

Jan/Feb 2015

Changing Lives From the Inside Out

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Newsletter

Does an Inmate Have to Leave the State to Get a New Start?

Over the years I have gotten many letters from inmates who believe that leaving the state they have lived in all of or part of

Isa. 55:7 “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

their lives is the only way to get a fresh start. Because they had problems with the criminal justice system during their life of crime, they feel they need to move away to get a fair break. Now while I can see moving to another area to get a clean start and not be in the community

where everyone knows you and will negatively influence you is a good idea, I do not think most states are infested with an unfair police force, judicial system, or crooked judges. I also hear some complaints about being on parole for long periods of time. While I understand someone wanting to be clear of parole, if he or she is following the rules of their parole what do they have to fear?

I left Manassas, Virginia, because I had a negative reputation and I knew many of the police officers would never believe I could change. Additionally, all of the people I associated with were doing things against the law, sad as it was—of my friends were law-abiding citizens. So I left that area to go where I had never

been in trouble, and where I made all new, Christian friends. I immediately got involved in a good Bible-preaching church. I established a new reputation as a godly, law-abiding man and did not get involved with those outside the law other than as a witness. Since some of my family still did not believe I had really changed, I spent a good deal of my time witnessing to them.

I have been out of prison over 27 years now and am doing well with the help of the Lord. I did not have to leave Virginia to stay out of trouble, I did leave the area where I knew I stood less of a chance of staying straight. We need to remember it is not the criminal justice system that got us in trouble, it is the crimes we committed that did.

As We Start a New Year Let Us Start With Thanksgiving.

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry wants to praise God for another year of blessing us to serve God in the jails and prisons. We did this through worship services, Bible studies and letters. We are thankful for the people who have signed on as pen pals, and certainly for those who support this ministry financially, which makes all of

the rest possible. I thank God for being able to preach once a month at a local church. They pray for this ministry daily and they pay me for preaching, which also helps me financially. Personally I thank my board for all of their hard work. I thank the prison and jail administration who allow this ministry to hold the worship

services and Bible studies as well. God is in the center of everything we are thankful for. He makes it all possible. So as we start a new year we have much to praise God for and nothing to complain about. Join us in praising God for His work in the jails and prisons to the least of these His servants. Matt. 25:40 →

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In-Prison Ministry

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(Letter Writing)

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Ministry training seminars are available for local churches.

Matt. 25:41 “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:’⁴² ‘for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;’⁴³ ‘I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and **in prison and you did not visit Me.**’



Matt. 6:14¹⁴ "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

Thought for: Jan. 26, 2002

When I pass a stranger, let me know if you desire me to stop. Never let my day be so busy doing what I feel is your work to pass by a soul that needs to hear of you. Give me discernment in all situations whether I should speak or not, and give me peace with that decision, as it were from you.

Who is the Most Honored Servant of the Lord and Whose Sins Are the Worst ?

It is bad enough when I am speaking about inmates to Christians who have never been incarcerated, and those Christians speak to me only about punishment instead of mercy towards offenders. But when I am in the prisons and various inmates look down on those they consider the lowliest sinner in the prison, that is even worse to me. After 27 years of working in the criminal justice system, God has gotten the point across to me that I not do have the right to judge who is worthy of God's message of salvation. I feel sorry for society who thinks inmates are where they belong and that we need to keep them locked up. I feel sorry for the way men are released from prison with so many strikes against them that it makes it near impossible for them to succeed.

Don't get me wrong: I know there are men and women locked up who need to stay there, but I am not worthy to determine which ones they are. Do you think you are so holy and righteous you can say

anyone who committed this crime is never worthy to be released or have a second chance? I know many people who have been affected by crime in some terrible way have different feelings toward this. I know they have much hurt and pain. My only point in sharing here is to present God's will in such a situation for forgiveness, while still being vigilant. Jesus speaks to this issue.

Luke 6: ³⁷" Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. When we condemn someone as not deserving a second chance, we are in direct opposition to this verse. **Matt. 5:** ⁴⁴"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵that you

may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. If we are to love our enemies certainly someone who has committed a terrible sin should be given another chance for salvation. **Matt. 19:** ¹⁸He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, " 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' ¹⁹'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' " Jesus categorized murder and lying and a lack of honoring mother and father as a "thou shall not," meaning they are all sins in God's eyes. **John 13:** ³⁴"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Is God's Word real to us, or do we pick and choose what commandments we want to follow?



Two of our pen pals who visited us for the Day of Jubilee

Here are a few pictures of the Day of Jubilee 2014 more on the back page.

Here are some pictures of the Day of Jubilee for 2014. We had one of the best turnouts and the

weather was like a special gift from God. Above is one of the men I ministered to at DCC, who attends each year. Please remember as you enjoy these pictures that you would enjoy being there



in person with us that much more. Some of you should recognize these people singing at the Day of Jubilee. These lovely sisters and brother in the Lord go into prisons sometimes with me.



Even with all of the fun we have, praising, thanking, and worshipping, God is our number 1 priority. Many people from many areas attend from a variety of denominations, all praising the one and only God Jehovah and His Son Jesus the Christ. As we just celebrated Jesus' birth last month, let's continue to celebrate His life and gift of salvation every day.

A Testimony From a Volunteer After Her Visit to Prison.

I want to try to express what ministering with you at these two correctional facilities has meant to me. Before last December, I'd never stepped foot in a jail or prison. Before this experience, inmates were simply faceless, nameless people who all deserved what they got. Then a couple of Mom's dear friends got locked away. One admitted he was guilty of his crime and the other held to his innocence. Both men had been accused of terrible things, but the one who maintained his innocence had been accused of something truly heinous. As mom and I prayed for him, I had to face the possibility that this man could be guilty of what he'd been accused. It made me want to stop praying for his protection in prison and to stop praying for his soul. I felt if I continued to pray for him, I was "letting him off the hook" and my disgust for him was real. At the end of the day, though, this man is a creation of God. Because God loves him, it is my responsibility to love him as well. This guy was not just Mom's friend, but mine, too, before all this happened. So was I going to virtually desert him when he needed me most? It was an important moment in my heart.

Then I came with you to Buckingham last Christmas. I was so moved by the men who attended the service that I wrote about it on my website (<http://www.kathyallenmusic.com/blog>). The sincerity in the faces of the prisoners, their genuine worship of Christ, their desire to be better men, touched me to the core. I knew it could all be an act and that maybe some of them even attended the service just to have something to do or to get

out of their cell. I really believed, though, that many of them were there for the right reasons. Even last night, while Billy was speaking, I kept an eye on the men in the audience and realized their eyes were fixed on Billy giving the message (I know I can't see everything and these guys can probably be pretty sly, but I felt for the most part that they stayed focused on Billy).

When you asked me to close in prayer last night, I had to pray what was on my heart and all I could think about was the way this experience has changed me. I'm hoping I didn't offend anyone by admitting my previous judgmental attitude. Now, it's not so easy to be judgmental when I have faces and hearts to go with the judgment. The fact that these guys cry when I sing about Jesus' love breaks me. Yes, they have committed crimes, some of them awful. Yet they are creations of God and He wants desperately to redeem their lives. Who am I to deny them that opportunity?

So, Ron, it is ME who must thank YOU for allowing us to come along with you into the system. But for the grace of God, we'd be in their places. Here is what I wrote on the website last December, and there's really not a better way to summarize my experience so far:

"I visited a correctional facility last night with a prison ministry connected to a man who goes to church with Mom. The visit was a humbling and profound experience. The men who attended this Christmas ser-

vice were men who faithfully attend Bible studies; many have given their lives to Jesus. I am fully aware that 99% of these men deserve to be in prison for their crimes. I understand they are not innocent little boys. However, the men who came last night came to worship Jesus. Those few hours were an extension of truths God's been gently teaching me the past few years. Here's a peek into my prayer journal from this morning:

"I had a quietly majestic night at the prison yesterday. Your peace permeated everything leading up to it. I'd not experienced peace like that before. Though I considered nerves in the weeks and hours leading up to the performance, Your wall of peace was stubborn and unmovable. Even when I tried to be nervous... that PEACE... Last night I met men; I did not meet crime or a set of numbers. I met men with faces and personalities. I MET REPENTANCE LAST NIGHT. I met the grace of Jesus. Those men love God and have found joy in the most terrible place.

"Father, You are putting faces to people who used to be so easy to distantly judge. You are teaching me grace and forgiveness through 'the least of these.' Thank You. I love You, too."

—Kathy Allen

Please read Kathy's blog and if you are looking for some wonderful Christians music please know she does concerts. She sings Christian music (sometimes sprinkled with country tunes and love songs for fun) and her mission is to make Jesus Christ famous. She want folks to take a second look at their relationship with Jesus because of the music she sings. Her style is gentle vocals and keys, with a Colbie Cailat-Laura Story vibe. Visit her website for booking or to learn more about the ministry: <http://www.kathyallenmusic.com/contact>

My thought for Feb. 14, 2002:

Overflow me with your loving Spirit so I can accomplish your love to those I find it impossible to love on my own.



Some of the children in an orphanage in Haiti that Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry supports.



JANUARY 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Red numbers on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sunday are days I minister at Dillwyn and Buckingham prisons. The blue number is the Thursdays we pass out food at the food pantry in Schuyler. The orange numbers are the days I preach at another church. Sometime this is last minute and it does not get posted in time. The green numbers are the days we have the MOM Monthly Outreach Meal.

Mission Statement

To establish and strengthen the Christian life of inmates and their families by providing opportunities for worship, instruction, nurturing of children, fellowship, service, mutual aid, brotherly counsel, and to establish and strengthen the Christian life of evangelism. To bring the Gospel to the unsaved and to lead them to faith in Christ followed by membership in the body of Christ establish and strengthen the Christian life of inmates and their families by providing opportunities for worship, instruction, nurturing of children, fellowship, service, mutual aid, brotherly counsel, and to establish and strengthen the Christian life of evangelism. To bring the Gospel to the unsaved and to lead them to faith in Christ followed by membership in the body of Christ

Offerings & donations are tax deductible since Rehoboth is a non-profit organization. They can be sent to the address below and will be used to further the Jail & Prison Ministry.

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Last Year's Day of Jubilee Went Great and We Are Looking for Number 29



Here we see some of the men Rehoboth Jail and Prison Ministry has benefited over the years. They all attended this past year's Day of Jubilee, two for the first time since

they were only released in 2014 and one at the right who has blessed us many times with his presence. After a sentence of GOD years under the old law, God granted him parole. He has been out for a while now and continues to do well.

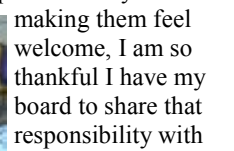
Left here below with his back to us, we see Alvin, who brought his father to the celebration, who is 94 years old and still praising the Lord. He has a wonderful story of his walk with Jesus.



Food is something we always have plenty of along with good Christian fellowship between some who see each other regularly and others who only see each other at this event. Trying to speak to everyone and making them feel welcome, I am so thankful I have my board to share that responsibility with me. I always appreciate the various people from all over the country who are able to be in this area at the time of the Jubilee and are able to attend and get a taste of hospitality Southern-style.



Praising God does not take a back seat when it comes to this annual event. We praise God in song as well as with testimonies of how great our God is. Se we invite you to come and see for yourself. The next Day of Jubilee celebration will be on Sept. 26, 2015. You have our information in this newsletter to get directions, if you want to come and bring someone interested in any aspect of prison ministry. Go to our website provided in this newsletter for further information of ways we might be able to assist you.



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God Bless!