



## THE GROWING NEWS

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On the Liberty Bell, the inscription from Leviticus 25:10 reads,

**“Proclaim Liberty Throughout All the Land Unto All the Inhabitants Thereof”**

During a recent trip with students to Philly, we discussed this line from the Jubilee vision, an Old Testament set of instructions meant to make things right in the world. The Liberty Bell is an important stop on the Harriet Tubman Byway, along with Independence Hall across the street, and both mark the end of her famed road to freedom.

When Harriet reached Pennsylvania in 1849, she said, “I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything. The sun came like gold through the trees and over the fields, and I felt like I was in heaven.” She then returned to the hell from which she had escaped. *Why? Who would do such a thing?* A person who tasted freedom, that’s who. She didn’t just proclaim liberty to the captives, she went back and got them.

We’re all captive to something—fear, lifestyle, self-hatred, substances, screens. What I appreciate about Harriet is that she let the Gospel do its work in her, then blessed others with the fruit. She experienced freedom, then freed others.

In Luke 4:14-21, Jesus inaugurated his ministry by proclaiming good news to the poor, sight for the blind, and freedom for the captive. We are called to go and do likewise. But often I don’t want to. Instead, I want to hold on to my comforts and consume *more* comforts. I don’t want to carry your burden because it might become my burden. I don’t want to walk a mile in your shoes because I prefer my shoes and my direction.

Jesus, however, denied himself. He put the Jubilee vision into action which changed lives then and changes lives now.

This is the kind of risk I want the courage to take—returning to help as I’ve been helped, seeing as I’ve been seen, encouraging as I’ve been encouraged. I want to model Leviticus 25:10 and Luke 4:18. One way I gain courage to do this is by appreciating the work God has done in me, enough that I can say, “I looked at my hands [and heart and mind, too!] to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything.”

In this Advent season, we long for all things to be made right. They are not yet, nor do we know when they will be. Do we have the courage to see what prison our friends and families and neighbors are in, and love them there?



Three hours at Philly’s Eastern State Penitentiary gave us much to ponder.



We listened to ESP’s audio tour and reflected on captivity and Luke 4.



What has Jesus freed me from?  
Where do I still need liberty?

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**As this letter suggests, it's not only students who grow through these trips. It's me, too. Thank you! Donations make this possible and your prayers fuel the growth.**

**A happy and hopeful Advent to you.**



Teaching young men to love well

**Read my Advent reflection here** →



Alice & roomies all had dance solos ♡



Inviting students to lay down their "old self" by the grave. Eph 4:22-24



Gathering and celebrating with 27 students and 7 co-leaders in one of my favorite trees!