



UPLO K

SEPTEMBER 2000

LIFE
BEHIND
BARS

LIFE BEHIND BARS

The Lord can open prisoners' hearts just like He once opened prison cells.

America leads the West in the incarceration of its populace. According to the US Department of Justice (as of June 30, 1999) 468 out of every 100,000 people in the country sit behind bars. That's dramatically up in the last decade (292 per 100,000 in 1990). This doesn't include those on parole, those wanted by police, or those guilty of unsolved crimes.

The number is staggering. It approximates one out of every 200. If you add to that family members affected by these incarcerations, and the victims of the crimes committed, you begin to recognize what a mission field of needy, hurting people there is, directly affected by the prison system in this country.

Over the centuries, men have expressed their hopes that incarceration can effect change by the words they have used for their jails (*jail* is from a Middle English word for "cage"). Young offenders were sent to *reformatories*. Older criminals were kept in *penitentiaries*. Now they are called *correctional institutes*.

But it is a rare thing to see slaves of sin reformed from their debilitating habits by man-sized techniques. The penal experts have tried. But with all the research dollars spent and endless self-help experiments, the only long-term, surefire answer is found in the offer made two thousand years ago: "*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*" (Jn. 8:36).

I recollect clearly my first encounter with God's prison reform. It was the fall of 1974. I was inside the Richmond County Correctional Institute, Tobacco Road, Augusta, Georgia, with brother Sydney Temple.

The clang of the great steel doors behind me was met with a response in the pit of my stomach. The guard stood aloof; his face had known few smiles. I was ushered down a narrow hallway to another steel door where I waited for the turnkey. Whoever said, "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage," had never been inside, I thought to myself. It was October, but the day had been borrowed from summer. I felt awkward standing there sweltering in the Georgia heat.

Eventually I was admitted to a room twenty feet by forty, perhaps. Concrete block walls. Benches without backs were the only furniture except for the ornate pulpit that seemed incongruous. Instead of stained glass

windows, there were cold steel bars.

I sat on the edge of one of the benches. Almost immediately the door reopened to admit twenty-seven rugged-looking customers. They were all dressed in prison garb. Prison garb with one addition—they all had smiles.

My collar cut my neck and my tie kept yelling at me. I felt so out of place—until I was introduced. Smiles flashed, handshakes were extended, and I heard, "Praise the Lord, brother," more than once. Then as the service began, I took a good look at God's prison reform.

Ralph, who led in prayer, was in for armed robbery. He also prayed for the warden every day since the Lord had changed his heart. The young man at the pulpit, who was waving his arms to the rhythm of thirty voices almost on key, smiled at me. I wondered what that handsome, happy inmate was in for.

I was later to learn that by the time he was twenty-four, Herb had been expelled from school and the army, was an alcoholic and a heavy drug addict, and was serving a life sentence for the murder of his wife and both of her parents. Satan is a cruel master. But I heard Herb lift his voice to God and sing,

*"I've found a Friend who is all to me,
His love is ever true;
I love to tell how He lifted me,
And what His grace can do for you."*

That's God's prison reform system. He doesn't change the prison; He changes the prisoners. God takes poor sinners and turns them into saints—not perfect, but learning. He sets them free. He gives them hope. He turns their prison cells into a palace. It's still noisy and dirty and hard to take, but the King is there.

The fellows listened as I talked about freedom in Christ. They didn't seem to mind that I could leave and they had to go back to their cells. God had changed their hearts. They were more free in their Georgia cells than thousands who walk city streets but are still enslaved to sin.



J. B. Nicholson, Jr.



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- 2) by using the form on our website at:

http://www.uplook.org/magazine_uplook/subscribe/

- 3) by contacting our office at any time, by phone, fax, mail or e-mail.

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Starting a prison ministry

Who was it that said, "I was in prison, and ye came unto Me"?

Some years ago when visiting the home of a new couple that had come to our assembly, one of the questions that was asked was, "What kind of outreach do you have beyond your own assembly?" Sadly, we had to say we had no significant program to reach beyond our own members. We began to pray for such an outreach that could involve a good number in our local church.

Shortly after this, we read a newsletter from Harold Preston of Kentucky at one of our prayer meetings. It concerned the Emmaus prison ministry in that state. A couple in the assembly was moved by a letter from one of the female inmates. From this interest grew a desire to start a similar ministry in South Carolina, which has a higher percentage of its population incarcerated than any other state.

It was not very long until this couple was completely overwhelmed by the magnitude of the endeavor, and as a result, the ministry began to suffer. We then realized that this was far more of a responsibility than could be handled by a couple with work and family responsibilities.

Charles Fizer, director of the Correspondence School for Emmaus, was contacted concerning the feasibility of involving a whole assembly in the prison ministry for our state. On a Saturday he met at North Augusta Bible Chapel with all of those interested in working with us. The greatest fear was that there would only be four or five people interested in working with this ministry, but twenty-five turned out to hear about the work. This was a sig-

nificant number, considering there were only about seventy in fellowship, including children.

Shortly before this, we had changed our Sunday meeting schedule to three meetings in the morning, which opened up Sunday evening as the time when everyone could meet for this ministry.

One couple agreed to serve as local directors, and we were off and running with "request cards" being mailed out the first few weeks to prison chaplains throughout the state to be distributed among inmates.

We were all amazed at the response from inmates all over the state: from state and federal prisons to county jails. The local assembly supplies postage-paid request cards, free courses with return postage-paid envelopes, and certificates on completion of a course. There are forty-five courses in the curriculum, which a number of students have completed. Upon completion, they may contact Emmaus concerning further studies.

The financial responsibility is great for a local assembly, but there



Grading courses each week to be sent back to student inmates is a team effort.

can be no price set on eternal souls. One of the rewards is to see the hand of the Lord supplying every need. As Hudson Taylor said, "God's work done in God's way will not lack God's supply."

We had to learn how to save by mailing our courses using bulk mail, as postage is the greatest expense. The Lord also provided a professional printer in our fellowship who is able to print all of our return postage envelopes, tests, Christmas cards, etc., right in our chapel.

Every sphere of the local assembly is involved. Those helping range from teenagers to those in their 70's, with each one fitting in where his or

her talent is most needed. We can honestly say that this work has encouraged our assembly through thick and thin. On Sundays, letters are read in our meeting from prisoners who have been blessed and saved, and many requests for prayer concerning families back home and fellow inmates who need the Lord. A monthly prayer list from students' requests is compiled and handed out to the whole assembly. Some of the more gratifying correspondences come with small checks for \$2 and \$3 from inmates through the Department of Corrections bank. Considering that they only receive pennies a day for working to buy their essentials, this is truly a reminder of our Lord's response in Mark 12:42-44, *"And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had..."*

A copy of a letter from "Set Free Ministries" in Russia was sent to the student inmates earlier this year concerning the plight of Russian prisoners. The response was nothing short of amazing as many sent in gifts, even one for \$100. One must keep in mind when dealing with these dear souls, that the average educational level for prisoners in South Carolina is only third grade, and that the HIV/AIDS infection rate in some of the prisons is higher than 70%. One needs to show much compassion as letters come from those who have been abandoned by their families outside, and their only contact is with the correspondence school believers.

One of the more amazing occurrences is how many times new enrollees have sent in tests to be graded. They have told of being transferred to a new facility, and when they moved into their cell, the only thing there was an Emmaus correspondence course.

Two more assemblies in the state, Overbrook Gospel Chapel in Greenville and Bethany Chapel in Columbia, have joined us in grading courses as we can receive as many as 250 courses in one week. There are close to 700 active students at all times.

The ultimate goal of seeing men and women won for Christ is realized when we see the responses to questions on the students' tests. One may always wonder how genuine these decisions are, but when we see such comments as, "I know that the Lord put me in this place so that I would find Him," or "I know that this is where the Lord wants me," we realize the Holy Spirit is doing His work in a heart.

The best way to appreciate the efforts of this endeavor

or is to hear it from the inmates themselves. These are some actual excerpts from their letters and answers, written exactly as they put it:

Greeting to you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I thank the Lord for each and every one of you, for truly you all have been a blessing to me, the Lord has been good to me, for it was by His Grace and mercy that I'm here today, because I know deep within my heart, I could have been dead and my soul lost completely forever.

Hey, I have finished these 12 Lessons, I just wanna thank all of y'all there for caring for us inmates in prison. That means a lot, I did these courses fast. Only cause I wanna learn all I can about Jesus, plus I'm locked in a cell 24 hours a day, I have nothing to do in here. I was lonely, but not now. Jesus is great. I'm 27 year old. I'm doing 5 years. I was only out for and month + 1/2. I went right back to my old ways. But its for the best that I came back, I might be dead by now if I didn't. Thank God I'm alive."

This course on the Minor Prophets was great. I now have a better understanding of Israel's history and have been encouraged to dig deeper into the Scriptures. I have begun to finally understand how it all fits together.

I would like to thank all who care enough for people like me to do these acts of kindness, sending the correspondence course. The Course are the best I have studied. They go deeper into the Bible and gives deeper insight than one could imagine. What I read in the book really overwhelmed me, I never imagined the things which I learned from the course. I am very, very, very eager to start the next, I received "Born to Win" Monday on the 3rd, and was finished the next day, I'm sure; I did well. I understood every word. The Scriptures each lesson talks about, make the picture so clear, and they explain a lot.

I am writing to thank you all for your love and kindness. Also for bringing me and others who are imprison the knowledge of God. Before being incarcerated I was in complete darkness. I was a homosexual, on drugs, thief, suicidal, and I could go on. But He put me in a place where He could minister to me. Praise You Lord God! Today I can honestly say I know which direction I'm going. I'm sold out for Jesus!

I'm serving a life sentence. Here just a little note of thanks. A friend and brother of God gave me your fist lesson of Born to Win. I've enjoyed it dearly. I never in all my life knew studies of the Bible could be so much fun, Thanks a million. Thank ya all for the wonderful

STARTING a PRISON MINISTRY

work you do for our saviour ; by sharing His word and His precious love for us is surely got to be one of the most beautiful gifts anyone could ever be able to receive while our stay here on earth.”

I got indicted for “Conspiracy of Marijuana”. I turned myself in to the authorities. I’ve been in jail ever since. I felt relief, at last! They would have church services all the time and I started reading the Bible and with you Emmaus Studies and other, I started understanding that GOD was there all the time with me. He had been protecting me all the time. I started realizing that GOD wasn’t the one that had turned from me. I was the one that allowed Satan to do this to me. I finally realized that GOD loved me so much that He sent Jesus to make a way for me to be saved. WOW!! Jesus died for me and by HIS GRACE my sins are forgiven and I feel free. Even now, that I’m in prison, I feel free at last. What a wonderful gift that is. After everything that I’ve done. I can’t wait to go home and spread this GOOD NEWS to my family and friends.

Yes, I celebrated my first year as a Born Again, blood bought Christian...and believe me it has been the best year of my life. My body has been in Prison but my soul and mind has been totally “free” with Jesus. I have learn a lot this year about the Lord and Savior and I want to thank you for helping me. He knew what I needed and He provided it through you. And I thank you again from the bottom of my heart. Please write me a letter concerning this so we might get closer to God together. Thank for the courses. Will you send me another one soon please listen can y’all send one to my mother (gives her name and address) and one to my wife (gives her name and address) and a couple more cards with free postage please. I got so many people what to get saved they are tied of sinning.

Often we get poems like this one from budding theologians, as it was sent to us, spelling and all:



Gerald Tice, prison ministry co-ordinator, examining some of the many hundreds of courses which must be kept in inventory.

CHRIST

*He was a man the same as us,
Brought to life from nothing but dust,
His true father was God from above.
Sent to Earth with nothing but love.
All His life He did no wrong.
For we are weak but He is strong.
He suffered hard, He suffered long,
So we could sing redemptions song.
For His blood it did not spill.
He gave it of His own free will.
The Bible says if in Him we do believe
Eternal life we will receive.
God gave His Son is for us to know.
Trust in Him and to Heaven we'll go.
If you do what the Bible has told.
You will get to walk on streets of Gold.
If we try to get to Heaven on good works alone,
We'll never see that Heavenly throne.
To Jesus Christ we should pray
And we could receive His gift today.
Jesus, God, the Holy Ghost are three.
They all should dwell in thee.
For it is us He does need
To move about and spread His seed.
So turn to Jesus you must not wait.
The time is now the need is great.
God destroyed the world once and the water did rise.
He turned a deaf ear to the sinners crys.
This time will be with fire and flame.
Christ did not die in vain.
If we go to Hell we are to blame.
For to Christ you do not turn
Its off to Hell so you can burn!*

Needless to say, this is one of the most enjoyable parts of the ministry: reading to each other these responses from the student inmates as we grade the courses each Sunday evening. What a thrill to see lives transformed from night to day!



FRONT LINES

LABOR DAY WEEKEND

Christians gathering to the name of the Lord at Horse Lake Christian Fellowship in 100 Mile House, BC, extend a warm invitation to their Bible conference, Labor Day weekend (Sept. 3-4) on the subject of evangelism. Speakers invited are Boyd Nicholson (ON) and Floyd Schneider (IA). The conference will be held at the Best Western 108 Resort Conference Center (108 Mile Ranch). Contact:

Don Street
(250) 395-4230
hlc2cor4v5@bcinternet.net

PROSPECT CONFERENCE

The assembly at Prospect Bible Chapel (576 Prospect Ave., Hartford, CT) will hold its Annual Bible Conference Sept. 15-17. Prayer meeting Friday at 7:30 PM. Meetings on Saturday at 2:30 PM and 6:00 PM, and Sunday at 10:30 AM and 2:30 PM. Lord's servants expected to minister the Word are Wade LeBlanc (NS) and Dr. Joe Mikhael (ON).

Thomas E. Woods
31 Strickland St.
Manchester, CT 06040
(860) 643-4477
TWoods1231@aol.com

WORD ALIVE SOUTH EAST

The Christians at Lakeside Bible Chapel, Lincolnton, GA, and Washington Chapel, Washington, GA, are hosting a series of monthly intensive Bible studies.

The goal is to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry. Those wishing to attend should be recommended by the elders of their local assembly as the coursework will be designed with the most serious believer in mind.

September 16, 2000:

AM: Dispensations of Scripture
J. B. Nicholson Jr, MI
PM: The Epistle to the Ephesians
Mike Attwood, GA

October 7, 2000:

AM Divine Distinctions of Scripture
Sam Thorpe Jr., GA
PM Bible Archaeology, Faith &
Science
Dr. Clifford Wilson, NZ

November 11, 2000:

AM Gifts of the Holy Spirit
Mike Attwood, GA
PM The Epistle of 2 Timothy
Alan Parks, SC

December 2, 2000:

AM Bible Study Methods
Sam Thorpe Jr, GA
PM The Book of Daniel
Mike Attwood, GA

All classes will be held at Washington Chapel (808 E. Robert Toombs Ave., Washington, GA)

For more information, contact:
Sam Thorpe
706-359-6297
thorpes@g-net.net

RUN TO WIN

The Assembly Youth Leadership Conference 2000 will be hosted by the Christians in the Houston, TX, area. You will be equipped and challenged to focus on the Cross and to run the race. Hebrews 12:1-3 tells us that the life of a believer is an endurance race. The time is now. Set your eyes on the goal and start running.

This conference is for young adults, ages 16 and older and is being planned for Sept. 15-17, 2000, at Pineywoods Baptist Encampment, Woodlake, TX. The main speaker is Steve Witter, Dean of Students at Emmaus Bible College. For more information:

Ryan Guikema
1118 County Road 47
Angleton, TX 77515
(409) 922-1455
eguikema@juno.com
www.run2win.org

NORTHERN ONTARIO CONF.

Bethel Gospel Chapel (North

Bay, ON) will host their annual conference Sept. 15-17 with speakers George Telfer (ON) and James Cochrane (Dominican Republic). A special children's program will be conducted by Dwane Norton (ON). Contact:

Don Bushey
126 Willingdon Ave.
North Bay, ON P1C 1E9
(705) 474-4627

NJ & NY MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The 2000 New York and New Jersey Men's Bible Study Program will be held, Lord willing, at Woodside Chapel (5 Morse Ave. Fanwood, NJ).

September 23—Michael Thomas
The Doctrine of Man & the Fall

October 21—Mark Kolchin
Spiritual Gifts

November 25—Bob Billings

Missions &
Pointers on Preaching
Contact Michael Thomas at
(914) 667-9581

FALL FOLIAGE CONFERENCE

Annot McIntee (ON) will be the speaker for a special Fall foliage conference scheduled, Lord willing, for Monday, Sept. 25 through Friday, Sept. 29, 2000. This annual gathering will again be held at the beautiful Camp-of-the-Woods conference facility located in Speculator, NY, in the heart of the Adirondack mountains. Cost for the conference is \$265 per person (includes all meals and deluxe accommodations).

Registration is strongly encouraged by Sept. 15. For more info:

Honeyrock Ministries, Inc.
P.O. Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734
honeyrock@juno.com

CHALLENGE 2000

Plan to attend Challenge 2000 on Saturday, Sept. 30, to be held at Don Valley Bible Chapel, Toronto. This

WORKERS' AND ELDERS' CONFERENCE: *Time Well Invested*

The Workers' and Elders' conference on Oct. 10-12 at Lawrence Bible Chapel (Lawrence, KS) is on the theme, "A Vision for Growth." Boyd Nicholson, Sr. (ON) is speaking in the morning Bible studies. Other general sessions feature Wade LeBlanc, Floyd Pierce, David Dunlap, Kenneth Daughters, Jack Spender, George Farber, Colin Anderson, and Robert Johnson. Practical seminars are offered, and there will be updates on the progress of God's work from around the country.

Three reasons to be there: 1. Meet the veterans. This conference is a brush with the mentoring process. If you long to rub shoulders with those who have dealt with the hard questions, some of them will be there.

2. Dealing with the questions workers and elders are afraid to ask: Am I in the right ministry? Should we have made a different decision in the last assembly problem? What dangers are ahead if we pursue our present path of thinking?

3. Handling the practical questions, the seminars address the nuts and bolts issues. Very helpful.

Young men and women interested in the work of the Lord should attend the conference this year. Enjoy the instruction, encouragement, and warm fellowship that are characteristic of this conference.

Receive a registration form:

Jim Upton

1639 23rd Ave. NW

New Brighton, MN 55112-5529

jimu@isd.net

or register online at:

www.drewnels.net/lbchapel

TIP: Smart investors will invest their resources in markets that yield high returns in an optimal time frame.

If you are looking for a spiritual investment, the Workers' and Elders' Conference yields a high rate of return.

annual ladies' missionary conference also includes an exciting program for girls grade 2 and up. Speakers expected are: Miriam Brubacher (Zambia), Cindy Fitzgerald (Ecuador), Gretchen Potma (Czech Republic), Wendy Pond (Madagascar) and others. For info or accommodations, contact:

Sheila Henderson

52 Bentworth Avenue

Toronto, ON M6A 1P4

Phone: (416) 784-3981

sheilhknow@idirect.com

CONFERENCE IN OMAHA

The annual fall conference at Keystone Bible Chapel in Omaha, NE, is scheduled for Oct. 6-8. A prayer meeting on Friday evening will open the conference. Meals will be served at lunch and dinner both Saturday and Sunday. The speakers, Lord willing, will be Mike Attwood (GA), Jamie Hull (CO) and John Bjorlie (MI). Contact:

Jeff Patterson

14426 County Road 40

Kennard, NE 68034

(402) 238-2878

Email: jkpne@aol.com

MOTHER/DAUGHTER RETREAT

Calling all mothers and daughters and grandmoms and spiritual moms, too! The mother/daughter retreat is to be held, Lord willing, at Camp Iroquoia, Oct. 6, 7 and 8. The gorgeous scenery of the Endless Mountains awaits you. Plan some time alone with your loved ones. The speaker will be Eleanor Wagner.

John MacPherson

(570) 967-2577

camp_iroquoia@juno.com

WESTBROOK, MAINE

The Christians that meet at Spring Hill Gospel Hall (Westbrook, ME) are looking forward to hosting their annual Bible conference Oct. 7-8. The expected speakers are Dr. Arthur Garnes (MD) and Roy Hill (England). For information:

Dan Chick

95 Maple St.

Westbrook, ME 04092

Phone: (207) 854-4968

PACIFIC COAST CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

The Pacific Coast Christian Conference will be held, Lord will-

ing, Oct. 9-13, at Mt. Hermon, CA (75 miles south of San Francisco) with speakers: Dr. Dan Smith (Emmaus Bible College) and Dr. John Phillips (Encounter Ministries).

Registrar: Henry Kamena

1400 W. 13th St., #91

Upland, CA

(909) 985-0437

[hrcamenaj@juno.com](mailto:hkamenaj@juno.com)

110th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Curtis Gospel Chapel in Detroit, MI, will hold its 110th annual conference, Lord willing, Oct. 14-15. The invited speakers are Randy Amos (NY) and Dr. Joe Mikhael (ON).

The conference will begin on Saturday, Oct. 14 at 2:30 with dinner served at 5:00 and continue through the day. On Sunday, the Lord's Supper will be at 9:30, gospel meeting at 11:00 and dinner at noon. The conference will conclude at 5:00 on Sunday. All are welcome.

Gerald Fitzgerald

29911 Orangelawn

Livonia, MI 48150

(734) 425-4217

KENTUCKIANA FELLOWSHIP

On October 21, brethren from Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio will gather at New Albany, IN, for their annual mini-conference. The meeting time is from 10 AM-4 PM. Jack Spender will be the speaker.

For more information, contact:
Harold Preston
443 W. Office St. #1
Harrodsburg, KY 40330
(859) 733-9305

LAND OF THE SKY

The saints of the Asheville (NC) Gospel Chapel and the Waynesville (NC) Christian Fellowship will host the annual Land of the Sky Bible Conference on Oct. 21 from 10:00 to 3:30. The expected speaker is Randy Amos (NY). At noon, a light lunch will be served in the chapel facilities at 350 Old Haw Creek Rd., Asheville, NC.

Walter Peck
15 Bent Tree Rd.
Asheville, NC 28804
(828) 254-5475

WOMEN'S ADVANCE

The 11th Annual Women's Advance will convene, in the will of the Lord in St Louis, MO, Friday and Saturday, Oct. 20 and 21 at the Henry VIII Hotel. Joyce Barinowski will share the Word and some of the opportunities the Lord has given her to witness. Accommodations will be provided for out of town guests.

Mary Walters
(314) 434-8055

HEALING BROKEN HEARTS

On Saturday, Oct. 28, Yonkers Gospel Mission Home will hold their 33rd annual open house and dinner. The theme of the evening will be "Healing the Broken Hearted" with speaker, J. B. Nicholson, Jr. (MI). There will also be special music to enjoy as well as reports of the mission work. Tours begin at 4:00 and the program starts at 7:00. Contact:

Michael Thomas
(914) 968-6577

75th ANNIVERSARY

Union St. Gospel Chapel in Kingston, ON, will be hosting their fall conference Oct. 28-29, 2000. This marks seventy-five years at 195 Union St. Guest speakers will be Roy Jones and Don Graham.

Robert Martin
(613) 384-3818

LOOKING FOR A COOK

The Guelph Bible Conference Centre (Guelph, ON) is seeking to fill the position of cook. Do you enjoy preparing meals creatively and desire to be part of a growing ministry? Are you being called to ministry with a heart passion to influence others eternally for Christ?

GBCC is a year-round facility hosting summer camps, weekends, and mid-week groups. At present no accommodations are available on site but this university city of 100,000 has many options. It is situated just north of the 401, west of Toronto by one hour. Kitchener/Waterloo and Cambridge are all within 20 minutes' drive. A unique

ANGOLAN LITERATURE FUND

Since missionary work began in Angola back in 1884, the land has been blessed with a large number of the Lord's servants, with up to 60 at one time. Their pioneering exploits are remembered to this day. In a remarkable way, the Lord has honored the labors of His people in the land of Angola. These missionaries reached various tribal groups and were able to provide literature that was greatly needed by means of a local printing press. This facility has not existed since the early 60's.

At the present time there are less than 10 assembly missionaries serving the Lord in Angola, working mainly among the Chokwe tribe and those who speak Portuguese. They have an exercise to meet the great need for literature in other tribal language groups. To this end, the Angolan Literature Fund has been formed (Registered Charity number 1077591). The missionaries in Angola have requested four brethren in the UK to act as trustees of this fund. Contact:

Andrew Griffiths
17 St. Philip's Avenue
Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 8LU
Phone: 011 44 323 643245 (from North America)



distinguishing factor is our location in the heart of the city. This 10 acres of parklike property has been operating for over 65 years. Prayerfully considered interest from an individual or a couple will be appreciated.

Guelph Bible Conference Centre
Attn. Richard or Carla Warnholtz
485 Waterloo Ave.
Guelph, ON N1H 3K4
Phone: (519) 824-2571
Fax: (519) 824-2894
gbcg@golden.net

CHICAGO MISSIONARY GUEST APARTMENTS

The committee responsible for the Chicago Missionary Guest Apartments, a ministry of the Chicago Missionary Study Class, is pleased to announce that Bob and Lois Sawyer have accepted the role of managers and have taken up residence in the apartments. The primary purpose of the apartments is to provide a furlough home for missionaries commended by Chicago area assemblies. Other assembly missionaries and full time workers are welcome when they are passing through or visiting in the area, if there is space available. If you would like more information on the apartments, or to inquire about reservations, please feel free to contact Bob and Lois at

jstifyd@aol.com
(630) 469-3767

The Sawyers were commended to the Lord's work by the assembly in Holland, MI, and were missionaries in Spain for several years. We are very happy that they have been led by the Lord to serve Him and His workers at the apartments.

CHAIRS AVAILABLE

Grace Chapel in Tenafly, NJ, has purchased new seating and has available approximately 120 old, but very serviceable, molded fiberglass

chairs. Perhaps a camp or a new assembly could use these. If interested, contact:

Rich Steinhofner
310 Lacey Dr.
New Milford, NJ 07646
RicJea@peoplepc.com

WORSHIP & REMEMBRANCE

The Christians at Grace Gospel Chapel (Mississauga, ON) are looking for old hymn books of "Worship and Remembrance." If there is any assembly that has some extras, please contact:

Ian Roberts
97-6950 Tenth Line West
Mississauga, ON L5N 6Y1
(905) 785-0510

CABIN FOR SALE

A cabin is for sale in Caledonia State Park in Pennsylvania, two miles from Greenwood Hills Bible Camp and Conference Grounds. The cabin has three furnished bedrooms, a bathroom, kitchen and screened porch, half cellar, central heat and air conditioning. For information:

Mary Jane Chitty
410A Menno Village
Chambersburg, PA 17201
(717) 709-0099

COMMENDATIONS

Gerry and Jackie Libby

The elders of Lakefield Gospel Chapel (ON), on behalf of the saints who fellowship there, are pleased to commend our brother and sister Gerry and Jackie Libby. The Libby's have been in happy fellowship at Lakefield Gospel Chapel for the the past thirteen years.

In His service at Lakefield Gospel Chapel, Gerry has demonstrated considerable gift in the preaching of the gospel and the teaching of the Word of God. He was recognized ten years ago as an elder, and has served effectively as a

significant part of the leadership in the assembly. Only recently has he resigned as an elder in order to pray diligently concerning the Lord's direction for his life.

Jackie has served the Lord in the ladies' ministries and has been a spiritual mentor to many young women in their homes. The Libbys have now come to recognize that the Lord is calling Gerry into a full-time preaching ministry. Gerry has resigned his principals' position at Grace Christian Academy, effective July 2000, in order to be free to serve the Lord as He leads. We are confident that as Gerry moves toward full-time service for the Lord, he will be used to the edification of many in various assemblies in the area.

Craig and Charity Phelps

The elders of Grove Park Chapel (Durham, NC), on behalf of the saints that fellowship there, do commend Craig and Charity Phelps to the work the Lord has called them to do. This young couple trusted Christ as their Lord and Saviour many years ago, before they met each other. They have been married for three years. They have a good testimony before all, and have been in fellowship at our assembly for over a year and a half. They have been faithful in attendance and participation at the meetings and in serving the Lord, primarily in children's and youth ministries. Charity currently serves part-time as our church secretary, and as a Sunday School and children's church teacher. Craig heads up our Sunday School, youth and children's ministries, as well as our vacation Bible school and Charity assists him in these endeavors. They feel the Lord has called them into foreign missions, for which they are training at this time.

The assembly is delighted that the Lord has led this couple to serve the

Lord in such a capacity. They pledge their prayers, encouragement, and support.

Mark and Fay Plaza

The elders of Parker Hills Bible Fellowship (Parker, CO) believe that Mark and Fay Plaza have been led by the Lord to serve Him in the ministry in this area. The Plaza family has been in happy fellowship at this assembly for a year and a half. Mark, with his wife Fay, has served the Lord faithfully for nearly a year in the areas of youth ministry, adult Bible teaching, assembly administration, discipleship training, and other needs as they are identified. Mark and Fay are heartily commended to the work of the Lord and the Word of His grace. Please pray with us that many will be built up in the Lord and that He will complete the work which He has begun in the community of Parker, Colorado.

Marge Litchney

The believers at Westlake Bible Fellowship (Westlake, OH) wish to commend Marge Litchney to the work of the Lord at The Ezekiel Project in Michigan. Marge has felt God's call to help full-time in the office work there, its several outreaches, and to lead ladies' Bible studies and encourage others in various ways as God gives opportunities.

Marge has been a compassionate and caring help at Westlake Bible Fellowship. She has shown hospitality to many and has encouraged and nurtured many of the sisters here.

Michael Kline

Michael Kline has been in fellowship with the assembly at Rideauview Bible Chapel, Ottawa, ON, for many years and has served the Lord with Operation Mobilization and later as an independent in the Lord's service in Israel. For the last few months he and his wife, Orit, have been commended to the Lord's service in Enterprise, ON. As Michael has now taken full-time secular employment in the Enterprise/Kingston area, the assembly is withdrawing their commendation at this time. Both he and Orit remain in full fellowship with Rideauview.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY

The saints gathered to the Lord at Iglesia Cristiana Evangelica de Mexicali, in Mexicali, Baja California, México, are praying to the Lord that He would send them a couple to take up the work of evangelists at the assembly there, as they are now few in number, and beginning to get on in years. Although they cannot provide for the couple's

expenses, they can provide a one-bedroom apartment at the chapel, complete with air-conditioning, bathroom with shower, kitchen, and bedroom.

The assembly is literally a stone's throw from the US/Mexican border at the California City of Calexico. The climate is dry and warm, and the field is white unto harvest, but the workers are needed. Mexicali is the capital city of the state of Baja California, and has all the conveniences that any major city would have. The elders at the assembly are David Leal (760) 357-5978, and Roberto Rodriguez; they do not speak English. A working knowledge of Spanish would be requisite to take up this opportunity.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Galilee Bible Camp near Renfrew, ON is seeking a Christian couple to serve as Facilities Managers. For information on this position, contact Murray McDonald at 613-432-5774. To learn more about the camp and to get the latest news, visit their newly designed website: www.galileeibiblecamp.on.ca

WITH THE LORD

Joseph M. Clarquist

Joseph Clarquist of Palos Hills Christian Assembly in Chicago, IL, slept into the presence of the Lord on April 30, 2000. He was converted as a young man and from that day on, was involved in ministering the gospel. After retirement, Joe enjoyed visiting small assemblies in Wisconsin and Michigan, preaching and teaching the Scriptures until his health began to fail.

In 1998, he with his wife, Florence, moved to Windsor Park Christian Retirement Home in Carol Stream, IL, where he passed away. He will be lovingly missed by all who knew him.



NEWS DEADLINES for FRONT LINES



As noted on page 3, news items for this section must be submitted *at least two months in advance* of issue requested. Remember that the July-August and December-January issues are combined. Selected news items will be carried for two issues (if time permits). The editor reserves the right to determine those items best suited for the magazine. Editorial decisions are final. Photos accepted. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for photos you wish returned.

A slave set free

An overcomer from Down Under

In June 1998, two nineteen-year-old girls in a lesbian relationship, and both Satanists, viciously attacked without provocation, an elderly woman at Noosa, almost killing her. The crime received national publicity. The leader, Sarah Bird, was sentenced to 18 years in jail. Her accomplice was sentenced to nine years in jail.

Four months later, October 1998, Sarah Bird was converted by the grace of God. Her conversion was a result of studying the Emmaus Correspondence Course, *What the Bible Teaches*. I learned of her conversion by letter. She wrote:

As you know, I have a very dark past. My interest in Satanism started late 1995 and until my conversion my thoughts and feelings had become so terribly evil, but now I've been born again. I have to tell you how it happened. I was lying in bed at night and I thought of all the things your study book told me, and so I just began to pray, asking for forgiveness over and over again for my crime, and all the other filthy things in my life. I cried and cried and cried. That was three weeks ago, and since then I have never turned back. Every day my love and faith seems to grow. Already I have become a much more gentle, forgiving, and loving person. In spite of all the ridicule I get because I'm a Christian, I wake up in the morning happy and rejoicing in the Lord.

Eighteen months have now passed since Sarah became a Christian and her faith has not wavered; rather she has continued to grow as a Christian. It would be difficult for anybody to recognize her now, such is the transformation in her appearance from the girl whose

picture is still shown on television when she was arrested. She has now changed and is a new creation in Christ. Her outward appearance reveals what has happened within.

Noel Sheen (Regional Director for the Emmaus courses, Australia) visits her frequently. On a visit about three months ago, she asked to be baptized by immersion. This, of course, had to be inside the jail. Corrective Services gave their permission (they have seen the transformation in her life). The State Minister for Corrective Services, the Director General, and other senior officers were there, the six chaplains, and so were her mom and dad—still unconverted, but lovely people who are pleased at what Sarah has done. Sarah asks prayer for them that they will also accept the Lord Jesus as their Saviour.

Yes, there were catcalls, and cries of derision from some of the other prison inmates, but then there were the tears of joy in Sarah's eyes, as she made her confession of faith in the Lord Jesus before going under the waters of baptism. It had been overcast all day, but incredibly as she came out of the water the sun shone through. Of course, we might call it a coincidence, but it had a dramatic effect on those present.

Sarah then, by way of testimony, sang the first verse and chorus of:

*I know not why God's wondrous grace
To me He has made known,
Nor why, unworthy as I am,
He claimed me for His own.
But I know whom I have believed,
And am persuaded that He is able
To keep that which I've committed
Unto Him against that day.*

She has a lovely voice and attended the Queensland Conservatorium of Music for almost a year before she dropped out. What she sang had a profound effect on everyone there.

Sarah still has many years to serve in jail, but she makes no excuses. When the Government Minister for Corrective Services asked her if it was her involvement with Satanism which was to blame, she was quick to point out that all of us must accept personal responsibility for everything we do. We can't blame anything, or anyone else. After all, that is how all men and women will finally be judged. It is evident he was quite impressed, judging from what he told others afterwards.

A number of Christians in the assemblies in Queensland are now writing to Sarah, and praying for her. Would you also pray that she will continue to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? And please pray for the Emmaus Correspondence courses that have been such a blessing in Sarah's life, as well as the lives of so many other prisoners.



The nitty gritty

Helpful hints for those with a heart to help.

What are prison inmates generally like? The average inmate is under 25 years of age. About 96% are men, and 3 or 4% are women. Many come from broken homes, or a home that had little love or discipline. However, some come from good homes, and some even come from good solid Christian homes. Most are accustomed to doing whatever they want to do.

They have had an average of nine years of education, but have only acquired an actual seventh grade level (in some areas it is considerably lower); they have failed a couple of grades here or there. On the other hand, some have a university education.

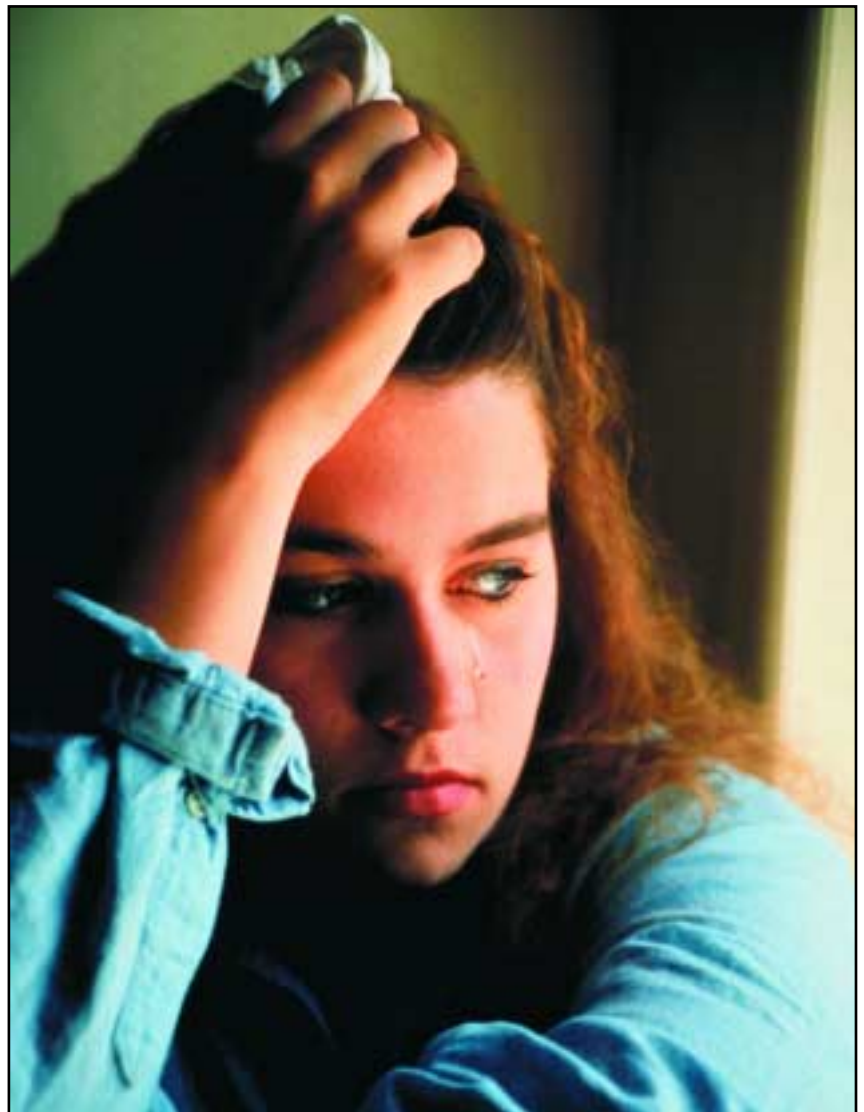
The offender may be a first time offender, or a multiple offender. He or she may have committed a minor or a major offense. Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that he could be anyone at all. The offender is not a problem person, but a person with problems. Everyone has problems, and everyone is capable of committing an offense. The average offender is a very ordinary Joe, who hasn't been particularly successful at anything, not even being a criminal, or he wouldn't be in one of our institutions.

In jail, the inmate realizes the impact of loneliness. Perhaps for the first time he has been separated from his family and friends. He may have an occasional controlled visit from a relative or friend, but this is never very natural—it may be with a glass partition between, talking on a telephone or through a little mesh at the bottom.

He may have very few acceptable inter-personal relationships. In prison he tends to seek out his own kind. In an unnatural single sex environment, like prison, homosexual invitations, pressures, and practices do occur.

He feels he is the victim of injus-

tice. He finds it very hard to face the fact that he is personally responsible for his own imprisonment. If he did have some religious training in his childhood, he now feels that God has let him down. If he is a believer, he may doubt his own security, and he is not at all sure God will hear and



answer his prayers. On the other hand, he may thank God for stopping him in his tracks. If he's never had any Christian training, he may assume that God and church are for others, and not for him. He does not understand the good news of the gospel, and he will not understand our common Christian language.

What does an inmate really need? He needs Christian friends who can show genuine concern for him without leaving the impression of being "holier than thou." This friend may be a chaplain, another inmate, a correctional officer, or a friend on the street. He needs a friend who can listen more than talk, and through wise and loving questioning can lead him to explore some alternatives to his problems. He needs to establish worthwhile relationships with you and others, based on mutual trust, respect, honesty, and understanding.

If he is a Christian, he may need reassurance of the security of the believer—the personal value that he has as a child of God, and the knowledge that even though he has sinned, he has in Jesus Christ an advocate with the Father.

The non-Christian inmate needs to know that God loves him, that the Lord Jesus died for him, and that God wants him to be a member of His family. But he also needs to know that you love him as a person, and the opportunity for you to share your faith may not come in the first moments of conversation.

Only the Holy Spirit can convict of sin, and convert the soul. You will need to be led by the Holy Spirit. He needs to know that he can trust you to care for him, and that you will not fall for the games he may try to play with or on you, but that you will continue to love him in spite of him, even as God loves us.

Before starting visiting prisoners, it's important that you first of all know for sure that the Lord has called you to this type of ministry. It's not a ministry for everyone. It's not for novices, and certainly not for glory seekers. It would also be very helpful to have your assembly behind you for prayer and support. Let others know of your interest in being involved. Take any volunteer training that is available, either through the institution, or through your sponsoring ministry. Get to know the regulations of the local institutions, the times of visitation, and the chaplain or volunteer coordinator.

Have a very realistic view of your time commitment. Prison ministry can become a bottomless pit. And if you're not careful, you can end up giving more than you can rightly afford.

If at all possible, work within a group, or with a partner. This will allow for sharing, praying, and counseling

together, and also will help avoid the martyr syndrome. "I'm the only one going in, and I've done this for three years, and it's storming out, yet I'm going in..."

Visit your new friend regularly and consistently. We need to be consistent. Whether it be once a week, twice a month, or even once per month, your person will be counting on you, and generally speaking he has been let down too many times already. If you must cancel, let him know through the proper channels, and reschedule another time with him.

Obey all the rules. Don't smuggle anything in or out—not even a correspondence course. One time an inmate gave me a Bible correspondence lesson, and said, "Let me just give this to you so we don't have to wait for the mail." That was fine, but I said I would give it to the officer first. The officer was standing right there, so he flipped through it and gave it back. Another time the officer read the entire thing. However the officer handles it, the inmate needs to know it will be checked and you follow the rules of the institution. A lot of this is covered in the book, *Games Criminals Play*.

Don't get involved in inmates' legal matters. Leave that to the lawyer. Don't get involved in his financial matters. Remember at first most prisoners see you as only someone to run errands for them. Your mission is to offer friendship, and to talk with them over moral and spiritual matters. If you are a woman visiting a male inmate—which is not a good idea, unless he perceives you as his great-grandmother—he may see every kind word as an indication that you have a romantic interest in him. Remember he is locked up, in a very unnatural situation for a long, long time.

Respect the inmate's right to confidentiality. This involves not mentioning names or situations to others. Exceptions to this would be learning of attempted suicide, hostage taking, or escapes. You do need to report that, either to a chaplain, or to an officer. Everything else is confidential. You don't go and talk to people at the assembly about what you've just been doing. That needs to stay confidential also.

Don't be curious as to what crime has been committed. Sometimes it's better for you not to know. Sometimes I prefer not knowing, because then I can talk to him as a person. Sometimes the crimes that they have committed are very horrendous and it's easier to simply talk to them, listen to them, and share with them if we don't know. Sometimes they will tell you, and that's okay. Just accept it as a matter of fact, and on you go.

The book *Twice Pardoned* is an excellent book, because it will give you a good idea of what prison life is like in America.



WHAT'S GOING ON?

France's National Assembly is considering a law to imprison "proselytizers" for up to two years. The bill aims to restrict the growth of 173 blacklisted faiths, including Jehovah's Witnesses, Scientologists and Unificationists. Also among the targeted groups is the Southern Baptist Convention. Should the bill become law, evangelism could be criminalized as an "exercise [in] serious and repeated pressure on a person in order to create or exploit a state of dependence." The socialist French government would be allowed to shut down a religious group when two representatives are found guilty of at least one legal infraction, including "mental manipulation."

AMSTERDAM 2000

More than 10,000 evangelists and Christian leaders converged on Amsterdam the last weekend of July. It was all part of Amsterdam 2000, sponsored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. The conference, which ran from July 29 thru August 6, helped prepare for evangelism in the 21st Century. Christian leaders from 185 countries participated. The conference was heard and seen live on the web at Amsterdam2000.org. Billy Graham, Luis Palau, and Brother Andrew were among the noted speakers. —MNN

PAKISTAN DECLARED AN ISLAMIC STATE

Military General Pervez Musharraf has declared Pakistan an Islamic state and according to Shahbaz Bhatti, president of the Christian Liberation Front of Pakistan, this is a death warrant for Christians. "A complete genocide for religious minorities and Christians in Pakistan." The Church is growing rapidly in Pakistan and this new law won't stop evangelism. "We are ready to sacrifice everything, even our lives. If our Jesus Christ gave

His own life for us, why can we not sacrifice our own lives for Jesus Christ?" —MNN

POPULATION EXPLOSION NOT A THREAT

The United Nations predicts that there will be 20 percent fewer people in Eastern and Central Europe by the year 2050. Economic woes and general uncertainty have contributed to a collapsed fertility rate. Russia's population is expected to fall by 18%, Hungary's by 25%, Bulgaria's by 31%, Latvia's by 31%, and Estonia's by 34%.

Western Europe is also shrinking. Italy will decrease from 57 million to 41 million. To maintain their population, Italy would have to accept an additional 240,000 immigrants a year on top of the many illegals. Germany needs to take in half a million more workers annually. —Pulse

GAMBLING WINS ANOTHER ROUND

An attempt to ban most forms of gambling on the Internet failed on Monday, July 17, just 25 votes shy of a necessary two-thirds majority (the two-thirds majority was needed

because it was brought to the floor under suspension, which prohibits amendments). Rep. Robert Goodlatte (R-Va.), who sponsored the bill, said he wanted the House to bring it up for another vote to "honor the will of the majority." The bill had been backed by the Christian Coalition, Focus on the Family, the National Council of Churches, and others. —CT

CULT UPDATE

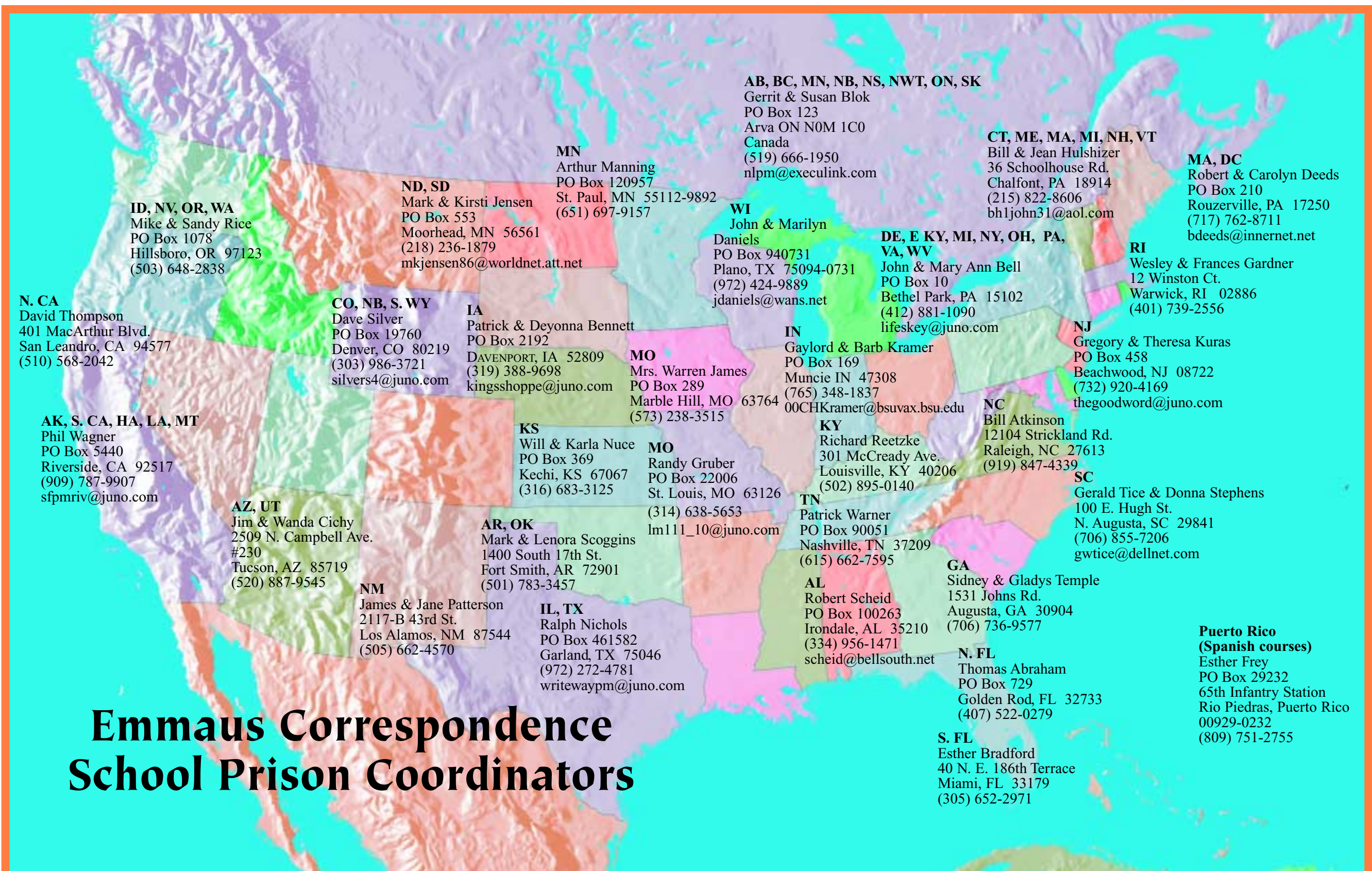
Mormons

The Book of Mormon has been printed about 100 million times, including 5.4 million last year. More than 63 million copies have been printed in the last 20 years. The volume accounts for almost 3% of religious books sold in the U.S.

Jehovah's Witnesses

Active members of the Watchtower Society worldwide grew 2 percent last year, according to statistics published in the January 2000 issue of the *Watchtower* magazine. Jehovah's Witnesses reported over a billion hours of evangelistic work, yielding more than 323,000 baptisms. Nevertheless, as a result of losses in membership, total numbers of active workers grew by only 110,000. Growth was strongest in Africa, Latin America, and the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The United States and most Western European countries registered losses in active members. With 10 percent growth in the number of active members, Jehovah's Witnesses in Israel far exceeded the world average. In the U.S., members expended about 5,500 hours of witnessing for each baptized convert. Despite a gargantuan evangelistic effort totaling nearly 175 million hours, the number of active members in the U.S. fell from 944,000 to 940,000.

—Pulse



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Emmaus Correspondence School Prison Coordinators

The other perspective

A California police officer tells his story

WM: **I**ntroduce yourself briefly and tell what you do for your job.

TR: My name is Tom Rodrigues. I'm a motorcycle officer in a traffic unit for the city of Hayward, California. I have been a police officer with the city for twenty-five years. My wife Mary and I have three daughters: Sarah (18), Allison (17), and Hannah (8). We attend Calvary Bible Chapel in Hayward.

WM: How did you get saved?

TR: I was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, and raised in a Catholic home. Although my parents never went to church, they wanted us to go, so I did all of the things that the church told us to do. After a while it got pretty boring—very repetitive, and I certainly wasn't learning anything. I was just going for the sake of going, and to avoid the little guilt trip that follows if you don't. After Mary and I got married, I quit going to church for six or seven years.

Since Mary was unable to conceive, we applied for adoption. The County told us that the wait would be three to five years for a baby.

About eight months into the process, we spent a weekend at Lake Tahoe, where we met a Christian gentleman. I didn't know very much about Christianity, but we talked about a number of things and before we left, he asked if there was anything that he could pray about for us.

We reluctantly said, "Well, we are in the process of adopting a baby."

He said, "Let me pray about that." So he prayed that we would get this baby soon. I was hesitant believing

that anything like that could happen, but as good as the Lord is, the next Friday—five days later—we got a phone call from Social Services, telling us that we had a little baby girl waiting for us. Mary was ecstatic and I was very happy, but didn't give any credit to the Lord.

The next Tuesday we picked Sarah up and took her to show my mom. My sister was there. She was a believer and had been attending Fairhaven Bible Chapel in San Leandro, CA. She challenged me that our lives were going very well: we had a nice home, nice cars, good jobs—all the material things. The Lord had really blessed us, but what had we done for Him? She was pretty aggressive in her comments towards me about my non-relationship with Christ. She invited us to attend Fairhaven with her.

The next Sunday we went to Fairhaven and attended an SBC class (*Survey in Basic Christianity*). The class was on Lesson # 6 which talks about heaven and hell, but they never mentioned purgatory. The teacher made it clear that the Bible does not talk about such a place as purgatory—when a person dies, he either goes to heaven or to hell. That was a stark reality to me.

We went back the next week and I filled out a visitor's card. The next Monday, there was a knock at my door and the man who taught our first class was standing there. He shared the gospel with me and invited me to a meeting in his home. I was reluctant to go, but I went and had a really good time. I met a lot of neat Christians—men and women



who loved the Lord dearly. I started going frequently.

After about five months, I was invited to the Breaking of Bread, but I made up reasons not to go. At last, one Sunday I said, "You know what? I'm going to that meeting to see what it's all about."

When I got there, I was a bit late, and there was only one seat left—right at the front. I noticed on a table in the middle of the room was a loaf of bread and a cup of wine. I had been hearing the message of the gospel and I had been receiving some very good teaching from God's Word, but it wasn't until that Breaking of Bread meeting that I was able to put together the meaning of what Christ did for me personally. On the cross He died for my sins; He shed His blood for me. After that meeting, I decided that I wanted to accept Christ as my Saviour. Everything fell into place. It all made sense like it never had before. That was fifteen years ago.

Mary was saved a couple of years later and we have been in fellowship at Calvary Bible Chapel since then.

WM: Tom, can you tell us about how you were able to reach a policeman for the Lord?

TR: In 1987, I was on the street working speed enforcement and a California Highway Patrol Officer pulled up and sat beside me on his brand new Harley Davidson. I asked him if I could take it for a drive. We traded bikes for about two minutes and as we were talking about our bikes, my radio broadcasted an in-progress armed robbery—a man with a handgun in a bar. It was only about two blocks from where we were sitting, so we exchanged bikes quickly and he followed me to the area of the robbery.

I was there so fast that as I turned on to the street, I saw the perpetrator with the gun in his hand, running down the sidewalk. He saw me and I began to chase him. This highway patrol officer and I followed him a couple of blocks and were able to apprehend him and take him into custody.

I let my supervisor know that I was assisted by this CHP officer who didn't have to help me; he just wanted to. Our city sent a letter of commendation for Angelo Costanzo.

Shortly after that, I saw Angelo on the street with his wife, Dorothy. He invited our family to his house for dinner, so we went over. We talked about spiritual things. He was a Catholic, but he had some serious issues with the church. I invited them to the chapel.

Angelo and Dorothy couldn't believe the love the saints had one for another. It wasn't long after that that both of them were saved. They have three beautiful children and are going on for the Lord.

I don't call it chance—it is the Lord's leading and His dealing with us as we minister His Word. Many people need to hear who Jesus is. Our conversation started with him talking about my Kawasaki and me talking about his Harley Davidson. The Lord has us meet particular people for a reason and from there we need to get aggressive for the sake of the gospel.

WM: Can you tell us about how the Lord has been working in your department?

TR: A number of things have been happening. Randy White was a missionary in Ireland for ten years but before going there, he worked for us as a communications operator, or 911 dispatcher. When he returned to California, he was given his old job. We have been praying together about what the Lord is going to do in our department.

Currently, Randy has a Bible Study going on with a number of people. We are seeing souls come to the

Lord at work. Men and women are asking questions about eternity, about having a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Corey Quinn is a police officer who worked in my unit. We didn't know each other very well, but I knew he had been married for a short period of time and that his wife had two miscarriages. In April 1999, I got a call one morning from Corey asking if he could come over to my house. He wanted to bring his wife, Danielle, with him as they were having a hard time dealing with this second miscarriage and they didn't know what else to do. I told him to come over; they were there within fifteen minutes.

Prior to them coming, my wife and I prayed together about what we were going to say. We had asked the Lord to bring a family our way in the year 1999 so that we could share the gospel with them. We wanted to see a family saved and living for the Saviour.

We began a Bible study with Corey and Danielle in our home. Three months later, in June 1999, both Corey and Danielle confessed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I had the precious opportunity of baptizing both of them.

Miraculously, she got pregnant again. In May of 2000, on Mother's Day, they had a beautiful baby boy and they are living to serve the Lord in our assembly.

As a result of that, another girl, Alice, a connection of Corey and Danielle's, has professed faith in Christ and it looks like next month we'll be baptizing her also.

At work a number of guys are asking me questions. I think in our profession when you don't know what's going to happen from day to day and so many law enforcement officers are being killed in acts of violence, the guys need to know what's going to happen to them and where are they going to be the day that the Lord takes them. Are they going to be in heaven or hell?

My department has 182 people and we have about fifteen strong believers who are going on for the Lord.

WM: In your dealing with young people, what is the main problem that gets them in trouble with the law?

TR: There is a breakdown in the family structure. Many young people have no father figure in the home, the mom has to go out to work, and the kids are left alone. That's when they get in trouble. We see in the school district that I work an overall lack of respect for adults. Looking at the big picture and going into a lot of homes on domestic disputes and issues with young kids, I would really say it is the family breakdown.

WM: Do you have any suggestions for the average Christian in a local assembly on how they can minis-

ter to a young person in danger of getting in trouble with the law before they end up in jail?

TR: I think that we certainly need to make headway in sharing Christ with the youth of today. We can do that through AWANA programs, by having kids bring their unsaved friends to church services, maybe youth activities, camps—things that will get kids to see that there is a life that is better than the life they are living.

Victory Outreach does a good work with kids who have been in trouble before, some in the county jail, some in the state prison, some recovering alcoholics or drug addicts.

Five or six years ago, I got called to an R.V. court. A woman had complained that a guy was preaching from the back of a pickup truck. A lot of kids were listening, and people were hanging around in the streets—some gang members, some young people with nothing to do. The preachers were doing an excellent job.

As I pulled up to the scene, a woman came up and said, “Make them stop! We don’t want to hear that!”

I said, “Ma’am, they have a good message. You need to hear that message. They aren’t doing anything illegal; they have their constitutional right of freedom of speech.” She didn’t appreciate what I had to say and after a few minutes, she turned around and left, but they continued preaching the gospel.

I don’t know if there was any fruit, but they did not have to turn their bull horns off and leave the area. Maybe another officer would have asked them to do that, but I didn’t feel it was right or necessary.

Sometimes we want to live inside a little box, but we need to get out of that box to get young people to hear the message that will give them eternal life.

WM: Can you think of one outstanding incident where your response to a situation was different than most would have expected because you are a Christian?

TR: I was working overtime one day, and was detailed to a home because a gentleman had his car broken into and his stereo stolen. I went into Rick Welch’s house to write the report and he introduced me to his wife, Irene. I overheard her say to her two boys, “Make sure you thank Jesus for your food.”

I told her, “You know, that’s a good idea. We should always give the Lord Jesus thanks in all that we say and do and receive.” Then Rick and I turned to the business at hand. With auto burglary, you’ll probably never find the stolen property—it gets stolen and sold so fast.

Doing some questioning of witnesses, I was told

about a guy who might know what was going on or be involved somehow, so I went to his home.

While I was talking to the young man at his door, I heard his father say from behind me, “Ok, son, Officer Rodrigues is here. If he wants to talk to you, you’re in trouble. Just make sure you tell the truth. Whatever you do, tell the truth.”

I looked at the man—I had known him for fifteen years. I asked about the stereo. The father said, “Is that the stereo you and your friend sold me for \$50?”

The father went and got the stereo and brought it to me. The young boy gave me a complete statement implicating his friend, even though he was there also.

With all of that done, I took the stereo back to Mr. Welch’s house. I was gone no more than an hour. He was completely dumfounded that I was able to do all of that so quickly.

I really believe it was of the Lord. I was preaching at our assembly the next week and invited the Welch’s to the meeting. They came with their boys, and about six months later both of them professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.


They’re strong believers in the Lord and I believe it was all over a stereo that was stolen so the Lord could give me the opportunity to return it to them and have an open door to share Christ.

WM: How should believers pray for the police officers in their area?

TR: Well, number one, I think it’s important for people to pray for safety. When a police officer goes to work he doesn’t know what he’ll face. We have to wear bullet-proof vests every day. Our mind has to be clear, free from the distractions that sometimes could cause us to stumble when we’re doing our job. Certainly pray for safety for all of the policemen on the road today.

Pray for wise decision making—that we would have wisdom that only comes from the Lord. We can only get that through a relationship with Him.

If there are believers in law enforcement, pray that they would be bold to share Christ with their counterparts and their peers. We certainly need more Christian police officers on the street today.

WM: In the assembly at Calvary Bible Chapel there are four police officers and another young man is taking tests to become a law enforcement officer. I think it shows that there is a work of God going on in the police department here and I pray that it will continue to increase. 

COMPASSION

Learn from the Master how to weep with those who weep

CHRIST IN THE CITY

*Where cross the crowded ways of life,
Where sound the cries of race and clan,
Above the noise of selfish strife,
We hear Thy voice, O Son of man.*

*In haunts of wretchedness and need,
On shadowed thresholds dark with fears,
From paths where hide the lures of greed,
We catch the vision of Thy tears.*

*From tender childhood's helplessness,
From woman's grief, man's burdened toil,
From famished souls, from sorrow's stress,
Thy heart has never known recoil.*

*The cup of water given for Thee
Still holds the freshness of Thy grace;
Yet long these multitudes to see
The sweet compassion of Thy face.*

*O Master, from the mountainside
Make haste to heal these hearts of pain,
Among these restless throngs abide,
O tread the city's streets again.*

*Till sons of men shall learn Thy love
And follow where Thy feet have trod;
Till, glorious, from Thy heaven above
Shall come the city of our God.*

—Frank Mason North

A five-word biography of the Lord Jesus Christ while He was on earth: He “*went about doing good.*”

You can never give another person what you have found in Christ: peace, joy, satisfaction. But you can make him hungry for what you have.

Care so deeply for others that among the famished one feels actual hunger, among the shoeless one's feet sting with frostbite on a cold morning.

“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.”

Hebrews 13:3

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.” Matthew 25:34-40

I was hungry, and you formed a humanities club and discussed my hunger.

I was imprisoned, and you crept off quietly to your chapel to pray for my release.

I was naked, and in your mind you debated the morality of my appearance.

I was sick, and you knelt and thanked God for your health. I was homeless, and you preached to me of the spiritual shelter of God's love.

I was lonely, and you left me alone to pray for me.

You seem so holy, so close to God, but I'm still very hungry, and lonely and cold.

The world is full of needs and sorrows and weakness. People seem to scent out the man or woman who is strong or poised, who has a Source of supply that does not run out; they are quick to come for help with their burdens and problems.

*A little word in kindness spoken,
A motion or a tear,
Has often healed the heart that's broken
And made a friend sincere.*

*A word, a look, has crushed to earth
Full many a budding flower,
Which had a smile but owned its birth,
Would bless life's darkest hour.*

*Then deem it not an idle thing
A pleasant word to speak;
The face you wear, the thought you bring,
A heart may heal or break.*

—John Greenleaf Whittier

Free at last

How could he find the answer to his nightmare?

I have seen the power of God in changing my life. I was known as an habitual criminal, a career criminal. Between 1979 and 1993, I was charged with the following: first degree arson, aggravated motor vehicle theft, criminal mischief, harassment, theft, trespassing, second degree burglary, attempted arson, forgery, eluding, menacing, theft by receiving, possession of marijuana, and shoplifting. Several of these I was charged with more than once. And of every one of them I was guilty.

Altogether I've been sentenced to serve a total of twenty-three years since I was eleven years old. I've served over four-and-a-half years in eighteen different facilities. I have been on probation seven times and on parole once. I have been ordered to pay more than \$26,000 in restitution for my crimes.

I also spent ten years in bondage to my addiction to pot (marijuana). My mom spent hundreds of dollars on lawyers, bail bondsmen, and shrinks.



I did not have the power within me to stay out of trouble. The authorities tried everything: rehabilitation programs, reform school, AA, NA, counseling, and even a "Scared Straight" program which involved a trip to the Territorial Correction Facility in Canon City, Colorado, when I was fourteen. None of these gave me freedom from this life of crime.

I found the power to free me in one place—Jesus Christ.

In 1993, I was in jail, on my way to prison for eleven years. It was there I met Don, Ted, and Bruce. They were coming in, giving us the gospel.

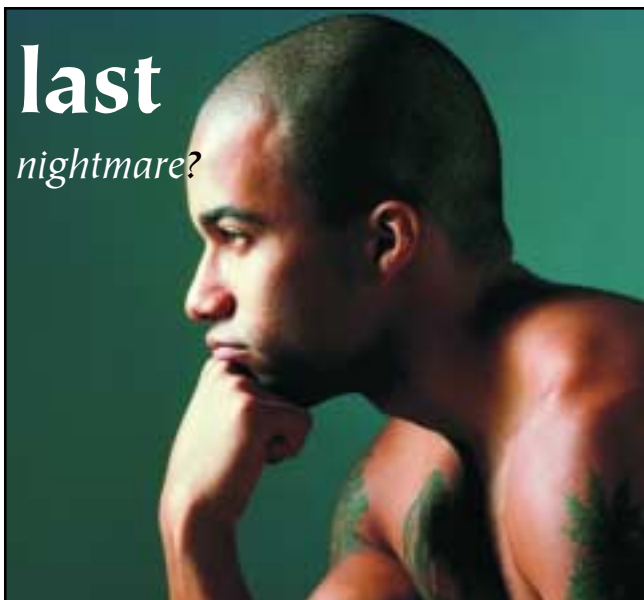
I was finally at the end of my rope, so with nowhere left to turn, I received Jesus as my Lord and Saviour.

I went on to serve my time, and after only sixteen months, the Lord freed me from those walls. He had already freed me spiritually, but now He let me go free physically too.

This is the first time in twenty-three years I have had the power to turn away from all this crime and trouble. I got this power from God.


Today I have been drug-free for three years. I have worked at the same job for two years and God has really changed my life. Today I have peace.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says:



"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." That describes what happened to me.

Maybe you too have had a struggle with sin and are tired of the bondage. Whether you have been in jail and prison or not, you are a sinner. *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Rom. 3:23). But God loves you and sent Christ to die on the cross to pay the penalty of your sin. The Bible states *"that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures"* (1 Cor. 15:3-4). Christ now is a living, risen Saviour.

Like Toby, you must repent and cry out to God for salvation. *"For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"* (Rom. 10:13). You too can know deliverance from the penalty and power of sin. 

The Life Learning Program

What is LLP? What does it mean to the men in the Cook County prison?

“**Y**oung man, I can reinstate your bond, or give you house arrest. Either way, you can be home today.”

“Your Honor, what’s the maximum amount of time I can receive for a continuance for my next court date?”

Taking a moment to check his docket, the judge responded, “November 21st, the Tuesday before Thanksgiving.”

“Your Honor, I would like to have the maximum amount of time that you can give me, but I would like to request that I be allowed to stay in jail because I’m in the Life Learning Program and I don’t want to leave right now—I’d rather stay in jail.”

When I was told this by the young man a few hours after he had made the request, I went into my office, closed the door and trembled before God in prayer and praise. Then I called Dan Swets, one of the

other chaplains who assisted me in opening the first Life Learning Program (LLP) in the Cook County Department of Corrections (CCDOC) in Chicago, IL. We both prayed and rejoiced, and agreed that the Lord had given us an awesome responsibility and wonderful opportunity to impact the lives of those whom He had and would give us.

In the Spring of 1997, I was called into the office of Superintendent Michael Moore. He had received a number of written requests from residents of Division XI asking that Christian men who wanted real change in their lives be allowed to have one of the 32 housing units of the 1,534 bed facility for themselves. He asked me if I could set up a program in one of the units for this to happen. I assured him that I could; and that just such a program already existed called the Life Learning Program.

The first LLP was developed by Chaplain Dan Matsche of the Good News Jail and Prison Ministry in Orange County Jail, Orlando, Florida in 1986. Dan asked the director of the jail if he could gather a unit of men from throughout the institution, and house them in one unit for the purpose of Christian discipleship. The idea met with some initial resistance and distrust, but, to his credit, the director agreed to let it proceed. The green light was given for the program to begin with a unit of ten men.

But God was in the plan from the beginning and within a short period of time, the Life Learning Program

proved to be so successful that after the first group of men completed the course, the location was changed to a larger unit and eventually it was given equal billing with three other programs in a new facility.

Shortly after the Orlando ministry received such acceptance, other jail and prison chaplains began duplicating this unique approach to their ministry. In every instance, the LLP was successful.

When I am asked to describe the LLP ministry—what it is and its purpose—I describe it as an in-house, residential discipleship ministry. We have been given complete access to the men and women in the units in which the program is being conducted.

The 16-week program consists of Bible instruction three times a day (this takes the form of book studies, topical studies, Old and New Testament survey courses, discipleship material, and other topics). The daily schedule begins with individual and small group devotions and prayer. The first period of formal instruction runs from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM. The second segment runs from 12:30 to 1:45, and the third is from 6:00 to 7:30.

In my section of the jail, we have 48 men in the unit. They are divided into four groups of twelve. One person in each group is designated as the group facilitator. His role is that of servant-leader to the eleven others and he relates to the chaplains who are the overseers of the program.

Those who are appointed as facilitators are men who have shown leadership ability, a servant’s heart, and a



The LIFE LEARNING PROGRAM

true desire to grow in their knowledge of the Word.

In October 1997, we opened the first LLP in Division XI of the Cook County Department of Corrections. In four weeks, the administration asked that we open one in all three of the other maximum security divisions of the jail. They attested to the already proven effectiveness of the ministry.

From my perspective, it was an admission to the power of the Word of God to change lives as 2 Corinthians 5:17 states, *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*

From the Administration’s perspective, they were seeing men who were sworn enemies—from various gang affiliations, various parts of the city, different racial backgrounds, different social backgrounds—all

getting along with each other. Former enemies were working together, singing together, praying together, and learning together. They were seeing these men, sitting for hours—attentive, alert and studying God’s Word. What a difference the Word of God makes!

Currently, there are Life Learning Programs functioning in four of the divisions of CCDOC. In Division XI, we now have two units, housing 96 men dedicated to the LLP. In my 25 years of service to the Lord at the Cook County Jail (three years as a student at Emmaus Bible College), the LLP ministry has definitely been the most labor-intensive, and at the same time it has been the most personally rewarding. God has indeed opened this door. His people have filled the ranks and by their prayers and giving, they make it possible for me to fulfill His will. All praise to Him for what He has done!



Prison follow-up

Prison is tough. Sometimes the toughest part is leaving.



While he was in prison, John the Baptist was depressed by doubts concerning Jesus being the Messiah. Jesus told His disciples that they should tell Him of the miracles they had seen and that, “*the poor have the gospel preached to them*” (Mt. 11:5, NKJV).

Many times it is the poor that are most receptive to the gospel, those who are poor materially and spiritually. Surely many who are in jail are among the very poor. Drinking and drug use may have left them destitute. A man told me that he had started using cocaine six months before. Now he had nothing and was facing time for burglaries. He had lost his home, his car—everything.

Jail is a place where a person can evaluate the direction his life is taking; it is an opportunity to consider making a change. I have been involved in jail work for about twenty-five years and have been the chaplain of our jail for about twelve years. We have two jails with a capacity of 300-350 men and women. Usually the jails are full. Perhaps about 10% will come regularly to Bible studies and some will profess faith in Christ. Many have never read the Bible, and some have said they have never held a Bible in their hands. It is a joy to preach the gospel to souls that have never heard the message before. When some with tears and brokenness receive Christ, it is a time of rejoicing.

But the follow-up when they are released can be discouraging. One man who had been a prison chaplain for twelve years said he only knew of about ten who were going on for

the Lord. Many drop their “religion” when they get on the streets. They go back to their wives or old friends and in time revert to their drinking and drug use.

Last night I was with a man who professed Christ in our jail nearly three years ago and showed signs of spiritual life. He studied the Word and made good progress. But when he was released from prison, I heard nothing more from him. Now he is back in jail. With sorrow he told me he had gone back to his wife who is a heavy drug user, and in time he started back to his drinking and drugs. He told me, “I can’t go back to her. She’ll drag me down.” He is intelligent and knows the Lord, I believe. But the battle is intense.

We strongly warn those who profess Christ that to go on for Christ there are certain things they must do. They must break with their old friends, their drinking, partying buddies. They must read the Word and pray every day to maintain fellowship with God. And it is very important that they get into a good Christian church. We urge them if they live in our area to come to our assembly. Christian fellowship is vital for their growth.


We have had some join with us in our assembly. Others, because of family and friends, go to other

churches. One faithful brother in our local church committed himself to being at every meeting when he was released. He has grown, is a blessing to all, and has led others to the Lord.

There will be some in heaven who have not gone on well. Dave professed Christ while in jail and later left us for more prison time. He kept studying the Word and growing. He told me, “Don, I have asked the Lord to give me one more chance to be a good husband and a good father to my three girls.” He had been a rough man, a hard drinker and a fighter, certainly a poor father.

But when he was released, his wife told him she was through with him. She had fallen in love with his younger brother. Dave got roaring drunk, and beat up his brother. He would have killed him, but had mercy; he was his brother. He continued drinking. He said, “Don, it’s the only way I know to handle my problem. I’ve always gotten drunk when things didn’t go well.”

Some time later, he was in a highway accident and killed, probably drunk. Dear Dave! I was his spiritual father and loved him. I believe I will see him in glory, but what a waste!

Yes, jail work can have its disappointments. Some may regress a time or two before gaining victory over the enslavement of sin. It is work where one must have faith, faith in the gospel and in the saving and keeping work of Christ. Surely these men and women who are poor spiritually and materially bankrupt, should have the chance of hearing the glorious gospel of God’s grace. What other chance do they have? 

Life in the “God pod”

God’s school is the best school. His lessons have eternal benefits, too.

In February 1999, I committed a crime while serving as a chaplain with a Christian health care corporation; the state of Washington charged me with a felony. Initially I denied the charge and asked my church and others to pray that I would be vindicated, but later I confessed and pleaded guilty to a plea bargained charge of Fourth Degree Assault.

I confessed my sin to God, the victim, my wife and family, the corporation board who hired me, my church, and a few others I had confided in, asking for their forgiveness. This they graciously did and offered to help in any way. I stepped down immediately from all church leadership positions and speaking responsibilities, believing any public ministry would be wrong until my debt to God and society had been paid.

As a result of my crime, I lost a well-paying job with valuable benefits, a ministry that I very much enjoyed and—to some people, I’m sure—my good name and reputation.

In April 2000, a judge sentenced me to 45 days in jail, followed by 45 days of Home Detention, followed by one year of probation. The time in jail was an unbelievable experience of life-changing proportion and Christ-serving opportunities. After being strip-searched, fingerprinted, mug-shot and given prison garb, I was put in the classification cell to await transfer to a permanent unit. The language of the other twenty-three prisoners here was unspeakably vile, the food practically inedible, and privacy non-existent. If the purpose was to dehumanize and remind

us we were criminals, it succeeded.

The two days I expected to be there stretched out to four, but God had His purposes. On the last day, a prisoner who had tried to commit suicide while on drugs, seeing me reading the Bible, asked if I knew how he could find God. I diagrammed the gospel, after which he confessed his sin and trusted Christ and His death on the cross. I then gave him my Bible with suggested passages he should read.

I had previously applied for the “God pod” and about midnight I was again strip searched, given fresh clothing, and led to this cell which is unique in the Washington State Penal System. A Christian prisoner friend, Abe, who knew I was coming, met me with presents of a new tee shirt, sweat shirt, boxer shorts, a bag of candy and a pillow. I wept at such love. For the next few weeks we enjoyed great fellowship.

The difference between the “God pod” and the other cells in the jail is the difference of day and night. Prisoners have to apply and be accepted to get in. Many are expelled for not obeying the rules.

The “God pod” was started by a prison guard who realized there was little or no rehabilitation going on, just a hostile “us and them” mentality between prison officials and the inmates. He resigned as a guard and asked to start a new program called “The Biblical Life Principles” course in one of the cells. Quickly dubbed the “God pod,” it held 64 prisoners.

We rose at 6:00 AM for a breakfast of relatively wholesome food. 7:00-8:00 AM was Quiet Hour when

everyone sat at tables and either read, wrote, or prayed in silence. At 8:30, the chaplain arrived and had a two-and-a-half hour session with short breaks, teaching the Scriptures. Lunch was at 11:30, followed by another two-hour session with the chaplain. He emphasized the need to trust Christ and to become a new creation in Him; also the truth of death to self, aliveness to the Lord, and dependence on the Holy Spirit as the only way to true rehabilitation. Many, who came in mainly for the peace and quietness, came to faith in Christ.


In the evenings, we led our own singing time followed by separate Spanish Bible studies. At 11:00 there was silence as the lights went out for the night. We could hear the yelling and screaming going on in the other pods, with the guards trying to keep some sort of order. I felt perfectly safe bunking next to a bank robber and murderer, both sweet, gentle, growing Christians who had trusted in the Lord while there.

Sensing that I knew a little about the Bible, my cellmates felt free to ask questions and get into Bible discussions all day. The greatest privilege was to lead five guys to the Lord. Then they experienced a “jail baptism”—sticking their heads under the faucet as we prayed over them. We emphasized that they fellowship with a Bible-teaching church immediately on leaving jail and get baptized by immersion.

The return to jail rate for those who pass their time in the “God pod” is minimal compared to the other pods. Other counties in

Washington and other states across the nation are sending delegations to see what it’s about. An article in a Seattle newspaper highlighted the Yakima God pod in May, and a Seattle jail opened one.

All this has had a profound effect on me and I am looking into helping in chaplaincy work at the jail. Although officially retired, I believe going in once or twice a week would really help. I know God is able to take my sin and its consequences and turn it around for

His glory. Satan wants to tell me I’m washed up as far as ministry for Christ is concerned. God, His Word, and my fellow-believers are encouraging me otherwise. So I am trusting God for a new season of fruitfulness. The “jail verses” I claimed were: “*Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert*” (Isa. 43:18-19). 

Making Your Visitor Welcome

The singing has already started. The Christians sit comfortably in their usual spots. As they sing, they glance down at the hymnbook every few lines. Before they get to the last line, they close the book and then bow their heads, anticipating the opening prayer.

In the back corner a young man slips in. His heart is pounding. He watches the song leader carefully to know what to do next. Will everyone stand up any moment now? Will they repeat the prayer? Will he get called up front to get saved? He feels conspicuous in his jeans and old tennis shoes. He fumbles in his Bible to find the passage and feels baffled by obscure references like, “Of course, we all remember the occasion when Balaam’s donkey talked to him.”

After many years of avoiding church, this man has just taken a major step: he has decided to give his life to God. That is a very intimidating thing for him. He has no idea what it will involve, but he knows it’s the right thing to do. He found the building that he was invited to by the preacher in jail (or at the mission, or on the back of the tract, or through the correspondence course...) and it took all of the courage he could muster to come inside.

When an assembly becomes involved in a prison or inner city ministry, we should expect this visitor at our meetings and be prepared to make him feel at home. If we are serious about seeing people saved and growing in faith and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, we need a plan that will make our visitors feel welcome as well as providing healthy spiritual food.

Christians need to be aware of any visitors. It will mean moving out of our comfort zone, away from the friends we wanted to chat with, but a friendly “Hi” and an introduction from most of the people in the room will impact our new friend for good. We may feel awkward, but it doesn’t compare with how he feels standing all alone in a room full of strangers.

Be sensitive about conversation: some people are eager to share their life story with anyone who is will-

ing to listen; others may be skittish about being bombarded with personal questions by a stranger.

Smile. Coming from jail or a mission, it has been a long time since our visitor has seen a sea of genuine, open smiles. This is what he is searching for. It will make a lasting impression.

Ask him if he has any questions about the message. If you don’t have the answer, don’t make one up. Ask the speaker, or get back to him later.

Tell him when the next activities are scheduled. If you have a bulletin, give him a copy. Write down your name and phone number so you can keep in touch; let him know it’s never a bad time to call.

Find out if he has a vehicle. If not, offer to give him a ride home and pick him up for other meetings.

Invite him to your home for a meal. Many times true friendships are formed away from the assembly building, in a one-on-one situation.

Find out his level of biblical understanding, and serve spiritual food that is appropriate and strengthening. Some assemblies offer adult Sunday School classes and Bible studies for newly saved people or those who are not familiar with the Bible. There are a number of excellent courses available. One suggestion is a series by Jean Gibson, *Survey in Basic Christianity, Basic Christian Training, and Advanced Christian Training*. Other assemblies feel it is best to include newcomers in their regular meetings. The preacher should be considerate by giving pointers on how to find the passage he’s discussing and not making assumptions that “of course, we all know...”

A fellowship may be doctrinally sound and following the New Testament pattern as closely as they know how, but if the body isn’t warm and receptive to newcomers, there will be no growth—no fresh life. It takes more than one or two who “are gifted in that kind of thing.” It requires a commitment from each member that their assembly will be a haven of nurture. —CAROLINE CAIRNS

Yonkers Gospel Mission Home

Here's love in 3D.

Healing the broken-hearted, delivering captives, setting at liberty those who have been crushed by life's calamities...that is what Yonkers Gospel Mission Home (YGMH) is all about.

It started back in the late 1960's with a gospel outreach into the community. This spawned an evangelistic Bible study that primarily reached those struggling with alcoholism. Soon those involved realized that there was more to the gospel than preaching the words. There were practical aspects to it as well. These men needed food and clothing as they sobered up. Then it was realized that all that was happening was a lot of well-dressed homeless men were coming to a Bible study. So the search for a suitable building in which to start the Mission was launched.

The original building was located at 50 N. Broadway and could house twelve men plus one staff member. This building was soon outgrown and a new location was sought. In 1973, Yonkers Gospel Mission Home moved to its present location at 191 N. Broadway. It can house sixty men.

During the late seventies, the type of men that were coming into the mission was changing from the classic derelict to the drug abuser. With heroin and cocaine use on the rise as well as PCP, LSD and other synthetic drugs readily available, the face of homelessness was changing in America. Drug users were younger and more criminal in their approach to life, stealing to feed their addiction. This has presented new and dif-

ferent challenges in dealing with this vast group of people.

Today, YGMH continues to serve men in Yonkers, NY, and surrounding Westchester County. The mission is located just twelve miles from downtown New York City. It has a very inner city feel to it and the neighborhood continues to deteriorate as time goes by. Safety for the residents and staff is always a matter for prayer.

Our Board of Directors is made up of nine men from area assemblies in New York and New Jersey. We have a staff of four, and a couple of volunteers from our resident population that round it out very nicely.

We desire to preach Christ to the men that come through our doors so that they might have opportunity to be saved, gaining new life and a new lifestyle. Christ is not only preached in word; the gospel is shown in practical ways as well, through serving three meals a day, seven days a week, providing clothing, and a warm, dry place to sleep at night. Toiletry items are also provided. It is through the goodness of the Lord's people that this happens.

Every morning at the Mission the gospel is preached at a Bible study that all of the men are required to attend. In the evening, a gospel meeting takes place with many area men taking part in the preaching of the Word. This meeting is also mandatory for every resident.

Apathy, opposition, and short attention spans make this type of work difficult, and there are many discouragements. We don't have a secret pill that cures homelessness

and substance abuse, but what we do have is real love and concern for each individual. Men who come to YGMH often desire to stay for extended periods of time because they find the home and family that they have longed for. Introducing men to Christ is the only way to change their destructive lifestyle. The Lord Jesus Christ is the giver of life and He is also a life changer.

The Mission is a place where men from all walks of life end up. We have had criminals on the run, NBA stars, college grads, and men who could not even write their own name. Hundreds of men have passed through the Mission doors over the years. Some have gone back to their sin and wicked lifestyle; we'll not know until we get to glory if there was any affect of the Good News in their lives. Others God has granted us the joy and privilege of seeing come to a saving knowledge of Christ and go on in their new life with Him.

Recently a man came to our building, just coming down off "crack." I remember the day well because the most prominent feature was his cheek bones. He was so thin from not eating for so long, his face was sunken in and the bones of his face were all clearly visible. His intent was just to get cleaned up, fed, get some clean clothes, and go back onto the street to the life he knew so well. He would only stay for one day—maybe two at the most; he had already decided that the gospel was not for him. Somewhere about the fourth day, this man was gloriously saved, and has not turned back yet.



The morning Bible study

Doug Milne

He found that his son, whom he had not seen in years, was in prison at nearby Sing Sing. Not only was he in prison, but he too had been saved

and was praying for his father's conversion. Now both are united in Christ.

Another man spent two years at the Mission and in that time barely uttered a full sentence. Recently he was reunited with his family who had been searching for him for ten years. The result was ten years of guilt lifted, and a new-found freedom to speak. He and his family are very open to spiritual things. Please pray for him.

The Doug Milne story is one that Christians in every assembly ought to hear. It will encourage your heart in the work that God has called each of us to do.

Doug had wrecked his life with excessive alcohol abuse and drug addiction to the point where he lost his family and job and found himself at rock bottom. He came to the Mission in November 1998 from Fishkill Correctional Facility. He had been released on parole to us. Before you can be released on parole in New York State, you have to have an address to go to. As Doug was sitting at the computer in the pre-release center, a counselor came alongside and explained that writing to all these places was a waste of time; there was only one place he knew of that ever wrote back. That was Yonkers Gospel Mission Home. Doug wrote to us and was received.

His first days at the Mission were difficult. He had gone back to the house where he used to live only to find that his wife had sold it and taken his three daughters to another state; he had no idea where.

He felt he had hit an all-time low, but he did not pick up a bottle as he'd always done before. Something was different now. He didn't understand it all, and he didn't even feel totally secure in it, but Doug had received Christ as his Saviour while he was in prison. The first night he was incarcerated, he had cried out to God that if He was real, to show him now because he was going to take his own life. As he cried in that prison cell, a

voice came from the next cell, "Don't do that. Jesus loves you." Just then a Bible came sliding around and under the door. The next morning the faceless voice became visible as an extremely large black man with a booming voice said, "Hey, would you like a Bible course with that Bible you're reading?"

So Doug was introduced to Emmaus Bible courses, which he did faithfully. Much to his surprise, they returned the corrected lessons to him, with helpful comments made.

As Doug told me the story, I had to ask, "Where did you send the courses to be corrected?"

His reply was, "Life's Key in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania." I was glad to tell him that I knew the believers that so faithfully carried on that work.

The icing on the cake, though, occurred some time later. We were sitting in a mid-week prayer meeting at a local assembly and Doug asked, "Who is that couple that just came in?"

"Paul and Georgia Kaschel, but you wouldn't know them."

He said, "I do know them. Where are they from?"

"White Plains Gospel Chapel," I replied.

"I grew up two doors from that chapel and every summer as a child I went to their VBS. It was the first place I heard about Christ and that woman was there."

I had the joy of explaining to that young believer how God had His hand on his life all the way. God had sent him to prison so that he could receive an Emmaus course from some folks in an assembly in Pittsburgh while he was transplanting someone from Cleveland to the work in Yonkers at an assembly-run mission. And even prior to that, He had used a quiet sister in White Plains, not only to pray this man to Christ, but into assembly fellowship as well. God is real and He is still in the business of healing the broken-hearted, and setting prisoners free.

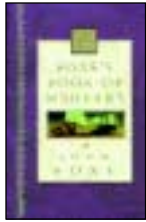
Doug was baptized in June 1999 and continues to be faithful to the Lord and is being used in the work at the Mission. He has been reunited with his oldest daughter and will soon be a grandpa.

The Lord Jesus Christ is still setting captives free at Yonkers Gospel Mission. Please, continue to pray for this vital work to the lost.

Michael and his wife, Laura, were commended to the Lord's work in itinerant ministry in January 1996 from Believer's Bible Chapel in Painesville, OH. In November 1997, their commendation was amended to include the work at YGMH. They now reside in Yonkers with their two daughters, Ruthann and Abigail.



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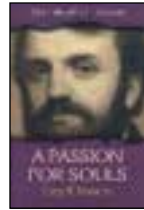
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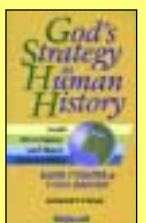
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Abide in the Vine —Karen Conlee

A weed, wilted flower,
A torn vine was I
Life was lifeless,
With no hope in sight.

Then I met a Man
About eight years ago,
Who told me He loved me,
And I knew it was so.

He said He would save me
If I'd simply believe.
The miracle happened
Eternal life I received.

That Man was as no other
Person I had known.
The seed that He planted
Was Divinely sown.

He watered and cared for
And tended that seed
With His Word and His Spirit
Providing all it would need.

To slowly grow into
A healthy, strong stem...
Attached to the Vine—
The Vine being Him.

And on that Vine
I saw flowers unfold
With fruit attached
And beauty untold.

They were other believers
Who had grown in Him.
I thought, "I want to flower!"
So I toiled and I spinned.

The magnificent Gardener
Said gently one day
For me to bear fruit
This was just not the way.

But rather, to rest in Him,
Abiding in the Vine.
By learning of Him
I'd bear fruit in due time.

To bear much fruit
Purging is a must;
Through the pain of purging
He teaches me to trust.

The Man I'm referring to
Is Jesus, my Saviour Divine;
The Master, great Pruner,
The Sower, the Vine.

As I look at myself
All I see is a dud,
But by faith in Him
I will blossom and bud!

Karen writes: Prior to placing my faith in Christ's finished work on the cross, my life was empty and meaningless. I tried so many things to fill the void that only Christ can fill. Finally, I came to the end of myself, heard the glorious message that salvation is a free gift of God and all I had to do was believe it. I believed and received eternal life. Praise God! No longer was I on my way to hell nor was I enslaved to the terrible bondage of sin. I thank the Lord each day for the love, grace, mercy, chastening, etc., He so lovingly provides for me each day.