

“Frank’s Letter to Barabas”

April 23, 2006

By Rebecca Enney

I John 1:8-9: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

It was just a few days after Easter when Barabas was up in his room looking for his baseball. He wanted to go out and play ball with Jeeter, his dog. Uncle Floyd called to Barabas “The mailman just came and I reckon there is a letter for you.”

“A letter for me?” thought Barabas as he heard Uncle Floyd coming up the stairs.



“It’s from Frank Heffelfinger.” Uncle Floyd said as he handed it to Barabas.

Barabas knows that Frank is his real father. “I don’t think I like getting letters from him,” thought Barabas. “I like Uncle Floyd. I wish Uncle Floyd was my father.”

Barabas opened the letter and looked at it. Then he gave it to Uncle Floyd to read aloud to him, because Barabas is only in second grade and even though he is a good reader, this looks like a lot of words.

Uncle Floyd read the letter:

Dear Son Barabas,

I hope you are well. I am well. I am writing to tell you three pieces of Good News:

First, I have completed my prison sentence and was released last Saturday. On Easter Sunday I left for Los Angeles CA to live with my cousin. I had one job interview today and I have another one tomorrow. This is a whole new beginning for me. I am excited about "doing it right" this time.

My second piece of Good News: My brother Floyd and I have talked about what is best for you, my son. We talked with Pastor Ed and others and we have prayed about this and we decided that what is best for you is for Uncle Floyd to adopt you. He is already the best father you could ever have.

My third piece of Good News is that I have come to accept responsibility for the wrongs I have done. I failed you as a father and for that I am deeply regretful. When I first was in prison, I felt like it was all so unfair. After all, that car crash five years ago was just an accident. I thought I had done nothing wrong. Why should I be in jail? I wasn't THAT drunk. And who would ever know that I was driving without a license? The chaplain at the prison invited me to Bible Study. One day when I was reading the verses from 1 John it made me stop and consider my own mistakes. When I thought I had no sin, I was just lying to myself. But when I confess my sin, Jesus forgives me as He forgives all our sins by his atoning sacrifice on the cross.

The cross that Uncle Floyd helped you hang over your bed is from me. I carved it in the woodshop at the prison. The cross of Christ has changed my life. The cross of Christ has saved my life.

Maybe some day you and Uncle Floyd can come out to visit me. We could go to a ballgame when the Los Angeles Angels and the New York Yankees play. Would you like that?

I know that Uncle Floyd loves you very much. I wish only the very best for you. And he is the best!

Love,

Frank Heffelfinger

Uncle Floyd gave the letter back to Barabas. Barabas folded the letter and put it back in the envelope, thought for a moment and then placed the envelope under his bed for safe keeping. Then he went back to Uncle Floyd. He LOVES Uncle Floyd.

Uncle Floyd said "I reckon that you and me and Jeeter should go out and play some ball." And he gave Barabas a big friendly wink and a hug!

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