



SOMEONE CARES PRISON MINISTRY *Newsletter*



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QUIETLY CHANGING LIVES

OCTOBER, 2009

Visit our web site:
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.**

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*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.*

THANK YOU AGAIN, JESUS

We are expecting another mountain top experience with the around-the-world, five day *Voice of Prophecy* radio show. Since we are growing so fast we really need this “shot in the arm.”

As usual we have two large piles of names—one with letters from inmates requesting applications, another from those who have called, emailed or written to request information to become a Pen Friend. As fast as we can we will get information packets out.

If you are one who receives a new packet, please (1) read all the instructions; (2) return the completed form so we can match you with an inmate; (3) start your Paper Sunshine Ministry.

THE YOUNG GIRL GROWS UP

Many years ago Yvonne and I held a five day Prison Ministry Seminar at Soquel Camp Meeting, three or four times a day in the rear of the main auditorium. We had built a copy of a prison cell

with bunks and a real prison toilet. (*So real that a very young boy used it!*) At almost every meeting a young girl named Judy listened and took notes. We chatted and answered her questions.

At the end of the last meeting she left a written note behind. Yvonne picked it up, and we both had tears in our eyes after reading it. That note has been in my Bible for years. Here's what it says:

*“If you don't care how
the problems get solved,
you can shake your head later
that you never got involved.*

*The call came ringing
from the throne of gold,
but you never got the message
'cause your mind was
on hold.”*

About ten years later Judy called us. We found out she had been writing as a Pen Friend under an assumed name, as she was only 12 at the time she signed up. She was writing 20 inmates. She is now married and her husband is also writing as a Pen Friend.

THE BEGINNING OF PRISON MINISTRY

Prison Ministry was started on the cross when Jesus stopped dying to save a convict. We will see that convict in Heaven. The future of the other convict is not so good. Jesus, as hard as He tries, cannot win them all because all are not willing.

Paul and Silas were part of one of the Bible's greatest mysteries. They broke into a Prison to have Church. Stripped naked, beaten, skin torn, chained and thrown in stocks. Stocks are an instrument of torture—a long board with groves cut everywhere, legs tied to it and stretched apart as far as possible. Obviously, very painful.

What did they do—cry out in pain? No! They sang praises to the Lord, and the prisoner's chains were broken and the door opened. Did they flee? No. "You and your house will be saved!" they proclaimed.

"But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. And he (the guard) brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." Acts 16: 25, 30-31

A PRISON SEMINAR

One dark and stormy night in a Chickasaw Nation prison, a Parson spoke to 90 inmates. His sermon was this:

*I'm going to preach
and try to teach,
to the 90 men in here
of the words of love
from the throne above
(his tones were loud
and clear).*

*I preach to you
of a Savior true,
in a happy home on high.
Where the angels dwell
all saved from hell
and the righteous never die.
He prayed a prayer
in the prison there
as the 90 bowed there heads.
To the bold Choctaw
and the Chickasaw,
the blacks, the whites,
the red.*

*He prayed for the chief
with his disbelief,
for the black highwayman bold.
For the robber true
and his bandit crew,
for the criminals young
and old.*

*Then he sang a hymn
in the prison grim.
He sang "Turn Sinner Turn."
It's not too late
to reach God's gate
while the lamp holds out
to burn.
Then from his bed*

*between the Black and Red
up rose an outlaw bold.*

*With trembling step
to the Parson he crept,
all shivering with cold.*

*And a vicious flash
from the lightning crash
showed his features pale
and stern.*

*As he bowed his head
and slowly said
"I am resolved to turn."
And it seemed to me
no one else shall see
a scene so glad, so grand.
As the black and red
on their blanket bed,
'round the Christian one
did stand.*

*While the night came down
like a silvery crown,
and a promise gave to all.*

*For the 90 men
in the Marshall's den
heard only the Savior's call.*

WE WILL GO WHERE HE WANTS US TO GO

The above poem means so much to me, as I came from a group like that 90. Many years ago I wrote a poem and threw it away. Yvonne found it and typed it out. I do not doodle with poems much anymore. This is the OLD me at the age of thirteen:

*"I went away one day
and never learned to be
a boy.*

*When all my friends learned
how to skate,
I learned how the world
to hate!*

*When girls and boys my age
went to the movies having
popcorn to eat,*

*I had already learned
the hard way of the street.*

*Switch blades, zip guns,
hookers, pimps
and a lot of heat.*

*Your boys and girls,
good grades to get.*

*My life depended
on winning each bet.*

*Remember how they cheered
when their team won?*

*I had to worry that the person
at the door
might be packing a gun.”*

I can never go back to change what was broken, but God, through His mercy and grace, has given me new life. He promises that the broken pieces will be healed, and they have.

*“He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds.”*
Psalms 147:3

FYI, Prison Terms: A switch blade is a knife that opens with the flick of the wrist. A zip gun is made of wood, the handle round, a metal barrel nail-firing pin and rubber band. A shank is a prison knife made of almost anything that can cut or puncture.

WHY PRISON MINISTRY?

When Yvonne led me to Christ, several other things happened. I gave up drinking, drugs, and a whole lot of things that had put me in jail and prison. But now I was set free! Still, I had a big problem to face—if you are not raised a believer and then become one, it can be difficult, especially if you came from where I did. I devoured the Bible and learned a lot. I’ve preached in 400 Churches, but the day I stepped into a Church for the first time was difficult. When I encountered the “we do not want those kinds of people” attitude of others, it really hurt.

Since Yvonne was the daughter of Clyde and Vera Groomer, who were well known in the Church, rumor of me spread. Some thought I did not fit. But I knew I belonged because the Bible said so. I knew my freedom did not come from the acceptance of others, but from Jesus.

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”
John 8:36

God in His mercy led me, and then both of us, back to prison, but this time in His service. Thank you, Jesus! Someone Cares was born and has grown for over 30 years.

We have made many mistakes over the years, but learning by mistakes has taught us well. Our Ministry is accepted by Church and State (however, we are paid by neither; our funds come solely from free-will offerings). Most importantly, our Ministry is accepted by inmates and prison staff. I have made alter calls in church and prison and many have come forward, but when an inmate accepts Christ we can really hear the Heavenly Choir sing.

Hebrews 13:3 tells us to remember the prisoner (inmate) as if chained with them. That is hard, but it can be done with God’s assistance. We receive a lot of invitations to hold Prison Ministry Seminars, and will continue to do this all over the place. We have miles of video (*thanks, Michelle*), with footage from inside prisons, testimonies from inmates, and lots more. We will convert the video to DVD, and also include explanations about every phase of our Ministry. We plan to make these DVDs available to the public. Please pray that we will have the funds for production.

YVONNE’S CORNER

As Don said earlier, I came from a much different

background than he did. In fact the difference was like night and day. I was raised in a very protected and strict Christian home, my Father a minister and my mother involved in child evangelism. My life revolved around the Church and its activities, knowing nothing about the world outside of Church, with the exception of being taught to witness to others and always share Jesus. I recall my father having “Jail Bands” where once a month we would go and sing to people in prison. I grew up with the attitude, “you do the crime, you do the time.”

When Don mentioned a prison ministry to me I said, “Fine, you go, but not me.” As I have said before, once I went and saw the pain and hurt, I told Don I would go with him no matter what it took and I still feel that way. God is the one that led Don to the Word; I was only an instrument willing to be used. It is true that prison is not a nice place. It is dark and dreary with a lot of sad people locked up, but you have been given the opportunity of bringing

Paper Sunshine to them. Will you? Many of you have been reading our newsletters for some time—when do you get involved?

PRISON MINISTRY PROGRAMS

PAPER SUNSHINE. The program works like this: we match you with inmates to write to, in order to shine a little “sunshine” (*Jesus’ light*) into an otherwise dark world. You use our address and not yours, so it is risk-free. This program alone has been responsible for getting one million inmates to complete Bible studies over 30 years.

DRESS OUT PROGRAM.

This is a much needed program that provides free, good used clothes for inmates leaving prison. We personally do not set these programs up anymore, but feel it is a very important community service to help released inmates as they return to the outside world. We are happy to provide training for any who are interested in setting up a program in their area.

BIBLE STUDIES.

Chaplains do not have enough time to conduct Bible studies for inmates, so Bible Study programs are greatly needed, and can be a powerful tool in leading inmates to learn about Christ and being a Christian.

If you have access to Bible Study materials, we encourage you to send copies to your pen friend. (Remember not to use staples, and to follow any other rules the prison has about what can be received.)

It doesn’t matter what Church you belong to. The important thing to focus on is this: does the study point to Jesus as our Savior? From working with many Chaplains over the years, we have found that they, like many people, are adamant about their particular Doctrines. However, we believe and teach that our Doctrines should not be a barrier; instead we need to provide a bridge to Jesus Christ through His Word alone.

“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”

Acts 5:4