for miles.*

In so many different ways, he did all this to so many different people.

I love you, daddy.

Your daughter Rebecca

∞

Breast Cancer Does Not

♀ *Discriminate* ♂

Men are notorious for not going to the doctor, even when they know something is wrong. It's even harder to get him to go for a checkup.

While less than 1% of new breast cancer cases occur among males, it is a fact that men do get breast cancer. Our own Larry Juedes was diagnosed with this form of cancer in 2010. Although it is more common in older men, this type of cancer can occur at any age.

Our bodies are temples for God's Holy Spirit. Let's take care of them!

Fellowship in Suffering

Christians in China, Russia, and the Middle East are putting their lives on the line for Christ by denouncing Buddhism, Communism, and the Muslim religion. And authorities are regarding them as criminals. Many are being executed.

The second Sunday in November is the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. Let's remember those who are in chains for their faith.

Hi Larry J. I'll send you encouraging words & stories each week.

Outside My Prison Cell

One day outside my prison window
 A sparrow came to me.
 I asked, "Hey little sparrow
 How's it feel to be so free?"
 He shook his head, as he replied,
 "I thought the prisoner was me...
 For you have the ability to pray."
 And only prayer can set you free.

Have a nice day
 Sam Marchese

VETERANS DAY

November 11



America Salutes You

For all you've done to keep our nation proud and strong, you servicemen and servicewomen deserve our praise and thanks. Happy Veterans Day!

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. (John 15:13)

Spreading God's word was Juedes' life work

By Tammy Real-McKeighan
 Fremont Tribune

To John Jozaitis, Bible teacher Larry Juedes was a mentor.

Jozaitis was an inmate at the Dodge County Jail when he met Juedes, who conducted Bible studies there for 23 years.



Juedes

"They asked if anyone wanted to attend a Bible study and I went — and to make a long story short — we really hit it off," Jozaitis said. "He brought me back to the saving grace of Jesus Christ and after I was released, we became really good friends."

Jozaitis would even help Juedes, taking the Fremont man to chemotherapy treatments and lab test appointments, after he was

diagnosed with cancer a couple of years ago. Jozaitis helped care for Juedes during the final months of his battle with the disease — and he plans to attend Juedes' funeral at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Full Life Assembly of God Church in Fremont.

Juedes died Friday at A.J. Merrick Manor in Fremont.

He was 63.

In a 2009 interview, Juedes said his first Bible study took place at the jail in the 1980s after his pastor couldn't make a visitation and volunteered him for the job. Before long, Juedes was conducting Bible studies on Thursdays and about 11 years ago was asked to teach Sunday afternoon sessions, too. Several years ago, he began teaching studies at Care Corps Homeless Shelter in Fremont. He also had led Bible studies at Full Life Assembly of God and Church of the Nazarene in Fremont.

Please see **Work**, A2

Continued from A1

Jozaitis believes Juedes touched thousands of lives.

Those who knew Juedes described him as a compassionate, faithful person, dedicated to his ministry.

"He was so very humble. He had such a heart of compassion. He was a wonderful teacher," said Sandy Valdez, a corrections officer at the jail, who ministered alongside Juedes.

Others expressed similar sentiments.

"Larry was a guy that had a big heart and he was somebody who really cheered on the underdog. He really loved the guys and he showed that week after week," said Don Atwell, who plays guitar at the Sunday studies.

The Rev. Mike Washburn, pastor of Full Life Assembly of God, where Juedes was an elder, had high praise for him.

"I would describe Larry as a quiet, unassuming, yet amazingly powerful man of God — a man of extreme humility and faithfulness to his family, to the Lord and to the community," Washburn said.

Juedes' daughter, Rebecca, also spoke of her father's care for others.

"My dad was a great father," she said. "He was willing to help anybody and everybody. He didn't care if you were a multimillionaire or you just committed murder, he would still try and help you."

The Caring Bridge

When word got out that Larry was suffering from cancer, people sent messages through an online organization called CaringBridge. Here are just a few of the heartwarming notes Larry received during his illness:

Larry, my brother, my mentor, my partner in the jail ministry, we are like two peas in a pod. Salt and pepper. Bread and butter. The Lord says we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Your light shines and your fruit is walking all over the streets of Fremont. Well done, good and faithful servant. Remember our verse, Jeremiah 29:11, a purpose, plan, future, and hope. The vision of the house will be honored and will come to pass. We walk by faith, not by sight. We are praying for you. ~ Sandy and Fidel Valdez

Dear Larry,

You are in our prayers, privately and corporately. You were lifted up to the heavenly Father last evening at our church prayer meeting. We love you, Larry, and pray for God's gentle and healing touch on you. Jeremiah 29:11 promises that His plan is for our best.

~ Bruce and Janet Johnson

Larry,

You're being prayed for around the world!! Thank you for all the lives you've so deeply touched, including mine. I sure miss Wednesday night Bible study with you and the rest of the guys. Get feeling better so you can make that trip to Belleville we were talking about. I look forward to seeing you soon. Take care :) ~ Dave Waring

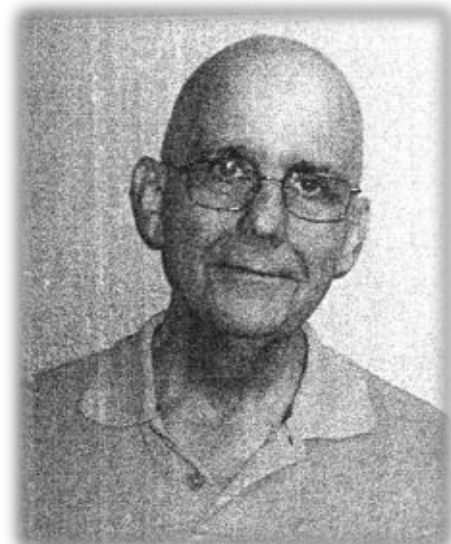
Larry,

Want to let you know we're thinking of and praying for you and your family during this time. "And my God will meet all your needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19)

~ Kelvin Sukut

Larry,

Had a good time at Bible study on faith, and I thought of how you've been so faithful and a mentor to many. Thanks for being there for me. Hope to see you Monday and are praying for you. You are laid on our hearts throughout the day. Love ya, brother. ~ Paul Valla



Larry's Vision

For more than twenty years, Larry Juedes began leading Bible studies at the Dodge County Jail in Fremont, Nebraska. He saw many inmates commit their lives to Christ and grow in faith only to return to jail soon after being released. He knew that they needed a place to go that they could call home without having to deal with the stress and strife that was such a big part of their real home. His vision was to open a transitional facility where ex-offenders could receive faith-based counseling and life skills training in a home environment that offers structure and super-vision.

Sandy and the rest of the Gideon's Army team are working to make Larry's vision a reality, but they need help. Your prayers and the financial support of the community will open the doors of "Larry's House" so that ex-offenders will have a place to go upon their release from prison that will help them gain the necessary training to prepare for employment as well as a healthy reunion with family.

One of the pitfalls that ex-offenders face is the temptation to rejoin their old friends and slip right back into the old ways of coping with life's adversity. At Larry's House, residents will learn how to address various issues that are holding them back and keeping them in the vicious cycle.



Larry stands proudly beside a Gideon's Army display set up in the lobby of a church. He and Sandy Valdez devoted many a Sunday morning to sharing with pastors and their congregations the need to open a transitional facility for ex-offenders

Fire From Heaven

Samaria was regarded by the Israelites as a place to be avoided because of its pagan traditions, which were practiced to help people feel holy and righteous. But Jesus wasn't about to avoid Samaria even though He was a Jew. He was all about preaching to the lost, healing the sick, and raising the dead.

When Samaritans reacted to Jesus with contempt, two of His disciples, James and John, asked Him if He wanted them to command fire to come down from heaven and consume these rebellious ones, just as Elijah had done (2 Kings 1:1-12).

Jesus rebuked James and his brother John, saying, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them" (Luke 9:55-56).

James and John were developing quite an attitude after seeing Jesus raise Jairus's daughter from the dead (Mark 5:37) and getting a glimpse of His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1). They were the sons of Zebedee, the owner of a successful fishing business.

Their mother asked Jesus to allow her boys to sit on His right and on His left when He reigned in His kingdom (Matt. 20:20). He responded by saying that this was not His to give but rather it was "for those for whom it is prepared by My Father."

In John MacArthur's book, "Twelve Ordinary Men," James is referred to as the older of the two "Sons of Thunder," a nickname given to them by Jesus because of their passion for the truth.

Although James was the most ambitious one in the group, the only *first* he's known for is in being the first of the twelve to be martyred.

Like James, we all have times when we would dearly love to call down fire from heaven to destroy those difficult people in our lives. But the fact of the matter is, we're all difficult people. Once our hearts are fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit, however, we are transformed into the kind, gentle, and long-suffering servants He can use for His glory.

Lord, call down Your fire and breathe it into us!

March 15, 2003



To Larry,

Hello. I told you I would write, so here I am.

The things you are doing for us who need help are great. The Lord will surely bless you for all you do for Him.

I myself am thankful for you coming up here and guiding us to the Lord, helping us through trials and tribulations and giving us hope. I wish there was a way to help, but at this time I can only pray for you.

The Lord says, "We can do anything through Him who gives us strength." Also, the Lord says, "I know the will I have for you, not to harm you, but bless you and give you a future." He is definitely mighty powerful and greatly merciful.

My life has been devoted to God for years, but I gave in to sin. The Lord put me in prison to make my relationship stronger with Him. He put me here to show me what it is He wants me to do. I now am on track in life and know I am saved.

There is a lot of sin in the pen, but there is even more God, if I keep my head with him. God bless you.

Your brother in Christ,

Chuck S.

Chuck went home to be with the Lord earlier this year. Just imagine what a joyful reunion he and Larry enjoyed!



Happy Birthday!

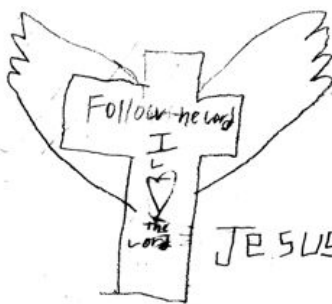
Born in November, your birthstone is the topaz. It symbolizes courage, faithfulness, wisdom, and strength.

Other notable people who were born this month include Christian recording artist Amy Grant, actress Meg Ryan, film director Martin Scorsese, and beloved evangelist Billy Graham.

"... Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49)

The Lord's prayer
O RE Father Who art in Heaven
Hallowed by thy name thy Kingdom
Come thy will be Done on Earth
as it is in Heaven Give us
this our daily bread & Forgive us for our
trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us lead us
not into temptation but deliver us
from Evil For thine is the Kingdom
& the Power and Glory ever & ever

Amen



Some inmates begin their sentence with very little education. It doesn't matter how good a speller you are or how well you can read. God can speak into any heart that is open to what He has to say.

"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."
(1 Timothy 4:12)

Don't Lose Heart!

by Larry Juedes

The following is the final article we printed on behalf of our beloved founder and president. It appeared in our November 2010 issue.

Greetings in the Name of our Savior and King! I've been thinking about our inmates and the many touching letters I've received over the years. I want to thank you for sharing with me how the Lord has been working in your life.

Some of you are about to be released, and you're probably pretty excited about that. But you also might be a little scared. What's out there waiting for you? Or more to the point, *who's* out there waiting for you? Others of you still have a long stretch ahead of you and are trying to find ways to hang in there when all you can think about is another day pretty much like the one before. I can only imagine how that must feel.

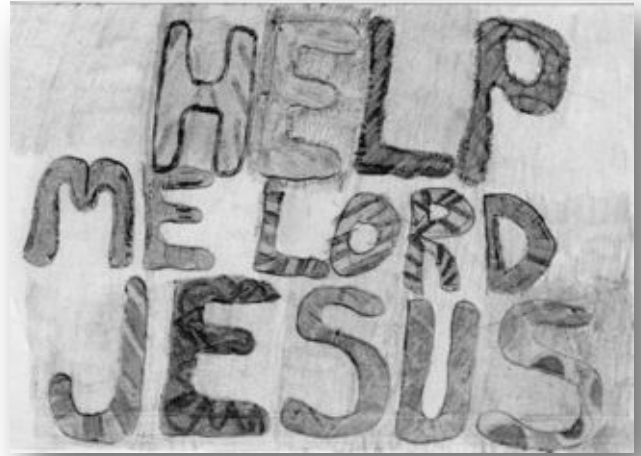
I've also been thinking about those of you who have just been sentenced. You might be going back in after swearing to yourself it would never happen again. What do you do?

Don't lose heart! Nothing gets wasted. God knows the plans He has for you (Jeremiah 29:11) and His plans are carried out without fail. Now, I don't know about you, but I find it comforting to know that the God I worship is a sovereign God. Even as I face more cancer, I don't lose heart. "Though our outward man perishes, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day." (2 Corinthians 4:16) I especially like the next verse: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Wow! How's that for encouragement?

When you find yourself running on fumes, refuel by reading His word. His promises are pure octane for the long haul.

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"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)



Be Strong

M. D. Babcock (1858 – 1901)

Be strong!

*We are not here to play, to dream, to drift
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift
Shun not the struggle – face it; 'tis God's gift.*

Be strong!

*Say not, "The days are evil. Who's to blame?"
And fold the hands and acquiesce – oh, shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name.*

Be strong!

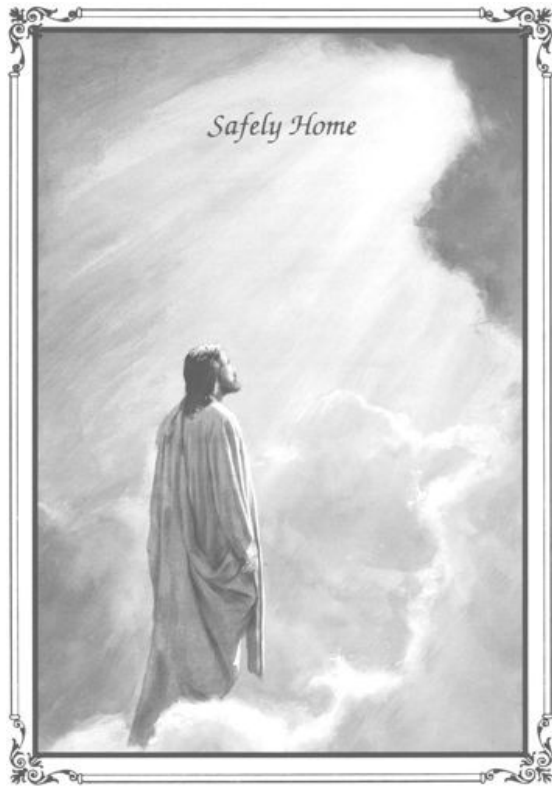
*It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong
How hard the battle goes, the day how long
Faint not – fight on! Tomorrow comes the song.*

Happy Thanksgiving

*Oh, give thanks to the Lord
For He is good!*

His mercy endures forever.

(1 Chronicles 16:34)



I am home in Heaven, dear ones;
Oh, so happy and so bright!
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.

All the pain and grief is over,
Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever,
Safely home in Heaven at last.

Did you wonder I so calmly
Trod the valley of the shade?
Oh! but Jesus' love illumined
Every dark and fearful glade.

And He came Himself to meet me
In that way so hard to tread;
And with Jesus' arm to lean on,
Could I have one doubt or dread?

Then you must not grieve so sorely,
For I love you dearly still:
Try to look beyond earth's shadows,
Pray to trust our Father's Will.

There is work still waiting for you,
So you must not idly stand;
Do it now, while life remaineth—
You shall rest in Jesus' land.

When that work is all completed,
He will gently call you Home;
Oh, the rapture of that meeting,
Oh, the joy to see you come!

Gideon's Army Jail & Prison Ministries

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