PAPER SUNSHINE

When Jesus directed us to start the Pen Friend Program, and then picked Yvonne and me to start it, we never knew the direction it would go. We currently have over 5,000 inmates being written to by some of you. Over 180,000 inmates have completed Bible studies through our ministry. Here are some of the blessings:

CHAPLAIN STANLEY REED

once wrote that the hardest thing in doing time is doing Hard Time. If you do the crime you do the time. But the loneliness that prison brings is unbearable. We know many an inmate who has written to him- or her-self, to hear their names at mail call. All the things going on in prison can be dealt with, but separation form those we care for is really bad. Note I said care for, as Love is a word most inmates do not understand, or they put it in the wrong context.

CHAPLAIN HARRY HOWARD

told us a valued program is M2-a one-to-one visitation that keeps inmates in touch with the real world.

I can tell you that serving time by yourself is very difficult. Paper Sunshine, or letter writing, is a form of visitation from the comfort and safety of your home. I can recall when I was locked up, my mom coming to visit me. The shame was unbearable. I am so happy she lived to see me changed by Jesus.

DOING TIME

Prisons today are set up in many ways. They range from Level 6 Maximum Security, to boot camps. They can be cell blocks like San Quentin, or cell blocks and open dorms. They have been tent cities, or cots in gyms or Chapels. A cell can be very small and house two men, a toilet and a sink. Some cells hold as many as eight inmates. You do not chose your cell mate, although some prisons do allow, to ease tension, friends to bunk together. Gang members are kept apart-sort of. Clothing is limited as is personal property. TVs are cherished, especially in lock downs. Gang control is rampant in most prisons. Protection is available at a high cost. You can buy almost anything in prison, if you can afford the price. Buy and don't pay, you might be killed. The strong devour the weak, and rape is common.
PROGRAMS

Most prisons have jobs and/or school of some sort, but most men and women pull dead time trying to stay alive. Pay varies from nothing to $50 to $100 a month, of which the system may take part for restitution. No job, no school, leaves the inmate with TV, reading, or the yard. We have worked at prisons which were to be substance abuse facilities, but had few treatment programs offered.

THE YARD

Here you might have weights, the mainstay of inmates, or handball courts, basketball, and in rare cases baseball and football- most controlled by the group in power. Most yards have bleachers, again controlled by color.

We had a general rap session with 13 inmates. Five were in for drugs, two for murder, four for sex crimes, two for white collar. The average sentence was seven years. Four were white, five Mexican, four black. Two were married, six divorced, nine having children (eight of which are on welfare). All over the yard or cell area are shanks (prison knives) waiting to be used. Drugs are everywhere, also pruno, and spud juice (home made booze).

PEACE IN THE VALLEY

Letters from the outside can change all the terrible things of prison. Most really want to make it, but many use the Pen Friend Program to extend their life style, that's why we try so hard to control this by having you write through us. Our forms say this is a Christian program, not a matrimonial or dating service, but they try. It takes a caring person to break down the shells men and women in prison have put themselves in. Do not give up, or give in; just let your love of Jesus control the tempo of your Paper Sunshine.

LONG HOT SUMMER

From all over the country we receive requests and letters asking for help. Tension in almost all prisons could be cut with a knife. Lock downs, riots and mini-riots are rampant. The hate level has gone up with the temperature. I was out on the yard the other day and drenched in sweat. It was 107°. No, the cell blocks are not air conditioned, neither are tempers. The Chapel is air conditioned and many come in just for that; but Praise God, HE is in control and many who come in to get cool get saved through the power of the Holy Spirit.

BEYOND THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Challenge prison expansion. See the LA TIMES, Sunday, July 2, article by Rose Braz. She criticizes California's Gov. Davis adhering to a "no parole" policy and creating his own justification for the $335 million maximum- security prison in Delano. Since 1980, the state has built 23 new prisons, but only one new university. California ranks #1 in the nation in prison spending, but 41st in education spending. Lockups have displaced dams, roads and schools as the state's new public works program. And history teaches us, if you build them, you fill them. Is
anyone able to effect change here? Prayer work is called for, and biblical council of our brothers.

Connie L.

YOU ARE NEEDED!!!!!!!
JOAN AND TOM WRITE...

When we listened to you on the radio, we were touched and asked for a pen friend. You sent us one. We then decided we both wanted one and you sent another. Our two kids each wanted one, you sent two more. We shared with the pastor; you sent 25 more. All involved are truly blessed and we pray for you and you ministry. Could you send ten more.

AND MARGARET...

I joined your Paper Sunshine Ministry about 12 years ago. I have written to or am writing 27 inmates. Eighteen of them have completed one or more studies. I am writing to six of their wives or parents. Eleven more I have returned because they were trying to play games with me and you dealt with them. I have gotten several dozen friends involved with you and pray others do the same. This is a ministry for all. I am truly blessed.

BOB, TOO...

When I joined I never knew if I could do this ministry. You matched me with a man looking for a female to write but I wrote anyway. That was ten years ago. John has become a friend, almost a son to us. Sue has her own pen friend, a young lady in prison in Florida. You asked several times if we would take ONE MORE INMATE. I said "DON'T HAVE TIME," but your last newsletter changed my mind. We will both take two more and make time.

YOU DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!!!!!
FROM JACK...

I have been locked up for 18 years and deserve to be here. My Pen Friends (got lucky and matched twice), are really a blessing. I believe each is a real friend. I don't go to church but believe I'm a Christian. I know having Someone Cares makes me care.

I have no idea where my family is, and for the first time in a long time I would like to find them. Your direction, I believe, is going to help that happen. Thanks, God Squad, I love you.

BETTY WRITES

My Pen Friend writes often and sends me your newsletter which I enjoy. You need to tell your supporters that all the things that go on in men's prisons go on in women's prisons. We have rape, gangs, drugs, abusive guards. I was in a gang when I first came to prison. I was talked into a Bill Glass Crusade and found Jesus, or HE found me. "To be free in Jesus is to be free, indeed," is so true. All the horror of prison is still here but solace in the Blood of the Lamb helps. Thanks to the Pen Friend Program, my friends found a way for me to not lose my daughter.
STEPS TO CHRIST

I found this little book in my cell, stuffed in a vent. Threw it away only to pick it up again. Could all these neat things be true? Could I change? Could I find love and lose hate? When I was five, my stepfather forced me to perform all kinds of terrible things to him. I ran away only to find the same again and again. I got married and the abuse went on and on, even when pregnant with my daughter. I ended up killing my husband to save my child, I did not care about my self. I will be here a long time and it is a blessing to see what good organizations like yours do. There are not many around that do what they offer. Bless you.

MAKE OUR JOB EASIER!

Folks, you who are part of our Pen Friend Program PLEASE

(1) Put your name or Pen Name on all letters to your inmate.

(2) Do not use "Someone Cares" as part of that address

(3) When you receive the information, make an index card for your inmate. Record the name, number, address, and release date. Log when you or they write.

(4) Rules in prison change so often. Please write the prison, not us, for do's and don'ts.

(5) If you wish to send something ( anything ) to your friend, make sure the prison allows it. Do not ask the inmate.

(6) Write the Community Resources Manager or Wardens office.

WE HAVE MAIL!! The following letters have come to us but we know not where they go. If they're yours, please claim:

(a) Jesus Perez 72207
(b) Curt Salyer 400272
(c) Joyce Small 28141
(d) Lester Franklin 221724
(e) Robert Dixon P07910
(f) Jeff Oller 239619
(g) Podesak H09689
(h) Michael Donna P 68655
(i) Bleau Carlton
(j) J Thomas J98558
(k) Lloyd Lucero 62991
(l) Wakefi? J43263
(m) Bobby Brown J82037
(n) P F using Sarifa Mohammed or
Lauroe Millikan or Mrs Geo Brown
(o) Schnefder
(p) Peter Keet 196007
(q) Hart 263027
(r) R White J23678
(s) Stroud N99977
(t) Joe Lince 225340
(u) Muzio P27402

CAN YOU HELP?

Every day we get mail calls or Emails from parents or friends wanting us to visit someone in prison somewhere. We are spread so thin, taking off for Camp meeting after a vacation is scary. If you are near a prison and would visit once or more to put pieces together, we need you.

SPEAKING OF VACATION

We were able to go to Michigan to visit family and friends. This was paid by the Dollar-a-Month club. We have a lot of you who send a dollar or two now and then or monthly. This is a reserve, and with gas prices sky high it got us through. We did have a bit of a summer slump and pray more of you find a way to support this ministry. "Because Of You Someone Cares."

I DID IT MY WAY

Young folks today have little direction. Folks who work to keep up with the Joneses "never knew who they were." Between work and TV and no Jesus, our youth are left to find their own direction. I am reminded of a Youth Congress we spoke at with 400 young people present. We found out that young people mostly go to other young people for direction. Pastors are not trained to deal with the problems of the home, and parents don't have time. The generation gap is getting bigger. Praise God for organizations like Youth For Christ, Campus Crusade, Boy and Girl scouts. I think back to my youth and think if I had stayed with the YMCA a little longer, my life might have changed and I may have done it someone else's way.

YVONNE'S CORNER

The Book that raises all the questions on the NIV Bible and other translations is "If the Foundations be Destroyed." If you would like a copy, send $5.95 + $1.50 for shipping ($7.45 total) to:

Word and Prayer Ministries
PO Box 361
The cost is well worth it.

As you read this, think of our Lord speaking to you and saying:

--You do not have to be clever to please Me. All you have to do is to want to love Me. Just speak to Me as you would to anyone of whom you are very fond.

--Are there any people that you want to pray for? Say their names to Me, and ask Me as much as you like. I am generous and know all their needs, but I want you to show your love for them and me by trusting Me to do what I know best.

--Tell Me about the poor, the sick, and the sinners, and if you have lost the friendship or affection of any-one, tell me about that, too.

--Just Tell Me about your pride, your touchiness, self-centeredness, and laziness. Do not be ashamed; there will be many saints in Heaven who had the same faults as you; they prayed to Me and, little by little, their faults were corrected.

--Do not hesitate to ask Me for blessings for the body and mind; for health, memory, success. I can give everything, and I always do give everything needed to make souls holier.

--What is it that you want today? Tell Me, for I long to do you good. What are your plans? Tell Me about them. Is there anyone you want to please? What do you want to do for them?

--Don't you want to do anything for Me? Don't you want to do a little good to the souls of your friends who perhaps have forgotten Me? Tell me about your failures, and I will show you the cause of them. What are your worries? Who has caused your pain? Tell Me about it, and add that you will forgive and forget, and I will bless you.

--Are you afraid of anything? Have you any tormenting, unreasonable fears? Trust yourself to Me. I am here. I see everything. I will not leave you.

--Have You no joys to tell me about? Why do you not share your happiness with Me? Tell Me what has happened since yesterday to cheer and comfort you. Whatever it was, however big, however small, I prepared it. Show Me your gratitude, and thank Me.

--Are you determined to run into temptations? Have you made up your mind about bad books and bad friendships? They disturb the peace of your soul. Are you going to be kind to that one who has hurt you?

--Well go along, now. Get on with your work. Try to be quieter, more humble, more submissive, kinder; and come back soon and bring me a more devoted heart. Tomorrow I shall have more blessings for you.
(We pray that this may help you as you talk with your Heavenly Father.)

HI, DON AND YVONNE -

Hope all is well with you. I was recently asked to share my prison ministry with our church Jr. High and High Schoolers. One of the teenagers, Anna, is interested in becoming a pen friend. I'm giving her your address and Email address, so she'll probably be contacting you soon.

I can't begin to tell you what a blessing I continue to receive from the friendships with my pen friends. Henry P. was recently released, after 21 years in prison! One day I want to share some of the ways God has so personally answered prayers on his behalf since his release. It is a wonderful reminder of how well God knows us!

I've learned there are several members in our church (mostly grandmothers) with relatives in prison. I do believe God is preparing our church for more involvement in prison ministry. There are also some who are interested in donating to the Dress Out program. How can they do that?

Hope y'all are well and richly blessed. You have certainly blessed my life because you provided this ministry. THANK YOU!!!

Pamela T.

HELLO, GOD'S MINISTRY

I listen to WKGM 940AM, the Ministry Station, six days a week. Sometimes during the Farm Report I might change the station. I believe I heard about your program on WKGM. I would like to participate in your program. Please send me the information. My name is Barb. I am a carpenter moonlighting as a truck driver. I am a single mother. My 11-year-old daughter and I live in ___. I spent three days in jail once. My husband had planned to leave me. He lied and had me jailed, then he left, taking our three-week-old son with him. [The girl] is not his child. He dropped her off on a neighbor. I wanted to die. God came to me in jail. I was broken in so many pieces but still I could feel His work beginning in me. I guess I was in God's express line. It's now eight months later and God has done so much for me, shown me so many things, proven His love for me and showed me He is there and will always be there.

I don't see my baby very much but I have faith and trust in the Lord, that He knows my heart and my husband's heart, and let His will be done. I live my life one day at a time with God as my focus. Some days are harder than others, but I trust in the Lord and cast my cares to Him.

You know what? The women in jail were very supportive to me. Hopefully I could be supportive to someone or two. God really does hear the captives' cry. He heard mine.

Didn't Jesus say "I have not seen so great faith, no, not in Israel?" We don't need a Ph.D. to be close to the Lord. Except we become as little children, we won't see the Kingdom of Heaven. Sometimes we're so caught up in the sophisti-cation game put forth by the media, we forget it's the beautiful, home-spun faith of women like this that really counts with Jesus.
REMEMBER
The God you trusted in the past,
Is the One who's faithful still.
Trust Him now, with all your heart,
To be working out His will.

There's nothing that you're facing
Which takes Him by surprise...
All the things concerning you
Have not escaped His eyes.

Wait on God to do His work,
In His time and way.
The answer may seem slow just now, But He will not delay.

One day you'll see the wisdom That led you from the start,
Was given by your Father's love,
To draw you to His heart.

...Roy Lessin

JEAN'S JOTTINGS

Yesterday I went with my best friend to visit her husband in prison.

The visiting room was filled with faces that reflected what went on in the souls behind the eyes. Fear, hardness of heart, even indifference to those who came to visit. Behind our seating group, a couple was surrounded in peace despite the man's presence in such an awful place. I said to my friend, I'll bet they're Christians. Sure enough, before they parted they were praying together, clinging to a tattered Bible. Do our faces shine with Jesus' love to those we meet?