

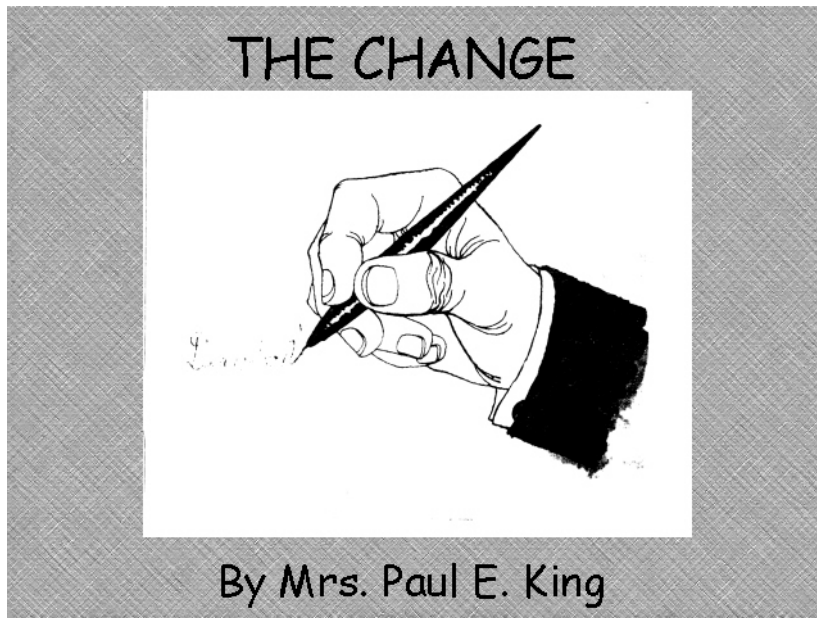
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The Sunday School Beacon
January 14, 1996 - February 4, 1996



THE CHANGE
(Part 1)
By Mrs. Paul E. King

Dear Tony,

So you finally decided to write. Thanks, twin. I'm sorry I have disgraced the family; you especially. And, even yet, I can't believe that I made such a

fool of myself. A dangerous fool, for sure. And me on the verge and the brink of such a promising career too!

Believe me, Tony, when I say that I'd give anything to relive that night But I can't: what's done is done. To my dying day, the sentence will follow me. I will forever carry the record with me -- to the grave. I curse the day my father gave me that first drink and told me it was time that I became a man. You were wiser than I: you refused both the drink and our fathers "challenge" to become a man. What a man it made out of me! How utterly ludicrous of me to have put the glass to my lips, since each of us saw and knew what a fool it made of our father when and if he overindulged and became inebriated.

Forgive me, Tony, if I sound bitter; but when you stated that Dad would not be making the trip back here to see me -- because of his shame over me and disdain for me -- I . . . I'm afraid I hate him. After all, who is responsible for what happened: my father, who wanted me to drink and "become a man," or is it I? Candidly and frankly and without any apology whatever, I lay the blame on our father. And now that I am in this place, he is too proud and too vain to come and see me. That hurts!

They are going abroad for an extended visit, you say. I am surprised they waited this long to leave Especially since their "bright and promising son" made headlines in the paper, I mean. Fortunately for me, a first-time offender is shown a bit more leniency than the repeaters. And fortunately for me, too, that I didn't kill anybody while helping with that big hold-up-robbery at the bank -- our father's bank at that! Again I say, how utterly ludicrous, since neither you nor I ever lacked for money: Dad was a great provider. Always. I am glad I can say this much for him. And yes, he has always been good to Mother.

I guess, like you wrote in your letter, I should be counting and enumerating his good qualities and traits instead of dwelling upon the first drink he gave me less than six months ago. Still, had he not given it to me and almost insisted that I drink it, I wouldn't be behind bars today. True, (as you stated) he didn't pour it down my throat. I admit this. Admit, too, that it was I who tilted the glass after putting it to my lips, and drank the bitter-sour concoction. But it still remains a fact that, had he not proffered it to me with the statement that it was time that I became a man, I would have refused as

stoutly as you did. But thinking that he thought I was less than a man did something to me and I drank it.

I always did seek his approval, as you will remember. Except for his drinking, Dad was my ideal. And now he refuses to come and see me! This is worse than all things combined, Tony. It stings my heart in a way that I cannot express it.

I have read your letter through so many times until I have it memorized. What I wouldn't give to be home with you! Sure, I have all kinds of reading material available to me; also television, videos, games, puzzles, et cetera, when I'm through with the daily exercise times and work periods. But I sit, mainly, and think. One has plenty of time for thinking in here.

I often close my eyes and, in memory, go back to the old grist mill and the pond in which you and I fished and caught our biggest and best sun fish and blue gills and then took them home to Mother for frying. And I think of that day in early May when we jumped from the rock into the icy-cold water in the pond for our first swim of the season. Oh, for those wonderfully carefree days of boyhood again! If I could only go back; but I can't. How I wish I could! I would never, never take even a first drink of alcoholic beverages.

I was sitting off to myself one day, recently, eyes closed, thinking back to a trek we had taken in the woods, you and I, when someone shouted rudely near my ear, "Hey, get with it, Lombardo. It's time you stopped moping. You wanting to go batty? C'mon, join the gang over here in a little fun. After all, you're not here for life. What's five years?"

He slapped me soundly on the shoulder and pulled me roughly to my feet in spite of my protestations, taunting me with, "You think you're better than we are, huh? Too good for us?"

I remonstrated; it was ineffective and futile and useless.

You wouldn't believe what you see here, Tony. It's scary at times. Creepy too. And while I get to see the sun and do a lot more outdoors than many of the prisoners do, still, the towering walls, the high fences and lookout towers surrounding the place are constant, silent reminders that I am not a free man. It's a serious and sobering thought. At times it nearly drives me crazy with fear and torment. To think that I who always cherished,

relished and delighted in roaming the great outdoors . . . I, who was free to climb mountains, fish, sail, surf, ski . . . am now incarcerated. No matter where one looks, the reminders are there -- everywhere -- I am no longer free. I am surrounded with these reminders and haunted by what could have been had I not tried to be a man of my father's making and kind.

I know now that you are right, when you said so frankly that, had I just given myself a quick glance in the mirror my better judgment would have asserted the fact that we are, indeed, men: tall, broad-shouldered, well-built men. Men! Not wimps. Men, every inch of us! And, yes, again you are right, when you stated that drink -- strong drink -- never made a man out of anybody; that, if anything, it weakened him and detracted from his true manliness.

Cecile comes to see me. In fact, she rarely misses a week of driving all the way back here to visit me. And, frankly, Tony, I wish she wouldn't come. She's a heavy drinker, as you and I both know, and she keeps telling me she'll see that I get all the liquor I want if I'll only say the word. I told her to forget it, that I've had all I care to have, ever! -- and only wish I could relive the past, that I'd never take even a first drink.

She laughs and says I'll feel differently after I'm here for a while longer. Then she said, "Anton, when you change, and decide you want a drink, let me know: I have a connection here."

She upset me so badly one day, when she persisted and insisted that a drink would really help me and soften my attitude, until I actually told her to leave and to never come back again.

I can't believe that I ever thought she was attractive and that she was fun to be with. Anymore, the mere thought of her sickens me. I'm sure it's due mainly and largely to the fact that I know how well she loves to drink. Believe me when I tell you that I'd never want her as a wife. Can you imagine what kind of life that would be! And then if there were children involved . . . ! I almost shudder with fear as I think about it.

I have been told that chapel services are held in here, and I have been thinking seriously about going. Don't faint, Tony, at my mention of this. I know we've never gone to church except for those three funerals and twice at

Easter. But like I said, one has plenty of time for thinking in this place and I figure the chapel services would be a diversion, at least.

I also overheard a couple fellows mention that a woman comes here once a month. A real motherly type, from what I gathered as I eavesdropped while working a crossword puzzle.

I know, I know, I should not have eavesdropped. I can almost hear you chiding me for a habit neither one of us could stand or tolerate in Murph Lang. But I "violated" our once-strict rule and I eavesdropped, Tony. I'm not proud that I did it, but I confess (to you) that I did. And frankly, I'm looking forward to seeing this woman and to hearing what she has to say. She's "different." At least that's what the fellows said. I have no idea what they meant by this; whether it's funny/humorous-different, fanatical-different, strangely-different, quaintly-different, or what, so I plan to be here in this room when she comes. This too should be a bit of a diversion.

Well, I've written too lengthily already, so I'll close for this time. I'll be counting the days until you arrive. Please, Tony, don't disappoint me. Love, Anton

(Part 2)

Dear Tony,

It was wonderful to see you! Thanks, twin, for that sooner-than-planned surprise visit. You will never know what it did for me nor what it meant to me. Time drags by in here.

I see the sun has given you a really good tan. That new construction job is certainly agreeing with you! You are more muscular and broad-shouldered than ever, Tony; every inch, a man!

I wish I was there, working with you and getting tanned and building up my muscles. What is that old saying? Oh yes, if wishes were horses, beggars would ride. It's something to this effect. At any rate, I wish -- sincerely so! -- that I was once again on the "outside"; that I would be free, like you are free. That I wasn't "marked." Oh yes, I am marked; my uniform "tattles" on me. It does it silently, to be sure, but it "tattles" nonetheless. Everyone who sees me and looks at me knows where I eat and where I sleep and where I dwell. I am

marked. And oh, these walls and towers and fences and piercing bright lights at night! They nearly drive me crazy. I want to be free, Tony. Free: Free to work; free to come and go as I please; free to roam, to run, to climb. Free, in the fields, the hills, the woods. Free: Outside free! Oh, what I wouldn't give to be free!

You mentioned that you heard from Dad and Mother only twice since they left for that trip abroad. I was afraid to ask you -- face to face -- when you were here, Tony, if they asked about me. I know this was cowardly of me -- not to ask you outright, I mean -- but I guess I feared what your answer would be; might be. I am asking you now, though, if they asked or made inquiry about me and how I was doing? Please tell me the truth, Tony. You have no idea how much this will help me, if I know they care and are concerned about me and how things are going with me. It will help to accelerate and speed up the time I must yet stay here until I am released. So, I feel I must know.

You wouldn't believe how frightening this place can sometimes be! Only last night, in a cell across from mine (there are four to five of us in these cells), a big fight broke out. It was dreadful, and this is putting it mildly. As you know, we're locked in for the night, so you can imagine, in a very small way at least, how terrible a thing a fight can be. It reminded me of a bunch of wild animals -- caged animals -- with all the yelling, bashing, fighting, cursing and swearing going on; only animals don't swear.

I had just fallen asleep and was into that first, deep sleep when I heard a horrible scream. At first I thought I was dreaming and was having a nightmare. The second yell and scream, however, changed what I thought I was having and brought me up, literally, sharply and quickly from my hard bed into the fear of reality. Incarceration reality, I mean. And until you have spent time here, there is no way I can describe it the way it really is. It is a dreadful place. Dreadful!

Not only am I not free, Tony, I am full of fear. This is a place of fear for me. You know I am not a coward I never was, nor am I now, a coward. But this place is a frightening place to be. There is so much violence in the cells. At night especially. I know I did wrong, Tony, and that I am paying for the crime I committed. But I am definitely not with my kind of people here, believe me. Ever so many of these inmate are violent and bitter and filled with

revenge. And -- perversion is rampant. This was the cause of the big fight. Not everyone, however, is perverted, or a homosexual.

These fights can be extremely "catching," and can "ignite" in cell after cell if not brought under control speedily by the prison guards. Fortunately for all of us, the guards were down in short order and after taking several of the men away -- these were the ring leaders of the trouble -- things settled down to normal for us and, finally, I managed to go to sleep again. However, I live in a state of constant fear when I m around some of these men. And I am not a coward! If worse comes to worse and necessity confronts me, I will do what I must to defend myself. Oh, what I wouldn't give to be free: free from this place, and free from fear of some of these extremely violent, bitter and revengeful inmates!

I went to the chapel service last night, Tony. I told you in my other letter that I planned to go. Well, I went, and it wasn't at all like I thought it would be. I can't say just what I expected, or didn't expect, when I planned on going. But whatever my thoughts and expectations were it wasn't at all like I was sure it

First of all, I was rather disappointed to see so few there. Don't ask me the why of my disappointment for I have no reasonable answer for this. Maybe it was simply that I thought the diversion itself would sort of draw the inmates into the service. Or perhaps I felt that each one would at least try to give the appearance and the impression that he was striving to change for the better by attending the chapel service any rate, it wasn't at all like any of the three funeral services we attended. Nor was it like those two Easter services we went to as little boys with our great-aunt Agatha when she came to visit and insisted we accompany her to church that Easter Sunday morning and night.

The chaplain was a serious looking man. I noticed that his eyes danced and twinkled brightly, however, when he told about the grace and the mercy of God. I never heard about grace or mercy before. I wondered what he meant by it. But rather than display my ignorance on the subject, I listened intently to everything he had to say and didn't ask any questions. It sounded real good though, I'll have to admit.

I was overcome with awe when he sang. Tony, he has a voice like the late Caruso. I mean it. His voice is not only trained, it's beautiful. And clear as

a bell. In other words, I was impressed by Chaplain Manns. And he's not an old man either. He seems to be a really nice man; someone who cares about those of us who are "serving time." (How I hate those words! They sound so . . . well, what do I want to say? Shameful, sort of describes them, but only in part and only in a small way. I guess, for me at least, ominous describes what I feel and how I feel each time I think about "serving time" or hear the term mentioned.)

But now, again, back to Chaplain Manns: I believe he actually loves us! This amazes me. But Tony, I could actually feel the love and the pity he has for us -- and feels for us -- flowing out from him to us. To me! And I know it wasn't merely my imagination: No way! He cried as he preached. Imagine it! A chaplain crying! I guess this, most of all, conveyed his concern and compassion and his love and pity to me. And when he stated that there was One who loves us far more deeply than any mortal on earth could love us, well, I didn't know what to think.

He then went into a discourse on the Lord Jesus Christ. Talk about learning! It made me realize just how ignorant I was about why Jesus came from Heaven to earth. Chaplain Manns said Jesus came to save us from our sins! I never heard that before. But then, I guess if I'd have gone to church more often than I did I may have known more.

Well, enough of this for now. But, kind of like a postscript, yes, I plan to go back for all the chapel services. And this week is "the week of the woman." Remember I told you that I heard about this woman who comes to visit those of us who are behind these walls and fences and wires? Well, I understand she's to be here this Friday. I plan to be where I can get a full view of her. She's quite unusual, so I have gleaned by conversational tidbits of jest and mockery dropped by some around me. At any rate, I'm looking forward to seeing and hearing this unusual person. At least, it will certainly be new for me and not the usual day-in day-out sort of routine thing.

Do come back to see me whenever you can, please, Tony. I knew I missed you, but I only realized how greatly and how much I missed you after I saw you come through those heavy doors. And then when you left . . .! Oh, Tony, thought I'd die. But (as is quite obvious) I didn't. In my heart, though, I believe a part of me did die. At least it felt that way. I felt I had to go with you -- my twin -- and oh, the remorse and the shame that washed over me for being such a fool and for committing a crime that put me behind bars! I never

meant to bring shame upon you, Tony. I honestly didn't. And I'm so thankful that my disgracing the family didn't keep you away. Thanks, Tony; thanks much for coming to see me. I love you.

Your twin,
Anton

(Part 3)

Dear Tony,

I know it's been long since I last wrote you -- too long, really, since you have written me three letters since your visit here. Thanks, twin. Thanks much for writing to me. I never really realized just how much you meant to me; how much we are a part of each other and need each other until these dreary months of my incarceration here. You, Tony, are my only link to the outside world.

Cecile finally realized that I meant it when I asked her to not come to see me anymore. She hasn't been back for weeks now, and I am truly grateful that she doesn't come anymore. She told me once that she and liquor were companions and that, so far as she was concerned, they would part only at the grave. I told her that parting would come a few days prior to the grave scene; that it would happen at death. She laughed, then said I was morbid and hateful and nasty since I was incarcerated, adding, that I was very prejudiced about drink and needed to learn more about it. Can you believe this, Tony! What other thing would I need to learn, when, a thousand times over I am sorry that I didn't have the strength nor the stamina to stand up against the desires and wishes of my father and say one stout and forever-final "no" to the proffered, provocative drink he extended to me that night. The drink that would make me a man!

Oh Tony, I couldn't write; couldn't answer your letters: bitterness filled, flooded and overflowed my heart when I read your response to the question I asked you in my last letter, the question as to whether or not my father inquired or asked you how I was doing when he called those two times from wherever he was as he and Mother toured abroad. He, who gave me that first drink and . . . well, I don't need to go into this again. Not any more, at least than to say again, as I have so frequently done, that had I not learned to drink, I would not be in here: I would still be a free man; like you, Tony.

When you said Dad hadn't inquired about me or my well-being, it was as though he sank a two-edged sword into my heart. And Tony, hatred boiled up inside of me like an eruptive geyser; hatred against my father, who introduced me to drinking then took off like a coward when I was sentenced to this dreadful place for my part in the crime. And you said he told you he didn't know when they'd be back home, which, as you and I both know, may not be until after I am released and out on my own, wherever "my own" may be or will be; for who, or what company, will hire an ex-prisoner? I know the law firm in which I was to have had a part and been a part of, certainly won't. But enough of this: I have some wonderful news to write to you now.

In my last letter I told you I had attended my first service in the prison chapel and that I was greatly impressed with Chaplain Manns. I also told you about a woman who visited the prison on a monthly basis. Well, I met her, Tony. What a woman! I felt I was looking at an angel instead of another mortal being such as I. She has a shining face! Her hair is white; almost as white as snow. She's not much taller than Mother, and her eyes are pools of love and compassion. She's a saint if ever I saw one.

She saw me instantly and noticed that I was new in the place and, immediately after her little service, she made her way over to me. With a glad cry she exclaimed, "O my dear, dear boy, you are the one the Lord has given me such a heavy burden for. You are Anton. . . ."

I stood like one who was stunned. Then I stammered, "Why, yes. Yes, I am Anton. But how did you know?"

With tears in her eyes, she said softly, "I was praying recently, way into the night; praying about my service for today, in this place. A heavy burden settled in upon my soul; a burden for today: for this service. Oh, how I wept and prayed for God to touch the soul or souls for whom the heavy burden was meant, that was cast so heavily upon my soul. Then, instantly, I felt I should pray for Anton. So I called your name over and over to my loving Heavenly Father, in Jesus' name, interceding for your soul and asking the Lord to save you and to come into your heart and make you a new creature in Christ."

And then, my dear twin, she said something that nearly tore me to pieces: she said, "Anton, I love you. You could be one of my grandsons, you

are so young. I don't know why you are in here, but I do know that Jesus, my Lord and my Master, wants to be your Lord and Master too. Son, today, Jesus is standing outside your heart's door: He's saying, 'Anton, will you open the door and let Me come in?'"

I was shaking like a leaf in late fall when the first Nor'easter sometimes blew in on us out of the North. You remember what that was like, Tony. At any rate, she was crying so hard over me until Chaplain Manns led both of us off to a little side room and closed the door softly behind us.

She looked at me for a while, then she said brokenly, "Anton, Jesus has come to pay a special call on your heart today. What are you going to do about it? You can't be neutral: you must choose whom you will serve -- will it be the Lord Jesus Christ or will it be Satan, the devil?"

"The Lord!" I cried instantly. I had had enough experience with what the devil does to those who follow him: I wanted nothing more to do with him.

She was sobbing so hard that she could scarcely speak. "Kneel, son," she said softly, pointing to one of four chairs in the room.

I obeyed, and then the fountain of tears erupted from deep inside of me and wept like I had never cried in all of my life. I felt so wicked, so sinful, so vile and mean. And Tony, I prayed. I who had never really prayed a single prayer in my entire life, was praying. I told the Lord how sinful I was and how much I needed Him and wanted Him, and suddenly everything was new. I was changed. My burden of sin was gone and I was laughing for pure joy and peace. Tony, your twin is born again! I am a new creature in Christ. I am changed. It is a wonderful experience! A glorious experience and a blessed reality. I'm no longer the old Anton: Christ made me new. Oh, Tony, I want you to be born again, too.

This wonderful woman with the shining face -- this saint -- gave me a Bible before she left, telling me to read it and to follow its precepts and its teachings and to believe it from cover to cover. She said it was the Word of God. Imagine this! The Word of God, my very own Book! My treasure. Oh, Tony, this is all too wonderful for me to fully comprehend; but I know one thing -- the old Anton is no more; through Christ, he is new. And so radically changed.

This dear motherly saint, Mrs. Esther Jeffries, has been coming to see me almost every week. She said she felt she had to teach me in the Word of God the way she taught her English-Literature students their studies when she was a teacher in high school years ago. What a marvelous teacher she is and what glorious spiritual vistas are unfolding and opening up to me! I stand amazed. These Bible studies are times of spiritual richness and enlightenment for me. It's like digging for gold and uncovering nugget after big nugget, only mine are spiritual gems; heavenly nuggets.

My earth-angel (as I look upon her and feel about her) is over-zealous for me, I feel. She has aspirations for me the likes of which I can't begin to conceive or imagine possible. Not so, this wonderful Bible teacher, whose love for me is like that of a mother. A saintly mother. Always, she addresses me as son while she teaches me and gives me the lessons which she has outlined and written down for me to do. And Tony, I am growing, in my soul, like you can't begin to imagine. Oh, how I love the precious Word -- God's Word -- the Bible. I read it every chance I get, which is frequently. My soul is "prospering" in the Lord.

I will close for now; but I promise that I will try to write you again, soon, the Lord willing. Until later,

I love you,
Anton

(Part 4)

Dear Tony,

What a beautiful, beautiful life -- and way -- is this Christian way! Oh, my dear twin, my heart is too full to keep it inside; I must tell someone: so I am writing to you, my beloved and much-appreciated brother.

Thanks for writing to me and for answering my letter so quickly. No, I know you can't understand what has happened to me, Tony. I would have been the same way had it been you who was telling me -- or, I should say, was trying to tell me. You see, my dear twin, this that has taken place within my heart must be experienced (personally) in order to be understood. All I can say is that it is positively indescribable. It is joy unspeakable and full of glory; it is heaven in one's heart. And now something else has happened to

me: I have been sanctified wholly. My heart has been cleansed and purified from every trace of inbred sin -- that old nature within that caused me to do the wicked things I did.

When I was born again (St. John 3:3) or converted, (as it is also called in St. Matthew 18:3 and 13:15), I was forgiven by God through Jesus' precious blood, of all my committed sins; when I was sanctified wholly, my heart was cleansed and purified and purged from all the inbred sin and the carnal nature and I was filled with God's sweet Holy Spirit. My heart is now pure; my rest is sublime.

Oh, Tony, I can't begin to tell you how glorious this is! Since the Holy Spirit has taken complete control of my heart and life and of my mind -- all of me; every part! -- I have a Comforter who is with me always. I am never alone: He dwells within me. He walks with me and He talks with me. Our fellowship is truly Divine, and now my heart is free. I am still incarcerated, to be sure, but Tony, I am a free man. More free even than those outside these walls who don't know the Lord Jesus Christ. I am free, free, free!

I am not only free, my dear twin, but I also am no longer bitter. Nor do I hate. Not even Father! No one! Oh, glorious freedom! Freedom from hatred, bitterness, strife, envy, malice, jealousy, pride, lust. Glorious, glorious freedom! My heart is like a great overflowing river of love -- Divine Love! God's Love! -- for everybody. Father and Mother especially. This is why I was hoping you could send me an address so I could write them. I need to ask for forgiveness from them and to tell them how greatly I love them.

If Dad calls again, please try to find out where their next port stop will be. I need to contact him, Tony. I feel it will be spiritual health for my soul if I can unload all the old baggage of past grudges and grievances and bitterness as quickly as possible by making full restitution and asking for forgiveness. It is a wonderful thing, this godly sorrow that led me to repentance. Please allow me to quote from II Corinthians 7:10-11; "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

"For behold this self same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing in yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter."

Like I previously stated, I am a free man, my dear twin. Free as a bird in the air. Chaplain Manns has had me speak twice in the chapel service. I was amazed how easy it was for me to stand up in front of the "congregation" and tell them what happened to me and what took place in my heart and soul. Then scripture verse after scripture verse came to mind and I expounded briefly on each, as the Lord helped me.

I feel such great love and concern for these, my fellow inmates. Some make sport of me, to be sure, and laugh at me. They think it's a sign of weakness to become converted and to follow Jesus. But I gladly and willingly follow the One who gave His life on Calvary's cruel cross so that I might live and have eternal life. I am not ashamed to be called one of His: with joy, I take up this cross and proclaim that I am indeed His follower; His child.

My saintly teacher and angel lady continues pouring the Bible study lessons into me. She said recently that she feels her days on earth are limited, and that she must do everything possible to make an excellent Spirit-filled Bible student out of me in the time yet allotted to her. How sad her words were to me! I love her so, Tony. She has been a mother to me, loving me in spite of the crime I helped to commit and always, always, pointing me, guiding me and leading me to this blessed, higher and victorious way in Christ. Talk about a light, that is what this dear lady has been and is.

She has told me more than once that she feels God has something special for me; that there is a place in life which only I will be able to fill. I wish I knew what she meant -- or means. I am learning, though, that God doesn't reveal everything to us in one big lump or all at one time. Many of life's greatest lessons are often best learned by simply being still and knowing that He is God, as Psalm 46:10 states so wondrously.

I am seeking to know God's will for my life, Tony, for I know there is something I will be able to do to help build up His kingdom. In time, I know He will reveal His plan for me. My angel lady told me that, sometimes, He may open a door wide, until one knows without any doubt that the opening was of the Lord and he must, therefore, enter that open door and work for the Lord there. Then there are other times, she said, when one may have no wide-open door experience at all, but, by much prayer and months of sweet patience and trust, he will be led, one step at a time, into the God-chosen field of labor.

I know this one thing, and that is that this God whom I love and worship and serve, delights to give good gifts to His children; nor will He leave them without His guidance. Like a shepherd, He leads those who are His, loving them oh, so intensely and greatly because they delight to follow Him and His leading. Patiently I will allow Him to lead me where He wants me to go.

I am overjoyed to know that you took my advice and bought a Bible. Read it prayerfully, dear brother, and read it often and with your heart wide open. I am praying for you; that you too will come to experience and enjoy the reality of God's full salvation. We will not then be only biological twins but we will be spiritual twins as well. Oh, how eagerly I am awaiting this day.

I wrote Cecile and asked her forgiveness for the bad attitude I had toward her and for the bitterness I harbored in my heart for her because of the stand she took for liquor and all alcoholic drinks. I told her my feelings hadn't changed one bit toward the issue of drinking, but I said that my bad attitude toward her, and my bitterness, was every bit as wicked and sinful and evil as was her drinking and her high praise for the poisonous stuff.

I haven't heard from her, and I don't expect to hear from her. But I have done what is required of me to do to get to Heaven, and this gives me great satisfaction and peace of heart and mind. I told Cecile what happened to me and what took place in my soul and in my heart. I also told her I was praying for her, and wanted her to turn to Jesus and allow Him to save her and change her the way He transformed me. What a witness for Christ she would be if she were converted!

Well, Tony, I will close for now, since I have a pile of Bible study lessons to finish and turn in to my beloved spiritual teacher for "grading," and correcting (verbally, where correction and proper interpretation is required and necessary). Oh, what a teacher she is! Without any doubt whatever, the Lord led this saintly woman here for me; for my spiritual enlightenment and help. She (and Chaplain Manns, too) has "discipled" me. She has taught me from the Book, to which I was once a stranger and was like a heathen. I will forever love her and thank God for her.

I love you, Tony, and I am praying for you. I am expecting to hear the good news of your conversion any day now. Until then, I want you to remember that your twin is a free man now, even though he is still behind

walls and wires and fences. The Spirit of Christ has liberated your brother, Tony, and set him free. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!

With much love --
Anton

(The End)