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Sunday School Times

# The Inmates of “Prison le DeVil”

***Stuff For Today***

• Wait, Wait, Let Me Guess!

• Been there…

* “Prison le DeVil”
* Questions and Answers

Published almost weekly, but more like…..whenever, so get used to it, OK?

**By Mr. Lyle (mrlyle1@gmail.com**

 ***John 3:16***

***For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.***

 A fictitious story is told of a notorious prison in France near the turn of last century. “Prison le DeVil” was a hideous place to be, and anyone incarcerated by the French justice system hoped that they would never be sent there.

 It seems that when Jean Pierre LaFayette became the newly elected president of France, he decided to exercise a constitutional authority granted to him by virtue of his position. He had the power to pardon anyone he chose. That meant that if he so decreed, the person or persons of his choosing would be allowed out of prison, their criminal record expunged, and granted a new life in France!

 He carefully chose three individuals and sent their official documents of pardon to the prison by messenger. As the messenger approached the cell door of the first recipient of pardon, he loudly proclaimed the good news.

 The prisoner’s response was surprising. In a shout of rage and disgust, he let the messenger know in no uncertain terms that he wanted nothing to do with a president who could issue pardons, and to leave him alone forever!

 Somewhat in shock, the messenger then went on the second cell door. He called out the same greeting—he had brought a pardon from the president.

 This belligerent prisoner immediately began an argument. You see, he did not believe in presidents, or pardons. He had never seen a president or a pardon before and was convinced that they were just some made-up story. He refused because he doubted their existence.

 Unable to convince the inmate of the truth, the messenger reluctantly went on the third recipient. And as he approached, he called out his news of a pardon.

 The cell window came open as the news was proclaimed. Unfortunately, this inmate had other ideas as well. His cell was immaculate! So clean and shiny that anyone could have eaten off of the floor! But he refused his pardon as well. He explained to the messenger that he felt that one day the Warden would come down to visit and would see all of the work he had put into keeping his cell clean. His belief was that the Warden would be so impressed that he would be granted release from prison.

 The messenger bowed his head in disbelief. How could these naïve people turn down the greatest gift possible?

 The world around us is lost in sin—in a prison of sin. And God has graciously extended to every human being walking the face of the earth a pardon. Jesus paid for our sins, he took the punishment, and we can go free—genuinely free!

 Do you recognize the inmate’s reactions as being parallel to reactions of people that you meet each day?

 Some despise the Gospel and do not want to hear anything about it. Others say that they don’t trust in a God they can’t see and don’t believe exists. And of course there are those who are trying to work their way into Heaven by living as cleanly as possible.

 There is only one way out of “Prison le DeVil”. A pardon from Jesus Christ!

**Been There?**

By Mr. Lyle (mrlyle1@gmail.com)



**Questions and Answers**

Today we begin this semester’s Q and A time!!!!!!

Been there and done that.

And been there a dozen times more. ‘Cause apparently I never learn.

This week a bird pooed on my nicely cleaned car. So I ate a breakfast of scrambled eggs on the front porch just so he would know what I was capable of.

Many years ago, Matthew Henry, a well-known Bible scholar, was once robbed of his wallet. Knowing that it was his duty to give thanks in everything, he meditated on this incident and recorded in his diary the following:

Let me be thankful, first, because he never robbed me before; second, because although he took my purse, he did not take my life; third, because although he took all I possessed, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed.