



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.

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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.

VOP PROGRAM AIRING THIS MONTH

We are happy today since Jesus, as usual, has taken all our troubles away. We have a real big event coming up and need all your help. Voice of Prophecy (VOP) is again airing a program about us, which will be played on many Christian radio stations.



Starting Monday September 19th through Friday September 23rd this program can be heard 24 hours a day on VOP.com. So, if you don't have access to the radio stations, or if you hear only part of the program in your car, you can listen on your computer.

We have an idea which requires your help. If every church and every person reading this posts it in their church, or emails it to their address book, what a large listening audience we will reach!

Our relationship with VOP, and their willingness to air programs about our Ministry, has led to over a million inmates completing Bible studies.

PAPER SUNSHINE

Ministry in prison is when people go into prison to teach to a group of prisoners. Although this is needed, it has its problems. People may be allowed to teach a class or preach to the prisoners, but individuals are not allowed to follow up on a one to one basis, which is the most needed thing for the inmate.

Paper Sunshine takes care of these problems. You have an incredible opportunity to minister one to one with your inmate pen friend! Don't take this calling lightly. Through friendship, built up over time, you can share the love of Jesus.

The Pen Friend program, also known as Paper Sunshine, was started at San Quentin Prison many years ago and has led many an inmate in the right direction ever since. Strange as it may sound it has established solid friendships with many a free person and inmate.

Jesus tells us in Hebrews to "Remember the inmate as if chained with them." In Matthew He says, "I was in Prison and you visited me

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

not." Paper Sunshine is a way to do just that, but from the comfort and safety of your home. Contact us and we will send you a packet. It is risk-free if you follow all the suggestions we offer.

PRISON MINISTRY

Prisons today are very lonely places. Of course, most deserve being there. But Jesus is a God of love and second chances - just look what HE did for me!

This Ministry has grown and helped many, but we have struggled along the way. One problem we've had is growing too big, having more work than we can sometimes handle and becoming over-loaded. When the economy fell apart our funding slowed. A sad result of the failing economy is that many losing their jobs turn the wrong way and end up in prison. That is why we feel this program is so important. It helps by providing hope for the hopeless.

Future Plans

We plan to finish our video on Prison Ministry if, God-willing, we receive enough funds to do so. This video will show all the programs we have established over the years, some of which we have had to lay aside because of time and money, although there are folks out there keeping some of these programs alive in their areas.

One example is the Dress-Out Program, providing free clothes for inmates being released. We once had this program going in every California prison. Another was Remedial Reading classes, using established programs and Bible teaching to teach the high amount of illiterate inmates to read. Stop smoking and substance abuse programs have been offered, either working with established groups or starting them up. Another very important program is Pre-Release and Re-entry education, which although required in many states, lacks the funds or staff to teach them. All of this and more is what Prison Ministry is all about.

A Special Appeal. We have lots of video footage taken inside of prisons, which includes a play performed by Soledad Christian inmates, for our proposed video on Prison Ministry. But we cannot do this alone — what we need is the additional funding to have all of that footage edited and transferred to DVD format, someone who can do the video editing and splicing work, and someone to film Yvonne and I covering training for each phase of every program we have done over the years that we believe should be continued on. Once this video is completed, any church or group wishing to start a Prison Ministry will have all of our 30-plus experience at their fingertips.

Any donation you earmark for this purpose will be held aside to help make this happen.

NEVER GIVE UP

Often an inmate will join our pen friend program, having no idea what will happen. They then receive a letter from a Christian, and, especially if they are a non-believer, they may have no idea how to respond, and so they sometimes do nothing. A problem we often encounter is that when the inmate does not write back, the free person is discouraged and gives up.

We need you! Please don't give up! If your inmate does not ever write back, or if your pen friend relationship is not working out for any reason at all, let us know, and request another inmate.

Molly, a free pen friend, wrote: "I have 13 inmate Pen Friends. I went through 40 (previous inmates) getting them, but it was worth it. Don took six of the others and made them change."

STRANGE BUT TRUE

A very long time ago we took into our home youth working door to door selling Christian books. One group consisted of three brothers, who all drank a whole lot of milk. We had not heard from them in years, but then received this email:

"My name is Mike. I spent much time at your home as a youth. Our Church is in the process of starting a prison ministry. We asked our local conference for help and got none, in fact we were discouraged. They need help and advice; we believe God is in this and need help. Sure wish we were back in California. We are not sure how, but some how. The prison is a women's prison."

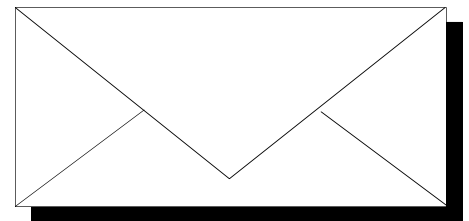
Here's a poem that came from that women's prison:

The Forgotten Tears

I'm sure she cried, the night you were gone.
 The forgotten tear, that lasted so long.
 They said you were guilty, the price you would pay.
 She cried in her spirit, it seemed all the day.
 For knowledge she had, of what she had meant.
 She knew of their laws, and where you were sent.
 Into their darkness, places where they kill.
 Our family members, somehow she fell ill.
 As she thought of what you would go through,
 She needed support, what would she do.
 They name it a prison, a place for correction.
 They knew not the time, they stole her direction.
 For how could she bear to cast you aside.
 You are her loved one, that moment she died.
 So God sent his angels to assist in her pain.
 The mothers and wives, this support she would gain.
 For they all knew the road she would walk.
 In communing together they learned to talk.
 About their own journeys, each one unique.
 The stories they told inspired the weak.
 They all had tears forgotten it seemed.
 But in this support group they stood as a team.
 For they all had knowledge of burdens she'd bear.
 They knew of the prison, those tears they did share.
 So come join us women that feel so detached,
 For we are the candles and YOU are the match.

ENVELOPE ADDRESSING IS IMPORTANT

We recently received a very nice letter written to an inmate. However, it had no name, number or address of the inmate, and no name or address of the sender. Unfortunately, this type of thing happens all the time due to envelopes not being correctly addressed. If you were matched with an inmate (especially if you are not receiving letters) send us your name and the name of the inmate so we can make sure we have your information in our system.



LETTER FROM A RELEASED INMATE

I had been going to a church for about six months, and never missed a service. Being recently released from prison I only had one good dress. We had a guest preacher (note, I said "we"). He asked if everyone knew everyone else. I stood up and told my tale of sorrow. I'm happy to say I now know everyone and am asked often to play the piano.

We have often spoken at churches where we were not greeted at all. The difference in the world between the lower and upper classes is drastic, evident also in politics. What group would Jesus hook up with?

WE DON'T WANT THOSE KIND OF PEOPLE IN OUR CHURCH?

Years ago I was preaching at a large church service, and then later in the afternoon presenting a program on Prison Ministry. *(As a grammar school drop out I have preached in over 400 churches!)*

This particular day, during the church service, I told a story of a man from the area who had committed a serious crime murder. He was caught and sent to prison to die. California over-turned the death penalty (it's now back again), so this man was sentenced to life. During his incarceration he dedicated his life to Christ and did much good for other inmates in prison. As a result he received a pardon, and today he is running a rescue mission.

After I told this story, a man stood up and said, "We do not want those kinds of people in our church." I then told this large crowd that I was sorry, but that being the case, I would have to leave. Even though I had never murdered anyone, I was once "one of those" people! Thanks to Jesus I am now a son of the living God and serving HIM until He Comes. Thankfully the man who stood up changed his statement, and we stayed.

Another time Yvonne and I were asked to put on a stop smoking program. I told them we would put on a stop smoking and substance abuse program. The Board said, "We do not want those kinds of people here." If our churches were full of those kinds of people Jesus would come and get us all now. "Every knee shall bow."

PAPER SUNSHINE

Today I got a verbal spanking. I was sent back a letter from a Pen Friend's inmate which was rank, and I had missed it. I wrote a note to the inmate saying, "God Bless." Then I sent the free person a replacement pen friend.

Folks, at 78 years of age I might make a mistake, or perhaps more than one. Blame me, not the Ministry. There are men and women in prison who will never change and will try anything they can. They will not see Glory, but not because we did not try. Do not let your talents go to waste.

One outside pen friend, Jackie, wrote to say that her husband did not want her writing another man. So we matched her with a woman and got the husband to take the man.

Please call us if you have any questions or concerns.

Yvonne's Corner

I volunteered as a Chaplain at the warden's invitation at a women's prison. Before that I had always worked in men's prisons. I asked Don if he would help me, but he said no way since he was already working at a men's prison about five miles from where I was.

I worked there for eighteen months; it was a real learning experience. Don and I have both been through police academies, but they didn't prepare us much for a women's prison. I would ask myself every day, "What would Jesus do?" With that and a lot of prayer we made it through day by day, hour by hour. We would like for you to pray for Michael and the group.

We remember the doors closed in our faces over the years that God ended up opening in order to help Someone Cares grow. Our prayer is that God will open the doors of this prison so they may take the light in.



**May God Bless each one
of you.
We are praying for you and
your family!**

**Donations are gladly accepted online through our website:
www.someonecares.org**