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## Death Sentence

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JULY 05TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

### Death Sentence

*Reprint Compliments of Men At The Cross By Joe White*

#### 1 Corinthians 4:9

*"9For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men."*

#### VIDEO OF THE DAY

Twice I have written to a dead man. On both occasions, his response showed me I was less alive than he.

When I sent my first letter to Darrell in the fall of '98, I half-expected to receive the ramblings of a stir-crazy inmate. After all, Darrell has been on death row for over ten years. How conversive can a man in his situation be? Yet, his immediate reply was full of wit, country humor, and most impressive, the wisdom of one whose only conversation partner is God -- 24 hours a day. Packed to the brim with scripture upon scripture, Darrell's letters are almost a Bible in themselves.

Since his incarceration in the 80's, Darrell has died many times. He has died particularly to that old, awful self who pumped a 12-gauge shot into his former drug dealer and two other human beings. He gave his life, what was left of it, to Christ after entering Potosi Correctional Center. Since then, Darrell has become the self-appointed chaplain of death row.

Not long ago, I was watching the news on a TV in a hotel room and I saw that Pope John Paul had convinced the Governor of Missouri to pardon a certain prisoner on death row. That prisoner was Darrell Mease, who had clung to the hope of pardon for ten long years. His letters reveal that he also believes he will one day be released. Then we'll all be in for some preaching, for there is no sermon like that of a man returned from the grave.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:9, "God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death." Have you considered that Christianity truly is a death sentence? Without crucifying our old, evil nature, there would be no chance at heaven. But Christianity is also a life sentence, one in which our cell doors are flung wide and we are freed to walk with God.

Have you died to sin? Like Paul and Darrell, are you a dead man who truly lives? If you are not, consider the cold hard walls inside which you merely exist. Then come to Jesus, the doorway to life, and leave that cell behind.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What in your life do you need to crucify to bring you into a right relationship with Jesus Christ?
2. If we as believers in Jesus Christ have been made a spectacle to the world (1 Corinthians 4:9b), what does the world see? A dead man or an alive man? One on death row or one on life row?

## **LIFELINE:**

Christianity truly is a life & death sentence. Today, choose to live this sentence Christ has instructed us to live. Die to self and live walking in the freedom of knowing you have a right relationship with Jesus Christ. Then show the world, like a beacon in the night, how to experience a life & death sentence.

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