

**May/June  
2025**

# **Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Newsletter**

**Changing Lives From the Inside Out**

## **Being Away From Loved Ones During the Holidays**

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Have you ever been away from family during a holiday when your family is in the habit of gathering together? It can take a lot of joy out of the holiday if you let it. There is nothing wrong with missing family during times when you would have gathered together and celebrated with them. Take someone who is in the military and cannot get home for Christmas, Easter, or Thanksgiving just to mention a few holidays. How about Mother's Day or Father's Day? Depending on the closeness of family, it could take away from the holiday experience if someone allowed the absence of family to dampen their holiday spirit. Mother's Day is a holiday when most men would hate to not be able to see their mother. Of course, this would be the same for women who were away from home as well. Father's Day could

also bring a cloud over the joy of not being around our parents at this time.

Something that can allow one to better enjoy such a time would be to allow yourself to think of all of the good times you spent together in the past. If you are able to call, do that and do not complain about your present situation, especially if you are incarcerated. Nothing ruins a phone call home like using the entire time to complain about your treatment, the food, or things one brought upon oneself. When away in the military, I always only shared the good times and all the daily things we were doing and not how the drill instructors yell all the time (smile). When I was incarcerated, my family probably thought I was in a summer camp since everything was always good. Why worry your loved ones and have them suffering

with you?

When I first got locked up, I hated all of the holidays, especially Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Mother's Day. Instead of enjoying them for what they stood for, I missed being free and celebrating them in ways that had nothing to do with the holiday. After a while God clarified what I was missing not who I was missing. He reminded me during these holidays when I was nowhere near my family or not in the true holiday spirit. God showed me to celebrate the day set aside for the birth and death of Jesus for what it stood for and to be thankful on Thanksgiving for all God was doing to keep me safe. From then and even today after being home for almost 40 years, I do not use excuses to not celebrate any holiday having to do with my Lord.

## **Have a blessed Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Resurrection Sunday.**

During the time of Resurrection Sunday's celebration of the believer's way to salvation, let us put aside those things that take our eyes off of the sacrifice God allowed when His Son died in my place and your place so that believers might become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. (2 Cor 5:20) As we look back through Bible history we can see clearly all God

put in place so man might be redeemed from sin. How then does man take this holy time of celebration so lightly and add to it rituals which have nothing to do with the solemn time of the greatest sacrifice ever made for man? I am so very thankful for my salvation, knowing how unworthy I am of God's forgiveness and eternal life in God's presence. I pray I will never look lightly at

this celebration by adding things which take away from the holiness of the time of year. How much is too much and how far is too far to mark this wonderful day of celebration as a true time of holiness? I guess that is up to how serious you are about God sacrificing His Son to redeem a sinner back to Him.

## Prisons are Making it Harder for Inmates to get Mail

I like to look back at times and see some of my thoughts and prayers either answered or ones I am still waiting for.

A thought and prayer I had on Jan. 5, 2002: Oh Lord, let me start two new habits. Number one, to spend more time in effectual, fervent prayer for the year 2002 and all the years to come. Number two, I pray to spend a time of solitude with God every day, not only speaking to Him or reading the Word, but to hear His will for me for each day and allow God to direct all my steps, all my words, all my deeds, and even my every thought.

Here is another prayer for Jan. 8, 2002: Let the Holy Spirit of God reign and rule in my spirit, overriding the desires of the flesh; let my love and obedience of God be stronger every day and the lust of desires of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in my life be replaced with a Godly walk in total obedience to the direction of God's Holy Spirit made available to mankind through Jesus' return to heaven to intercede for us with the Father.

Here is another one for Jan. 10, 2002: The days and years move more rapidly as my years increase, as I no longer look forward to being a certain age. I now seek to live the remaining years of my life pleasing to God. So many years wasted in sin. Oh God, how can I make these years of waste productive for you? Let the years I have forgotten you, Lord, be helpful to others who desire to walk that path, to see ahead of time that the path leads to Hell.

Many jails and prisons are making it harder for families and ministries to be in contact with their incarcerated friends and family. I mentioned before about the mail system. The inmates write a letter and the address on the envelope is actually not the return address. If you write to that address, the letter comes back refused. The reason is a mail distribution center checks all mail for K2, a synthetic marijuana that is in liquid form and is sprayed on the letter or the envelope and when it is burned, the

smoke can make one high when inhaled. Instead of the individual institutions allowing the mail to be checked out at the jail or prison, they pay another location to check the mail and then the letter and envelope is sent electronically to the inmate. The inmate then receives it on a tablet or if he does not have a tablet, he is allowed to use a kiosk machine at the prison (that is when he can get to use it since there might only be one kiosk for a pod with 80 inmates wanting to send and receive messages from it).

This may take over a week or even longer for them to get a letter. So you might say if it is keeping drugs out of the jails and prison, it must be worth it; however, the drugs are as plentiful as ever. The only thing mailing the letter to a sorting center does is slow the mail down getting to the person incarcerated and frustrate the pen pal and families writing to them. This is just one thing that seems to be a way for the jails and prisons to make prison more intolerable. Something to pray about!

## Poem for Jesus Christ by one of our Pen Pals

### Poem for Jesus Christ

Time comes and it goes  
It leaves no trace of where  
it's gone  
But sometimes it shows.  
Lord Jesus, don't let me  
forget the time  
There are souls I have to  
win  
Before I can begin  
To forget time  
Be with me night and day  
If I suddenly may

Slip and fall  
Please be there when I call  
Let your love come in  
And comfort once again  
With you I have no doubt  
That time will never fall out  
Time with you is always a  
must Lord Jesus  
Since the devil tends to slip  
in dust  
That covers all my hopes  
and dreams  
And makes my soul cry  
with screams

So help me to be watchful  
of the time  
So that I can win souls for  
you  
Before this life is through.  
I know up there time will be  
no more  
But down here it comes and  
goes  
Taking souls that don't  
know  
They have to bear the seeds  
that they have sown.

## Worship Services in the Prison System

I have explained this before but it bears repeating. When I was incarcerated at Staunton Correctional Center, there was a Christian services every evening and two services on Sunday, one in the morning and one in the evening. There were also other services from cults allowed to come in. The services were usually at least 1 hour or more. We had different outside volunteers coming in for each service and things went well. Today, the prison Chaplains seem to be there, in many cases, to get an extra

paycheck, and Worship services, instead of being on a Sunday, are many times placed on a weekday or evening. It seems more and more chaplains do not ever try to visit the inmates in solitary. Men put in a kit (request to see the chaplain), but it seems the message does not get through or the chaplain ignores the message. Some chaplains start out well, but as the institution dampens their enthusiasm after time, the chaplain cowers to just do like the officers do - as little as possible - and the pris-

on is fine with that. Christian programs and faith based dorms have a very good record for changing the behavior of many inmates, but in many cases, it does not seem to impress the administration enough.

## Visitation in Most Prisons

1. Apply for Visitation. Submit a visitation application online if you are a new visitor or renewing your visitation privileges.

This could take a long time since the DOC is not known for its speed in responding to someone needing help with a visitation application.

2. Schedule a Visit. Once you receive approval to visit an inmate in a VADOC facility, you must schedule your visit online using the Visitation Scheduler.

A scheduled visit is not a bad idea although the day you chose might already be filled up and that might be the only day you have available to visit. The video visitation started

during covid and is not a bad idea since people far from the prisons, like inmates in the federal system, can see their relatives and talk to them instead of traveling a long way or just writing letters.

3. Onsite visits will be no longer than thirty minutes. On-demand visits will be no longer than fifteen minutes. Persons 18 years or older may visit inmates. Persons less than 18 years old must be accompanied by an adult at least 21 years old.

As you can see, traveling for 1 or 2 hours or more for a 30 minute visit, especially with fuel prices like they are, can be a hardship for people. Visitation

use to be different. When you came in, you could visit until the visiting room got full, and the one who had been there the longest would have the visit terminated. So as you can see if you are reading the entire newsletter, things have only gotten worse in every way in the jails and prisons. Along with the influx of gangs who seem to be taking over a lot of the prisons from other inmates trying to just pull their time and the officers who seem to not be able to handle them.

<sup>5</sup> But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. <sup>7</sup> And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." <sup>8</sup> So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. Matthew 28:5-8

## REVIVAL IN SCHUYLER

*LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known* [Habakkuk 3:2].

*"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground,"* [Isaiah 44:3].

*"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord."* [Psalm 24:3—4]

As we age and our bodies become less and less useful to the world, we are often looked upon as a drag on our cultures, our communities and even our families. Today I encourage you to understand that when the world, society,

our communities, or anyone else tries to convince you that you're too old to help do anything worthwhile remember two sisters named Peggy and Christine Smith. They lived in a small cottage in a small village on the Isle of Lewis. They were 84 and 82 years old. Peggy was blind and her sister almost bent double with arthritis. Unable to attend public worship, they turned their humble cottage into a sanctuary where they met with God.

Endlessly day and night, they pleaded with God for revival. Finally, and at His perfect time, God answered their cries. I quoted part of their answered prayer at the top of this page. *"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground,"* From 1949—1952 a widespread revival spread across the Hebrides.

Why? They prayed and pleaded continuously in God's will with pure hearts and clean hands. They met the requirements of Psalm 24:3—4.

The price for a heaven-sent revival has and will never change. Before the floods of Holy Ghost conviction can sweep across the hills and valleys of the Blue Ridge and settle on this small hamlet we call Schuyler, strong men must be broken before God, wrestling in the agony and labor of prayer, and pleading with God through the long hours of the night for months. As champions for Christ, we must do this in spite of our normal demands of home and work.

This is perhaps the greatest problem attacking us today. We have all the modern luxuries of life to make our work easier, and yet we cannot make time to

pray! What a tragic paradox! Years ago, I told an old teacher and mentor of mine named John Miller, that I was just too busy at home and at work to pray. John glared at me and responded, "With eight kids and a farm to run, I've never had time to pray — So, I've always found that if I want to get anything done, I'd better find time to make time!"

As Christian men, prayer is our duty. It is our obligation. We must make time to pray and wait before God! We have a perfect model in Jesus. Therefore, I leave you with this thought today:

*"And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God,"* [Luke 6:12].

T. J. Blackeather

### The Bible Readers Outreach Ministry for March/April

In Feb 2025 we mailed out 205 Bible lessons, enrolled 23 new students, mailed 12 Bibles cost of \$313.25, 7 Bible dictionaries/Concordances at \$148.41, 4 Old testament Vernon Mcgee concordances at \$79.49; Misc. office materials (paper, envelopes, ink, cardstock) \$433.82 and Stamps \$802.11 for a total of \$1,777.08

In March 2025 we mailed out 290 Bible lessons, enrolled 18 new students, mailed 7 Bibles cost of \$164.07, 7 Bible dictionaries/Concordances at \$160.40, 0 Old testament Vernon Mcgee concordances at \$00.00; Misc. office materials (paper, envelopes, ink, cardstock) \$99.515 and Stamps \$618.83 for a total of \$1042.81

### Rehoboth Jail & prison Pen Pal Outreach for March/April

In Feb. 2025 I wrote 34 letter and received 9 new request during that month for volunteer pen pal . I received 3 New volunteers to write inmates.

In March 2025 I wrote 56 letters and received 17 new request during that month for volunteer pen pal . I received 1 New volunteers to write inmates.

We still need pen pal for women and men and we could us a couple volunteers for Hispanic inmates who do not read or write in English. I have to translate the letter into English and try to translate the return letter from English to Spanish. Keep us in your prayers.

#### 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.

All donations of any kind are tax deductible under United States Code Section 170(c)(2). All giving constitutes your express agreement to relinquish control in accordance with IRS regulation. Donations can be sent to the address below with checks payable to the ministry.

#### Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry

Ronald R. Baker, Chaplain

6166 Helens Way, Schuyler, VA 22969-9607

#### The Bible Reading Outreach Ministry

Barbara Holmes

3152 Glenn Husky Road, Sevierville, TN 37862

I'm a 51-year-old double lifer for drugs (sales, trafficking). I am also in a wheelchair for lower back pain and severe neuropathy in both my legs from a car accident. I have not written or talked with my family in over 11 years. I do not want to be a burden to them; my crime, my time. My parents are deceased and in a way, I am thankful because they don't have to endure the hardships I've caused.

Many times people had offered the Word to me, but it always fell in the thorns. The things of the world had a firm hold on me, and I always played games with God. I was a bad son by my choice. I was not forced to be bad. I allowed my sin nature to control me.

While in county, many inmates facing trials prayed and shared the Word with

one another. I knew God's Word, and they wanted to come and ask me questions about the Word. One time my friend asked me, "Why do you not call on the Lord?" I told him it was because I was so tired of playing games with God. I also told him the only way I would come to God would be freely and open, in a way I do not know.

Well, I lost at trial and was sentenced to double life in prison. After I was sentenced, while I was in the holding cell, I fell on my knees and cried out to God and told Him I was tired, and I needed Him in my life. (I have tears right now as I write this.) I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and I honestly felt my burden fall away. I honestly felt the joy and peace only Christ offers.

I heard in my mind, "See, you thought you could never come to Me." And I also heard, "Nothing is impossible for Me (God)." Smiling with tears in my eyes, I realized that even as I will spend my life in prison, I have been given the gift of eternal life. Almost ten years have gone by and I have not complained because my place in Heaven is set; now I watch and pray. If God found a way to save me, please know He can do the same for you. Trust and believe. Don't wait, don't fight, let God in and all will be right.

I've been with the Lord now since 2009, and I keep in the Word daily. I used to cook and donate time to the Salvation Army. I guess I had believed I could do good to make amends for my sinning.

I have many ailments (chronic diabetes, kidney problems, vision, hearing). I am a high school graduate and now seek any help being that the prison doesn't offer jobs where I could earn any money. I leave it all in the will of God as I walk in His will and not my own.

I do pray for all who I write and am always open to any who can spare time to write me. Being indigent has had its challenges, but I do believe God's will and His mercy will keep on shining through me. From being rich in the world and now poor, yet, I am rich in Christ.

Praise the Lord.

*This is a testimony from an man with a double life sentence who was a pen pal and shared this testimony.*