



S.M.I.L.E.—Samaritan Ministries Imparting Letters of Encouragement

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The Guilded Cage

By Sherry A.

What do you see when you hear “human trafficking”? Children being snatched up in third world countries or even here in the USA where homeless children are desperate for a home, or maybe unaware parents taking their eyes off their children for just a moment while shopping? That can and does happen, however there is another way that is taking place right before our very eyes.

This story is about an eighteen-year-old-young lady who was brought up in a Christian home with lots of love and boundaries. She worked in a restaurant in her home town. She normally heeded the “rules” of the home and was fine with them. Waitressing opens doors to meeting people and many become regulars. There was an older man who would come in often and strike up a conversation with the young woman, and, over a period of time, the two learned much about one another. Unbeknownst to the young woman, he was passing the information on to two very handsome young men who were a little older than she.

When they started coming in to the restaurant, they knew what she looked like, her interests, and personal history. She could not believe how much they had in common with her in just a few short conversations. She delighted in talking to them and befriended them. They told her all about the mansion they lived in and their glamorized lifestyle enticed her further. One day they invited her to spend the weekend with them. They would have a weekend of doing the things that she really enjoyed doing. She was hooked. She called her mom from work and asked if she could spend the night with a girl friend. The mom said no. The young lady told the two men that she could not go. They reminded her that she was eighteen and could make her own choices. She went with them.

Everything they had told her about their mansion and other points of interest that sounded too good to be true was right before her eyes. A phone call came in to the men. Could they come to Arizona soon? The men knew this was a desire of her heart from the earlier conversations with the older man. When asked if she would like to go to Arizona with them, she jumped at the offer. The plan was in motion. However, there was a friend of the family who knew about this kind of human trafficking and enlightened the parents. Plan B went into action.

The friend of the family arranged to have a female authority meet with the young woman at a motel. The parents and the friend of the family assured her it would be alright to meet with the woman and explained to her what these men were up to. She met with the authority and was taken back to her home. Had she gone with the two men, she would have been sold at a high price to someone in another country to be locked into sex slavery for the rest of her life.

These people are seeking young, beautiful, and gullible girls. This young woman in her interview emphasized a very important point for parents. When your child asks about something, take the time to explain why it is harmful. “No, because I said so” does not cut it with children. They want to know *why* they can’t do a particular thing and will find out on their own the reason why they can’t, which could lead them into a fate worse than death. Communicate with your children even when it’s not a convenient time. It could save their life.

(Editor’s Note: This article was written from a documentary one of our staff saw on television. Some of the women we’ve assisted have stories relevant to this article. Conversely, however, they are brought HERE from another country which had promised a better life which turns into enslavement and abuse.)



Human slavery is a robust,
multi-billion dollar industry—
only drugs and weapon dealing
are more profitable.



— Dr. Noël Busch-Armendariz

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Father Knows Best

By Heather Hoffman

Job 6:10 – “At least I can take comfort in this: Despite the pain, I have not denied the words of the Holy One.”

Nowadays, when folks drop the phrase 'having the patience of Job', guess who they are referring to. Tell me all those years of chronic pain, suffering and hardship wouldn't push you to the end of your spiritual rope. A raise of hands and Amen!

Do you think Job was 'done', at the breaking point of turning his back on God, abandoning all faith? It's an internal tug-o-war, especially for those who choose to stay the narrow path of obedience and humble servitude. It becomes a question of: Is God doing this to test me, to let Satan temporarily take the reigns on my life or have I subconsciously submitted to unholy temptations to gain some relief from endless struggle and in turn, making it worse? Do I choose to remain in hope of HIS plans for me or resort to darker means to make it all better?

We approach our Holy Father with a child-like "Daddy, it's not fair!" foot-stomping tantrum because we see non-believers leading a more prosperous and charmed life. However, they may have taken to less scrupulous means to obtain it, which makes them a less-perceived threat to the 'enemy'.

For those trying to walk the holier road, constant tribulation and detour make it a challenge to stay the course for our glorious conclusion and can lead us to discouragement over the stagnant lacking quality of our earthly existence. We get that 'swallowed up and spat out' Jonah-like complex mainly due to not meeting worldly standards. Staggering with insult to injury, we feel kicked while we're down. Blessings are seen as far, few, and fleeting rather than a subtle constancy in our lives.

Our last line of defense via hope in HIS holy promise is how we claim victory. Forsaking the evil one is how we defeat distress and despair in our weaker, vulnerable moments.

Jeremiah 29: 11 – “For I know the plans I have for you...plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

FROM A VERY HAPPY CAMPER ☺

“I would have fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart, wait I say on the Lord.” (Psalms 27:1)

I've been a participant at Samaritan Ministries for over a year and have never once regretted signing up. When I volunteered at Alpha House I then discovered all the benefits Samaritan Ministries provides, because they are housed next door to each other. The Lord orders our steps and places us where He wants us to be, but we must be devoted children under the protection of His love. I'm so glad He orders my steps.

Samaritan Ministries provides food, produce, and toiletries to its members. They have advised me in many facets of assistance throughout Palm Coast. As a widow I have directed by them to financial facilities in times of my need. I have received car maintenance, prescription refill, and financial counseling from Samaritan Ministries as well.

Ms. Lorraine along with the other employees/volunteers have been so kind and patient toward me. They truly express fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5). I have a peace and confidence as I walk through the doors of Samaritan Ministries, and the best part is that they treat each participant professionally as well as individually. Because of their confidentiality, I've told several other single women in need of the help they can supply. I will continue to tell others about the wonderful assistance Samaritan Ministries offers, for we are blessed to be a blessing.

Thank you Samaritan Ministries and I thank my Lord forever.

From a very happy camper

