



SOMEONE CARES PRISON MINISTRY NEWSLETTER



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Quietly Changing Lives

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www.someonecares.org

Become a Pen Friend
(Register on line!)
See Don and Yvonne
Catch up on back issues
Send us Email (see below)

IT IS REALLY TRUE
GOD LOVES YOU.

BECAUSE OF YOU,
SOMEONE CARES.

Published monthly by
Someone Cares Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 11245
Fort Wayne IN 46856
Phone: 260-387-7423
Email: sdapm@someonecares.org
UPS : 3431 Cedar Run
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46818

Don & Yvonne McClure
Co-Founders

Someone Cares is a faith
ministry, supported by God's love
and your gifts. It is a non-profit
corporation; all donations are
tax-deductible.

"HI" FROM US TO YOU



Over the years we have attempted to make this a personal Ministry, and have prayed for all of you and prayed with many of you. I do not preach as often as I used to, but hope to be doing so again soon. It will be nice to have a grown up Jake performing Amazing Grace before I preach. It seems like only yesterday that I was preaching, and as the end of my sermon drew near, Jake crawled up to the pulpit, I reached down and picked him up (I sure can't do that anymore) and finished the sermon. This is always a reminder that even today Jesus carries me in the work that we do for HIM. That same Grace, God's Riches at Christ's expense.

A friend from my past, before Jesus, asked me how I learned to preach. I really did not learn, but through Christ's love I read His Word and applied what I learned from the Bible in a sermon. The important thing to remember that pertains to our soon coming trip to Heaven is this - when you are preaching or teaching (and this includes what you pass along when you write your letters) make sure that what you tell others comes straight from God's Word, so that the folks who are listening will have it written on their heart, never to be erased.

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Hebrews 8:10

100 NEW PEN FRIENDS

Seventy-seven of these inmates wrote us notes thanking us for responding to their request for pen friends. Here are excerpts from a few of those letters:

Don, I have been in prison for over 20 years. I have attended Bible studies but gotten confused about so many different religions. I have gone to Church and really enjoyed the singing, but the Chaplain's short sermon had little meaning. I am glad you told me about Yvonne's "All Faith" service. These people you matched me with were so honest, they said, "We are writing you because Jesus said to." They were happy to be servicing Jesus and meeting hopefully a new friend.

I have written 28 organizations for a Pen Pal, was glad I finally got a Pen Friend and I will do my best to honor that friendship. I'm not a Christian but am willing to try. They wrote that hopefully their friendship will bring me close to Jesus, as I read in your newsletter to be free in Jesus is to be free indeed.

Thank you for hearing my plea. I got a letter, it took two tries but worth waiting. I am scared though, I am in solitary confinement for something dumb I did. I have no radio, no TV, little education. What I know of the world I hear from other inmates. I hope I don't offend my new friends. They are my only road to freedom.

I PREACH AND TEACH BUT I ALSO LISTEN

When we listen we also learn, when we learn we share (or at least we should). I was once asked, "If you were offered a penny a minute for one hour or a million dollars, what would you take?" My answer without thinking was a million dollars. Do the math, you'll be surprised.

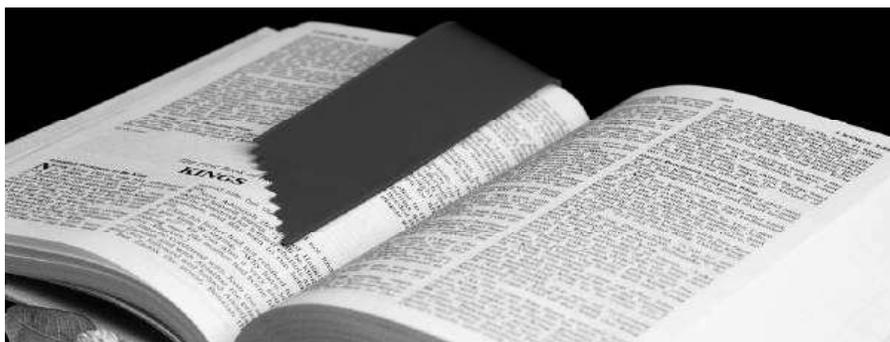
Another time someone asked if I thought I was religious, thinking that if I spoke about God I must be very religious. What I told them was that as I learned through God's Word I tried to apply the scriptures to my life, especially as it related to Ministry in Prison. Sometimes it was easy. Remember the scripture from Hebrews 13:3 "Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering." (NIV) For me, this was an easy scripture to apply, since this was my calling. For you it may be a little more difficult.

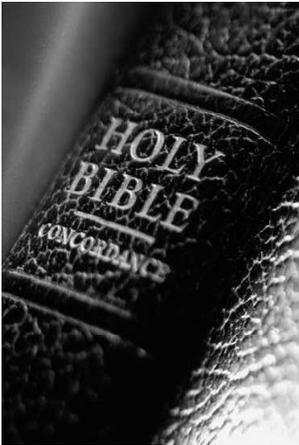
I also shared with them my experience on the Cross with Jesus. At first when Yvonne tried to convert me I wanted nothing to do with Jesus. But like the repentant thief, I accepted HIM and here I am. The deeper I got into HIS word the deeper I returned to Prison Ministry. Then with Yvonne at my side a perfect union had been formed. I knew the Word and where most of the inmates we served came from, Yvonne knew about the world God has prepared for them.

There's a song I learned about God called "Have You Ever Talked to God Above?" Sure I have, haven't you? Someone asked me if He ever talked back. It was easy for me to know the answer, but hard to explain. Reading HIS word over and over again brings new knowledge and great experience. His Word is alive, and He speaks to us through it.

Another favorite song of mine is "Blessed Assurance."

*Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.*





MORE LETTERS FROM INMATES

HOW TOUGH IS TOUGH.

My name is Jim. I have been locked up most of my life and believe me it has not been easy. I deserve every moment of it. I have learned to ask forgiveness to the many I have hurt, just do not have the nerve to ask. I am getting out. Things are a little different this time. But this is California. I must parole to the county of commitment where I know no one. I will be given two hundred dollars, gate money, and I have saved \$213.00. I'm 57 and do not have any job skills except common labor. With the condition of the state of California it will be tough. I have a cousin in Southern California but the county in Northern California will not release me to him, and his county will not accept me. I have a grandfather somewhere and the McClures are trying to help me find him. I will live on the street under a bridge, as if I go back to prison I will die there. Someone Cares does care and wish I had hooked up with them earlier.

HEY, MCCLURES, I'M FREE!

I was in a pre-release home when I got your address. I had gotten a Pen Friend and Bible Study through you and accepted Christ in Prison. To be blessed so much for the person I had been all my life is a true miracle. I have no idea how I'm going to make it. No, family, no job and living in a duck blind in a swamp. But I'm not going back to prison. I got a few bucks and stayed last night in a shelter and borrowed a stamp to write you guys. Thanks for all you do for all of us. My payment is a swear on Jesus' name I'll not go back to prison. Somehow in this world that's so messed up I'll make it. When I get it all together I'll stop by.

Tony Blacker

THANKS FOR SOMEONE CARES.

Finding Someone Cares five years ago was a blessing. I got two pen friends, the first person did not write. They rematched me and then the second found the misplaced paper work. My name is Judy and I'm white and 33. I have been locked up three times, twice in jail once in prison. Thanks to Someone Cares and my pen friends I have gotten my GED, have a place to stay when released, and a possible job. Thanks to all I have met and bonded with Jesus. Amen. Sure wish someone had been around when my troubles started. Please pray for them and me.

Yvonne's Corner

A Christian is as a Christian does. We deal with so very many different folks, going to so many different churches. Growing up with the Bible and going to one church I was sheltered in a comfort zone. Helping Don was difficult as he had never been in the Bible. I watched and helped him learn the Word and how to apply it. He learned as he taught in prison. When he preached he allowed questions to be asked! One rule he had was to allow a week for the answer if he was not sure. Often the inmates would try to trick him, making a lot of extra work. He based all on "You are saved from Sin, not in Sin." It is a good idea when you get to know your inmate to share your belief and discuss your opinion.

HELPING SAVE THE LOST

We have about 13 women's groups and three men's groups who have joined our Pen Friend Program. All admit that writing to a person who may have done an unspeakable crime is difficult. They also learned that if we do not witness to these then Jesus may never return ... "Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess." In prison are many religions, including cults. Sharing what you believe, not tearing down what they may believe, is the answer to good ministry.

LETTER FROM A SAD BUT GRATEFUL PARENT

My Son Died Saved. *You do not know me but I want to thank this Ministry. My son was sent to prison down South. We did not even know he was in prison or where he was until I got a call from you telling us he had contacted you. We are a Christian family who lost everything during Katrina, including my son who had run away a year before. In prison he was raped and got aids, telling no one until he got really sick. Through one of your programs he met a couple and took a Bible study. We could not visit him as we did not have any money. Through the Salvation Army or maybe the Red Cross he got a call through from the prison's hospital ward? He told us how sorry he was but he said he would be going to a better place soon. Now we have to make an effort to be there also.*

God Bless,

A Sad Mother.

(A church in Georgia called us with her on the line. The son was buried in a Potter's Grave.)

IMPORTANT WRITING TIP REMINDER

On your letter to the inmate, PLEASE use your Pen Name in the return address and on your letter to Someone Cares, write your real name in the return address.

HAD A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS

This Ministry has run on prayer for many years. Our Prayer Partners provide the corner stone of action, Jesus of course is the corner stone of all. Inmates who were not raised in church families do not understand prayer. I met a young man at San Quentin who told me he prayed every day for release from prison, but was still there. It was difficult to explain that his prayers *were* answered, just not in the way he wanted. The study of God's Word is so neat, as there are so many examples of answered prayer. When I first became a Christian I read the Bible through in a heartbeat. I learned to read it chapter by chapter, cross referencing every thing. I learned books in the Old Testament were keys to the New Testament. Believe and receive. In Heaven God sees all. I knew a young gay man who took a lot of studies, prayed a lot, read the Word every day. God saves us *from* sin, not *in* sin. We are all guilty of sin. When Mary, who was guilty in sin, was brought to Jesus for punishment for her crime He found guilt in the accusers and wrote it in the sand. That writing blew them away.

GIVE GOD THE GLORY

It is a wonder to us that after all these years we still hear from so many. I wish we had kept count of all the inmates that have been touched by Jesus through all of you. Please help us by recruiting others to write, as we are more than swamped. The loneliness in prison is terrible. No schools, little yard time, very few jobs. Most all are pulling dead time with as much as 24 hours a day locked up. No radios or TVs, so your "Paper Sunshine" letter writing ministry is a true salvation to so many. Many who have made it through prison and are trying to make it in this world are feeling "slapped" with further disgrace with such outlooks as, "We don't care if you paid for your crime, you cannot vote."

Folks, we cannot put our non-profit status at risk. However, we suggest that you help anyone you know who is not registered to vote to get registered. We could show the government a way to save billions if we had a voice, so we all must do what we can to help correct the system. Prison is expensive and behind those walls are trained inmates willing to do anything. Check your ballots for issues that deal with prisons.

We thank God for what you have done and pray you can share our message. Remember Jesus' words, "I was in prison and you visited me not." We offer a way to do that from the comfort and safety of your home.

God Bless!

Don, Yvonne and Jake