



"WILLIE CHOSE POORLY"

Willie was an Inmate at the Kentucky State Reformatory located in LaGrange, Kentucky. The year was 1980. I was the Assistant Chaplain in charge of a counseling group in which Willie took part. He was a muscular young man with a pleasant personality, and always respectful in my presence. But, Willie had refused to accept his responsibility as a law abiding citizen in society. He committed many crimes against his fellowman and was serving a long sentence for being a "Persistent Felon Offender".

"WILLIE CHOSE POORLY".

That particular morning an extremely heavy fog fell across the prison yard. The Inmates were being transferred from one area to another. Unfortunately, Willie made a **poor choice**. He thought it would be a great opportunity to escape over the fence. But, when he started running, the Guard shouted "**Inmate Run**" and within seconds the alarm sirens were activated. The officer in the gun tower saw that Willie was running full speed towards the outer fence. The fog made it too difficult for the officer to see him clearly. So he fired a warning shot at the ground in an attempt to stop Willie's escape. Unfortunately, when the round hit the ground it ricocheted up at an angle and struck Willie in the head. He was instantly killed. "**WILLIE CHOSE POORLY**".

The Warden asked me to go to Eastern Kentucky and handle the funeral arrangements for Willie. The State was to take care of all funeral expenses. It was during this time that I was to learn another lesson concerning the pitfalls of "**Choosing Poorly**".

I walked up the narrow path behind his Mom's house, where he was to be buried. There, I was greeted by his younger sister. She had pulled the weeds by hand to make a walking path. She had also dug out steps on a small rise just before the place where the grave was to be. The house was old and poorly constructed. The old army blankets of yesteryears covered the open doorways. His little sister pointed out the place where Willie slept. No, it wasn't in the house. It was over the 20' cliff where the pig pen was. He had wanted his own room she said, so he used rough sawed lumber to build it connecting to the pig shelter. So there he spent his teenage years until he was accepted into one of our finest Baptist Schools. There, he was remembered as a Basketball Star and rose to be a popular Senior Class President. He was raised in poverty. But he experienced what life was like as a popular school star. He could have had the Good Life. It was Willie's choices, **No Person - No Thing - No Situation** was the cause. What happened then? **Willie Chose SIN! SIN + CRIME = DEATH**. Neither is a respecter of persons. "**Willie Chose Poorly**". Do everything you can to help your love ones make wise choices. But in the end, it is "**Their Choice**".