

Son of Sam Killer: Go and Sin No More

There are some things from your childhood that you simply cannot forget. For me, one of those was Walter Cronkite's reports on the *CBS Evening News* about David Berkowitz, the infamous "Son of Sam" serial killer.

Because my grandfather religiously watched Cronkite, I found myself, at the age of 11, watching with him and learning of the six horrible murders Berkowitz committed in New York City in 1976 and 1977 (he actually shot 13 people). What made the whole situation stranger—and tragic—is that Berkowitz claimed after being caught that he received orders from his neighbor's dog to kill, that "Sam is the devil."

Certainly the dog had nothing to do with Berkowitz's actions. The enemy, however, did. And certainly someone like that who had been sentenced to over 300 years in prison with no hope of parole was barred from the kingdom of God forever, right?

Thankfully, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the answer to that question is a resounding "no."

Ten years into his imprisonment, Berkowitz, who was adopted and grew up in a Jewish home, became a born-again Christ follower because God refused to give up on him although Berkowitz had given up on himself.

An inmate he met in the prison yard introduced him to Jesus.

"He told me that Jesus Christ loves me. I told him, listen, I don't want to hear that because I've done too many evil things and there's no forgiveness for me," Berkowitz said in an interview with . "Maybe there's a God out there someplace, but I don't think he has any interest in me at all."

Within a couple of months, Berkowitz accepted Christ. Despite Berkowitz saying, "There were so many demonic strongholds in my life," God loved him and saved him. " ... But He is patient with us, because He does not want any to perish, but all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9, MEV).

And come to repentance is exactly what Berkowitz did. Berkowitz now prays with other prisoners and shares his faith openly with them, helping many inmates come to know the Lord. He's doing more for the kingdom as a prisoner than most are doing as free "so-called Christians" in the church.

Some may not believe his transformation, but there is only One whose opinion that counts. Just as He said to the woman who was caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more" (John 8:11, MEV).

I want to thank my good friend and author Grant Berry, who wrote this story for about Berkowitz, for reminding me of the incredible redemptive power of the shed blood of Jesus. Instead of the "Son of Sam," Berkowitz now refers to himself as the "Son of Hope."

Take Berkowitz's story to heart, you who believe that God couldn't possibly love you because of your sinful past. He loves you no matter what, and you are not lost forever.

And even if you call yourself a Christian and are buried in sin right now, come to Him and repent. He wants you back more than you can possibly know. Come and find Jesus again, and welcome back to life.

And as I always like to say, "there is that."

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