

# GOD'S WORD IS NOT CHAINED

## 2 TIMOTHY 2:9

**For 50 years**, Prisons Week has encouraged Christians everywhere to pray for prisoners and their families, victims of crime and their communities and those working or volunteering in the criminal justice system. Please pray each day during Prisons Week but also ask yourself if there is one thing that you as an individual, or as a church, can do to help any of the people for whom you are praying.

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## PRISONS WEEK 2025

### 2 TIMOTHY 2:9 GOD'S WORD IS NOT CHAINED

(NIV) the reading for 12th October 2025, Prisons Sunday

Many things in life can bind us, fear, anger, abuse, rejection or shame. And this is as true for those held in prison as those who are not. And unless that bondage is addressed the consequences of this can be very dark. Hopelessness and helplessness can overwhelm, destructive behaviour continues unchecked - an imprisonment of body and soul.

But we believe that God desires to break those chains and to set people free. To restore in them the image of God. And he does this through his Living Word, Jesus. As we celebrate this truth for Prisons Week 2025, we are delighted to offer the testimony to God's power from a number of people who have worked in or been caught up in the justice system. Their experience of having chains broken by God's grace is an encouragement not to give up. To know we are loved by God and restored to those who love us and the communities we live in. So, join us in prayer, give thanks for God's grace and mercy and share God's work of release in your own life. (The full transcripts of testimonies are at [prisonswEEK.org](http://prisonswEEK.org))

We are enormously grateful for the support offered this year from Lady Unchained [www.unchained.org.uk](http://www.unchained.org.uk)

**DAY 1 THE PRISONS WEEK PRAYER** *Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist. Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care. Heal those who have been wounded by the actions of others, especially the victims of crime. Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit, now and every day. Amen*

### DAY 2 SIMON, A PRISON CHAPLAIN

Aged 40yrs, Simon's world collapsed – homeless, jobless and addicted – he could no longer perceive any value in himself. The religion he had grown up with had nothing to offer. But God sent a fellow traveller who began to reveal to him certain truths that hadn't registered – he was loved, made in God's image and known and God wanted Simon to know Him. Only later did Simon understand this not just as 'metanoia' meaning a change of mind, but rather a fundamental conversion in the way he thought. Simon writes 'In truth, it's still happening ... the only thing that is important is the willingness to change and be changed.'

*Heavenly Father, I thank you that no matter how far we have drifted away or how low we have fallen, change, through you, is always possible. May all those who need change in their lives and thinking be ready to recognise the possibilities you offer. May all who have become held down by old behaviours or lack of opportunity become open to the hope of metanoia. And may you empower those who long to do your work so that they may be ready to answer your call to bring the good news of change to those who need it. Amen.*

### DAY 3 LOUIS, A PRISON LEAVER

Louis describes growing up in a world that was "broken", Abandoned by his own mother as a baby, brought up by his well-meaning father within an extended family, sexually abused by a step-sibling, he experienced loss, confusion and "chaos" throughout childhood. Destructive relationships and behaviours followed, and eventually prison at the age of 15. He was there when his father died and he was completely broken when Jesus met him. He writes 'From that moment on everything changed.' Through the support of the prison chaplain and many twists and turns Louis' faith grew powerfully. Louis now serves God as a school mentor drawing alongside children from similar backgrounds to his own, sharing his experience of being set free.

*All glory to the one true living God who saves, redeems, heals, and fills us with a love you won't find anywhere else. Amen.*

**DAY 4 SUSIE, A FORMER PRISON GOVERNOR**

Susie's relationship with Jesus really deepened through Alpha around the same time that she joined the prison service. As an officer confronted by a world of "darkness and emptiness" she began to see with clarity that "restoration" could only come through faith in Jesus. Later as a governor she was witness to God's redeeming power in men's lives and passionately believed that no one was beyond God's reach. But after 20 years' service she came to realise that she had become overwhelmed...the Lord led me into a place where I could no longer do life in my own strength'. Leaving the prison service was hard but Susie now sees how the Lord has affected that change and brought her into a new space professionally working with children with care experience.

*Lord, we thank you that you are always there. Whether we choose to hang in our own strength, or risk letting go so you can catch us and hold us, you are always there. I am sorry for the times that I have tried to do life in my own strength and I pray for humility to continue to seek your way for my life. Thank you, Lord, that your word is not chained, or restricted by walls, that you know and love each one of us. Amen*

**DAY 5 LYNDA, A VICTIM'S PERSPECTIVE**

Lynda became a Christian as a teenager at Sunday school. After 36 years of Christian faith, married to a church pastor and with two grown-up children, Lynda experienced the sudden and tragic loss of her son through a "knife attack". Despite the shock and pain of loss, she sensed a "higher purpose" even from the first few hours after receiving the news and identifying her son's body. The Lord has not only comforted her in her loss but also called her to serve Him in prisons by sharing her story and God's offer of forgiveness to those who genuinely repent. Despite that tragic loss, Lynda describes her life as "an amazing journey, full of purpose".

*Lord, we praise you for who you are, the almighty God, maker of heaven and earth. We thank you for the freedom your word brings. We thank you that you have given so many opportunities to bring Your word to those in prison who don't know you. We pray that your Holy Spirit will touch every heart and bring change to the lives of people who are in darkness. Reveal yourself to them Father and bring them to salvation. In the name of Jesus. Amen*

**DAY 6 JP, A MAGISTRATE**

'We are not here to help - we are here to do justice – the words of a very wise and learned Justices' Clerk who trained me for the Magistracy have stuck with me. JP understands that justice is about the application of the law, recognising the humanity of the people who appear before him, made in the image of God. Something has gone awry, but it is his task, and that of his colleagues, to deal with the matter with humanity. Jesus always saw beyond the problem to the person. Jesus walked with the wounded, talked with the troubled, reached out to the wrecked – but was also never afraid to "say it as it is". That's justice and mercy walking hand-in-hand!

*Lord, we pray for those who are broken, without help or hope within the judicial system. Give wisdom, clarity and grace to all in authority, particularly judges and magistrates, that they may serve with integrity and humility and seek the common good. Amen*

**DAY 7 ANN, A PRISONER'S DAUGHTER**

Ann's father's attempted suicide and later imprisonment set up a chain of emotions for her. In her twenties with a new baby, she found that living on the wrong side of the justice system was a lonely place to be. Justice can feel like a muddled grey, especially when the offender is vulnerable and a parent you love. Brought up with faith but never really engaging, her father's imprisonment changed everything. 'It dawned on me that God was with me'. Ann now works to support family members of people in prison.

*Lord Jesus, we are so quick to judge when you would pour out grace, mercy and love. Open our eyes to the hidden victims of justice- the children and families of the convicted. Give strength to those supporting loved ones and all those striving to fix a broken system. May all those affected by imprisonment know the Good News is for them. Amen.*

