



SOMEONE CARES PRISON MINISTRY NEWSLETTER



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Quietly Changing Lives

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IT IS REALLY TRUE
GOD LOVES YOU.

BECAUSE OF YOU,
SOMEONE CARES.

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ministry, supported by God's love
and your gifts. It is a non-profit
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tax-deductible.

THE FAMILY OF GOD

When I first became a Christian I learned that song. God's family is something wonderful to be a part of.

*"I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God,
I've been washed in the fountain,
Cleansed by His Blood!
Joint heirs with Jesus
As we travel this sod,
For I'm part of the family,
The Family of God."*

We welcome all of our brothers and sisters in Christ, as we are all a part of the Family of God. And we once again welcome the many who have joined our family from the last VOP program - it's a joy to see more and more folks wanting to do something for the Jesus.

*"For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my
brother and sister and mother." Matthew 12:50*



A MEMBER OF THE GOD SQUAD WRITES

You need not read my inmate mail anymore, except for one I am having a time with. You have sent me some really nice Pen Friends. The one I got a letter from today really wants to know about the Lord to become a better person. He does not want to end up in prison again as he knows he will without Jesus. It is truly a great blessing writing these people. Thank you so much! Holly

***Once again, we receive the credit for what others like
Holly are doing. Thanks to all of you!***

Ruth's Story

Ruth Wilson is an 85 year old lady. Saying that she is just a lady is not enough. She is what the scripture, "I was in prison and you visited me not" is all about, and she really took that lesson to heart. Since the summer of 1993 she has been writing to several inmates in many prisons. For quite some time she has been writing to as many as 150 inmates a month, and a total of 400 inmates all together.

This is her ministry, not ours. She knows one day the inevitable will happen and she will die, and she wonders what will happen to those inmates who depend on her.

Below are bits from an article about Ruth's life that was sent to us. One thing the article mentioned was about how much fun it was to be a teen in the 40's (I was there).

Most of us, she stated, do not have any sympathy for those in prison. We are repulsed by the deeds committed by many. We drive by these massive prisons made of cold steel, colder brick and razor wire everywhere. Ruth said that many of us call ourselves Christians and hold judgment for those in prison. She also said, Jesus told us "we are not to judge them." Why, then are we disobedient to HIS command, she asks? She went on to say all of us are sinners - "all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.

Ruth admits that before she got into Prison Ministry God had to work hard on her. Ruth's marriage was not the best and she spent many hours by herself raising her children. At the age of 35 the Holy Spirit entered her life. Some time after her husband left her, God sent her a man named David who helped her regain her identity and put a burden on her heart to go into prison to minister.

One day her son brought to her attention a 28 year old inmate who had been praying for a Christian woman to write to him. Ruth wrote her first letter, and with her marvelous sense of humor told me, "Too bad he did not ask for a younger woman; I was 68 at the time!"

Then another reference came her way... and another. Ruth said that when she began writing she was filled with pride, figuring she was doing something nice for someone. Those thoughts "back-fired" she now realizes, "They do more for me and have taught me more than I have for them."

Ruth says that she never considers herself writing to that person who was sent there (to prison) but rather someone that the Lord has forgiven. She wants them to know that they are acceptable to her and before God if they ask His forgiveness. No matter what, she said, "We have to love them. They, like all of us, want to have somebody in their lives and to know what it feels like to be loved." At first she used to be curious about why a person was in prison, but that does not occur to her any longer. She said that an inmate will eventually want to tell her all about him or herself.

Gerard L. Ready has been incarcerated at the Bridgewater State Prison for the past 28 years. He, like so many others, is blessed by her letters and told us in a letter that most refer to her as "Mama Ruth." He wrote, "I have been blessed beyond words by Ruth." He points out that Ruth has taken seriously the Lord's words in Matthew 25:36: "I was naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came to me." He considers her wonderful letters "visits" to the inmates. There is no such thing as a form letter for Ruth; according to Gerard, "Every word of personal encouragement is directed to the individual to whom she is responding."

There are a few individuals who have taken on a portion of the letter writing. In fact, Gerald Ready (Gerry as Ruth Calls him) writes to about a dozen inmates and has asked for more. Janine, in

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Buffalo, New York has been writing and has recently asked Ruth for ten more. In response to a letter written in this paper about Ruth, a Spanish speaking woman has come forth, which will be extremely helpful.

Ruth's ability to reach out in love to so many people did not take place until the Lord taught her what it is like to feel loved. Perhaps you have been blessed by knowing love all along. Not everyone is called to write letters, or to any particular ministry, but to those open to His calling, the Lord will use you to do His work. There are many thousands of incarcerated who could use some loving encouragement today. Are you ready to share God's love with them?

P.S. I just spoke with Ruth on the phone today, her 85th birthday. We assured her we are willing to take on her Ministry, and the tears she had shed turned to joy. She had written a final letter to all telling them just that. Now she is adding a PS telling them we will provide them a replacement (but how do you replace a lady like this?). She is referring all of them to us. And you, you might want to send her a birthday card showing that God's family cares.

JAKE'S CORNER

When I read this article on Ruth it touched my heart. To know that one single lady that was touched by God brought so many others to God by letting them see and feel what God's love feels like. So many people think of people in prison as prisoners or evil people. Many really are. That is the problem. 100% of us humans have our sins, and as the Bible says, one sin is just as great as another. The men and women in prison just happened to get caught. The Bible also says, "Thou shalt not judge." And as my grandfather says almost every day, "Jesus said to see and love a prisoner as if you are chained with them."

Prayer is the Answer

We have seen through very hardened inmates the answer to prayer. Did you know that many inmates today are fearful of release? If a free person has a difficult time getting a job (unemployment is at an all-time high), you can imagine that an ex-con has little to no chance.

The prison system in our country has an increasing number of the elderly, and conditions are poor. I've been told that one prison has cut meals to only two a day. No longer do many prisons allow stamps, some have no jobs to offer inmates, and so the inmates experience a lot of dead time.

I never have and never will defend crime. "Do the crime, do the time" is what we say. But dead time is dangerous. Criminals start hitting on the weak. Those inmates who are preyed upon cannot tell anyone, since prison rules say if you report a crime you must give the name of the person, which is something that can get your throat cut. Religious programs are being cut as staff in most prisons has been cut way back. Usually those who come to volunteer in prison must be escorted to chapel or visiting areas, but without proper staffing this does not happen.



GOD BLESS YOU JAKE AND BRITTANY

We as a prison ministry have seen the love and magic of God’s love first hand. Grown men that have been through more than some of us can imagine breaking down on their knees and crying. Do you know why? Because God is touching their hearts, and at that time and moment He is showing them what it feels like to be loved and seen as nothing but a person, not as a criminal, or a prisoner but as another one of God’s children.

Jake, at the age of 17, helps us, goes to College, and does many odd jobs including shoveling snow and dish washing. If we can get a couple of your churches or companies to donate toward a full time a salary he can work for us as an additional life line.

DADDY, DO YOU LOVE US?

Some time ago we wrote about a young boy, after visiting his father in prison, stood outside the prison wire fence with his dad on the other side, and yelled, “Daddy, are you staying here because you don’t love us?” We were able to work with that inmate, and by the grace of God he became a totally changed man. A church group worked with the boy and his mom.

Praise God that we received a call that the inmate has been released, and was able to go home to be reunited with that boy, now much older.



Yvonne’s Corner

My dining room table? It is a large, very nice table and it will seat eight. Except on one end are several piles of letters waiting for applications, and in another area is a stack of unfilled out applications waiting for one of you or a friend or relative of yours. Then there is a pile of letters from inmates to many of you. There is also a pile of letters from you to inmates. In the middle of it all are checks (Thank God!) waiting to be deposited. Organized confusion, all going somewhere, sent by someone to someone. Then there is the pile at the end. Letters from inmates to....we have no idea. We again will have to write these inmates trying to find out who should be getting them. I know our dear Lord has to be amused and wondering how it all will get done, but it is HIS work and it will get done maybe some day? Amen!!

PRISONS AND POLITICS

I wish I could tell you my true feelings with about the goings on from Washington throughout the States with regards to the prison systems. But as a non profit organization I would put that status in dire straights. (Some day.)

I do ask each of you, with many elections coming up, to please vote. Most I hear from are disgusted and do not know what is the truth. It takes just a call to get registered, and a piece of paper to vote. Let your opinion be known. Don’t say, I don’t like what has been done so I will not vote.

TEN DIMES SCOTCH-TAPED TOGETHER!

We have no idea who sent us these 10 dimes, but we do know why. There was no note, just the dimes. We will try to give a million dollar effort to deserve them.

PLEASE, IN ANY WAY YOU CAN, JOIN WITH US TO HELP CHANGE A SYSTEM THAT IS BROKEN. BY DOING SO YOU WILL HELP CHANGE THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN BROKEN WITH IT.