

WHEN A MAN CRIES

By Christopher Balmer

The last six years of solitary confinement have brought many emotions I've never been in tune with to the surface. Tears have fallen down my face many times as I sat in the solitude of my prison cell. Many of the times that I have shed a tear were for my fellow brothers and sisters who are locked behind bars, getting abused by prison officials. In prison, people look at a man who cries, seeing him as weak or as an easy target. When you become more in tune with your emotions and leave the denial state that most prisoners live in, shedding a tear for another who is in pain is a wonderful feeling.

When you learn that others feel pain and many times you share the same pains with them, you can realize how much people in this world really suffer. When I matured and left the childish teenage state of mind, my heart opened up to helping people who are without the one thing people always want and need -- **love**. When you show people love who are suffering, you ease their pain. Just being there for someone in a loving way allows their pain to be weakened. Then you watch their tears flow. Tears of hurt, depression, joy, excitement, sadness, and many hundreds of other emotions run down their faces. And because you love them, you put your hand to their face, gently wiping their tears away.

When I cry, I cry these tears for the people who hurt. When I was suffering I never had someone to cry for me nor show me love. But does that mean I have to be bitter towards others who didn't show me any sympathy? NO! I completely understand how people in prison feel. I am a human confined to these walls of hatred, pain, misery, and anger as well. I've suffered like hundreds of others have suffered.

When you see one of the people you live around suffering, lend them a hand. You don't have to know the person to help him or her. Offering that love to them after recognizing that they are in need shows that person someone is out there that cares. Shedding a tear for them in the comforts of your living quarters is fine as well. These tears represent the love you have for others who suffer.

God revealed to me, "Don't stick out your hand to get something, if you're going to be tight-fisted when the time comes to pay it back." Sirach 4:31.

I stuck my hand out for help and had someone help me. Now it's my time to take the hand of others who need the same help.

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