

# A CHALLENGING WORD

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## Convict, Convicted or Convinced

By Dwight Knight  
(part 1)

### CONVICT

A convict is someone who is imprisoned because of a violation of an established law, mandate, precedent or edict. Under the laws of present day governments, such a person must live a life separated from society. This is orchestrated to prevent society from the influence of his or her chosen lifestyle. It is a distinction of shame and infamy.

In the Kingdom of God, however, the parameters are reversed.

The life of the believer is a life best lived by voluntary submission. Whereas in the world of men, being called a prisoner of anything is a reproach that no one would ascribe to; yet in the service of Christ it's the highest honor attainable.

When Paul addresses himself as the prisoner of the Lord, he is not merely assessing his situation as being under arrest by the Roman government for his preaching the gospel.

Rather his declaration is one of pride and honor. To be a convict in his eyes for Jesus Christ is an imprisonment from which he never wants to be released.

The **goodness of God's plan** made the inconvenience of Roman chains small matters; the honor of living for Jesus in an impossible situation like facing death was worth encouraging his favorite disciple Timothy to follow also.

The **grace for God's purposes** is always sufficient for the tasks of life (II Cor. 12:7-9); Regardless of the challenge.

For in every step of the journey we've been called to take, we have the assurance of the Lord that His presence and ability will be greater than the task. The **greatness of God's power**, is the reoccurring theme found in the pages of scripture. It's evident in the life of every man or woman of God in history.

### CONVICTED

The Life of the believer is often exciting; but never easy. The loss of personal independence at first seems to be unreasonable, and in some eyes cruel. But to the redeemed heart that has walked with His Master for any length of time there is an assuring knowledge that the all surpassing love of Jesus Christ and the certainty of His promises makes even the most impossible situations bearable by His amazing grace.

There is a price attached to this life however. It is the price of the loss of freedom. No longer am I able to do my own will, and determine my own pleasures and destiny. For the committed believer, the **responsibility of righteous living** requires that we maintain a holy lifestyle before God. No longer can the desires of the flesh rule. Everything that the Bible says about honoring the Lord incorporates a personal ownership in living as Christ intended. I must depend of the Holy Spirit to live through me, but not live for me. His aid is always in conjunction with my surrender to His leading.

In all of this, God does not ask for blind obedience from us. He gives clear **reasons for righteous living** throughout the pages of scripture. Over and over His promises are fulfilled in the lives of those who commit to His will. And equally so, the promises of joy, grace and forgiveness are balanced with the truth that to disobey brings a life of despair and pain.

(The conclusion of this article will be in the February "A Challenging Word" issue.)

## Rebekah's Story

A testimony by Dianne  
L. Coventry (Part 1)

I wish I could tell you a life time of stories about Rebekah; the truth is she never had a chance to live out God's plan for her because I exercised my right to choose. Rebekah died July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1980.

I was 17 years old and had enrolled myself in High School. My parents were divorced years prior and the dysfunction in the new family environments was prevalent in either household. I went back to my home town, where my grades improved and I was hopeful to go to college and pursue a career. I never felt I was destitute while being on my own at such a young age. My outlook on life was a very positive one. We were raised with humor and love seeing the glass half full and I had a zest for life. Whenever I needed a job to pay rent or a meal or a place to live God would send an earthly angel to accommodate. I never felt in danger, although looking back I could have traveled many paths of destruction. Looking back, God was with me every step of the way. I am so thankful that He protected me.

Being a trusting person, always seeing the bright side of life with a smile, I was easy prey for the enemy. He convinced me differently during my crisis.

I met and fell in love with Rebekah's father, J. S. (using his initials as I have not asked him if I could use his name). We were going to be married some day. Too young to make such grown up decisions but we crossed that line of intimacy before marriage. Although we were "smart" about contraception, we experienced the 1% failure of the protection choice and I became pregnant.

We shared the news with his mother and we had a meeting at their dining room table where JS's father proceeded to tell me that if I kept the baby I was not welcome ever again in their house and that J.S. would be kicked out and they would not help him pay for college. I was told by JS's father..." I never want to see your face or your baby's face ever again." I was told about adoption and if I chose that route I was not welcome in their house until after the baby was adopted and removed from their presence. I was also told about abortion.

The enemy began his destruction by telling me I was abandoned by my father, unlovable and unworthy of being loved, unable to care for a child or go to anyone for help. I looked inward and listened to the world instead of following my first instinct. I had actually been happy and excited about being pregnant although definitely scared, too. But the dinner table discussion left me feeling abandoned yet again, this time by my future family. And if I chose to keep my baby, I would feel responsible for JS being abandoned by his family as well.

[Psalm 68:5](#)

[A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy habitation.](#)

JS and I left the house and he told me that he didn't care what his parents said; if I wanted to keep the baby we would find a way. But JS didn't know that I felt abandoned by my father. I myself didn't put that together until later in life. At that moment I was in survival mode and was making a decision based on fear. I remember the feeling; I remember the exact moment in his driveway to this day. I felt so alone, so responsible for everything in my world. I was supporting myself at age 17 and now I was responsible for JS's abandonment if I chose to keep our baby.

[The continuation of this testimony will be in the next few issues of "A Challenging Word". National Helpline for Abortion Recovery 866-482- 5433 (You may download the entire testimony at [www.challenge-ministries.org](http://www.challenge-ministries.org). Go to the Directory's Corner and click on A Challenging Word and Rebekah's Story will be listed among pass issues.)

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### UP COMING CONFERENCES

BELIEVER'S NOV. 27-29, 2009 NORCROSS GA  
WOMEN'S RENEW MARCH 5-7, 2010 CHARLOTTE, NC  
MEN'S SUMMIT JOURNEY APRIL 9-11, 2010 MACUNGIE,  
PA