SOMEONE CARES PRISON MINISTRY
Quietly Changing Lives
Archived Newsletter

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Don & Yvonne McClure
Directors

HE IS THERE ALL THE TIME

We have been doing the Voice of Prophecy radio show for a long time. Most of you reading this came from their programs. Each time we are blessed to do the radio show, something great happens. Lonnie Mela-shenko called me, from his home. He’d had a chance to listen to the broadcast. I believe, like us, he was blessed.

When we first recorded with them, almost 90% of the contacts came by mail. Then by phone, now by e-mail. The choir in Heaven was singing all through the week of this broadcast. By the way, you may get the CD of all five sessions by contact-ing V.O.P. the cost is $5.00; or send a check to V.O.P to us and we will arrange for the CD to come to you.

HAPPINESS IS TO KNOW THE SAVIOR

One of the things I learned big time this year is that folks are dying in church. We often get notes how folks are blessed by our ministry and I need to pay more attention.

George wrote: Don, several years ago my wife and I listened to you and Lonnie, and were touched to get involved. You matched us in a heart beat.

The inmate was not Christian, and of a different race than us, and we were scared. We even called. You had prayer and said "Let the Lord lead." He sure did. John, our new friend, did write nice letters but was uneducated, and not a believer. This made us really have to work at what we were doing for the first time in 26 years as church members, witnessing.

John did accept Christ, but more important, we grew massively in the Lord. We found three other couples in our own church, and they started writing, and they grew in the Lord.

We really know what Someone Cares means, as we really do!

I AM SO ASHAMED
I received a note from Don attached to the form he sent me when I was matched to an inmate. It said "You wrote one letter and did not get an answer, did you just give up?"

Not only did I give up on the inmate but I gave up on a promise to Jesus. Don had also written to the inmate and got him a Pen Friend that did write and did follow through. As Jesus often has, Don gave me a second chance and I am writing a man and woman inmate.

**I WAS SO ANGRY!**

Don sent me a note with a newsletter I often tossed. The note said "In 2002 we sent you the name of an inmate with an application and letter. Did you ever write?"

I thought back and remembered my husband opened the mail and said "I dont want you writing an inmate, especially a male.”

Was I Christian enough to return the info? No. Did someone else write the inmate? No. It made me think of all the chances I had to share Jesus and never did. We pray once in awhile, go to church every now and then, our kids don’t go at all. I’m still angry—not at Don, but at ourselves! I will write a lady and my husband sends the enclosed check.

**HOW COULD YOU DO THAT TO MY CHILD?**

My daughter listened to your program and signed up for a Pen Friend. She sent back the form you required, but lied about her age. She was 12 but said 22. She used a friend’s address. She wrote for two years before we found out. I was furious.

Sue said, "Mom, read this:"

“I want to thank you for the last two years. It made my time go by a little easier. I never told you I had Aids, which is now taking my life. But I knew from your letters you were much younger than 22. Your parents should be proud of how they raised you and how Jesus is in control in your life. This may be the last letter I write as my condition is very bad. Please thank your parents for allowing you to write. I have a friend here in the same condition I was in. Could you write him? I pray we all meet in Heaven.”

Heaven came down and Glory filled my Soul. Thank you for doing that to my child. May we as a family write his friend?

**MINISTRY???

Are these men and women, boys and girls, in prison just taking up space? Why does Jesus say "Remember the inmates as if chained with them? Hebrews
13:3.

Why did Jesus stop dying on the cross to save a convict?

Why does He say "I was in prison and you visited me not."

Jesus said "Go Forth." How far? Beyond your comfort zone! Many of us are in different kinds of prisons: alcohol, sex, TV, food, and yes even church. God does call all of us to be Someone Who Cares. I preach and teach, but I also listen.

We were contacted by over 50 folks so far who have kids on the way to prison.

Reading between the lines, most Pastors have no clue of the things going on in our world today.

1. Dear Yvonne: I am sending this information on the Pen Friend Program as my Pastor says it is not right to do.

2. My priest said I could go to hell for being involved in this kind of ministry.

3. My Pastor said, "Neat! Can I get a Pen Friend also?"

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR JESUS THIS WEEK, MONTH, YEAR?

As we see signs of all the Bible talks about happening, are we ready?

Paul says, "I die daily."

We say, "What can I do for someone who can do something for Jesus now? Boy, it would be neat if everyone reading this wrote an inmate and sent a check! Our most important need is that everyone prays. Someone else does do just that.

I talked to a warden a few weeks ago and he was not happy with me. We were having trouble with his mail room and I went straight to the top. I was getting nowhere when I asked him, "May I pray for you?"

Talk about dead silence! Why? I told him that he was hurting and had nowhere to take his problems, and we would do it for him. I talked to God for him and, as prayer would have it, hit on many of the things bothering him. He wept. Several days later he called me and asked me some very private questions, and he and I prayed. God is so good.

THE REST OF THE STORY

The Bible says to rebuke publicly so others may fear. Awhile back we told you of a girl working in a church office who was sexually harassed. She went to the President and the man was bought in. Seems he had done this before. He admit-ted the problem. It was agreed that both obtain counseling—not done. The wife, who
works in the same office, was to stay away from the girl. She did not. It seems the 
President never told her that her husband admitted the CRIME. The end result 
added up. Their children picked on the girl’s son at school, accusing his mom of 
trying to break up a marriage. They went to the same church and told stories. On 
top of all this, the girl’s drug addict husband went to prison, causing a divorce. She 
also suffered a badly broken leg and had time off. The resulting depression caused 
more time off. Her car broke down. She is losing her house.

After doing nothing to the man, they found time and reason to fire her. After 14 
years, a small severance; no medical; now on welfare. We don’t yet know what, but 
something good is about to happen. Friends, when things in your life are going 
good, Satan will attack. When we are up, he takes us down IF WE DON’T CALL 
ON THE NAME OF JESUS.

YVONNE’S CORNER

My, what will it take to awaken us to the reality that we are living in today? If you 
make a promise to someone, please keep it. They have nothing, and sometimes that 
promise is all they have to give them hope to keep on going, this is especially true 
when they are in prison. Please pray for the young mother Don mentioned above, 
she is trying to get a job.

They can’t seem to find out what is wrong with her car. This is the second young 
lady who has been treated this way by the same employer. In prison there is a 
saying: if you talk the talk you had better walk the walk. We should apply that in 
business, at home and at church as well. You can always hide from some people 
some of the time, but you can never hide from God. The day will come sooner than 
we think, when we will all answer before God, I pray that we will all be ready and 
looking forward to that Day!!

JEAN’S JOTTINGS

Can you believe the previous story about ministry? And doesn’t it just take you 
straight back to the story of the Good Samaritan?! It is appalling that men who 
claim to represent God can have such an un-Biblical attitude! I’m full of joy to tell 
you that my prison ministry partner, and my pastor is the Good Samaritan in 
Illustration #3. He also believes in getting out of one’s comfort zone to follow 
Jesus.

He started us out, but the next time he had another commitment and we had to go in 
by ourselves. After that, we were on our own, and gained such a blessing and so 
much joy in this ministry. Just what two “mother hens” needed, and so did our 
inmates. But our “Good Samaritan” pastor was smart enough to handle the process 
with great tact and a little holy slyness. J

As promised, here’s the rest of the story from a female chaplain who shares her 
per-spectives on women in the ministry:
Knowing the history behind the role of women as [pastors] I do not feel out of place having been ordained to do the Lord's work. Though a few people don't like to see a woman in the pulpit, I do not feel that I am out of place as a volunteer chaplain at the local Rescue Mission. Every time I preach there, I hang around afterwards to talk to the homeless who always approach me, and I sit around on the patio until they're through with "chow" so that they can have a longer conversation if they need to. Many of them have told me I'm the best pastor at the mission. I don't say that out of pride, because I don't even know all the other people who conduct services there, and I don't have any idea of whether the men are just trying to flatter me. I also get serious criticism.

What I am sure of is that they realize that I accept them and many are willing to open up to me.

And that is another reason to have women as chaplains and pastors. On the whole (and of course all generalizations are exactly that), women tend to be more sensitive and empathetic than men. Also, many women are more comfortable discussing a trauma, such as rape or spousal abuse, with another woman than with a male pastor.

I really think we ordained women have our place, and it isn't in silence at church. I am not proud of the fact that my own church has five male pastors and will not choose a woman to serve in that role, though the deaconesses have a good bit of power in the church.

I live near the Lompoc compounds of four prisons (3 state and a federal) in California. I would love to be doing work inside those facilities; I know that Prison Fellowship goes in only once every three months with a team from Los Angeles. Sure, PF helps men to accept the Lord ?? but those new Christians need regular support beyond their overworked Chaplain. Three months between visits is too long.

I would like to establish a weekly Bible study there and believe I could recruit enough volunteers from my church, but though I'm cleared to visit friends in at least 5 California prisons, I have no idea how I would set up something like that. If you do, and support having a woman pastor leading a team of solid Christians, then please help me how-ever you can. No—don't help me. Help the inmates. I'm just a conduit, a servant, God's donkey ... but a donkey can carry a lot!

Pax Christi,
Drucilla Mills

One suggestion I would make to you, and anyone with a similar prompting of God’s Spirit, would be to contact the Warden and Chaplain(s) of each prison in which you are interested in setting up Bible Study Groups. There may already be a religious volunteer program in place that you can take advantage of. Since you are already a Chaplain, you should be able to set up services for each level to coincide with the chapel’s schedule.

There will probably be an inmate in each group who is a “group leader.” It doesn’t
take long to discover them. Group leaders are good recruiters, whether for bad or
good purposes. Where we minister, each level is required to have its own service.

Don and Yvonne can be a great help to you in contacting churches to furnish
volunteers to lead these studies. Church couples who go in together, gain a dual
blessing through an extension of the “two-care” program. My belief is that if
inmates are not exposed to a sweet, Christ-like influence of Godly women, they will
forget how to behave on release. There needs to be training in this area for the
volunteers.

Pairs of people can combine talents to work together, but it’s best to have teams of
men or women, in order to avoid any possibility of gossip!

Be careful to obey prison rules. We can’t begin to imagine what inmates think up!
A handshake is as far as greetings are allowed. Ladies, dress in nice pant suits and
closed-in shoes. The guards respect your making their jobs easier. And don’t try to
bring in anything unrelated to your Bible Study.

Drucilla, your dreams and talent can be multiplied beyond your wildest dreams in
God’s service, and like Moses, you won’t become overworked. May God richly
bless you. ©

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