HEAVEN CAME DOWN AND GLORY FILLED OUR SOULS

When I was a youth and as a Boy Scout, I learned "Be Prepared". A great message for all Christians. Yesterday, as usual, we went to prison but there was nothing usual about that day.

Both Yvonne and I spent the afternoon one-to-one with a constant flow of inmates. We took a break and went to B yard for a Bible study on the book of James. We arrived early and talked to the guys as they went back and forth. There was a lot of tension, as Northern gang members had been moved to this yard. "Service tonight, Chaplain?" was asked often and we said "yes," then I went in to get prepared for the lesson. The inmates started coming in and they kept coming and in the twinkle of an eye the Chapel was overflowing with inmates.

Past experience told me that when this happens there is trouble brewing on the yard and many wanted out of harm's way. But that was not so. The Christian inmates had really done a job of promotion. Too many for a Bible study, and I was not prepared for a sermon? Of course I was! Prayer led to an explosion of the Holy Spirit. God took over and put words into my mouth. I looked out on over 200 faces, all smiling, some with tears flowing down their cheeks. An officer came in and saw we were way over the amount allowed in Chapel but he listened and went away. The Holy Spirit touched many a man last night and put me on a high I have never felt. I stopped but they wanted more--I stopped again and they wanted more, and God provided me with just the right stories. I will remember this as the single greatest experience I have so far had, and know many more are ahead. Maybe we will get started on James next week. Yvonne said in the car going home, "God sure used you in a mighty way."

SEVENTY VOLUNTEERS

God has cleared the way to really put Someone Cares into action. Corcoran is a very large prison and the needs are great. It would be neat to have the Chapels open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day. To do this, either the State Chaplain or Yvonne and I have to be present, or maybe YOU. Below are some of the needs; see if you fit.

CARE SHARERS

We have over 1,000 hours of quality Christian Videos we donated to Corcoran. We need volunteers to just open the Chapel and be present while videos are being shown. Could you come in once a week from 9 to noon, or from noon to four or from seven to nine to just be present so
the Chapel can be open? Are you a Bible teacher and could you come in during those hours to teach a Bible Study? Are you a good listener and could you come in during those hours to listen to the men and direct them to us if their problems are serious? We have promised there would be some kind of service seven days a week. Pastors, can you go on a list that we could use you once a month to do two services either Saturday or Sunday? Inmates love to sing. Can you sing and play a guitar or do you have a friend who plays while you lead singing? Has God freed you from alcohol or drug problems and will you help us start a Christian A.A. or Narcotics Group once a month? In our four Chapels are four Libraries and in those Libraries are no books. We need books; National Geographic and Reader's Digests. Or quality books on culture, nature, anything men can learn from. We need quality used Bibles. We need these in English and Spanish. We need Volunteers who speak Spanish. We need teachers who can teach men to read and write.

Lastly we need your prayers that God will send those we need. Before you go in you will be trained by Yvonne and me, then Chaplain Reed and Yvonne and me. Once you are comfortable with what you are doing you will be trained by the Prison and issued a Brown Card allowing you to go in without us escorting you.

**Two Care:** could you, once a month, visit an inmate in the visiting room to be just a friend? It could lead to a Bible study and more. Care to Share?

**LEADING THESE MEN TO JESUS**

One thing we do that has kept us in good standing with Chaplains, inmates, and staff is to teach about Jesus. We believe that we should not let our doctrines be a barrier but a bridge to Jesus. The joy you will have in doing this can never be explained, but only experienced.

I was walking across the yard and coming toward me was a very large inmate with a scowl on his face. I said, "Excuse me, sir, but do you know Jesus loves you?"

He stopped and glared at me, his fists clenched, then he laughed.

"You called me sir," he said. "Do you know who I am or what I have done?"

I said, "No, and I don't care. You are a Child of the King."

He reached behind him and handed me a shank (prison knife). "I was going to leave this stuck inside of someone but you take it."

We sat on the grass and talked about him and his family and the fact no one had ever said "Jesus Loves You" to him. From that day until his release he attended Chapel every day. This was when we were at Soledad and the Chapel was open every day. I took the shank to the Watch Commander. He never asked were it came from. God is Good.

**JESUS SAID "COME TO THE WATER"**

I love the story of the man who for 38 years stayed by the water and no one helped him in. We find out it was not necessary, as Jesus was there all the time. It is not easy being a Christian in
prison. Also it is not good to try to use Jesus as a way to get out of prison. Many use religion to try to get out of prison, but Jesus will not be used. I told the men that being a Christian by letting Jesus in and Satan out will do the job by just being as close to Christ-like as possible.

Gangs are a way of life in prison as this is the only love many of these men have ever experienced.

I will never forget when Yvonne was in a prison hospital talking to a man dying from AIDS. She asked him if he would like her to pray and he said yes. He was shocked when she took his hand in hers. He cried when she held him in her arms as he cried. Was there a risk? YES, but the risk is worth the end result.

**ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE!**

We need those of you who do not support this ministry to do so. Yvonne and I need to spend less time fund raising and more time in the Prison, training others to do what we do. Prayerfully reach for your checkbook and write as big or small a check as you can. We are a non-profit organization so your donations are tax-deductible here on earth, and Jesus knew when He wrote "I was in Prison and You Visited me Not" that not all can go to prison, but your support gets us into prison doing what God called all of us to do. Many of you are connected with big companies and there may be some grant money available. You may have a car that could be turned into support. God has opened a big door for us, and we will, through HIM, go all the way through but we do need YOU. Remember, it is still the Widow's Mite that gets God work done.

**GOD IS SO VERY, VERY GOOD.**

Yvonne had worked with an inmate for awhile, and then inmates on the yard had been praying in bunches for him. Last month I preached a sermon that Jesus saves us from Sin, not in Sin. This young man was a homosexual wanting to be normal and follow God's word. Yesterday, Yvonne's birthday, we preached two services. The first was on the yard where this man lived.

First I told about a service I had held the day before in Fresno. I told them that I shared that all the libraries in the chapels were empty of books. I asked if a phone committee could be formed and ALL the churches in Fresno called and asked for Bibles and Christian books and quality reading books new or used. The committee was formed on the spot!. Neat idea for your Church!

Now it was time for song service and the man who usually led it was not there. I sing so bad the inmates would leave if I led out, so I asked for a volunteer. In a flash the man above was up and started to sing as he came forward. The inmates joined him in Victory in Jesus. His voice was like that of an Angel. He later sang a song he wrote on his conversion. Amen, Amen.

**HIS LIGHT WILL SHINE!**

Blessings are being heaped upon us and right away transferred to prison, all blessed by Jesus.

Saturday and Sunday (Yvonne's birthday) I marveled at my wife. Before she did the children's story in church, the Choir had sung "HE LIVES" a favorite song of her father and mother.
Yvonne cried. Our friend, Jim Finn, went to offer to do the Children's story, but she said tearfully, "No, I'll do it." What a helpmate God gave me!

This same Jim Finn was one of a small group who saw something in me and helped me find Jesus.

On the way to prison we had breakfast, and Yvonne noticed a woman wearing what looked like comfortable shoes. I told her to ask where she got them. Timid Yvonne could not.

Not an hour later, a gang member passed and was swearing, and Yvonne was in his face saying "I can't believe you said that," telling him also that God's last name was not damn.

I look at that and remembered an inmate getting ready to be sentenced saying "Judge, I deserve going back to prison, but please please do not send me to wherever Yvonne is, I can't face her." The judge did, and Yvonne got to try again with him. Thanks, honey, I Love You.

A MIRACLE

Her name Jackie, she was 23 when an automobile accident put her in a deep coma, the driver of the car who caused the accident was killed. Jackie was on life support not expected to live. We came to you for prayer. Though she was in a deep coma, the doctor thought her parents talking to her would help. We asked, and many of you answered, with letters to be read to Jackie. Even many inmates wrote. Several weeks ago a tear, then a squeezed hand. The parents accepted Christ. Yesterday, Miracle of Miracles, Jackie woke up and said "Hi Mom." Praise God and Thanks.

VOICE OF PROPHECY & SOMEONE CARES AT CORCORAN

Those of you who have been with us for awhile, and all those who have come our way via Voice Of Prophecy, say "AMEN!" There is a chance (please pray) that Someone Cares and Voice of Prophecy can do a fiveday radio program from inside Corcoran Prison.

We get excited sharing with you, but a chance to share God's work in prison to the world, through us, is so very, very exciting.

JEAN'S JOTTINGS

Even though Don's is in January and Yvonne's is in February, Don's mention of it gave me a reality check.

Everything is on hold here until the end of March. But when we're so deep in the winter doldrums we think we can't make it another day, God comes along with a taste of His sunshine and assurance that Spring isn't that far away, and we are comforted.

This issue has been especially exciting as I go through each of the stories of God's goodness to us. He has many children locked away in prisons. Sometimes an innocent Christian person is sent to prison, seemingly for the purpose of drawing his fellow prisoners to Jesus. Two local
Bible Study schools have sprung up in this area to answer the needs of those who are sending their lessons and having their questions answered. A lot of prayer, research, and postage support goes into these ministries.

School is nearly over, and it's good to look forward to graduation at the end of March. You folks will then have your newsletter much earlier and the ministry will be much happier to have that happen, I know.

It's frustrating to have so little time for pursuits like sleep; some weeks it's several days between visits with prayer partners.

Prayer Warriors are so important to those who are stressed. Keep your Pen Friends lifted up to God each day for protection in their cells and on the yards. It's amazing to have a close call and know someone is praying for your safety. Let them know you pray for God's arms of love to hold them and care for them each day. Don and Yvonne accomplish so much each day, and that's because Someone is praying for the success of their ministry. When even a guard can let a service continue in a room with 150 people over the limit, Jesus is watching over those He claims for His own.

Please remember to go through those shelves for uplifting books to send to Someone Cares for the libraries, and pray for those who can help with program needs to volunteer.

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