

“MY CHANCE!”

by David

As an inmate in a maximum correctional facility, I have had my share of regrets, bitterness, and resentment about my life. One area of bitterness came as a result of feeling that a fellow inmate had lied while testifying in my trial which resulted in me getting 42 years and my wife seven. While in the county jail, I had vowed that I would get even someday! I would break his nose and maybe worse if given half a chance! With the department of corrections keeping us in different facilities the chances of my revenge being fulfilled was extremely distant. On, November 30, 2006, however that chance came in an unexpected moment!

On November 30, 2006, I decided to turn in blankets that I had crocheted for the Jaycee’s “life warming stitches” program. Mr. Hughes of Freedom Challenge*, which teaches life skills from a biblical perspective, of which I have completed the whole eight months and am now involved in their extended training program, wrote me a pass to pastoral care. When I was leaving pastoral care and rounding the corner to head back up to the educational department where Freedom Challenge operates, I came face to face with the man that had testified against me, even lied about me. As soon as I saw him, I dropped my sack of yarn and drew back to hit him ... for now was my CHANCE!

As I drew back to hit him bitterness and anger weld-up in me, I wanted to hit him. To inflict my revenge! As Ron realized what was happening, and said, “Dave, wait, wait” and covered his face, I heard a voice say, “I thought you forgave him?” All the anger and hatred left and I realized he needed to forgive me. Instead of hitting him, I said, “Ron forgive me for feeling like this, it’s wrong.” He said, “No Dave, I need you to forgive me, what I did was wrong!” We got forgiveness, hugged and said goodbye.

A correctional officer (C.O.) who had been standing in the rotunda and observed what had just transpired came over and asked, “Is there a problem here?” “No, Not any more” I stated. That evening, after returning from Freedom Challenge, I was sent to the clinic and the C.O. that had seen the whole incident called me over and said, “good-job.” I told him, “There’s no longer a problem.” And he said, “I saw that!”

God is still in control and will make an opportunity, a chance, for you to work out the things that stop you from growing too. I really thought I had worked through it already & God said, “Oh, yeah, let’s see!” I stumbled, skinned my knees but didn’t fall! Thank God, I no longer harbor those feelings!

*Freedom Challenge (FC) is an eight month, five day a week, life skills program utilizing biblical principles to address life controlling issues (i.e. anger, lack of self-discipline, drugs, alcohol, un-forgiveness). FC is an affiliate of Teen Challenge International. FC began operations in March of 2005.