

Aurora Ministries

Helping you bring God's light to those who sit in darkness
Psalm 107:10-16

Jail Ministry

Training Manual

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FORMER
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“Those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, bound in affliction and irons— because they rebelled against the words of God, and despised the counsel of the Most High, therefore He brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and broke their chains in pieces. Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He has broken the gates of bronze, and cut the bars of iron in two.”

Psalm 107:10-16

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You can also check on updates to this manual by going to the web site, where you can also get any of more than 125 messages for Chaplains and volunteers under the “Chaplain’s Corner” section

www.ChaplainHelp.org

The History of Aurora's Chaplain Help Ministry

The heart of Aurora Ministries is to give out the word of God freely. Our ministry to correctional Chaplains now known as the Chaplain Help Ministry, began in 1983 as a vision of its founder, Anthony T. Rossi, to provide the word of God on audio Bibles to inmates. Our current President and Executive Director, Dr. Joe Aleppo, and his wife Georgia, began visiting prison Chaplains in California, offering them free Biblical audio tapes and special players to be used by them for discipling inmates in the Christian faith.

In 1990, they were invited to a meeting of the American Protestant Correctional Chaplains Association (APCCA) to present Aurora's ministry to chaplains. It was there that they saw the need of an additional ministry to further encourage and support Chaplains, not only providing them with free biblical materials for their ministry, but also in equipping them with teaching and practical help from God's word. For example: how to counsel inmates from the word of God and how to prepare expositional messages.



Joe Aleppo

This vision, after a few years of preparation and organization, took shape in August 1994, when, under Joe Aleppo's direction, Aurora began offering and sponsoring Chaplain Enrichment Seminars. Our first Seminar was a three-day meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, with Dr. Stephen Olford as the key speaker. Aurora provided food and lodging for the attending chaplains.

The results were encouraging and promising, as the Seminar was very well attended by Chaplains and their spouses. They were invited to attend with the chaplains because Aurora believes that the supporting role of the spouse is vital to Chaplains for a successful ministry.

Since then, Aurora covered most of the costs for 50 three day Chaplain Enrichment Seminars. As of mid 2011, we cannot offer to fund Seminars any longer.

In 1997, Aurora Ministries prayerfully contacted Rev. Rich Hines, and asked him if he would come to Florida to be the "Minister to Chaplains" for their ministry to correctional Chaplains. After some months of prayer, seeking the Lord's direction he and his wife Barbara, joined the Aurora effort in December, 1997. As of mid-2011 they are no longer employed by Aurora, but Rich serves as a missionary partner with Aurora.

Rich Hines is a graduate of Talbot Theological Seminary in La Mirada, California, with a Master of Ministry degree. He was ordained to the Gospel Ministry by the elders of Grace Community Church in California. He served as a Jail Chaplain in Los Angeles County, California, for 21 years (14 years in max. security).

For 17 years he also served as an Associate Pastor with Dr. John MacArthur at Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California. After leaving the jail chaplaincy in 1994, he served as the Pastor-Teacher of The Master's Fellowship Church, a church-plant in Visalia, California, for four and a half years.

He currently serves as a part time Chaplain in Snohomish County, WA. He also has served on the elder board of Lakeside Community Chapel, in Clearwater, Florida.



Rich Hines

He produces a monthly message to Chaplains and volunteers called the "Chaplain's Corner." These messages are posted monthly to our web site and some of them are part of this training manual. He has

taught one or two of the sessions during Aurora's three-day Seminars and all the sessions at One-Day Seminars, which individual Chaplains arranged.

Since the ministry to correctional Chaplains began, Aurora has given free Bible-based material to over 4,500 institutions. Currently there are over 1,640 Chaplains on our active mailing list. Annually, over 300 Chaplains have attended either three-day, or one-day Seminars. By April, 2011, we had held 50 three-day Chaplain Enrichment Seminars and 34 One-Day Seminars. Testimonies of God's blessing through these Seminars are included in the next section of this Manual.

At each Seminar, Chaplains and volunteers received a refresher course in Bible doctrines with special emphasis on how they apply to those they serve. They had wonderful fellowship with the Lord and with each other. They were given free study books for their own personal growth and ministry. They were encouraged in their ministry and challenged in their faith.

In 2006 under Rich's leadership, the ministry started the Aurora Chaplain Training Academy (ACTA), which offered graduates a credential validating and sanctioning them as biblically sound and prepared correctional Chaplains. To date there have been five graduates who have functioned as Aurora Chaplains.

Since Rich's departure from Aurora Ministries was necessary because of the poor economy and Aurora's resulting financial situation, he will continue to do One-Day Seminars and Chaplains Academy classes under the covering of another solid, biblical Christian ministry to correctional chaplains. If you are interested in sponsoring a One-Day Seminar, or want Chaplains Training Academy information, please contact Rev. Rich Hines at: (360)722-2429.

This manual came about as a result of some Chaplains involved in a County Jail Ministry in Northern California. Many of them had attended two, three-day Chaplain Enrichment Seminars and two, One-Day Seminars. They repeatedly asked us for a course of study that would help equip their new Chaplains and volunteers.

When other prison and jail Chaplains around the country heard about this project, they began requesting incomplete copies of this manual to use what they could immediately. So far, over 840 copies have been requested by over 540 chaplains from 45 different States. To our knowledge, some copies have even ended up overseas to help equip Christians, as correctional chaplaincy is beginning in foreign countries.

The following statements come from real prison and jail Chaplains, including many that have attended our Chaplain Enrichment Seminars, One Day Seminars and our Training Academy classes.

from a new Chaplain's Training Academy (ACTA) student after his 1st session, May, 2011

“Thank you for all your hard work and commitment to equipping others to the work of the ministry of chaplaincy. I would also like to extend my heart felt appreciation for your ministry of providing BIBLICAL BASED training for prison chaplains. There is so much that is so far from the Bible, your ministry is truly refreshing and edifying. Thanks again,”

Two notes from our last One-Day Seminar near Chicago, Illinois, April 2, 2011

“There’s just nothing like a bunch of “Jail People” getting together! Chaplain Tom is convinced it’s the closest thing to Heaven! Our friend Rich Hines from ChaplainHelp.org, a division of Aurora Ministries (Bradenton, Florida) visited us again. This is Rich’s 3rd Seminar here, and as usual, God was glorified, and He was enthusiastically received, by a record crowd of 76 Jail & Prison Ministry devotees!”

“Hi Rich, Thank you so much for the manual’s etc. I have been ministering at Cook County Jail for 3 years. Marlene and I are currently mentoring 4 men who have been released from the jail. Your seminar was a gift from God, the biblical insight was amazing, all in His plan. Thank you for all you do for His Kingdom. Blessings, Art.”

from a Chaplain in Texas

“I was able to camp a day early before the retreat (3-Day Seminar) ... I spent much time in prayer about the retreat. ... Well, after camping I was ‘primed’ when I reported to Glorieta for the retreat. You did not disappoint!...I hear so many ‘easy answers’ from all kinds of ministries and the State also, that your message was like clear cool water. It reaffirmed truths I hold very dear. ... During the retreat my heart was ‘strangely moved’ and I felt the love and presence of God in a wonderful way. I will always look back on this retreat as a very important time in my ministry.”

from a Chaplain in Oklahoma

“I want to thank you for your ministry to those of us who work as jail Chaplains. I appreciate your insight and advice in working with inmates. I am a former jailer who now works as a volunteer chaplain to inmates. You bring out information that sometimes I don’t think about as I work closely with the inmates. You keep me apprised of the fact that working with inmates is not exactly the same as dealing with the general public. Your advice and teachings bring a viable approach to my ministry, with what I believe are good results. Again I thank you and may God bless your ministry as you walk in his will.”

from a Chaplain in Georgia

“Words cannot express the impact you have made on my life and ministry in the last ten years”

from a women's Chaplain in Michigan

“From time to time, I feel slightly depressed after visiting inmates and hearing the sad stories surrounding their lives. This Seminar has enlightened, encouraged and inspired me to strive for greater heights in the Lord and in the prison ministry.”

from a Chaplain in California

What I appreciate most about Aurora Ministries is the clear teaching of the word of God. No fluff. Good solid teaching. We must know our doctrine and guard against the movement that says teaching doctrine is bad.

from another Chaplain in Texas

“As a state trainer for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, I train volunteer Chaplains. With my contact with Chaplains at this conference (*meaning Aurora's Seminar*) and with the presentations, I now have new knowledge and understanding of prison ministry. Thank you.”

from a Chaplain in Massachusetts

“Aurora Ministries has been the most generous in continuing to support the chaplains throughout the United States Correctional System. In all my years of working as a Chaplain, I have never experienced the openness and the giving like that of the Aurora Ministries.”

from a Chaplain in Pennsylvania

“As a pastor of a church made up of 60% ex-offenders, and as a 10 year chaplain at a maximum security facility, I thought this year’s Seminar was the finest I have ever had the privilege of attending. It was the most informative, inspirational and enjoyable time I have ever had.”

from a Chaplain in Nebraska

“What I continue to be so very grateful for is the encouragement and equipping and enrichment God has brought to us through Aurora Ministries.”

from a Chaplain in New York

“We go through times when it seems that no one cares. You have shown how much you really care about us (*Chaplains*). You may be the only support some of us have.”

from a Chaplain in Arkansas

“You not only minister to the inmates with materials you share, but you also minister to the Chaplain. The Seminar was great!”

from another Chaplain in California

“Paul complimented Philemon for ‘refreshing the saints.’ I compliment Aurora Ministries for doing the same for correctional chaplains.”

from another Chaplain in California

“We go away encouraged, better equipped to help others.”

from a Chaplain from Florida

“Greetings! Thank you and all the fine staff of Aurora Ministries for the outstanding seminar in Memphis. Betty and I appreciate this opportunity; all the arrangements were excellent. The theme, “Ministry In The Light Of Christ’s Return,” was a timely message. Dr’s Stephen and David Olford blessed and challenged us. The two books, “Anointed Exposition Preaching,” and “The Second Coming,” will be read with much interest and profit. Thanks for these quality books. Aurora Ministries is making a difference in the lives of many people. We pray God’s blessing and strength to be with each of you. Thanks friends for everything . . . Our prayer is -Jesus, Be Jesus In Me”

from a Chaplain and his wife from Pennsylvania

“A brief note to say thank you, a big THANK YOU for your kindness in putting us up and putting up with us at the “Chaplain Enrichment Seminar” at Sandy Cove last month. It was everything you promised and more. Speakers - challenging, Service - superb, Accommodations - outstanding, Food - delicious, Fellowship - sweet & abundant . . . Thanks for the rest, challenges, etc. We are blessed. We pray that you may continue to be a blessing. Looking forward to next year if the Lord should tarry.”

from a Chaplain in Tennessee

“I suggest that you contact Aurora Ministries in Bradenton, FL. Their ministry is geared toward prisons . . . Each year they sponsor a Bible conference for Chaplains. Those who attend are Chaplains with a heart for the Lord. They send out a newsletter to those Chaplains, and they should be able to assist you in getting your message out.”

from a Chaplain in Ohio

“I just want to say thank you for the ministry that you do. We Chaplains are encouraged knowing the prayers of God’s people are ascending to the throne on our behalf. Your ministry is vital for restoring and refreshing those who are on its front lines. Many have to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Several years ago I attended the Seminar held at Word of Life in New York. My wife and I were blessed. May the Lord encourage you in your ministry of ‘encouragement’ to men and women in ministry.”



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The Aurora Foundation
Aurora Ministries
Aurora Mission

Statement of Faith

What We Believe:

1. There is one God (Deut. 6:4), supreme in His Being (Dan.4:3,25,34-36), glorious in His perfection (Isa. 6:3), eternal (Ps. 90:2), existing in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Gen. 1:1-3 with John 1:1-3 and Job 33:4).
2. Jesus Christ is the eternal, unique Son of God (Heb. 1:1-3,8), who was born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14), lived a sinless life (1 John 3:5), died a vicarious death to atone for our sins (Isa. 53:4-9; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:19-21), physically arose from the dead according to the Scriptures, ascended to the Father (Luke 24:34-43; 1 Tim. 3:16), and will one day come again in power and glory to judge sin (Matt. 24:27-30). He is co-equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (Titus 2:13).
3. The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person (God) (Acts 5:3,4) who baptizes all believers, at salvation, into the Body of Christ (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 2:12,13; 1 Cor. 12:13), is present to guide, teach, control and empower believers for service (John 14:17,26, 15:26; Acts 1:8; Eph 5:18), and to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:7-14).
4. The Bible is the Divinely breathed-out, infallible, written Word of God, inerrant in the original texts (2 Tim.3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20,21; John 10:35; Psalm 119:96, 138:2), the only sure and sufficient guide for Christian faith and practice, and the final authority on all matters of life (2 Pet. 1:3,4 with Deut. 29:29). Therefore, we promote the expositional ministry of all the Word of God (Nehemiah 8:8, 1 Tim. 4:13).
5. Man was created by God in His own image (Gen. 1:26). By an act of his own will, mankind rebelled and has fallen into sin, thereby incurring physical and spiritual death (Gen. 2:16,17; Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:1,2). Man is separated from God (Isa. 59:2) and under condemnation in his impenitent and sinful state (Ps. 7:11; John 3:36).
6. Salvation has been provided, by grace alone, through faith alone, as a gift for men through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and His resurrection from the dead (Romans 3:24-26, 4:24,25; 2 Cor. 5:14-19; Eph. 2:8-9). Those who repent of their sins and believe in Him are born again of the Holy Spirit; their sins are forgiven; they are given a right standing before God; they receive the gift of eternal life, and they become children of God (John 1:10-13; Acts 2:37-40). Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation (John 14:6; Acts 4:10-12). His righteousness is the sole ground of the believer's justification (Rom. 3:21-22). The full merit of his righteousness is imputed to every believer (Rom. 10:4). Believers contribute nothing meritorious to their own salvation (Rom. 4:4-5; Rom. 10:3; Phil. 3:9). We believe Christ eternally saves every true believer (John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:28-30; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:5), and we believe those who abandon the faith completely, simply demonstrate that they were never genuine believers to begin with (1 John 2:19).

7. The church universal consists of all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, and are born again of the Holy Spirit (1 Pet. 1:1-5). The church constitutes the body of Christ in this world, whom Christ has commissioned to proclaim the Gospel to all the world (Eph. 1:22,23; 1 Tim. 3:15; Mark 16:15). The local church is the body of believers joined together for worship of God, preaching the Word, edification, fellowship, and observation of the ordinances Christ gave the church, which are Baptism and the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 1:2 with 1 Cor. chapters 11-14). We believe in baptism of believers by immersion (Rom. 6:4,5; Acts 8:38,39). We believe and practice the Biblical unity of all those who hold the true doctrine of Christ (John 17:20-23 with John 1:14,17). We are opposed to ecumenical and syncretistic movements with those who deny clear biblical teaching, as expressed in this Statement of Faith (1 John 4:1-4; 2 John 7-11).
8. God ordained the institution of marriage between one man (male) and one woman (female), to become one flesh (Gen. 2:22-25; Matt. 19:4-6). This is the only union that includes a divinely approved sexual relationship, and any other sexual thought or conduct is sin, due the judgment of God (Heb 13:4). All practice of sex other than as God designed it to be enjoyed in male-female marriage is a statement of rebellious sinners against God. Homosexuality was not created or intended by God (Rom. 1:18-32) but is a gross perversion by rebellious humans, and is a total abomination to God (Lev. 18:22-30).
9. Being committed to a literal, historical-grammatical principle of Biblical interpretation, Aurora Ministries' understanding of eschatological Scriptures is both premillennial and pretribulational. There shall be a second, visible and personal coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to establish His earthly kingdom for a literal 1,000 years (Zechariah 14:3-9; Acts 1:6-11; Rev. 20:1-10).
10. There shall be a bodily resurrection of all who are in Christ to eternal bliss in heaven, and of all who are without Christ to eternal punishment in hell (John 5:25-29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:4-6,11-15; 22:3-5; Matt. 25:34,41,46).
11. We believe experience must never interpret Scripture, but rather Scripture must validate all we believe and practice. We therefore do not accept Charismatic and Pentecostal teaching on the sign gifts and other phenomena attributed to God working through them in this age—speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, miraculous signs, “revelations” and “faith healing” by the laying on of hands (1 Cor. 13:8, 14:1-40; 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20; Jer. 23:16-32). We believe the true sign gifts that God gave to confirm revelation, passed away with the Apostolic era. We are opposed to all unbiblical false religion that poses as Christian and seeks to blur the division of truth and error (2 Peter 2:1-3; Jude 4; 1 Tim. 4:1,2; 2 Tim. 2:15-18; 1 John 4:1-6; 2 John 7-11).
12. In the matter of salvation, we believe that Divine sovereignty (election, foreknowledge, predestination and calling) and human responsibility are two truths that coexist together (Mark 14:21; Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Thess. 1:2-4; John 6:37; Acts 2:23, 13:48, 16:14,15) and find perfect standing and explanation only in the infinite wisdom and eternal counsel of God (Deut. 29:29; Isa. 55:8,9; Rom. 11:33,34).
13. In the matter of missions and evangelism, we believe that God has sovereignly chosen prayer for the lost, and proclamation of His Word as the means to bring His elect to salvation (Matt. 28:18-19; Acts 10:36-44; 13:2, 14:1; 1 Tim. 2:1-4; 2 Tim. 2:8-10).

1. The Love of Christ and Love for Christ (active and genuine)

2 Cor. 5:14 “For Christ’s love compels us...”

REQUIRED LISTENING: Message from Jay Adams (in training album) “The Right Motive For Ministry”

1 Cor 9:16 - A sense that one MUST do this. “Necessity is laid upon me...” No one should be in this ministry against their will. Not by human persuasion but rather by being driven by the Holy Spirit.

2. Love for inmates and staff (from Christ’s Spirit). Workers should see these people as objects of Christ’s love -

Mark 6:34 “And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.”

3. Preparation - *Five Key Things*

A. *Willingness to learn*

Acts 17:11 “...they received the word with all readiness (of mind), and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.”

1 Thess. 2:13 “...we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.”

REQUIRED READING OR LISTENING: Chaplain’s Corner, September 2001 from archives (bookmark the Chaplain’s Corner section from www.ChaplainHelp.org section as you will be required to study other selected messages) *This message is also included at the back of this manual*

B. *Much Prayer*

Acts 6:4 - note the order

“but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

C. *Study of God’s word*

2 Timothy 2:15 “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 4:2 “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering (patience) and (all implied) teaching (doctrine).”

D. *Personal Practical Sanctification*

2 Timothy 2:21 “...if anyone cleanses himself from the latter (dishonorable sinful things), he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.”

E. *The importance of this work. A sense that eternity hangs in the balance* (see 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

“Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.”

Priorities In Jail Ministry For Chaplains and Volunteers, continued

4. Presentation - *Five Key Things*

Teach the word of God systematically - preach and teach salvation and the worthy walk (the Christian way of living according to the word) Acts 20:26,27

APPLICATIONS:

A. *On personal salvation stress repentance see Sept. 2004 Chaplain's Corner at the end of this manual*
Acts 20:21 "testifying ... repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

Luke 13:3 Jesus said: "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

1 Thess. 1:9,10 "...you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son ...whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come."

B. *Stress personal growth into the stature of Christ* (see Ephesians 4:11-15)

1 John 2:6 "He who says he abides in Him (the reference is to Jesus Christ the Righteous One - in 2:1) ought himself also to walk just as He walked."

C. *Give your best quality message*

1 Cor. 10:31 "...whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

D. *Dress - Be an example of a believer. Don't offend or stumble the authorities or inmates.* Modesty is especially important for women. See 1 Tim 4:12; 1 Cor. 9:19-22; 1 Tim 2:9-14

E. *Don't speak over their heads - Keep your message on their level and don't go on too long.*

1 Cor. 14:9 "...unless you utter with the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air."

5. Participation - beyond an actual service, Bible study or group meeting.

A. *Prayer for specific inmates / needs* See 1 Timothy 2:1-4

B. *Follow-Up - Discipleship* (mentoring) of a criminal offender.

REQUIRED READING/LISTENING: Chaplain's Corner messages: July, Oct. and Dec. 2000

These messages are included at the back of this manual

C. *Helps* - set up entry into voluntary after care programs, job interviews, etc. The principle of James 2:14-16
"What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but he has no works? Can that (*kind of*) faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself." (NASB translation)

6. Variation - making the word of God both interesting and understandable.

A. Videos (Aurora has free loaner videos)

B. Overhead projections, chalkboard, flannelgraph presentations

C. Occasional use of props - (allowed by security) e.g. fruit, samples of cloth, costumes

7. Identification - Be aware of where they are. Present messages that speak to them, not necessarily your own culture.

The principle of Christ's incarnation in John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14-18

Principles in Ministry To Which You Must Pay Special Attention

1. This is God's ministry - not yours or mine! He must get all the glory. He supplies the strength through His Spirit, but you must appropriate it.

Scriptures - 2 Cor. 2:14; 3:5;
2 Cor. 4:7 "the power...of God, and not of us"

2. You must not make your plans independent of His Spirit's leading through the Scriptures - this again means constant prayer and study.

Scriptures - 2 Cor. 1:12; 10:45
"not with fleshly wisdom" - "the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly"

3. If you're relying on the Spirit of God, you will not burn out.

Scripture - 2 Cor. 4:1 (remember, God is not a quitter!)
"since we have received this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart"

REQUIRED LISTENING: (MP-3 album) Dr. Adams "Discouraged? Don't Give Up"

4. You must appear (and be) as a loving helper, not as a dictatorial authority.

Scriptures - 2 Cor. 1:24; 12:14; 1 Thess. 2:7,8; Hebrews 13:3
2 Cor. 1:24 "Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy;"

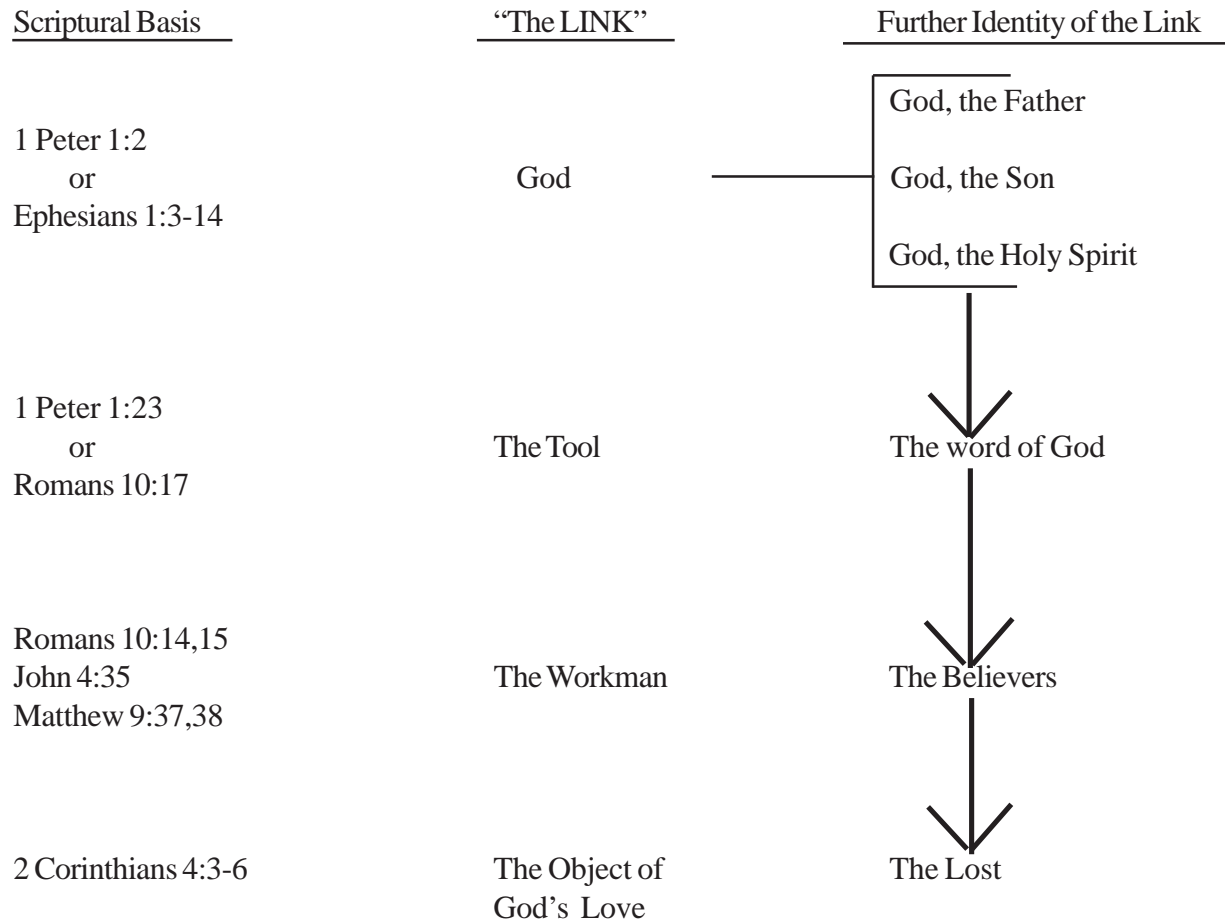
5. Your behavior both inside and outside the facility **MUST** be consistent with the message you proclaim.

Scriptures - 2 Cor. 4:2; 8:21; 1 Thess 1:5; 2:3-5; 2:10
2 Cor. passages "commending ourselves to every man's conscience...providing honorable things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."

6. You must seek the approval of God - **EXCLUSIVELY!**

Scriptures - 1 Cor. 4:3,4; 2 Cor. 2:7; 4:2; 5:9; 7:12
"He who judges me is the Lord."
"we speak in the sight of God"

The Chain Of Operation For Evangelism



At times, the only “weak link” in this chain of operation is in the workers, who are believers.

According to 2 Cor. 4:3,4, Satan would keep the minds of the lost blinded to God’s truth. Satan’s attack on the Father failed as he was cast out of heaven and His service. Likewise his attack on the Son failed. “It is finished!” was Jesus’ victory cry on the cross and the empty tomb (the resurrection of Christ) rendered the Evil One powerless against Him. 1 John 4:4 tells us the One who indwells all true Christians, the Holy Spirit, is “greater than” the one who is “in the world” (a reference to Satan). Likewise, the written word of God, the Bible, has endured and withstood all attacks. The word of God is as eternal as God Himself, because it is His ultimate truth. How wonderful it is that He has made it known to us.

The only place the Adversary is ever successful in finding a weak link is in the workmen, who are you and I in our yet unglorified state. He is able to become temporarily successful when we are disobedient to our Lord (our Sovereign Master) either by refusing to do what He leads us to do, or in trespassing His standards and thereby using our poor testimony of life as an excuse for the lost to not listen to our message.

Ultimately, even our disobedience as a weak link cannot stop God, or disable Him from reaching, enlightening, giving His life to and saving a lost person He intends to make like His dear Son! But, the loss of joy in glorifying our God is tremendous, when we like David “have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme...” (2 Sam. 12:14). As you do ministry, don’t bring shame on the One you love!

PROPER PREPARATION

1. Pray for hearts prepared by God

A. Of the Listeners:

Acts 2:47; 13:48; 16:14

“...the Lord added to the church”

“as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed”

“The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken”

B. Of the Message Givers

2 Tim.2:21,22 - purity of life

1 Peter 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:15 - able to teach the Bible doctrine of salvation

2. Identify the prepared listeners by asking key questions

Example: Acts 8:30

“Do you understand what you are reading?”

Example: “I’m a follower of Christ, and I was just asking God to lead me to people who want to know Him, could you be one of them?”

PROPER PRESENTATION

3. Use God’s word

Heb.4:12 “the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit,...and is a discerner (judge) of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Present to them their true situation - SIN, and then the solution - CHRIST (see John 16:7-11)

A. When presenting their sin, STRESS - in the sight of God, not man!
Isaiah 64:6; Phil. 3:4-9

B. When presenting Christ as Lord and Savior, STRESS His uniqueness, His Deity, and His substitutionary work.

The most important truth to tie all these truths together is the bodily resurrection of Christ. Romans 4:25; 2 Tim. 2:8-10

“Remember Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, having been raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, so that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”

4. Have a method of using God’s word to meet their need. 1 Cor 9:22

PROPER RESPONSE

5. Don’t put words in their mouth, they must respond to the Holy Spirit’s invitation and prompting. (Jer. 29:13; Hosea 14:2; Romans 10:13) to repent and place their faith in Christ alone.

REQUIRED READING OR LISTENING: Chaplain’s Corner, September 21, 2004

*This message is included
in the back of this manual*

If and when they seem to have responded to Him, ask questions to determine the object of their faith. Make sure it’s in Christ ALONE!

Elements Of A Good Jail Service

GOALS

- A. To confront the inmates with the message of the Bible. This is to be done in such a way as to encourage and urge them to make an internal response (one way or the other) based on what they have heard.

Biblical examples of this approach are seen in:

Acts 2:22-37

Acts 3:12-20

Acts 4:8-12

Acts 5:29-33

- B. To equip and encourage believing inmates to “fight the good fight of faith” against the deceptively evil world system of unbelief and sin around them. This is to be done by giving them what they need for spiritual attacks, i.e. understanding how to use God’s word both defensively and offensively.

Biblical examples of this approach are seen in:

Acts 14:22

Acts 18:23

1 Thessalonians 5:14

Titus 2:11,12

- C. To glorify God, really honoring Him. 1 Cor. 10:31

VEHICLES TO REACH THESE GOALS

- A. The spoken message. This is the key vehicle.

1 Cor. 1:21 “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through (*it’s own*) wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the (*so called*) foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe”

2 Tim. 4:2-5 “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering (patience) and (all) teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine (healthy teaching), but according to their own lusts, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”

1. The message **MUST** be biblical. It is the word of God that the Holy Spirit uses to pierce hearts.

Ephesians 6:17

Hebrews 4:12

2. The message must be **ACCURATE** to the **TRUE TEACHING** of the Bible.

2 Timothy 1:13

2 Timothy 2:15-18

3. The message must be on the inmates level. Don’t use language unfamiliar to them without adequate explanation. Don’t be afraid to use a **BIG** word if it is key to the text, but make sure they understand the concept in their own cultural setting. Try to use visual aides and vivid illustrations, being careful to hold their attention.

1 Corinthians 9:19-22

2 Timothy 2:24-26

Vehicles to reach the Goals, continued -

B. Prayer - MUST always recognize and submit to God's SOVEREIGNTY. Must be worshipful

It must be a deep, serious, humble asking only for things that are truly consistent with the Lord's will. The hint in prayer of feeding our own sinful ways or theirs, should never come through in our prayer life, especially with the inmates.

Matt. 6:9,10

James 4:3

1 John 5:14

C. Testimonies - Should be in harmony with the theme of the message brought. This is part of the idea of Phil. 1:27, one application of the truth taught in that text.

"...stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

D. Music - Is not primarily a tool for teaching, preaching or evangelism. It should be used in worship - a true demonstration of hearts that are actively loving God, in truth. This should frequently be explained.

The lyrics MUST be in line with the true teachings of the Bible. Songs sung by those who refuse to be Christ's servants, are not qualified as worship to Him.

All music is not good. Someday the music that comes from unbelieving, rebellious hearts will cease forever. The Lord's true servants and children will sing a new kind of song for all eternity in heaven.

Evil Music used in False Worship/ Idolatry

Good Music

Exodus 32:6,18,19

Amos 6:3-6

Revelation 18:21-23

Psalm 96:1-9

Rev. 4:8-11

Rev. 5:8-10

TO USE THESE VEHICLES, A TEAM MUST BE

A. Thoroughly prepared

1. The MESSAGE - Well prepared, well studied, in the Scriptures.

2. The TESTIMONIES - Well thought out and discussed ahead of time.

3. The MUSIC - Well planned, well practiced, and in harmony with the theme of the message presented.

Acts 6:4

Acts 18:11

Acts 20:31

B. Give a well presented program with a message and testimonies demonstrating a true love for God and His holiness, and a love for the inmates which they understand does not endorse their sin.

Realize the attitude of those speaking is a louder message than the actual words. A well presented program demonstrates hearts grateful to Jesus Christ, the Lord for His indescribable gift!

1 Cor. 2:4,5

2 Cor. 4:1,2; 12:14-16

1 Thess. 2:7,8

What Jail Ministers Need To Know About Inmates

1. Most inmates resent authority and ALL live in an atmosphere of fear and hate.
2. Most are more accepting of the truth that they are sinners than those in free society. This however, is not the same thing as actually having been convicted by God's Spirit of their sin AGAINST GOD. They know they are offenders, but most do not realize they have deeply offended an infinitely Holy God.
3. Many think there is absolutely no hope for them.
4. Many have assigned themselves to a spiritual fatalism, thinking they are "born to lose" or "it's in my blood, nothing can change me." **REQUIRED LISTENING:** (MP-3) Bruce Mills "A Biblical View of Failure"
5. Most are in a position of not wanting to give up their sin. They (especially the younger ones) think they are having fun and that there will be time to straighten themselves out, later.
6. Many think Christianity (even evangelical "born again" Bible Christian faith) doesn't work, because:
 - A. They've made a false commitment (For the wrong reasons with no true repentance towards God).
{Like Simon the Sorcerer in Acts 8}
 - B. They've seen hypocrisy in others that call themselves Christians.
7. Most are extremely self-centered. "I want it," makes it right. Many feel framed, double-crossed and let down by others (there are some legitimate failures on the part of others that enforce this feeling). Mainly they are looking for excuses and "scape-goats" to help them feel free from personal guilt.
8. Many do not have an education above a 7th grade level. They are not stupid, and know about complicated things and compound words, like "Meth-Amphetamine" but at the same time have never been taught some basic things like the rules of grammar or the importance of history (basics for good Bible understanding!) or even basic health practices. Yet, **MOST CAN LEARN** if they really want to.
9. They all have a long way to go (but, by God's grace they can grow) to what the Scriptures presents as a normal Christian life.
 - A. Practically all have severe problems with sexual immorality.
 - B. The "Bad crowd" is their crowd, their peer group, even their culture. Those who they look up to are in many cases: con men, physically violent, drug pushers, pimps and users of others.

Describing the culture of the ancient people of Crete, Titus 1:12,13 also describes their culture:

" 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.' This testimony is true..."
In other words - they were con men, violent and savage, and given to the lusts of the flesh as pleasure seekers.
 - C. Many, even most, have never known a normal family relationship. Their background has taught them no love, no respect and no discipline - according to God's standards.
10. Most have prior records. Most will not receive any constructive help from society when they are released.

11. Christ loves them and died for their sins. You too were just as offensive to God before you came into a saving relationship with Christ. Anything they have done, you too were capable of doing. Only God's grace prevented you from doing the same things as they have done, and are still doing.

After knowing Christ for over 30 years, the Apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 1:15:

“This is a faithful saying worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief (the foremost of all).”

12. When approaching inmates, keep these things in mind:

- A. Never talk down to them. Speak about sin, even their sin, but at the same time be honest about your own struggle with sin. Don't ever give them the idea that you think you are better than they are.
- B. The jail may be the place of incarceration, but it is still their home.
- C. Never ask about their charges.
- D. Never take a negative statement from an inmate personal.
- E. Never do special favors for an inmate. Do not get involved in helping them communicate with other inmates or any one on the outside. This could jepordize your ministry and help them to sin.

It's always important to obey the security rules of the facility. Sometimes inmates who resent the governmental authority over them, try to get you to help them disobey the rules. This is the opposite of what the word teaches Christians in regard to submitting to that authority.

REQUIRED READING: Chaplain's Corner from November 18, 2004 (a copy is at the end of this Manual)

- F. Pray that the Holy Spirit would open their hearts, and that He would give you patience with them.

ARE THERE ANY THINGS THAT ARE POSITIVE ABOUT INMATE CULTURE?

YES!

1. Their culture stresses LOYALTY, albeit to the wrong things and persons. They understand the principle of being part of a greater whole and naturally abhor the concept of betraying the whole (gang, family etc.). This is part of the reason being a “snitch” is such a serious thing.

This means it is usually easier to teach them the biblical truths of being part of the greater body of Christ, the church. It is also easier to teach them the importance of a consistent testimony, than to teach this to the more “independent” mindset persons in free society.

2. They understand all out COMMITMENT (again from their background of drug addition, etc.)
3. Their culture despises certain forms of hypocrisy. Therefore, generally they RESPECT someone who truly “practices what they preach,” especially a Christian who truly lives consistently with his profession.

What YOU Need To Teach Those In Jail



About The Bible

Generally, inmates have little or no comprehension of the AUTHORITY of the Bible. Many things in their religious and secular backgrounds, and even in the correctional religious system, contribute to this. Some are convinced that the Bible is archaic, full of errors and totally FROM A HUMAN SOURCE. By the power of the Holy Spirit you must correct these serious errors and convince them that the Bible actually has the answers to their problems.

You need to understand that the educational level of most inmates is not suited to the King James Version (KJV), yet at the same time be CAREFUL not to get them into a text ONLY because it is easier to read - at the cost of a good word for word translation. We highly recommend the New King James Version (NKJV), which is a solid word for word new and accurate translation from the same family of ancient texts as the KJV. We also highly recommend the New American Standard Bible (NASB) which is a solid word for word translation from the same texts as the NIV paraphrasers used. The difference in these two base manuscripts is less than 15%, and no major doctrine is contradicted or changed by either manuscript. The NKJV is less expensive than the NASB and usually has the differences in manuscripts noted in the margins.

An important truth to remember about how God gave His word is that, in the original, especially in the New Testament, it was given by the Holy Spirit - in the COMMON LANGUAGE of everyday people. If you are stuck on the KJV, we agree that it is an excellent word for word translation. It was done in the common language of England in the early 1600's. Even inmates with limited educational understanding of language, have been and can be transformed by the old KJV, but do not fear that some of the newer English word for word translations are not equally giving people the true word of God. Remember however, it is best to stay away from paraphrases like the NIV, the Living Bible, and other simplified versions that sacrifice commitment to word for word accuracy for the sake of "readability."

Some parts of Scripture are by its own admission, "hard to understand," (2 Peter 3:16). One reason for this is that the Bible is from a Holy God to sinful men. Yet thorough and prayerful searching of God's word gives the reader understanding as to its meaning, see Psalm 119:97-104, 130. Correct at the outset any idea that anyone can come to a "quickie" understanding of the depths God's word.

THE BIBLE: ITS SOURCE - There is much external and internal evidence that the Bible is in fact the very word of God. Externally, we can look at the evidence from archaeology, ancient recorded history, and more importantly, at the miracle of changed lives - all show that what the Bible says is true and works. Yet the strongest testimony that it is truly God-breathed, is the internal evidence within the Bible itself. Men do not write like the Bible. By contrast, men always lift themselves up in their pride rather than constantly showing their failures and weaknesses and total inability to correct themselves. 1 Peter 1:10-12 tells us the prophets who wrote at God's direction did not even understand the very things they wrote! By contrast, a human author that is truly the source of his own writing knows and understands what he is communicating. You MUST establish the Bible as the very word of God. It is the message of the Creator to His creation, man. It was given to us by God, the Holy Spirit.

Good verses and passages for teaching on these themes are:

Psalm 119:96	Acts 1:16	1 Corinthians 2:12-14
1 Thessalonians 2:13	2 Timothy 3:15-17	Hebrews 1:1,2
1 Peter 1:10-12	2 Peter 1:19-21	Jude 3

Suggested reading: "The Word Of God In English: - by Leland Ryken (Crossway Books)
"Discipleship Evangelism" - by Kenneth Stephens

About The Bible

THE BIBLE: ITS AUTHORITY AND IMPORTANCE IN DAILY LIFE - The transition from the Source to the **SERIOUSNESS** and the **AUTHORITY** of the Bible is easily made. If it truly is from God it has His authority! We teach the authority of the Scriptures as much or more by the way we act in front of the inmates as by what we say. Everything in the lives of Chaplains and volunteers as it is on display to them, **MUST** have sound Scriptural backing.

It is impossible to be Spirit-filled (controlled) and not at the same time Scripture -filled. Compare Ephesians 5:18,19 to Colossians 3:16 and Acts 4:31. Stephen was a man “full of faith and the Holy Spirit” (Acts 6:5). In the seventh chapter of Acts, we see the demonstration of that filling. He boldly spoke out the Scripture from the Old Testament.

We must interpret every part of our lives in the light of the Bible and be very careful not to interpret Scripture in the light of our experiences or what “the brethren” say. As inmates **SEE** in you the evidence of every thought being brought into captivity to obeying Christ’s word, they have a living example of the authority and importance of God’s word.

You need to be telling them how you have been challenged **RECENTLY** to change your thoughts rather than to support them, by the witness of the Scriptures. You should also regularly show them how the Bible has answers to everyday problems in your life. An inmate (or anybody else) lacking the understanding of the role and power of God’s word will never be a success in the Christian life. They will be lost eternally, thinking perhaps they were saved, or they will be doomed to a lifetime of Christian carnality and chastening, **UNTIL THEY LEARN TO LIVE BY GOD’S WORD**. This is very, very important.

Good verses and passages for teaching on these themes are:

Joshua 1:1-9 (note verses 7-9)

Psalm 1

Psalm 119

Mark 12:18-27 (note verses 24-27)

Hebrews 4:12,13

Suggested Reading: “From God To Us” - by Geisler and Nix

“General Introduction To The Bible” - by Geisler and Nix

FINAL THOUGHT: You must start with the source and authority of the Bible because without it, it is useless to talk about God. Unless a person’s concepts and understanding of whom they refer to as “God” are in line with the Bible, their worship will be idolatrous. No one can find the true God and the truth about Him without the revelation that comes from Him. God has told mankind all they need to know about Him and has placed it in the written Scripture of the Bible.

Most inmates have a very limited understanding of the true and only God. Many cannot conceive of a totally Righteous Person. The god they often think of is either a weakling, or a bully, a church organization, or an unknowable force. They need to be taught the biblical truths of God's utter Holiness, wisdom, power, eternity, existence as three Persons yet One God, love and about His desire for a personal relationship with the crown of His creation, man.

Good verses and passages for teaching on these themes are:

Genesis 1:1-27	1 Samuel 16:7	Isaiah 6:1-8
Acts 17:16-31	Romans 11:33-36	Revelation 4:6-11
Psalms 24	Psalms 29	Psalms 46
Psalms 47	Psalms 66	Psalms 90:1-12
Psalms 93	Psalms 99	

Suggested Reading Material: "The Knowledge Of The Holy" - by A. W. Tozer
"The Attributes Of God" - by A. W. Pink
"Knowing God" - by J. I. Packer

Most inmates have had it, to say the least, with condemnation. They do need to be taught about God's love. God sees their ultimate need and, in the coming of Jesus Christ has done something about it. They need to learn of God's great GRACE, what it means, and what it offers. They come from a background of plea-bargaining, pay offs, personal debts, evening the score, etc., etc. They have little or no concept of God's grace as taught in the Bible.

Good verses and passages for teaching on these themes are:

Deuteronomy 4:30-39	Psalms 103	Romans 3:21 - 5:21
Galatians 2:15 - 4:31	Titus 3:3-7	1 John 4:7-10

Suggested Reading Material: "Liberated For Life" by John MacArthur
"Law and Grace" by Alva J. McLain

Although most inmates resent condemnation (because of how man has condemned them) they need to understand that a Holy and Just God MUST JUDGE SIN. They must be taught not only that God WILL JUDGE SIN but also WHY He must judge it. When they, who are not perfect and know it, are offended and a victim of crime, they want the one that offended them to receive his just reward. How much more does a totally Holy God have to judge sin?

Good verses and passages for teaching on these themes are: Isaiah 5:11-25

Nahum 1:2-8	Malachi 2:10-17	Hebrews 3:7-12
Revelation 6:9-11	Revelation 15:1-8	

About Mankind - Personal Sin and Guilt

When hearing the teaching on sin, the inmate tends to see himself not as bad as the other guy, or to think, “Yes, we’re all sinners - but we can’t help it, so it’s OK.” These thoughts really serve to rob them of a personal conviction of having sinned.

Always remember the job of convincing the sinner of his true condition before God is the work of the Holy Spirit through the word of God, the Bible (see Romans 2:19,20; John 16:7-11 and Galatians 3:22-24). Also remember that without the inmate becoming sincerely aware of his own awfulness and unacceptability in God’s sight, he will never really repent and believe the gospel and be saved!

Some, maybe even many inmates, have been conditioned away from guilt - having their consciences “seared with a hot iron.” Part of this is due to a personal perversion (see 1 Tim. 4:2 and Eccl. 8:11). Another contributing factor may be that a slick attorney or a sloppy case by the prosecution has gotten them off unpunished when they knew they were guilty of a crime. In these cases they tend to think, “I’m not guilty --- the courts said so!”

Therefore, you and your team must proclaim the word of God faithfully. 2 Timothy 4:2-5 has an application to the problem of being conditioned against guilt. In this text, the conditioning comes from listening to people who tell them what they want to hear rather than the truth.

When teaching on mankind’s sinfulness the following verses and passages are appropriate:

1 Kings 8:46

Isaiah 6:1-8

Psalm 51:3-5

Isaiah 53:6a

Isaiah 59:1-15

Isaiah 64:6,7

Matthew 5:20

Romans 3:9-23

James 2:10

About Jesus Christ

Above everything and anything else, jail ministers must present the truth about Jesus Christ. You and your helpers must present a CLEAR picture of who He is, and of what He has done. Often, the Jesus that the inmates know about is not the same as the Jesus of the Bible! Many have no concept of His uniqueness. Many have been exposed to cultic teachings that rob their hearers of the concept of Jesus' Deity and attendant ability to save from sin. For example: Muslim and Watchtower (Jehovah's Witness) teachings have influenced many African-Americans. Often drug offenders are deeply into the New Age Religions and Eastern Mysticism.

You and your staff must not present a Savior who is less than Almighty God! Again, your conduct is so important because the inmates concepts of Jesus uniqueness is often dependant upon your own holy uniqueness, as His Spirit manifests His presence in your life. Don't minister in the flesh, the inmates will not see Jesus that way.

WHO HE IS: The uniqueness of Jesus is that He alone is the God-man, the only Savior.

When presenting the Deity of Jesus Christ, be very careful that the inmates don't get the idea that He is "another god" besides The Almighty God, or that there is more than one God.

When presenting His humanity, stress His humiliation and love to stoop to such a role in order to be identified with lost mankind and save them. Be very careful not to in any way convey the idea that He was God, then man, then God again -- switching back and forth. He is both at the same time!

Good passages for lessons are:

Philippians 2:5-11

Isaiah 7:14; 9:6,7

Hebrews 1:1-2, 1:18

Revelation 1:4-18

Colossians 1:12-22; 2:8-15

John 1:1-18; 5:17-23; 8:42-59; 10:30-33, 14:7-10; 17:1-5; 20:26-29

Isaiah 48:2,11,12

1 John 5:20

Jude 24,25

Matthew 26:26-68

Mark 2:1-12

1 Timothy 6:14-16

About Jesus Christ

WHAT HE HAS DONE: In presenting God's answer to man's sin, all evangelism must begin with the establishment of the full Deity of Christ. Once you have clearly proclaimed Jesus' Deity, and the inmates understand the Bible is saying Jesus is God in a human body, the transition to His work of redeeming the lost is infused with its proper power.

What needs to be stressed in the substitutionary, sacrificial WORK OF CHRIST is "by one sacrifice He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). Inmates need to understand and truly believe the completeness of the one single work done by Jesus Christ on the cross and through the empty tomb.

Truly, a large percentage of inmates have grown up with a smattering of Romanistic and other man made religious teachings on salvation that say salvation is a combination of Jesus' work and our own. This thinking must be refuted (see Colossians 2:8-23). You should be careful to refute the wrong teaching WITHOUT NAMING THE BRAND OF THE PEOPLE PROMOTING THE ERRORS (e.g. Roman Catholicism, Seventh Day Adventism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Eastern Orthodox, Islam and all forms of legalism as it applies to salvation, i.e. 'works salvation'). If you mention by name the groups doing the wrong teaching on salvation to the inmates (as I have, in part, just done for you) unnecessary walls of resentment are likely to arise and hamper the communication of the truth you are attempting to get across. Teach the biblical truth on salvation and let it judge the groups and systems of theology that inmates have listened to, and will run into.

Good passages to teach the work of Christ are:

1 Timothy 1: 14-20

Galatians, chapters 2 - 4

Hebrews, chapters 9 and 10

Romans 5: 12 - 21

Romans 6: 7 - 10

Colossians 2: 8 - 23

Revelation 5: 8 - 12

Isaiah 53

Genesis 22: 1 - 14

Exodus 12: 1 - 13

Suggested Reading:

"More Than A Carpenter" by Josh McDowell

"Jesus Christ Our Lord" by John F. Walvoord

"The Master Theme of The Bible" by J. Sidlow Baxter

About Salvation

When we say you need to teach inmates “About Salvation,” we mean about how it is appropriated, or acquired by the sinner. The word salvation means “deliverance.” When we speak of salvation for the sinner we mean spiritual deliverance from sin and all its consequences. In this regard a key verse is Acts 20:21, which gives the most basic apostolic outline for presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“Testifying to Jews and also to Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

For you to have a truly Christian ministry to criminal offenders, the correct teaching about biblical salvation from sin **MUST** be the thrust of your ministry.

Jonah 2:9 declares: “Salvation is of the LORD.” That is a very important statement from Scripture. All that salvation in any context includes is totally and completely the work of God. He, not man in any way, does it all. It is God who first seeks the sinner. He, alone in Christ Jesus paid for the redemption of the sinner. He regenerates him and then He produces fruit in the life of the regenerated one. It is God alone who truly perfects and matures the saint and finally will present him or her “faultless before the presence of His glory” which is to say, before His throne.

Inmates desperately need to be taught these truths and then how to appropriate them into their lives through a true saving faith that includes repentance from sin.

REPENTANCE You and your helpers must spend much time teaching about repentance and its spiritual brother, conversion. You need to stress what repentance IS NOT, then what it really IS. Sorrow over a specific sin, or number of sins may or may not produce true repentance. Repentance means a change of mind that leads to a corresponding change of direction in living. Included in the change is a completely different attitude about sin. Where it was once loved and sought after, after repentance it is hated and run from.

Saying one desires a change and really having a God given desire to change is part of the difference between false and true repentance. The flip side of repentance is conversion. Repentance turns a man from sin, conversion turns him to follow Jesus Christ. Conversion is the fruit of repentance. Repentance looks back on sin and shuns it. Conversion looks forward to Christ and living for Him. True repentance is a gift of God’s grace, as is saving faith.

Good passages to teach on these themes are:

Jonah, chapter 3	Luke 3: 1-14	Luke 5: 27-32
Luke 13: 1-9	Luke 15: 11-32	Luke 19: 1-10
Mark 1: 14,15	2 Corinthians 7: 9,10	1 Thessalonians 1: 9,10
2 Timothy 2:24-26	Acts 11: 17,18	

REQUIRED READING OR LISTENING: Chaplain’s Corner, September 21, 2004 see a copy at the end of this manual.

Suggested Reading:

“The Doctrine of Salvation” - by Arthur W. Pink

“Newborn” - by Harold Freleigh

“Salvation” - by Charles M. Horne

About Salvation

FAITH When teaching inmates on faith in what Jesus Christ has done, you need to be very careful. Many of them confuse the words “faith” and “believe” with a religious ceremony. Others confuse faith with a head knowledge, which is only intellectual assent.

Inmates must be challenged to an active faith that steps out and receives God’s promises in Christ. The New Testament word translated “believe” and “faith” in its normal everyday usage always meant total commitment to something, or someone. In our culture sadly, faith is often thought of as a temporary or current way of thinking something might be right or true. That’s a long way from total trust and commitment!

Two important truths about God faithfully taught help prepare an individual to have true God defined faith in His promises. They are His veracity, that is His faithfulness to perform what He said He would do, and His omnipotence, which means He is all-powerful, therefore He is able to do it.

You must not teach about “faith” without an object of faith. Don’t ever explain faith without stressing Who it is the inmate needs to have personal faith in and a total commitment to: Christ Jesus, God. You also need to teach inmates about biblical “hope.” It is biblical faith that looks forward, the confident expectation of biblical faith that is to be received in the future. Biblical hope is not a wish something might come true. It is knowing by God’s word it will, in the future, be a reality.

Good passages that teach on these themes are:

Psalm 32

Psalm 37

Romans 4: 1-8

Hebrews 11:1 through 12:3

Mark 10: 46-52

John 1: 1-13

John 11

1 John 5: 1-5

1 Peter 2: 1-8

Suggested Reading:

“Can A Man Live Again?” - by John MacArthur

“Twelve Sermons On Faith” - by Charles H. Spurgeon

About Prayer

Inmates need to be taught about prayer. Prayer is communicating with the true God. You need to teach about prayer from the Bible, by personal example and by allowing saved inmates to participate in public prayer with guidelines. Two important questions to answer are: “Who can pray?” and “How are we to pray?”

WHO CAN PRAY? In a very real sense, evangelism (that is giving the Biblical gospel of Jesus Christ) is part of the answer to this question. Ultimately, only those that are God’s own adopted children, or those who are on their way to becoming God’s adopted children, can truly communicate with Him. One reason men and women need regeneration and salvation is because without them they are out of communication with God. They are yet spiritually dead in their trespasses and sin. The Scripture is very clear on this when it says; “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do (practice) evil.” (Psalm 32:15,16 and 1 Peter 3:12). Isaiah 59: 1,2 says: “Behold, the LORD’S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.”

As you teach this you need to be careful not to suggest or give off any thought that Christians look down on others that aren’t in their “elite” or “inside” group. God desires all men to know Him. 1 Timothy 2:3,4 speaks about “God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” It is always God that initiates a relationship with a lost sinner. God seeks men before they ever seek Him. The fact that some do sincerely want to know God in truth (appear to be seeking Him) is the best evidence God is already at work seeking them to be brought into His family. Acts 8:26-39, 10:23-45 and 16:13-15 are all examples of God’s further work in the lives of persons to whom He gave His saving truth. They were people that truly were open and seeking Him and He gave them the information and motivation they needed to be saved.

So you can, on biblical authority, tell unsaved inmates that God will respond to them and help them, if the true desire of their heart is to know Him. He will show them the truth of Jesus Christ, His sacrifice for them, and He will help them to repent and truly commit themselves to Him in faith. Once a right relationship with God through Jesus alone is established, they will have boldness and access to God, and to the throne of His grace in prayer.

If you ever give an unsaved inmate the idea that they can talk to God while they still cling to their sin and really have no desire to follow His ways, you dishonor the Bible and do a great disservice to that inmate. Don’t give inmates the impression they can talk to God and ask for His blessing while they have no concern for their own sinfulness before Him.

Good passages for teaching these truths are:

Psalm 51

Psalm 84

Daniel 9: 3-19

Matthew 6: 1-15

John 17

Acts 17: 16-34

Ephesians 1: 15-23

Ephesians 3: 14-21

1 Tim. 2: 1-10

Suggested Reading:

“Jesus Teaches On Prayer” - by Ray Stedman

About Prayer

HOW TO PRAY? Inmates need biblical instruction on what prayer should and should not include. Many truly ask only to “consume it upon” their “own lusts.” They need to see that this is not consistent with biblical teaching. Therefore, it is against the will of God.

An inmate who appears to respond to your gospel message, is often tempted to think, “I’m on God’s side now, ... I’m trying You out God, so give me what I want, and give it to me now!” They may even go so far as to “pray” something like “If You’re really real, prove it to me by doing this!” These statements thought of as prayer do not reflect or correspond to a repentant attitude. Inmates must sense God’s grace and their privilege in prayer. Hence we have included a chart “Principles In Prayer,” below.

Suggested Reading:

“Sense And Nonsense About Prayer” - by Lehman Strauss

“Praying Jesus’ Way” - by Curtis Mitchell

PRINCIPLES IN PRAYER

If you want to “nail down” what prayer should be, use T. A. C. S.

T A C S

Always remember Who GOD is (Holy)	<u>T</u> hanksgiving <u>A</u> doration	Praise Matthew 6: 9,10 Daniel 9: 4
----- And who you are on your own - apart from God’s grace (nothing). “You stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear” (Rom. 11:20)	<u>C</u> onfession	Penitence Matthew 6: 12 Daniel 9: 5-15
Specific Requests	<u>S</u> upplications	Petition Matthew 6: 11, 13 Daniel 9: 16-19

About Satan

Most inmates know something about Satan, or think they do. We know from Scripture that he would have them not really understand who he is, how he operates and that he is a defeated enemy. Many inmates are confused because of exposure to unbiblical theology on this subject. Satan, although powerful, is not sovereign, God is. He cannot do whatever he wants. All he does is under the permission of God. For the true believer in Christ he is truly a defeated foe, he has according to Hebrews 2:14 been “rendered inoperative” (katargeo, translated “destroy” in AV, NKJV - to reduce to inactivity) in the believers life. The Christian life is not a constant process of cursing, binding, outsmarting and challenging the devil - it is saying yes to the indwelling Holy Spirit.

WHO HE IS: You need to explain that Satan is a real personality, yet very, very, different from the “devil” in red with horns and a pitchfork as is popularly depicted in advertizing. You should explain his origin as Lucifer, an angel of God. You should teach them about his rebellion and fall through pride. You should also carefully and biblically explain his leadership and rule over evil spiritual forces (fallen angels - demons) and his ultimate end.

Good passages that teach on these themes are:

Isaiah 14: 12-17

Ezekiel 28: 12-19

Mark 5: 1-20

Luke 10:18

Hebrews 2: 9-18

1 John 4: 4b; 5:18,19

2 Corinthians 4: 3,4; 11: 3,4; 11: 13-15

Revelation 12: 3-4; 12: 9-12; 20:1-10

HOW HE WORKS: The key is deception, cunning craftiness. The inmates need to learn that they have been deceived by the Master Deceiver through his tool, the world system - which is temporarily under his control. You need to teach them that his devices through the system of unbelief in the world’s society appeal to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. It is good to show them how Satan will even quote Scripture (out of context) to accomplish his devastating goals. Man-made false religion and human philosophies are also some of his powerful tools, so inmates need to be on guard against them.

Inmates need to realize their complete inadequacy and helplessness, apart from Christ, in dealing with the Wicked One. They also need to understand that they are in one of his strongholds, the jail system, and that only God through Christ in the Bible, is strong enough to invade the darkness of thinking in jail or prison and disrupt Satan’s schemes.

Suggested Reading:

“Satan” - by Lewis Sperry Chafer

“Holy War” - by John Bunyan

“Unmasking The Devil” - by Dr. Richard L. Mayhue (available from Aurora)

You must not assume that the inmates know Who the Holy Spirit is. Remember, many inmates have been bombarded with cultic and unbiblical teaching. Strongly stress that He is God! He is fully God, the third Person of the Godhead, the Tri-Unity. Acts 5:3,4 and 2 Corinthians 1:21 correspond with 1 John 2:27. See also John 14:26. These are good passages from which you can stress the full Deity of the Holy Spirit.

WHAT HE DOES: The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to convict and convince the lost of their need of Jesus Christ. This should be stressed and explained. Believers involved in evangelistic efforts must never get ahead of Him. Believers in Christ should not lead others in the “sinners prayer” of repentance UNTIL He has thoroughly done His work of preparation and conviction.

You should enforce your teaching on the authority of the Bible by going to great lengths to explain the Holy Spirit’s authorship of Scripture, and also His unique ministry of opening it to the understanding of the seeking heart and mind.

The Holy Spirit’s authorship of the “new birth” or “birth from above” also needs to be understood by the inmates, as many do not understand how new life in Christ is actually given to a believer (Titus 3:4-7).

Good passages to teach on these things are:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| John 3:1-8 | John 14:16-18, 23-26 | John 15:26 |
| John 16:7-15 | 1 Corinthians 2:4-14 | 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14 |
| 2 Peter 1:19-21 | Hebrews 3:7-19 | |

HOW HE HELPS CHRISTIANS: The work of the Holy Spirit, especially in relation to believers, needs to be established. It will both encourage, enlighten and empower Christian inmates.

To encourage them, you should teach about His work of sealing and guaranteeing to the true believer in Christ, ultimate salvation (Ephesians 1:12-14; Romans 8:14-17; 1 John 3:24 and 4:13). You should always stress the Spirit’s relationship to the written word and His unique ability to open it to the believer, teaching them new truths that comfort and guide.

Tied closely to these truths is the fact that He is the One who produces a practical holiness in their life, sanctifying them as they become fuller and fuller of His word and walk in obedient faith to it. Christian inmates really need to know that they can’t live the Christian life apart from submission to the Holy Spirit’s control through the word. Often an inmate spends years in frustration and defeat because he has not learned to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:8 explains the reason the Spirit came to indwell all believers is to empower them to proclaim Christ.

Good passages to teach these truths are:

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Romans 8 | 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:15-20 | 1 Corinthians 3:13-18 |
| Galatians 5:16-26 | Ephesians 5:15-21 compared with Colossians 3:16,17 | |

It is in the doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit that professing born again believers often have the greatest divergence. This is of particular intensity within the correctional setting and ministries that are committed to helping inmates live the Christian life. Therefore, a companion study that is consistent with our doctrinal statement (#11) is offered (pages 34-37). This study titled “**The Manifestation of The Holy Spirit,**” is only meant to bring biblical light on some of the issues, not to offend or divide.

The Manifestation of The Holy Spirit

This study was written with much prayer. It is our prayer that the result in the lives of those who read this will be better biblical understanding, and specifically for true believers: unity, edification (strengthening) and true love. We have asked the Lord for His grace in granting an ability to “speak the truth in love.”

When and where this study shows errors in positions held by some, our only desire is to show in a loving way, a better way. It is not the intention of the writer to put anybody down. The motivation for what follows is to honor Christ by honoring His word. It is also to see the best in the lives of those who read this, that they would realize Christ’s richest blessings. The Holy Spirit’s work in the life of a New Testament believer is to make them more Christ-like. Aurora Ministries wants every true believer in Christ to realize what they have in loving Christ and then to allow those spiritual blessings to flow out in a manifestation of grace, to the glory of God.

The writer of this study is thankful that you, the reader can read this privately. In fact, he even encourages that. At the same time it is our prayer that the presence of the Holy Spirit and His word would be remembered. Please allow Him to guide you into the truth.

Three BASIC FACTS are pre-supposed:

1. That the reader has the Bible as their final authority. It is God’s word. We cannot sit in judgement of it, rather - the word judges us (see Hebrews 4:12,13). Our desire should be that what we believe, and how we therefore live and act, agree with Scriptural teachings.
2. That the reader is fully persuaded that the Holy Spirit is in fact, God - The Author of Life, the Third Person of the Godhead (Tri-Unity).
3. That you, the reader, as a truly Spirit-born believer in Christ, possess a willingness to love the brethren who love the true God, in order that He alone may be glorified.

To begin, the word “baptism” must be explained and understood. This word is a transliteration (really an anglicanization) of the Greek word “baptidzo,” which came from the root Greek word “bapto.” Bapto in ancient Koine (common, everyday) Greek meant “to dip, place into, or identify with.” When the New Testament speaks of being baptized by, or with the Holy Spirit, the emphasis is on His work of placing the believer into Christ. No believer in Christ is ever put into the Spirit, as if He were the end or goal of the operation. Instead, it is the other way around. According to 1 Cor. 12:13 “by one Spirit we (believers in Christ) were all baptized into one body (which is Christ’s).” We weren’t baptized into the Holy Spirit, He baptized us into Christ! You must know that the Holy Spirit does not primarily speak about Himself. His mission is to testify of and to Christ - see John 14:26, John 15:26 and John 16:13-15.

Being born of the Spirit, born again, placed into Christ and baptized by the Spirit, are all the same thing. A person cannot be saved and at the same time not placed into (or baptized into) Christ by the Holy Spirit’s work. Titus 3:5 states it clearly: “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His (God our Savior’s) mercy He saved us, through the washing or regeneration (new birth) and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” When any individual is truly saved, God through His supernatural operation places them in Christ. This operation is neither physical nor ceremonial. It is the Spirit’s work of baptizing them into Christ and identifying them with Christ. Carefully read Colossians 2:8-14. This passage gives you timely insight when, in verse 10 it says: “you are complete in Him (in the context “Him” refers to Christ).” That means just what it says, the believer does not need anything more. We who have Christ have everything! We have all of the Holy Spirit we will ever need. We simply must learn to appropriate His power already resident within us. We need to learn to use what we already have. We don’t need to seek for, or get more of the Holy Spirit.

The Christian life can be summarized as follows: understanding more and more the powerful treasure the believer already has (because of Christ's reality in the life through the presence of the Holy Spirit) and learning to use that power in a practical way so that Christ is magnified more and more through the life they live.

The Holy Spirit not only evangelizes, He also edifies (builds up and strengthens). The Christian is told to "walk after" the Spirit, and to walk "in" the Spirit (Romans 8:4 and Galatians 5:16). The believer is also told not to "grieve" (distress or make sad) the Spirit, and not to "quench," or extinguish His leading (see Ephesians 4:30 and 1 Thessalonians 5:19). It is one thing to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, which means to have the Spirit of Christ living within and be saved, and quite another thing to be filled with the Spirit. Spirit filled people must first be saved in order that they may be filled. To be filled with the Spirit is to be so controlled by Him that His presence is so evident, so obvious in one's behavior, that Jesus Christ and His character is truly magnified to all around.

Every true Christian has the Holy Spirit (see Romans 8:9, 14-16; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 John 3:24; 1 John 4:13 and Acts 11:12-18). But, every true Christian is not always walking in obedience and yielding to His control. In practice many Christians are temporarily acting in the flesh, which means in practice they are not reflecting the power and presence of Christ (through His Spirit) but instead are reflecting the depravity of their yet unredeemed flesh. The filling of the Holy Spirit is an issue of the believer's obedience to His leading so that He can magnify Christ through their life. Adelaide Pollard, the hymn writer, was doctrinally correct when she wrote "Have thine own way Lord, have Thine own way, -- Hold o'er my being absolute sway, -- Fill with Thy Spirit, till all shall see, Christ only, always, living in me."

Mark 16:20 says, "and they (the Apostles) went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs." What "signs?" The Holy Spirit given word is "semeion" which means, "a miracle, wonder, token or sign." The first century Apostles were given power to be a conduit of God's miracles in order that their words or messages about Christ would be confirmed or established. One example of this is the miraculous healing wrought through the Apostle Peter in Acts 3:1-8. The reason for this historic miracle is clear from the text. It was to get the attention and wonderment of the crowd (Acts 3:9-11) so that Peter could give them the brand new message of the Christ, who was Jesus (Acts 3:12; 4:4). Later, the Apostle Paul, in defending his true Apostleship and authority in 2 Corinthians 12:12, said: "Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs (semeion) and wonders and mighty deeds." These miracle signs done by the Apostles were also, on occasion, done by some in the first century church. The Holy Spirit was the Source of these signs to confirm the message they gave.

Acts 2:4-11 records that as a result of the filling, not baptism, of the Holy Spirit the sign of tongues (which word in the Bible always means known human languages) was manifested. The attention and wonder of the crowd was caught, the sermon was powerfully preached, and as a result of the faith He created, the Holy Spirit baptized or placed into Christ, 3,000 new souls (Acts 2:14-41). There is a pattern here in regards to these sign gifts. But the filling of the Holy Spirit was not solely related to or limited to them.

In Acts chapter 6 we are introduced to a Christian who was "full of ...the Holy Spirit," named Stephen (see Acts 6:5). A careful searching of the record in Acts never once mentions that Stephen ever spoke in other languages, or "tongues." Yet, Acts 6:8 tells us that as a result of the Holy Spirit's filling in his life, he did "great wonders and signs among the people." But later, filled with the Spirit, he boldly preached Christ.

Three times in the book of Acts, supernatural speaking with languages (tongues) did accompany the initial gift of the Holy Spirit. In all three occasions, there is a special reason why. The first occasion is with the 120 disciples gathered in the upper room (Acts 2:4). Here, it was an initial sign pointing to something new, namely, the church. The next incident was at the conversion of the Gentile Cornelius, in Acts 10:44-48. This is explained in Acts 11:1-18 as a unifying sign between Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus as the Christ. It unified the church as one church.

The initial 120 Jewish believers in the upper room, could not feel superior to these “Gentiles” who also manifested the Holy Spirit’s enabling in the same way He did with them. Please notice, in Acts 11:15, 17, the clear emphasis is that these Gentiles received the same Holy Spirit as the original 120, and He was manifested in the same way as He was to the Jewish believers.

The third occasion is in Acts chapter 19, with the full and true conversion of some of John the Baptist’s disciples. Paul’s question to them in Acts 19:2 is crucial. Accurately translated it should read, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit, having (not since, as if a time gap should exist) truly believed?” Their answer was they didn’t even know the full truth about Christ, how could they believe? They, as learners from John the Baptist, only knew that Christ was coming and that they needed to be ready for Him and repent. After a proper presentation of Christ and His work was given to them, true conversion took place and they then supernaturally spoke in languages, again tying them into the original manifestation of the Holy Spirit (on Pentecost) so as to keep them all, in their own minds, equal members of Christ. This served to unite the universal first century church in the new faith.

I Corinthians 13:8 says, “knowledge” and “prophecies” (or preaching) which are gifts of the Holy Spirit, will “fail” or “vanish away” (in the original language it is the same word in both places, literally, “rendered useless by something acting on it”). When will those two gifts of the Holy Spirit be rendered useless? When according to verse 10, “that which is perfect has come.”

The best interpretation here of “that which is perfect” is the second coming of Jesus Christ, see 1 Cor. 13:12. Importantly, 1 Corinthians 13:8 uses a completely different word for the end of tongues (supernaturally spoken human languages). Verse 8 says tongues, a “sign” gift shall simply “cease.” This word “cease” means to stop all by itself, with nothing deliberately acting on it. Therefore, in the context of 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 we must allow the end of tongues to be a different time than the end of knowledge and preaching (prophecies). Verses 9 and 10 speak about the doing away with knowledge and prophesying, not about tongues which cease all on their own. Verse 10 also says that the doing away of knowledge and preaching (as gifts) will be when that which is perfect, i.e. Christ, is come.

The logical question is then, when do tongues as a supernatural gift of the Holy Spirit, “cease?” The best interpretation is they ceased with the other special sign gifts when the word of the gospel was confirmed with the Apostles. Apparently, after the special signs confirmed the new message of Christ, they were no longer a part of the Spirit’s program. Note this: the Apostle Paul manifested the “sign gift” of healing (see Acts 28:8). Yet, when he had a “thorn in the flesh” a decade or so later, he couldn’t heal himself and neither could anybody else (see 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 and Galatians 4:15). Toward the end of his ministry, Paul also wrote that he left Trophimus sick in Miletus, (see 2 Timothy 4:20). The only explanation is that by that time the sign gift of healing must have passed away.

But some, even many, have taught and are actively teaching inmates that unless someone speaks in a special “unknown” language, a “prayer language” which they call the gift of tongues, that: (a.) you have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which would mean you are not saved; or that (b.) you have not yet been filled with the Holy Spirit. Now, beloved Christian reader, there is just no way these statement can square up with Scripture. In the first place, “tongues” in the Bible always means a known human language, albeit supernaturally learned. The phrase “unknown tongue” is not truly biblical, as “*unknown*” is always *italicized*, which means it was added.

The early Corinthian believers in Christ came out of a background of idolatry. Part of their former pagan practices included what was called “talking to the gods,” in a private language of ecstasy. Somehow they got this cultural pagan practice mixed up with the true spiritual sign gift of speaking human languages without having learned them. Paul alluded to this former practice in 1 Corinthians 13:1 when he mentioned “tongues of angels,” “sounding brass” and “clanging cymbals.” These were all part of the ancient pagan worship of Dionysius, the god of wine.

We have shown that the Bible clearly teaches that all believers in Christ are baptized by the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 12:13), yet 1 Corinthians 12:28 indicates that all Christians do not have the same spiritual gifts. Verses 29,30 go on to literally say: “Not all are apostles? Not all prophets? Not all teachers? Not all powers (hence workers of miracles)? Not all gifts of healing? Not all speak with tongues? Not all interpret?” All of these questions expect a “no, they don’t” answer. Even in the early apostolic era church, tongues or languages were not the only manifestation of the filling of the Holy Spirit. Acts 4:8; 4:31; 6:3,5,10; 7:55,56; 9:17-22; 11:22-24 and 13:52 - all indicate the filling of the Holy Spirit yet without languages, or tongues. Bold preaching, faith and joy are manifestations of His filling also. To push tongues (really languages) as the only evidence of having the Spirit or of being filled with the Holy Spirit is just not biblical.

Then what is going on today? What are people doing when they speak in unintelligible sounds? We confess we do not have all the answers, but we will offer three possibilities.

First, and most distressing, some that are not even saved, who do not confess the unique Lordship of Christ and the completeness of His death to redeem them are copying what is popular. They might be doing this to feel a part of what’s happening, part of what they think God is doing, when in reality, they don’t even truly know Him. The Christ denying cults are practicing this phenomenon.

Second, some true believers are pressured into practicing this phenomenon because they want acceptance and recognition from the group they have identified with.

Third, there are some true believers who are genuine in their active love for Christ, and want to worship Him in a real act of devotion. At the same time they have been raised in or exposed to fellowships where unintelligible sounds are called “speaking in tongues” and the practice is part of the regular warp and woof of the group activity. In a true desire to praise God from their heart, they succumb to their surroundings and practice this kind of thing.

I know some dear brethren that are in this third category. I am quick to say whereas this is not the scriptural spiritual gift of languages, they themselves are well meaning. These same people on other occasions in my presence have manifested the filling of the Holy Spirit by speaking the word of God with boldness, showing that they were full of faith and by demonstrating a complete surrender to the revealed (biblical) will of God in a given situation. They are my brothers in Christ and fellow laborers in the gospel.

I am not (nor should any Bible believer) going to let a schism arise over our differences on this issue. I honestly believe the case needs to be stated, but not over stated - so that we polarize only around those who agree with our viewpoint and divide the body of Christ. To do so would be to deny and attempt to defeat the most powerful testimony the true church of Christ has --- love. Let us endeavor “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:3) Let us who know Him, magnify Him.

About the Church

WHO AND WHAT IT IS? Inmates seem to have a natural desire to be part of a group. The real human problem (which is even stronger among inmates than in general society) is that in our naturalness (our flesh) we want to choose the group and it's make-up. You must clearly explain the church is not a building or chapel part of a building, where one goes to worship. The church is all of God's chosen ones, objects of His grace and eternal plan, not man's. They come (according to Rev.5:9) from out of every clan and dialect and people group and race.

It is made up of all true believers in Christ. God, not any of us, chose and chooses who will be part of His forever family, Christ's body on earth to represent Him. There is no righteous racism or classism in His church. Christ paid for the sins of these true believers on the cross, He purchased them to be His church. Everyone who is part of the true church is connected by faith to the One who died for them. They are also connected to one another.

The church is one with its' Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. It is also one with itself (Ephesians 4:3-6). You must get individual Bible believing inmates involved with one another while they are incarcerated. If they truly are "in Christ" they ARE church members in the truest sense of the biblical teaching. A realization of their membership in Christ's body and participation with it while they are incarcerated will help them to get involved with their Christian brothers and sisters when they leave the facility.

Good passages that teach these themes:

1 Corinthians 1:1-3
 1 Corinthians 12:12,13
 Galatians 3:26-29
 Ephesians, chapters 1-3
 Philippians 1:1-6
 Colossians 1:1-8
 1 Thessalonians 1:1
 1 Peter 1:1,2
 2 Peter 1:1,2

Suggested Reading:

"The Nature Of The Church" - by Earl D. Radmacher

HOW IS IT TO OPERATE? Fellowship and growth around the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, with one another is of major importance. The believing inmate must get involved in the believing community - HE MUST PARTICIPATE. There is much talk among evangelicals about a "personal relationship with Jesus Christ" because it is an imperative for true salvation, but in practice we must never promote the idea of a "me and Jesus have our own special, different thing going." Often, as an outgrowth of their natural resistance to and resentment of authority, inmates oppose "organized" religion. But, when a relationship to Christ is right, a participation with the living organism of Christ on earth, the church, will also be a reality.

The basis for Christian conduct within the true church, and as an individual is love. Jails and prisons are places that promote and produce hate, disharmony, selfishness, fear and distrust. Into this darkness you and your volunteers come with a gospel of true love. This love comes from God through Christ. If He is enthroned in a life, His love in that life must reach out to others. Jesus Himself defines this kind of love, and you must point to His example. His love is not primarily an emotional love but a self-sacrificing service that seeks the best for those that don't deserve it and mostly have not yet responded to Him. He loved by giving His life without a pledge from us to love Him back in return, This is "agape" love, the love of God.

About the Church

HOW IS IT TO OPERATE? The church is to be under and submitted to it's Lord, Jesus Christ. He is the Head of the church. His rule is mediated by His word faithfully taught and modeled by fully qualified spiritual leaders, Their authority is His word, not personal whims. (See 1 Timothy 3:1-16; Titus 1:4-9; Hebrews 13:7,17)

Good passages to teach on these themes:

John 13
 John 17:6-26
 Acts 2:41-47
 Acts 4:23-37
 1 Corinthians 13
 Galatians 6:1,2,10
 Ephesians 4:1-17
 Ephesians 4:25 - 5:2
 Philippians 1:27
 Philippians 2:1-4
 Colossians 3:1-14
 Philemon
 1 Peter 3:8-12
 1 Peter 4:7-11
 1 John 2:7-11
 1 John 3:10-24
 1 John 4:7-10
 1 John 4:20 - 5:2

Suggested Reading:

“The Church, The Body Of Christ” - by John MacArthur

The Church - Gifts

Whereas some of us from different denominational and doctrinal backgrounds, disagree as to interpretation of spiritual gifts, we should be united on their purpose - to minister to the body (the whole church) for its edification (strengthening, building up). The clear teaching of the word of God is that no member can say his gift is more important than that of another, for that would divide the body. You must stress “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:3).

Study 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit are given by Him according to His will, not the recipients. Nothing any believer can do can earn or obtain for themselves a different gift than the one or ones which the Holy Spirit sovereignly designed for them (1 Corinthians 12:1-11). Church members (really all Christians) are to minister their gifts to one another to aide the body of Christ. The overall spiritual growth of any local body of believing inmates in turn adds to the corporate testimony of biblical Christianity in the institution.

About Reaching The Lost

The incarcerated men and or women in the jail facility you serve need to think about someone other than themselves. They need to see the needs of others. When an inmate is saved or professes to have been born again, they should be challenged and guided to be a witness to those around them (Acts 1:8, compared to Acts 8:4). They are to evangelize their fellow inmates.

HOW TO DO IT An inmate needs to be a living sermon or message before they can proclaim the saving message of Jesus Christ **WITH CREDIBILITY**. Though true in any setting for a Christian, this is even more intense in the jail and prison culture. When you challenge inmates to tell others about Jesus Christ **STRESS** personal purity before Him as a pre-requisite.

As a Christian reproducer, you need to do more than lead others to Christ. You must win them to the same level of dedication to our Lord as you have yourself. You must quite literally be involved in reproducing yourself spiritually in the lives of inmates, who in turn will reproduce that same thing in the lives of others. **OF COURSE THIS IS ONLY POSSIBLE BY THE POWER OF THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT**. He does it in us and through us. A great biblical example of this is Timothy. He was led to faith in Christ by Paul (1 Tim. 1:2 “a true son in the faith”). But Paul did not stop there with Timothy. He knew God’s way was for Timothy to win others, who in turn would win others (2 Tim.2:2). You are to be like a Paul to the inmates, and they are to be like Timothy to other inmates.

This principle of reproduction never really ends. It does not stop with a conversion to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. When an inmate truly receives Christ, your work has just begun! Evangelism and edification (building up a believer to be strong spiritually) are not two separate ministries, but part of each other.

You should be showing inmates how to present the gospel using Scripture. You also need to be prepared to help them in their task. It is not enough to tell them they should witness and testify to Christ’s salvation, you must teach them how to do it. Follow-up and follow through is the key if you would be a Paul-like minister. Chaplains can on occasion go with inmates to speak to other inmates. You also can have open discussion and dialogue on how to give the gospel and handle typical objections in the “service” or “Bible Study” format within the facility.

Good passages to teach from on these themes:

Isaiah 6:1-8

Ezekiel 33

Daniel 12:2,3

Jonah 4

Acts 1:8

2 Corinthians 3:1-5

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

2 Timothy 2:19-26

1 Peter 2:9-12

1 Peter 3:13-17

Suggested Reading:

“The Master Plan Of Evangelism” - by Kenneth Coleman

“How To Give Away Your Faith” - by Paul E. Little

“Say It With Love” - by Howard Hendricks

Note also page 48 of this Manual, “Suggested Passages for Evangelism”

About Death

You may be required - even many times to give a “death notification” to an inmate informing them that someone in their immediate family has died. Sometimes only the Chaplain is allowed to do this. In most cases in a jail setting the authorities look for someone from the “religious services” area to do it.

This situation is one the inmates greatly fear. Inmates take this news very hard, feeling isolated from the situation, helpless and even cheated. But God has put you there for such a time as this! The Lord has opened many doors through these death notification situations for faithful ministers of the gospel to effectively present God’s truth. A lot of inmates will ask “What happens when I die?” If you give the Biblical revelation clearly, the Holy Spirit will use it at the right time to show the inmate their need of salvation in Christ and to comfort them in the loss of their loved one. The October 2004 Chaplain’s Corner article offers more help with giving a death notification (see a copy at the end of this manual).

Again you need to remember that many inmates come from a religious background that teaches “another chance” after death. The natural mind of the non-religious, secular inmate thinks the same way. It is negligent to the point of potential eternal consequences if you do not gently correct this false thinking and religious teaching. Either the person that died had Christ or they didn’t. Physical death seals one’s eternal destiny and existence, heaven or hell; there is no other state after death and no way to change directions after the spirit leaves the body in physical death, see Luke 16:19-31 and Hebrews 9:26-28.

HEAVEN If you have done a proper job in teaching the inmates the attributes of God, the task of teaching to correct misconceptions about heaven is an easy transition. Often even professing Christian inmates have the world’s fairy tale view of heaven -- sitting on a cloud, playing a harp, turning into a quasi-angelic being, etc. In contrast, heaven is the place where the Lord in all His glory and majesty is. To be in heaven is, in the fullest sense of the meaning, to be with the Lord. You should present heaven in such a glorious way that the Holy Spirit will cause the inmates to be caught up in their minds and desirous in their hearts with the wonder of being there. In the Spirit’s power and by the word He inspired in the biblical texts, you should see the inmates starving for heaven.

Good passages to teach on these themes:

John 14:1
 Romans 8:18-25
 2 Corinthians 12:1-4
 Philippians 1:21-23
 1 Peter 1:3-9
 1 Peter 5:10
 Revelation 21:1-7, 9-27
 Revelation 22:1-5

Suggested Reading:

“Heaven: A Place, A City, A Home” - by E. M. Bounds
 “The Biblical Doctrine Of Heaven” - by Wilbur Smith
 “The Glory Of Heaven” - by John MacArthur

HELL It is a fact that Jesus taught much more about hell and judgement than He ever did about heaven. The Holy Spirit will warn someone who rejects His wooing. Someone once said “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink it.” Our answer should be something like “That may be true, but you can salt his oats.” Salting the oats is a sure way to make a horse thirsty. Teaching sinners about hell and judgement should

make them thirsty for the message of God's salvation. A word of caution and advice -- be careful how you present this truth about hell. It's awful. The Apostle John referred to it as "bitter" in Revelation 10:1-10. Pray about having God's loving attitude expressed in 2 Peter 3:9 and Ezekiel 33:11. He takes no pleasure in the death and eternal punishment of lost sinners. We have included an article written by John Thomas, a Southern Baptist from West Palm Beach, Florida, titled "That Hideous Doctrine."

THAT HIDEOUS DOCTRINE

That Hideous doctrine of hell is fading. How often have you thought of it in the past month? Does it make a difference in your concern for others, in your witness? Is it a constant and proper burden?

Most believers would have to say "No." But the individual is not the only one to blame. After all, the doctrine no longer gets its float at the church parade; it has become a museum piece at best, stored in the shadows of a far corner.

The reality of hell, however, demands we haul the monstrous thing out again and study it until it changes us. Ugly, garish, and familiar as it is, this doctrine will indeed have a daily, practical and personal effect on every believer who comes to terms with its force.

Our Lord's words on the subject are unnerving. In Luke 16, He tells us of a rich man who died and went to Hades (the abode of the unsaved dead between death and the final judgment). From that story and a few other revelatory facts, we can infer several characteristics of hell.

First, it's a place of great physical pain. The rich man's initial remark concludes with his most pressing concern: "I am in agony in this flame" (Luke 16:24). We do not make enough of this. We all have experienced pain to some degree. We know it can make a mockery of life's goals and beauties. Yet we do not seem to know pain as a hint of hell, a searing foretaste of what will befall those who do not know Christ, a grim reminder of what we will be separated from.

God does not leave us with simply the mute fact of hell's physical pain. He tells us how real people will respond to that pain. Our Lord is not being macabre; He is simply telling us the truth.

First, there will be "weeping" (Luke 13:28). Weeping is not something we get a grip on; it is something that grips us. Recall how you were affected when you last heard someone weep. Remember how you were moved with compassion to want to protect and restore that person? The Lord wants us to know and consider what an upsetting experience it is for the person in hell.

Another response will be "wailing" (Matt. 13:42). While weeping attracts our sympathy, wailing frightens and offends us. It is the pitiable bawl of a soul seeking escape, hurt beyond repair, eternally damaged. A wail is sound gone grotesque because of conclusions we can't live with.

A third response will be "gnashing of teeth" (Luke 13:28). Why? Perhaps because of anger and frustration. It may be a defense against crying out or an intense pause when one is too weary to cry any longer.

Hell has two other aspects, rarely considered, which are both curious and frightening. On Earth we take for granted two physical properties that help keep us physically, mentally and emotionally stable. The first is light; the second is solid, fixed surfaces. Oddly; these two dependables will not accommodate those in hell.

Hell is a place of darkness (Matt. 8:12). Imagine the person who has just entered hell -- a neighbor, relative, co-worker, friend. After a roar of physical pain blasts him, he spends his first moments wailing and gnashing his teeth. But after a season, he grows accustomed to the pain, not that it's become tolerable, but that his capacity for it has enlarged to comprehend it, yet not be consumed by it. Though he hurts, he is now able to think, and he instinctively looks about him. But as he looks, he sees only blackness.

In his past life he learned that if he looked long enough, a glow of light somewhere would yield definition to his surroundings. So he blinks and strains to focus his eyes, but his efforts yield only blackness. He turns and strains his eyes in another direction. He waits. He sees nothing but unyielding black ink. It clings to him, smothering and oppressing him.

Realizing that his darkness is not going to give way, he nervously begins to feel for something solid to get his bearings. He reaches out for walls or rocks or trees or chairs; he stretches his legs to feel the ground and touches nothing.

Hell is a "bottomless pit" (Rev. 20:1,2 KJV); however, the new occupant is slow to learn. In growing panic, he kicks his feet and waves his arms. He stretches and lunges. But he finds nothing.

After more feverish tries, he pauses from exhaustion, suspended in black. Suddenly, with a scream he kicks, twists and lunges until he is again too exhausted to move.

He hangs there, alone in his pain. Unable to touch a solid object or see a solitary thing, he begins to weep. His sobs choke through the darkness. They become weak, lost in hell's roar.

As time passes he begins to do what the rich man did – he again starts to think. His first thoughts are of hope. You see, he still thinks as he did on Earth, where he kept himself alive with hope. When things got bad, he always found a way out. If he felt pain, he took medicine. If he were hungry, he ate food. If he lost love, there was more love to be found. So he casts about in his mind for a plan to apply to the hope building in his chest.

Of course, he thinks, “Jesus, the God of love, can get me out of this.” He cries out with a surge. “Jesus, Jesus! You were right! Help me! Help me! Get me out of this! He waits, breathing hard with desperation. The sound of his voice slips into the darkness and is lost. He tries again. “I believe, Jesus! I believe now! Save me from this! Again the darkness smothers his words. Our sinner is not unique. Everyone in hell believes.

When he wearies of appeals, he does next what anyone would do – assesses his situation and attempts to adapt. But then it hits him – this is forever. Jesus made it very clear, He used the same words for “forever” to describe both heaven and hell. “Forever,” he thinks, and his mind labors through the blackness until he aches. “Forever?,” he whispers in wonder. The awful truth spreads before him like endless overlapping slats; “When I put in ten thousand centuries of time here, I will not have accomplished one thing. I will not have one second less to spend here.”

As the rich man pleaded for a cup of water, so, too, our new occupant entertains a similar ambition. In life he learned that even bad things could be tolerated if one could find temporary relief. Perhaps even hell, if one could rest from time to time, would be more tolerable.

He learns that “the smoke of (his) torment goes up forever and ever; and (he has) no rest day and night” (Rev. 14:11 NASB). No rest day and night – think of that. Thoughts of this happening to people we know, people like us, are too terrifying to entertain for long. The idea of allowing someone to endure such torture for eternity violates the sensibilities of even the most severe judge among us. We simply cannot bear it.

But our thought of hell will never be as unmanageable as its reality. We must take this doctrine of hell, therefore, and make sure we are practically affected by it.

A hard look at this doctrine should first change our view of sin. Most believers do not take sin as seriously as God does. We need to realize that in God's eyes, and in His actual plan, sin deserves eternal punishment in hell.

We can actually learn by comparison, to hate sin as God hates it. As the reality of hell violates and offends us, for example, so sin violates and offends God. As we cannot bear to look upon the horrors of hell, so God cannot bear to look on the horrors of sin. As hell revolts us to the point of hatred for it, so also God finds sin revolting. The comparison is not perfect, but it offers a start.

Second, the truth of hell should encourage our witness. Can we ever hear a sigh of weariness, see a moment of doubt, or feel pain without being reminded of that place? In all honesty, can we see any unbeliever, watch his petty human activities, realize what he has in store, and not be moved with compassion? It encourages us to witness in word and in deed.

That hideous doctrine may grip our souls in dark terror and make us weep, but let us be sure it also prompts us to holiness and compassion.

Written by – John Thomas,
West Palm Beach, Florida

This article was written to Christians to make them more compassionate toward those headed to a Christless eternity in hell. It was also written to help believers take their sanctification seriously, seeing how God hates sin. It has been used by God's Spirit to bring some unbelievers to true saving faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ.

When hearing about hell some inmates, like some in every place, will be tempted to resent God. This is especially true if someone who was in the “good” category according to their thinking, died without a visible relationship of faith in Christ.

You can deal effectively with this situation in the following manner: “seeing that all of us are headed towards the grave, the Scripture says ‘So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.’” (Ps 90:12). If we would do the right thing in relation to the problem of preparing for death, we would receive eternal life in Jesus

Christ. Furthermore, if we have Christ, we have God's promise of heaven wherein there will be NO SORROW (Revelation 21:4). If there is to be no sorrow at all in heaven, then the eternally saved believer will not miss someone when they get there, even someone they loved very much on earth who rejected Christ.

Always go back to the authority of God in His word when stressing these eternal truths.

Good passages to teach on these themes:

Isaiah 66:22-24

Matthew 13:24-30 with 13:36-43

Mark 9:42-48

Luke 3:7-17

Luke 20:9-18

John 5:17-29

John 15:1-6

Revelation 20:11-15

Suggested Reading:

“Countdown” - by G.B. Hardy

“The Final Destiny Of The Heathen” - by Richard Wolff

“The Biblical Doctrine Of Judgment” - by Leon Morris

About The Future

Even more than people on the outside, for obvious reasons, inmates spend a lot of time pondering the future. If you neglect to give them biblical instruction, you will be guilty of not properly equipping them for confrontation with false teaching about what's to come which they undoubtedly will, or have run into. In theological terms inmates, more than those in the outside population, are hungry to be taught eschatology. You need to make sure they get a thoroughly biblical understanding of the truths about the end times.

RESURRECTION(S) Jesus' resurrection guarantees a resurrection body for saved and unsaved alike. The redeemed, saved person will be given a glorified physical body in which they will inhabit heaven for all eternity future. Likewise, the unsaved will be given a resurrection body fitted for the eternal lake of fire (this body is called the second death). See John 5:28,29 and Revelation 20:6,14.

Aurora Ministries' understanding of Scripture sticking with a literal, historical-grammatical principle of interpretation is both Pre-Millennial and Pre-Tribulational.

Premillennialism is the position that teaches the physical second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in power and glory to earth for judgment, and then immediately following that judgment will be the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth for a literal 1,000 years. After the completion of the 1,000 years Satan, who will have been bound in the abyss (the bottomless pit), will be loosed for a season. The Lord will again judge the earth and then the resurrection of the unjustified souls' (the lost's) bodies, the resurrection unto damnation, the second death will occur. (Rev. 20:7-15)

Pretribulationalism teaches that the resurrection and glorification of the physical bodies of the dead in Christ and the catching up and away and glorification of the living bodies of true believers on earth (the rapture) spoken of in John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Philippians 3:20,21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10 and 1 John 3:1,2 is BEFORE the tribulation period of history spoken of in Matthew 24; Mark 13; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10 and Revelation chapters 6-18.

Good passages to teach from:

John 5:24 -29

Revelation 20:1-15

THE EARTHLY KINGDOM God's faithfulness is at stake when it comes to teaching about the future earthly kingdom. All the promises He made to national Israel about the glories of the restored Davidic Kingdom under Messiah's (Christ's) rule MUST be taught as literal and not spiritualized and transferred to the church, to the exclusion of Israel. If the kingdom is spiritualized and not taught as literal, God's nature is impugned. Most errors on biblical interpretation on who God's chosen people are begin with a wrong view of Israel's future. If God is a forfeiter of promises which He made to national Israel unconditionally, then we have insurmountable problems.

Good passages to teach from:

Acts 1:7,7

Romans, chapters 9-11

Ezekiel 34:11-31

Recommended Reading: "Israel My Glory" articles (magazine produced by Friends Of Israel Gospel Ministry)

THE ETERNAL STATE

Inmates long for a change and you can give them the good news that all things will not stay as they are. There will one day be a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness (2 Peter 3:11-12, Revelation 21:1). The idea of doing a long time in prison can be “gospelized” upon when they consider ETERNITY without Christ. That’s much worse than any life sentence here on earth in any place of incarceration.

Lessons on passages like Revelation 20 and 2 Peter 3:11-18 are important to motivate inmates toward God’s eternal program.

In the final state of the saved in heaven with the Lord, there will be no Satan, no sin, no sorrow, no sickness, no pain, no fear, no death, no darkness or night but simply a perfect eternal existence with the one true God.

Suggested Reading:

“The Millennial Kingdom” - by John F. Walvoord

“Things To Come” - by J. Dwight Pentecost

Suggested Passages For Evangelism

These texts are excellent for preaching and teaching about salvation from sin. Some require more knowledge of the entire doctrine of salvation as taught in the Bible than others. With each reference, a theme or biblical doctrine is highlighted.

<u>Old Testament Passages</u>	<u>Theme or Doctrine</u>
Genesis 22:1-14	The offering of Isaac, a type of Christ
Exodus 12:3-36 (compare 1 Cor.5:7)	The Passover
Leviticus 14:1-7, 17:1-16	The Day of Atonement
Ruth (the entire book)	Redemption (the Kinsman Redeemer)
Psalms 22	The cross of Christ our Substitute
Psalms 51	Confession and repentance
Isaiah 53	The Substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ
Jonah, especially chapter 3	Repentance
Zechariah 3:1-5	Being clothed with the righteousness of Christ

<u>New Testament Passages</u>	<u>Theme or Doctrine</u>
Mark 2:1-14	Jesus has authority to forgive sin
Mark 10:17-22	The rich young ruler - how not to be saved
Mark 10:46-52	Bartimaeus receives his sight (physical and spiritual)
Luke 16:19-31	The rich man and Lazarus, two men - two destinies
Luke 23:39-43	The repentant thief on the cross (an inmate under execution)
John 3	The new birth and John's testimony
John 4:5-45	Jesus and the woman at the well
John 5:17-29	The Deity of Jesus, Savior or Judge?
John 6:22-59	Jesus, the Bread of Life
John 9	Jesus and the man born blind
John 10:1-33	Jesus, the Good Shepherd and His true sheep
John 20:19-31	Believing Thomas
Acts 2:14-41	The Day of Pentecost, the birth of the NT church
Acts 8:26-40	The Ethiopian eunuch, how to be saved
Acts 10	The conversion of Cornelius
Acts 17:22-34	Paul's sermon to the Athenians
Philippians 3:1-14	Conversion, from religion to Christ alone

INSERT HERE



YOUR DEPARTMENT OR FACILITY

REGULATIONS

Chaplain's Corner - September 2001

Rev. Rich Hines

This month, I want us to consider a great verse, 1 Thessalonians 2:13. It says:

“For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.”

Let me give a little background. In the first chapter of 1 Thessalonians, Paul repeatedly thanked God for the fact of the evident salvation of the people to whom he wrote. Then, in the second chapter, Paul began a defense of the motives and character of those that brought the gospel to Thessalonica.

You remember from July's message (see “archives” if you missed it) that unbelieving religious Jews were dogging the heels of Paul's missionary party and trying their hardest to undo the work they began in every place they went.

In Thessalonica they attacked their character. One of the things the unbelievers said was that the gospel Paul and the others were preaching was of purely human invention.

That's why Paul wrote in 2:1

1 For you yourselves know brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. (*i.e. nothingness*)

THEN, IN VERSE 3 HE WROTE

3 For our exhortation (*the giving of the message*) did not come from error (*being led astray by human doctrine*) or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit (*which means trickery, as a human invented religion would operate*).

And he continued in v.4 -

4 But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.

In verses 2,8 and 9 this “gospel” Paul referred to is described as “the gospel of God.” It is God's message from His word.

So now in 2:13, he again stressed that the message they preached was not the word, the message or the ideas and invention of men.

In doing so, Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, laid down a key principle, one which many seem to have abandoned today, namely that CHRISTIANITY IS THE RELIGION OF THE BIBLE, the word of God, and that it must remain **a religion of the word**.

Christians are to know and live out the whole word of God. Each and every single word of the entire Bible is the perfect, inerrant and infallible word of an all holy, completely sovereign God.

It is not for little men to sit in judgment of it. We are not to take only what we like, what seems reasonable to us and call that inspired and then, throw away and disregard the rest. We cannot dismiss that which we may have a hard time swallowing or obeying. The Bible, which is the word of God, must ever remain the charter and daily road-map for our faith. Not the shifting winds of human opinion.

We live in a dangerous period of church history. A time in which many main line Protestant denominations and even independent, professed Bible churches, have turned and are turning away from the Scriptures as the **only guide** for life and worship.

Unbiblical traditions and pragmatic approaches to get the crowd out to the services often overrule the plain teaching of Scripture. Secular humanistic psychology has in many a church been redefined as Christian counseling, and often undercuts and opposes the clear teaching of chapter and verse of the Holy Bible.

As a result, many who call themselves the born-again followers of the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, are on the brink of a whole-sale sell out and compromise of the true message of how people are to be saved and live out the Christian life.

Let me give you an example of what I'm talking about.

This really happened. Recently, a woman called in to a radio counseling program, supposedly a Christian program. She said she'd been having repeated affairs with many men and couldn't seem to stop herself. The supposed Christian counselor told her she had become a sexual addict and that she needed to get into regular, long-term counseling, and that it would take maybe years of therapy to straighten her out.

That's tragic and unbiblical advice. Think about it. Jesus simply told the woman taken in the act of adultery in Jn.8:11 "**go (present imperative) and sin (present imperative) no more.**" (present tense imperative verbs are commands to keep on obeying).

Similarly, Christ ordered a man that was the prisoner of the sin of greed, who was in the very act of overcharging people on their taxes so that he could pocket the difference, to simply and completely cease what he was doing on the spot and to now continually follow Him. And Matt.9:9 simply says, "So he arose (aorist active) and followed Him." The verb tense of "arose" in that verse, means he did it immediately, on the spot!

In Rev.2:21-23, in dealing with sexual immorality and the woman that was teaching the church at Thyatira that it was all-right to participate in it, Jesus literally said:

"And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she continually does not want to repent. Indeed I am casting her into a bed (*of sickness may be implied*) and those who are continuing to commit adultery (present tense verb- meaning repeatedly) with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death..."

(*meaning her spiritual children, that is those that thought like she did, that it is OK for those that are identified as His church to live in sexual impurity*)

“... I will kill her children with death and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the hearts and I will give to each one of you according to your works.”

The Christian counselor in such cases as the radio program I told you about, should have explained these verses or ones like them, to the woman and urged her to immediate repentance, warning her of possible immediate judgment from the Lord Jesus should she not repent.

The tragedy of it widens as one realizes the sinning woman called in to that radio program for help. She was looking for a way out of her sin, and by telling her it would simply take years of therapy to get straightened out, he was telling her there really was no immediate help from the Lord, from Christianity, from her professed faith - a faith he was there, on the radio, - to represent! I beg you Chaplain, do not do like this radio counselor did.

The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ offers immediate power to turn from sin to serve God.

Remember 1 Thessalonians 1:9? This verse describes the pagan idol worshipping Thessalonians, who were involved in all kinds of sexual immorality in the worship of Dionysius and the Cabiri, the pagan gods of ancient Thessalonica. Idols whose very images were pornographic. It says these very people “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.”

They did so because the gospel had an attendant power to enable them to stop sinning immediately.

1 Thessalonians 1:5

“...our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit...”

The true gospel has the same power over sin today. We don't need years of therapy to get over our sinful practices. By His Spirit, Jesus can take them away right now!

But the cumulative result of practices such as I just described with the man on the radio, where no real immediate help from the Bible is offered, places us who call ourselves born-again followers of Jesus Christ as our personal Savior as I said before, on the brink of a wholesale sell-out and compromise of the true message of salvation.

Jesus summed up the message in Mark 1:15 “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel.” That gospel, or good news for sinners, is that sin is put to death through His death and resurrection.

With this in mind there is something very, very important to see in 1 Thessalonians 2:13

In this verse Paul said he and the others (Silas and Timothy) continually, even uninterruptedly, thanked God for the ministry they had with the Thessalonians, and specifically for the way they received the gospel message, which is the word of God. Thank God for inmates that receive your Biblical teaching as the very word of God!

Listen again to the inspired Apostle:

13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe (present participle - "who are believing").

O, pray with me that the majority of America's preachers and Chaplains would return to giving out **only** the word of God, and that the people they minister to would do more than tolerate it, that instead, they would hunger and thirst for it. That they would love and obey the Bible as God gave it!

One Biblical evidence of a true spiritual new birth is such a love and hunger for the word. John 10:26-28 describes the difference between saved men and those with only human religion. There Jesus said to the religious leadership of the Jews, (*those with a man-made tradition that overruled Scripture*) :

26 ... you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.

27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand."

The true sheep hear Jesus' words. The word of His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, is also the entire Bible. The Holy Spirit is the true author of every Bible word. Unsaved people, that God didn't call His sheep in eternity past, don't love the word of God. But each and every one that God by His great grace intends to save, will someday respond to solid Bible teaching.

Those that have been saved, continue in the word. It is their spiritual food, and they can't do well without it!

With this scripture from John 10 on his mind, the great Bible preacher, A.W. Tozer, prayed when he was ordained in 1920 the following words. "Make my voice so like Thine own that even the sick sheep will recognize it and follow Thee." We need correctional Chaplains with that same heart commitment to the word of God.

As Paul and his fellow-missionaries thought back on how their ministry was received at Thessalonica, they realized the response those people gave the word of God, proved they were in fact, some of God's true elect sheep. So he wrote that they thanked "God without ceasing."

Are you like Paul and his companions, giving the inmates a solid, well studied, well interpreted Bible teaching? Are your inmate listeners today like the saved Thessalonians, who received and welcomed Bible teaching as the true word of God?

Notice those two words, "received" and "welcomed." **Received** here means to receive from another alongside of you. And **welcomed** here means to take and accept with approval. "Received" focuses on the reception of the content of the gospel teaching, whereas "welcomed" pictures the inner joy and favor in realizing the value of what has been accepted.

There's a lesson in those two words. We are to believe what God says is so and act upon it first, then, later we'll feel good about it.

In Matt.28:19,20 Jesus taught that in disciple making, people who get saved are to be taught to observe, that means - to obey, all that He taught. That means among other things that with the exception of unrepentant adultery and the later teaching in 1 Cor.7 about the desertion of an unbelieving spouse because they can't stand your devotion to Christ, disciples are not to seek divorces.

If I'm in a bad marriage, I may not like that teaching, but if I honor God, and obey that which the Lord has taught, I'll feel good about obeying Him eventually! After all God, not we ourselves, knows best! The Scripture says "trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding!" (Proverbs 3:5)

Now listen again to this verse:

13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

Here, Paul said they heard the word of God from himself, Silas and Timothy. Again, let me stress that these servants of God gave His word not their own personal opinions. Sometimes they used Old Testament written prophecy and principle. Acts 17:2 says in Thessalonica, Paul reasoned or dialogued with the people from the written Old Testament Scriptures. There were other times he and the others simply quoted Jesus, and gave His teaching before it had been written down. In either case the people knew what they were hearing was in fact the word of God, not the word of men.

Today, no one truly speaks God's message apart from the written Old and New Testaments. Which as Jude 3 says, is the body of truth to be believed, **the objective faith**, which was "once for all delivered to the saints."

In closing this verse, Paul said this word of God, not human philosophy or opinion "also effectively works in you who believe." The word of God under the illuminating and empowering work of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is the Christians resident Truth Teacher, not only powerfully impresses and blesses at the time of the reception of the gospel, it also continues to work, to energize the new life, from the inside out.

What a wonderful truth!

True Christianity, the religion of the word, continues to operate powerfully in ongoing grace in the life of those that literally continue to believe! Faith comes by hearing and hearing by a Biblical speech about Jesus Christ!

Make sure Chaplain, you are continuing to give the inmates only the clear teaching of God's word. God says you are responsible to do just that. We at Aurora want to help you give out the word of God.

Rich Hines - Minister To Chaplains

Chaplain's Corner - July 2000

Rev. Rich Hines

For the next three or four Chaplain's Corner messages I want to speak to you correctional Chaplains from the letter of Paul to Philemon about how to disciple a Christian inmate.

Apart from the general call for all believers in Christ to proclaim the gospel message to society (Matt. 28: 19,20 / Acts 1:8), and the Christian Minister's call to evangelize (2Tim.4:5), what biblical basis do we have for a prison or jail chaplaincy?

We must do what we do because the Bible says to do it. If there is no biblical direction or example, it isn't Christian ministry. I believe the emphasis Luke put on the Lord's love for and redemptive ministry to the outcasts of society, and then how Paul worked with Onesimus, as we shall see in the letter to Philemon, are the New Testament reasons for a ministry to civil lawbreakers.

It is important that we understand the Holy Spirit inspired letter of Paul to Philemon in it's historical and ministry context. We need to understand Paul was imprisoned for preaching the gospel. His imprisonment was in the capital city of the Empire, Rome. He was writing a man named Philemon, who according to verse 19, he had led to faith in Christ. Philemon lived in the city of Closse, near the eastern end of the Empire.

He was writing Philemon to secure the forgiveness of his run away slave, a man that had also stolen something of value from him. The run away slave's name was Onesimus. After his theft and departure from Colosse, he ended up in Rome as a fugitive. There, according to verses 10, 11 he had also been brought to spiritual life in Christ by God's Spirit through Paul's ministry - while Paul was chained to a Roman Praetorian Guard.

Rarely will any of us as a correctional Chaplain even know both the criminal and their victim, much less, have been used to lead both to true faith in Christ. Yet, the way Paul worked with Onesimus as a new convert, does give us a pattern for a discipleship ministry in the life of those that have broken the law, and then, come to faith in Christ.

The letter to Philemon, just 25 verses in our Bible, has 3 parts:

- 1) verses 1-7 An **introduction**, stressing Paul's thankfulness for Philemon's genuine faith in Christ.
- 2) verses 8-21 Paul's **request** to Philemon on behalf of Onesimus.
- 3) verses 22-25 A **conclusion**, with instructions, greetings and a blessing.

For the next three Chaplain's Corner messages, I want us to consider Paul's request in verses 8-21.

- 8 Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting,
- 9 yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you - being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ -
- 10 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains,
- 11 who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.
- 12 I am sending him back. * You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart,
- 13 whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel.
- 14 But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

15 For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever,
16 no longer as a slave but more that a slave - a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.
17 If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me.
18 But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account.
19 I, Paul, am writing with my own hand, I will repay - not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides.
20 Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord.
21 Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.
* verse 12 - NU text reads: "I am sending him back to you in person, that is, my own heart."

In discipleship, all new believers need to be taught about God, they need to be taught to study and memorize the word, to develop a prayer life, to properly relate to others in the true body of Christ, and to be a witness for their Lord. But beyond that, and in considering the special circumstances of an inmate that has professed saving faith in Christ as Lord, this letter to Philemon teaches they need to be shown God's love through your God-like love for them.

As we shall see in more detail in our next Chaplain's Corner; if at all possible, an offender needs to go back and make things right with those he or she has offended. I mention that now because it connects to this matter of love. You see, in Onesimus' case going back was extremely difficult. That's because in Roman law, the penalty for being a run away slave was death by crucifixion. Philemon could legally prosecute Onesimus and have him crucified. It didn't happen, but Onesimus didn't know for sure that it wouldn't happen. Some one said later, "Onesimus was probably the first man saved from a cross, by the cross."

I'm sure one of the things that encouraged the fugitive to follow Paul's instructions and turn himself in was the fact that he was sure Paul loved him and had his best eternal interests in mind. Look at verse 10 again, "... my son, Onesimus."

Although the primary meaning of those words is that Paul had begotten Onesimus in the faith, and that he was his spiritual son, comparison with verse 12 shows us Paul loved him as if he were a physical son. In verse 12 Paul called Onesimus, "my own heart." Paul was always loving new converts that way. 1 Thess.2:7,8 states that Paul and his partners in ministry loved the believers as if they were their own newborn children.

1 Thess.2:7,8

7 But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes (lit. 'warms with body heat') her own children.

8 So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives (or 'souls'), because you had become dear to us.

Loving the inmates doesn't ever mean condoning their sin, or helping them get away with crime. Proverbs 27:5,6 tell us:

Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend (one that loves) but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful

We are to mirror God's love, which always seeks the best for His child. When they are out of line, God's love goes after them and brings them back to the right way. So understand the first principle in discipling inmates we get from the letter to Philemon, is to love them to the point they know we do, and always seek their best. Ultimately their best means that they would have a pure and true walk with the Lord.

The second principle for discipling inmates from the letter to Philemon comes in verse 13.

13 whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel.

We are to **give the new believer ever increasing responsibility, or a ministry for the cause of the gospel**. One word of warning: this does not mean giving them a title or an office in some sort of inmate church, like “deacon” or “elder.”

Too often Chaplains have given certain inmates a church office. Biblically, they are not yet qualified for any New Testament office. The basic requirement for church leadership is that one be “above reproach” or “blameless” (1Tim.3:2). The word literally means “Having nothing for which he can be laid hold of, or arrested for.”

Obviously this is not talking about slanderous charges, but reality. Furthermore, 1 Tim.3:6 warns against a new believer being instated in office and then, becoming overcome with pride. Pride is one of the sins incarcerated men in particular struggle with the most. In the prison and jail culture any way to get “one up” on the other inmates is a great temptation.

But it is obvious from verse 13, that Paul had given Onesimus some responsibility, some tasks to perform, some service to render for the gospel cause. All God’s born again believers are saved to serve.

In commenting on the conversion of the pagan people of ancient Thessalonica, Paul wrote: “...you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.” (1Thess. 1.9)

In the Bible, all ministry for God is to be seen as an act of worship to God.

Giving the inmate you are discipling ever increasing ministry opportunities strengthens their new identity in Christ and helps them feel beneficial and truly useful for a good cause. Paul even used a play on words to describe Onesimus’ new life of service. Look at it in Philemon verse 11:

11 who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.

You see the name Onesimus literally means “profitable or useful, beneficial.” In his unsaved state Onesimus had been the opposite, he’d been “unprofitable” even hurtful and a liability, but after Christ came into his life, everything changed and he could actually be what his name meant, “profitable, helpful, beneficial and useful” for good.

Note those two little words **“but now”** in verse 11. They center on the new life found in Christ alone. Those two little words look back to the point of his conversion and new birth, and the sure aftermath. Someone has rightly said, “There had better be a ‘but now’ in your life, or else you are still in your sin.”

Before he knew Christ as his own Lord and Savior, Onesimus was incapable of not sinning, BUT AFTER Christ began to reign within, or as Paul wrote in the present tense from his own prison, BUT NOW, Onesimus with Christ as his Lord, was able for the very first time to do truly righteous works for the glory of God and the advance of His gospel.

In Christ, even the vilest offender is completely made new. Apart from Christ living as Lord in the life, no real change for good can happen. Criminals can't be rehabilitated but they can be re-created and regenerated and made new by the life transforming power of the resurrected Christ through Holy Spirit baptism into Christ at the point of their spiritual birth.

2 Cor. 5:17 says "...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new."

And just like Onesimus was valuable for ministry after Christ dwelt in him, so too is any truly saved inmate. The Chaplain must teach them this truth and give them opportunity to serve the gospel. Using God given wisdom and spending time with the inmate showing them how to perform a task that has spiritually beneficial effects, is very important.

This principle of **giving them a ministry responsibility** to perform coincides with the biblical teaching of sowing and reaping.

Saved inmates often get discouraged and feel bad because they are reaping bad things from the bad seeds of sin they have sowed in the past. They need to be taught that with Christ empowering them for good, they can now sow new seeds by the Holy Spirit, in Christ-centered service, and reap God's reward in the future.

So we are reminded from the word of God in discipling Christian criminal offenders to: 1) Love them as our own dear children to the point they are assured of that love and 2) Get them involved in service for the furtherance of the gospel of Christ.

In our next Chaplain's Corner we'll see more from Philemon 11 - 16 on how correctional Chaplains must also teach believing inmates to seek to make restitution and or a reconciliation with those they have wronged and, how they must be given a new identity.

Rich Hines - Minister To Chaplains

Chaplain's Corner - October 2000

Rev. Rich Hines

Last month I began speaking to you Correctional Chaplains from Paul's letter to Philemon on principles for discipling born-again inmates. If you just signed on you can go back and get the text from July, 2000 - to see where we've been.

Beyond the basics of teaching a new believer about God's true nature, how to study and memorize the word, how to develop a prayer life, how to properly relate to others in the true body of Christ, and to be a witness for their Lord, we saw last month from the word of God, two important things. Paul called Onesimus, who was like many of the inmates you should be discipling in the faith, "my son" in verse 10, and "my own heart" in verse 12.

Paul truly loved this man, and in the same way, every Chaplain should love the inmate they are helping to follow Christ. Then, in verse 13, Paul told Philemon that Onesimus was now one who ministered to help him "in the gospel." From this, we saw the importance of giving Christian inmates a service or ministry to perform.

This month, I want to show you how Paul also taught Onesimus to seek to make restitution and reconciliation with Philemon, the one he had wronged. This is seen in Philemon verse 12

12 I am sending him back. *

* verse 12 - NU text reads: "I am sending him back to you in person,"

Put in other words, Paul taught the fugitive Onesimus to turn himself in to the man he had wronged. In terms of inmate culture, this is huge. But this also agrees with the teaching of other Scripture.

For example: when the prodigal son repented, he had to return to his father and say he was wrong.

"I will arise and go to my father and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven (*a Jewish way of referring to God*) and before you' " Luke 15:18 (*verses 20,21 show us he followed through and did it*).

When the criminal boss of the extortion ring of Publicans in Jericho, Zacchaeus, was converted he literally said to Jesus:

"Lord, I do here and now give half of my goods to the poor and if, as is the case, (*or since*) I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I do here and now restore him fourfold." Luke 19:8

The literal translation of that verse is important - because it indicates the new heart within the former extortioner. He didn't say something like "If they come with a complaint, or a warrant, then, I'll admit I did it." Zacchaeus was saying "I am guilty and I am willing to pay right now."

And Christ, noting the reality of his true conversion, responded in the very next verse by saying:

"Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham." Luke 19:9

The criminal Zacchaeus was not saved because he sought to make restitution, rather he did that because through faith in Christ he was a new man, with a new heart for righteousness. His act of restitution didn't earn salvation, rather it proved the reality of it.

When I served as Chaplain, I remember an inmate, who truly seemed to lay hold of Christ as his Lord and Savior. He was facing serious charges stemming from his former drug habit. He not only robbed a person, but by transporting him to an ATM machine to get the funds he wanted, was also charged with kidnaping.

When he went to court, like Zacchaeus, he did the right thing - he told the truth. He said he was guilty and ultimately was sentenced to 25 years. But he rejoiced that he was enabled by the indwelling Spirit of Christ to do the right thing.

When this all happened it was quite a testimony to the power of the gospel. The court eventually ordered him to have a psychiatric examination because he wanted to tell the truth. They kept asking him "Is anybody forcing you to do this?" His unrelenting reply was always, "Yes!" They would ask "Who?" He would keep answering, "God, the Lord Jesus Christ!"

They would then say in effect - "He needs his head examined!" The court and judge had seen many that had claimed a conversion to Christ, but few who admitted their guilt and wanted to make things right.

From Philemon verse 12 we see Paul had taught Onesimus to go back and make things right, to seek restitution and to reconcile with the man he had wronged. Like Paul, teach your believing inmates the same thing.

There are many applications to this. If you are discipling an inmate that is already sentenced, like in a state or federal prison, and there are no other legal charges they face, the principle is still valid. For instance: an inmate's family is also wronged when they go to prison, and the inmate needs to see that, and do what they can to seek the family's forgiveness, and make right what he or she can.

In review, any correctional Chaplain working with spiritually newborn legal offenders, should first love them to the point that they know it and trust them. Secondly, the Chaplain should give them some ministry responsibility to help the gospel cause, and thirdly, the Chaplain should help them be ready to make restitution to their victim and if possible be reconciled with a person they have wronged. Sometimes that simply means pleading guilty and doing the prescribed time for the crime.

The next thing you must teach an inmate that comes to faith in Christ is that in Christ, they have a totally new identity. Look at this in Philemon verses 15-17:

- 15 For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever,
- 16 no longer as a slave but more than a slave - a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.
- 17 If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me.

This is a major issue. I personally believe it is the most important thing to teach a believing inmate. The great enemy of our souls is after our mind and our imaginations. With those that are in prison, he has a great advantage.

In warning the godly against evil company, Proverbs 23:7 says "as he (*the evil man*) thinks in his heart, so is he." Our own concept of who we are dictates the way we think and eventually act. Inmates are often made to feel lowly and useless and as the human trash of their own generation. When they truly have Christ, that should all change.

Paul acting on what he'd already taught in 1 Cor. 7:22, wanted Onesimus to know, even though he was still a slave, he was the Lord's freed man. Paul also wanted the master or boss, Philemon, to treat him as a true brother and to build him up in his new spiritual identity in Christ.

“no longer as a slave but more that a slave - a beloved brother, ...in
the Lord”

A convicted (or about to be convicted) felon is a prisoner, and his sin brought him to that, BUT in Christ he is to no longer think of himself as a criminal, but as a true son of the Most High and Holy God! Every morning as he wakes he should re-affirm to his own mind who he is in Christ, a redeemed and adopted son of the King of Kings.

This is a true New Testament theme. The idol worshiping Gentiles that believed in Christ were generally considered the no accounts, and the human trash by the religious Jews of the 1st century. This is why Ephesians 2 stresses the change in identity that union with Christ brought them. Look again at these verses in Ephesians 2:

10 ...we are His (*God's*) workmanship (*or masterpiece*), created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

11 THEREFORE (*capitals for emphases*) remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh - who are called uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands -

12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

13 BUT NOW in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household (*family*) of God.

The issue in the life of the believer is victory over the temptation of the flesh and sin. Realizing and dwelling on their new identity in Christ is the most important weapon in the Holy Spirit's arsenal for Christian inmates and ex-criminal offenders.

Ephesians 4:17-24 stresses this very principle.

17 This I say, therefore and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk (*live daily*) as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

19 who being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But you have not so learned Christ,

21 if indeed you have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

“Putting off” and “putting on” has to do with the thought life. The new man thinks in a new way, with the very nature and image of God who created the believer in Christ totally new at the point of his conversion by the Holy Spirit.

Said another way in Colossians 3:10 -

10 put on the new man who is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the One creating him.

The Creator of the new man is God. The image of the true God made known to the believer renews his thinking.

The Holy Spirit through Peter echos this same thought.

1 ...To those who have obtained like precious faith with us...

3 ... through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue (*that is Jesus*),

4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these (*promises, such as now actually being adopted into God's family*) you may be partakers of the divine nature, (*we share in God's nature*) having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Peter 1:1-4

Actually this new identity and new thinking will be used by the Holy Spirit to enable the ones you are discipling in the faith, to go back and make restitution where they can, and seek restoration when they can.

Discipling inmates in the faith is the ministry of every Christian Chaplain. That teaching should always include:

- 1. Loving them to the point they know it, and trust you**
- 2. Giving them a ministry to perform for the furtherance of the gospel**
- 3. Encouraging them to go back and make things right. Make restitution and seek restoration.**
- 4. Giving them a totally new personal identity in Christ. They must think of themselves as God's true children with His true nature dwelling in their hearts and minds.**

Next month, we'll see even more about a Christian discipleship ministry to criminal lawbreakers from how Paul worked with the fugitive, Onesimus. We'll see some things about **God's sovereignty and your investment in the lives of the inmates.**

Rich Hines - Minister To Chaplains

Chaplain's Corner - December 2000

Rev. Rich Hines

Last month I gave you the second of three messages from Paul's letter to Philemon. In this New Testament letter we have been learning from the Apostle Paul how to disciple a believing inmate by examining how he worked with the fugitive criminal offender, Onesimus. In a very real sense, Paul was Onesimus' unofficial "Chaplain."

The man Onesimus sinned against, the victim of his crime, was a Christian believer, whom Paul had previously led to faith in Christ. That man's name was - Philemon. We read beginning at v.8 the following words from Paul:

Philemon 8-21

8 Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting,
9 yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you - being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a
prisoner of Jesus Christ -

10 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains,
11 who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.
12 I am sending him back. * You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart,
13 whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the
gospel.

14 But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion,
as it were, but voluntary.

15 For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever,
16 no longer as a slave but more than a slave - a beloved brother, especially to me but how much
more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

17 If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me.
18 But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account.
19 I, Paul, am writing with my own hand, I will repay - not to mention to you that you owe me even your
own self besides.

20 Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord.
21 Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.
* verse 12 - NU text reads: "I am sending him back to you in person, that is, my own heart."

To briefly review discipling principles from this text: we saw the importance of truly loving the inmate in verse 12. In verse 13 we understood that we should give them a ministry to perform to help the progress of the gospel. Then, again in verse 12, we stressed the principle of teaching inmates to make restitution and seek reconciliation. Finally, we saw last month from verses 15-17, the absolute importance of stressing to the regenerated inmate the fact of their new identity in Christ.

This month, we come to the final two principles for discipling a Christian inmate in their life of faith in our Lord.

The first of these is a little obscure, but tremendously important. Look at verse 15 again with me:

15 For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever,

Here Paul reminded the victim of crime, Philemon, that God was in control of the events that happened, all along. They served His redemptive purposes. This is a reminder about God's sovereignty and ordering of all things.

Surely, the criminal Onesimus, must also have been taught this fact. Chaplains need to teach the inmates they are discipling the true biblical attributes of the God they have come to know in Christ. For inmates comfort and growth, one of the most important attributes of God is His sovereignty.

Teach them that God is in control, He is sovereign, He rules and orders the universe, which the inmates are part of. All things are working out ultimately to serve God's cause and design. Nothing takes Him by surprise or causes Him to be perplexed or thwarted in what He planned to do. God's sovereignty means His total rule. He answers to none, all answer to Him. It also means His total independence, no one can question His action.

Onesimus had departed, actually run away from his master Philemon. In the departure he had also stolen something of considerable value. That was, from man's perspective, bad. But in God's sovereign design, it eventually caused Onesimus to flee all the way to Rome and to somehow be brought to the place of Paul's imprisonment, where the Apostle led him to true saving faith in Jesus Christ.

God had been in control all along, not that He ever sponsored Onesimus' sin, but He allowed events to take place that in time brought Onesimus to Himself in true repentance. Onesimus and Philemon and Paul are going to spend eternity together worshipping the One who died and rose again for them in heaven!

Jails and prisons are bad places where a lot of bad things happen. The enemies of the inmates faith (the Devil and all those that don't know God and want to hurt them) want to destroy their faith in the Lord. Often, when trying times come, unbelieving inmates will be right in their face to say in effect, "Where now is the God you serve?" At times like that, they must know He is still on His throne, in control, and that it is all working together for His ultimate purpose, even for them (see Gen. 50:20, Romans 8:28). Teach inmates the sovereignty of God.

"he departed for a while (BAD) for this purpose, that you might receive him forever," (GOOD)

One of the best sources for teaching God's sovereignty, is the Old Testament book of Daniel, especially chapter 4.

There, we have the testimony of a man whose sin of pride when he was the powerful ruler of ancient Babylon, brought him to a place even lower than Onesimus, the runaway slave. Yet through it all, he too came to saving faith in the Sovereign Lord, who ultimately redeemed him at the cross of Christ.

Hear these words from the ancient king, Nebuchadnezzar.

"I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me. How great are His signs, and how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation." (Dan. 4:2,3)

"...In order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men." (Dan. 4:17)

“...At the end of my time, I Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’ “ (Dan. 4:34,35)

God is totally Sovereign. He, not man, nor any evil spirit, ultimately is in control. Teach your inmates that truth.

Finally, we come to the last principle from our text. For us that serve as Chaplain, it is the best proof of our Christ-like love. Note again the words of Philemon 18,19a

18 But if* he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account.
19 I, Paul, am writing with my own hand, I will repay - * can be translated, “since” or “if, as is the case,”

Here we see the practical principle of being willing to spend out of your own resources to support an inmate’s spiritual growth. At times, like Paul said he would do with Onesimus, it means purchasing things for them out of your own funds. Jesus taught where a man’s treasure was, there his heart would be also (Matt. 6:21). It is possible to give money and not really have our heart involved. One can give without love, but is impossible to really have our heart in a ministry and not what we have in our bank account. We always make a way to afford what we love

When Paul wrote “since he has wronged you” referring to the value of the thing Onesimus had stolen - and more likely than not, sold to support his sinful way, and then said “Put that on my account. ... I will repay -” he meant he would cover the cost of the damages.

In a beautiful way, that mirrors God’s love for sinners at the cross of Christ. Theologians call this the doctrine of imputation. To impute means “to credit to the account of”. The sinners guilt and shame was put on Christ’s account, and He paid for it with His precious blood, with giving His life as a perfect sacrifice for sin. Rom.4:3-6 and 2 Cor. 5:21 go even further and teach that Christ’s perfect righteousness was imputed, or credited to the believer’s account.

The words of the chorus “He Paid A Debt He Did Not Owe” written by Ellis J. Crum speak about the same thing:

”O such great pain my Lord endured, when He my sinful soul secured. I should have died there but Jesus took my place, so now I sing a brand new song — “Amazing Grace,’ Christ Jesus paid the debt that I could never pay.” Copyright 1977 Ellis J. Crum, Publisher (extracted from CCLI’s SongSelect at <http://www.ccli.com> on 11/3/00 copyright 1998, 1999 CCLI)

In other words, I owed a debt I could not pay and Christ Jesus paid the debt He did not owe, since I needed someone to wash my sins away. This principle of paying for those who cannot pay their own debts continues in a non-redemptive sense when Christian Chaplains spend out of their own resources for the benefit of those the Lord has given them to love and disciple in the faith.

Your spending cannot redeem men, but it can mirror the love of the One whose shed blood did redeem them (1 Peter 1:18,19)

Many Chaplains impoverish themselves to provide spiritual resources, Bibles, study materials even courses for the inmates that demonstrate saving faith in Christ. If that describes you, Chaplain, be encouraged, you're following the Biblical example of Paul - who followed the example of Jesus Christ!

This principle of spending out of your own because God's love for inmates prompts you to do so, goes beyond the realm of money. Often it means canceling personal plans and desires to be available to them and to minister God's love and truth to them. God's definition and example of love always includes sacrifice.

So we see from God's word in the letter to Philemon, discipling Christian inmates should include:

- 1. Loving them to the point they know it, and trust you.**
- 2. Giving them a ministry to perform for the furtherance of the gospel.**
- 3. Encouraging them to go back and make things right. Make restitution and seek restoration.**
- 4. Giving them a totally new personal identity in Christ. They must think of themselves as God's true children with His true nature dwelling in their hearts and minds.**
- 5. Teaching them about the sovereignty of God, especially as it applies to their personal tragedies.**
- 6. Being willing to spend yourself and your resources for their spiritual needs.**

Next month, Lord willing, I will begin to answer some good questions that many Chaplains asked about correctional chaplaincy ministry at our recent Chaplain Enrichment Seminar in California. Until then, keep on being light in that dark place that you serve. You're there to represent the God revealed in the Bible.

Rich Hines, Minister To Chaplains

Chaplain's Corner - September 21, 2004
Rev. Rich Hines
Repentance Is a Vital Part of Jesus' Gospel

This message is prepared especially for those in the United States who call upon the name of Jesus Christ as their own Lord and Savior from sin, and serve as a chaplain in a jail, prison or a follow-up ministry such as a rescue mission.

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This month I want to consider the subject of repentance. I know it is something inmates and residents need to be taught. I have reasons to think many of them are not being exposed to the true biblical teaching on this very important subject. One reason is I know the teaching about repentance, even the mention of it, is lacking in most of America's church pulpits today.

My heart's concern for correctional ministry is most intense as it relates to inmates' salvation. They need to become Christians, that is, to be true followers of Jesus Christ. So I write to remind you Chaplains that repentance is a vital part of Jesus' gospel. It's not a secondary issue. It's part of what it means to have true saving faith in Jesus Christ.

John the Baptist, who Jesus said was the greatest Old Testament prophet, the one who was sent to prepare people for Christ's coming, called men to repentance (see Matt. 3:1-12 and Luke 3:1-17). Then Jesus called people to repentance. He also taught His disciples to do the same as they spread His gospel (Lk.24:47). By His Spirit He has directed you to do the same. You are to call inmates and residents to repentance.

In Mark 1:14,15 we read -

14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching (proclaiming, heralding) the gospel of the kingdom of God
15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. REPENT, and BELIEVE in the gospel."

Consider Luke 24:46,47 – which tells us what Jesus said in the evening of the day He rose from the dead. Together with Mark 16:15,16 and John 20:21, this passage is a record of the first of the three occasions Christ gave His followers "The Great Commission," (the second occasion was in the well known words of Matt. 28:19,20; and the third is recorded in Acts 1:8).

The Luke 24 text reads-

46 Then He said to them (the eleven Apostle plus the two disciples from the Emmaus road, see 24:13-33), "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,
47 and that REPENTANCE and remission OF SINS (literally, REPENTANCE UNTO THE SENDING AWAY, or release of sins) should be preached (proclaimed, heralded, announced) in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

The Apostle Paul, though not part of the original group of Apostles that received the great commission, must have been given the same gospel charge by Christ during the three years he spent with the Lord, in the desert area around Damascus (Nabatean Arabia) recorded in Galatians 1:12,15-18.

I say that because when he later summarized his evangelistic message, he said in Acts 20:21,

21 "... testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD AND FAITH TOWARD OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST."

Repentance is the flip side of the same coin as saving faith in Jesus Christ. The two are partners. Repentance (really attempted repentance) without faith in Christ, is humanism and always fails. Faith in Christ without repentance, is presumption.

Further consider Acts 3:18,19,26, which is an example of the Apostolic preaching of the gospel after Pentecost.

18 "But those things which God foretold by the mouth of His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

19 REPENT therefore and be CONVERTED, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." ...

The Holy Spirit through the Apostle Peter continued in 3:26 –

26 "To you (Jewish people) first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in TURNING AWAY EVERY ONE OF YOU FROM YOUR INIQUITIES (malignantly evil sins)."

These words in verse 26, "turning away...from your iniquities," are important. The Greek word translated by the NKJV translators as "iniquities" is a synonym for sin, and has the root idea of a malignant evil, like cancer. Sin is spiritual cancer that spreads and kills.

"Turning away" rightly captures the biblical idea of repentance. The actual Greek word for repent, means to change the mind.

Some teachers like to say repentance is no more than mentally calling something bad that we once thought was good or at least all right to do. They sometimes go so far as to say repenting and believing in Christ simply means to change your mind about who He is, but that no actual change of behavior is called for, or is even in view. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.

The basic meaning of the word is to change one's mind, BUT in its biblical use, repentance ALWAYS MEANS a change of mind that is ACCOMPANIED BY A CORRESPONDING CHANGE OF BEHAVIOR.

In the Bible as repentance relates to human sinners finding forgiveness and eternal life it means a real change of life direction. This of course is humanly impossible and can only actually happen as a work of God in and on the human heart. True repentance is a miracle created by God alone.

But in many places in the Bible, God commands sinners to seek it from Him. Acts 2:38 is just one example of such a command.

Look at the following quotes from Dr. John MacArthur's notes on repentance from the "MacArthur Daily Bible," page 926:

"'Repentance' refers to the desire to turn from sin and restore one's relationship to God... Repentance is at the very heart of and proves one's salvation: unbelievers repent of their sin initially when they are saved, and then as believers, repent of their sins continually to keep the joy and blessing of their relationship to God... It is the initial reaction of true repentance to eagerly and aggressively pursue righteousness. This is an attitude that ends indifference to sin and complacency about evil and deception... Repentance leads to anger over one's sin and displeasure at the shame it has brought on the Lord's name and His people... The essence of repentance is an aggressive pursuit of holiness,..."

What happened to the ancient Thessalonians believers is exactly what John MacArthur is saying biblical repentance from sin means.

1 Thessalonians 1:9b says of them, "...you TURNED TO God FROM idols (idolatry is sin) TO SERVE the living and true God."

God-granted biblical repentance is a true and total change of directions. It is what inmates and residents and all sinners need. Chaplains and their gospel assistants need to fully explain the necessary role of repentance to inmates and then in God's stead, command them to seek it.

Ultimately, as I said in the July Chaplain's Corner, this gets down to their individual hearts responding to His Spirit. On this theme of true repentance being part of the saving gospel, one of my favorite Christian writers, Dr. A.W. Tozer, said:

"The GIFT element in the gospel is held to be its exclusive content, and the SHIFT element is accordingly ignored. Theological assent is called faith, and is thought to be the ONLY DIFFERENCE between the saved and the lost. ... 'A Christian,' say these teachers, 'is not morally better than a sinner, the ONLY difference is that he has taken Jesus, and so he has a Saviour.' I trust it may not sound flippant to inquire, 'A Saviour from what?' If not from sin and evil conduct and the old fallen life, then from what?" ...

"Is justification from past offenses all that distinguishes a Christian from a sinner? Can a man become a believer in Christ and be no better than he was before? Does the gospel offer no more than a skillful Advocate to get guilty sinners off free at the day of judgment?"

"How then can any man be saved? The penitent sinner meets Christ AND AFTER THAT SAVING ENCOUNTER HE IS A SINNER NO MORE. The power of the gospel changes him, shifts the basis of his life FROM SELF TO CHRIST, FACES HIM ABOUT IN A NEW DIRECTION and makes of him a new creation. ... Salvation must include a judicial change of status, but what is overlooked by most teachers is that it ALSO INCLUDES AN ACTUAL CHANGE IN THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL. And by this we mean more than a surface change, we mean a transformation as deep as the roots of his human life. If it does not go that deep it does not go deep enough." (A.W. Tozer, "The Divine Conquest," Chapter 2, "In Word, Or In Power")

Tozer was describing true God given repentance.

The real opponent to true repentance is the human heart set on the pursuit of its own sin.

Let me show you from the Bible what I mean. In the future, as Christ begins to take back the earth, He will yet be gracious, giving some unrepentant sinners time to consider where their sin will lead them. As we read about coming events and judgments He orders in Revelation, we see this.

By the time you get to Revelation 9:18, at least one-half of the world's sinful population has been killed by God's judgments (compare Rev. 6:7,8 with Rev. 9:18). God will graciously leave half of the population alive that they might seek repentance, and yet Revelation 9:20,21 says –

20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, DID NOT REPENT of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.

21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries (use of drugs “pharmakeion”) or their sexual immoralities or their thefts.

That's an incredible commitment to malignant evil, especially when we remember that Jesus warned sinners “unless you repent you will all likewise perish!” (Luke 13:3,5). That warning is for all of us.

But at the same time God's great patience with unrepentant sinners is explained in 2 Peter 3:9

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise (from the near context – His promise to judge sin), as some count slackness, but is longsuffering (intensely patient) toward us (as sinners), not willing (desiring) that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Today and even into the time of the great tribulation in the future, God will graciously grant repentance and salvation to some. So, promote the preaching and teaching of biblical repentance.

The messenger of the gospel is told in 2 Timothy 2:24,25 to patiently teach “in humility correcting those who are in opposition (to God's truth) IF GOD PERHAPS WILL GRANT THEM REPENTANCE, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”

May God grant true repentance to those in your facility. May you be His voice calling them to seek repentance. May none of us ever leave repentance out of our presentation of the gospel.

Rich Hines
Minister To Chaplains, Aurora Ministries

“for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ”

Chaplain's Corner - October 22, 2004
Rev. Rich Hines
The Role Of The Chaplain In Death Notifications

This message is prepared especially for those in the United States who call upon the name of Jesus Christ as their own Lord and Savior from sin, and serve as a chaplain in a jail, prison or a follow-up ministry such as a rescue mission.

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One of the most difficult situations correctional Chaplains face is when they are called upon to give an inmate notification that someone close to them has died. News of the death of a loved one while incarcerated produces feelings of horror, loss, anger, shame, frustration, guilt and despair.

As you probably already know, one of the greatest fears inmates struggle with is that this very thing will happen. The fear is so great, that any time any inmate that does not know the chaplain is called to "go see the Chaplain," normally the immediate thought is, "Who died?"

During the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season, receiving a death notification usually magnifies these feelings of anger and remorse in the inmate.

How should you as a Christian Chaplain deal with this? Of course, in a compassionate and caring way, but you should always be open to the possibility that this very situation may be part of God's eternal plan to open an individual human heart to His saving truth. Remember, He prepares human hearts to repent and believe the gospel at His appointed time.

As soon as you get word of the inmate's outside person's death, you need to double check that it is in fact, a reliable report. When you're sure it is, you need to stop and pray for that inmate BEFORE you ever see them and tell them the news. Pray that God would open their heart to His truth and His comfort in the gospel.

Once an inmate has finished expressing his emotional grief, you can and should probe them to see if they are at all open to any of God's truth on death. This probing might come at a later meeting, as the inmate's initial reaction to the news of the death of their loved one may obviously cloud their ability to listen and think. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit (prayed for), you can ascertain the inmate's general emotional and intellectual state and the right time to bring up the Lord.

Usually, the inmate wants, if at all possible, to attend the funeral. Your role may include making calls to the inmate's family and even filling out forms to secure an escort by deputies or corrections officers. The very fact of their desire to attend the funeral provides an opportunity to probe the inmate's openness to spiritual truth. A good place to start is:

Ecclesiastes 7:1-4, which says:

1 A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth;
2 Better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for THAT IS THE END OF ALL MEN, AND THE LIVING WILL TAKE IT TO HEART.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter, for by a sad countenance the heart is made better.
4 The HEART OF THE WISE IS IN THE HOUSE OF MOURNING, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

You should always point out that according to God's word, rather than human invented religion, a funeral is FOR THOSE LEFT BEHIND and NOT for the one who has departed (died). That's the thrust of the last half of verse 2, "THAT IS THE END OF ALL MEN (i.e. death), AND THE LIVING WILL TAKE IT TO HEART."

This passage in Ecclesiastes is speaking about the unavoidable death each human faces and the funeral's place in prompting the heart of those left behind to think about being prepared for their own mortality.

Though a funeral is hard to attend and much sorrow is experienced, that is good IF THOSE AT THE FUNERAL "TAKE IT (that is DEATH) TO HEART," which means to ponder it, think about it, to mull it over in their minds.

I always found an easy transition for the listening inmate is made to: Psalm 90:10-12, which says:

10 The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
11 Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath,
12 SO TEACH US TO NUMBER OUR DAYS, THAT WE MAY GAIN A HEART OF WISDOM.

You should explain from verse 10 that normally, after the breaking up of the watery cloud filter that existed before the flood in the days of Noah, a human's physical life is normally 70, or at best 80 years. The breaking of that "firmament" (or "canopy") which shielded human flesh from the sun's ultra violet rays, caused the aging process to speed up.

Whether before the flood, when a normal human physical life might have spanned 800 or more years, or after when over 80 years was really old, at the point of the death of the body, the true inner being, the spirit, flies "away."

Verse 11 makes one thing that is stated clearly in Hebrews 9, very clear. After death, a human faces an all-holy God who is right to be angry over their sin. As Hebrews 9:27 states:

"... it is appointed for men to die once, but after this (one physical death) the judgment."

The Holy Spirit inspired logic is unmistakable in Psalm 90:10-12

Verse 10 - Physical life is relatively short and filled with trouble, and at death we (our non-physical beings) go somewhere.

Verse 11 - We then all face a Holy God who must judge sin.

SO, Verse 12 - during our 70-80 years (or less) we ought to ask God to teach us to make careful use of the days allotted to us - so that we can get the true wisdom that solves our sin problem when we face His judgment.

Verse 10 leaves the after death destination of the human spirit ambiguous, simply stating that we “FLY AWAY.” Other Scriptures confirm that it is immediately either in a place of torment called Hades, which will inevitably lead to the eternal Lake of Fire, or into the Lord’s blessed presence forever. (See Luke 16:22-24, Revelation 20:12-15, 2 Corinthians 5:8 and Philippians 1:23 - also you can read an article by John Thomas titled, “That Hideous Doctrine”).

This article is included in our Jail Ministry Training Manual and can also be requested from us separately.

According to Jesus, the absolutely worst thing that can happen to a human being is to die in the sin of refusing to believe in Him. To do so is to die with all the punishment for all one’s sins upon them eternally.

In John 8:21 and then verse 24, He said to unbelievers:

21 “I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.”

24 ... “you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

Jesus was going back to heaven, and He was telling these unbelievers that they were not going to heaven when they would die.

The difference between the singular “SIN” in verse 21, and the plural “SINS” twice mentioned in verse 24, is the ultimate single sin of unbelief in Jesus’ true identity and work, leaves a person with the guilt of all their different sins when they face God’s righteous judgment.

Of course, there will be times when the inmate you’re trying to help will already have some unbiblical ideas about death, judgment and what happens after this present life is over. Some will profess to be a member of a religion, which you know does not base its teachings on the Bible. In these situations, pray that the Lord would cause them to ask you questions about what you believe or even better, what the Bible teaches.

Seek to help them understand that the Bible really is the ultimate authority and it identifies only two types of persons, those outside of a relationship to God through Christ, and those who are “In Christ.” Stated another way in 1 John 3:10, those that are the children of God and those that are the children of the devil. These are the saved and the unsaved.

In a message to saved people, looking back on their unsaved state - God through the Apostle said in Ephesians 2:12,13 -

12 ...at that time you were WITHOUT CHRIST, being ALIENS from the commonwealth of Israel and STRANGERS FROM THE COVENANTS OF PROMISE, having NO HOPE and WITHOUT GOD in the world. (In other words, you were: Christ-less, State-less, Promise-less, Hopeless and Godless and stuck in this confused system of human ideologies)

13 BUT NOW in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). In the process of saving from their sin those He would make believers, He also conquered death, which is the result of sin.

So tell them they are, like all men, a sinner. Then go on and tell them because of God's graciousness in the gospel of Christ, any sinner can know personally a real deliverance from sin and judgment and eternal death, IF they truly repent and believe in Christ and what He did for them through His substitutionary death and resurrection.

Show them verses like:

2 Timothy 1:10 and 1 Corinthians 15:26, 54-57

10 ... our Savior Jesus Christ, who has ABOLISHED DEATH AND BROUGHT LIFE AND IMMORTALITY to light through the gospel.

1 Corinthians 15:26, 54-57

26 The last ENEMY that will BE DESTROYED is death

.

54 ... "Death is SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY."

55 "O Death, where is your sting? "O Hades, where is your victory?"

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, who gives us THE VICTORY (over death) through our Lord Jesus Christ.

To be included in verses like these ("OUR" in 1 Tim. 1:10 and "US" in 1 Cor. 15:57) they must personally have Jesus as Savior (2 Tim. 1:10) and Lord (1 Cor. 15:57). Ask them if they want Him to be their only Deliverer and Master (Savior and Lord).

You may be privileged to witness the miracle of a God given repentance and saving faith in Christ, because God has used this death and your faithful explaining of His truth, to open their very heart!

Thinking about the inevitability of giving inmates death notifications as part of your chaplaincy ought to do something else. It ought to cause you to teach, and have your staff teach, on these things BEFORE some of the attendees in the Bible Studies face the death of a loved one.

As I recall my experiences during 20 years as a jail Chaplain, I remember that a good percentage of the men I had to give death notifications to had previously been in our services, or had spoken to me before the terrible news came. That made the transition and application of God's truth to the situation they faced easier.

As ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are required to give the whole truth that God reveals in order to turn men and women from their sin to trusting Christ. Don't fear explaining judgment to inmates or anybody else. Remember, you are there to give God's truth – not just nice religious sentiments.

Lastly, when these death notifications situations occur, you should always follow-up on the inmate after the funeral, whether or not they attended it. The word of God has answers for them in Christ for the feelings of shock, loss, anger, shame, guilt and despair. If they truly gain from God the true heart of wisdom like Moses prayed for in Psalm 90:12, then according to Revelation 21:4, they will not experience endless sorrow in heaven. May God continue to bless and use you in your facility.

Rich Hines - Minister To Chaplains, Aurora Ministries

"for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ"

Chaplain's Corner - November 18, 2004

Rev. Rich Hines

Chaplains Must Teach Submission To God Ordained Authority

This message is prepared especially for those in the United States who call upon the name of Jesus Christ as their own Lord and Savior from sin, and serve as a chaplain in a jail, prison or a follow-up ministry such as a rescue mission.

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This month rather than my normal "Thanksgiving Message," I want to address the subject of teaching inmates submission to authority, in particular, to THE AUTHORITIES in the facility.

For sure, one of the things we ought to constantly thank God for is His plan for human society includes governing authorities, laws and law enforcement. Without them, we would have total chaos. When they discharge their duty, corrections officers even protect inmates from other inmates.

As you and your staff give Biblical instruction to inmates you must teach them God wants them to submit to all God ordained human authority. Understand that for most inmates, this is hard to hear and apply. Apart from the cursed human sinful nature all of us enter the world with, most inmates have been even more conditioned than others to despise authority, and to become an authority unto themselves.

In the true criminal mind, lack of submission to authority began at a very early age. It continued unchecked, and was maybe even encouraged, until they committed their first crime. Statements from young children such as "You're not the boss of me, you can't tell me what to do!" are not cute and need to be dealt with and corrected by God ordained authority, immediately.

Additionally, when a person never learns to truly submit to human authorities, they will always have problems submitting to God's authority.

On this subject of submission to authority I want to deal with two main texts, 1 Peter 2:11-20 and Romans 13:1-7. The emphasis of each passage is different, though the instruction to submit to the authorities, is the same.

In 1 Peter, the emphasis for true Christians is SO THAT THEY WOULD BE A GOOD TESTIMONY to a watching society of what it means to be Christ's true follower. In Romans the emphasis is BECAUSE BEFORE GOD IT IS RIGHT. To say it another way, Peter tells us to submit BECAUSE MEN ARE WATCHING, Paul tells us to submit mainly BECAUSE GOD IS WATCHING.

Before I go any further I want to stress exactly what the concept in both passages of being subject or being in submission to the civil authorities means.

The same basic word is used in four places in these two passages, (1 Pet.2:13,17; Rom.13:1,5) and it comes from a military term meaning to RANK YOURSELF UNDER THE AUTHORITY of another, to be ready to OBEY THE ORDERS OF A SUPERIOR.

1 Peter 2:11-20 (written about 65 AD)

11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers (the common word for criminals), they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

13 THEREFORE SUBMIT YOURSELVES TO every ordinance (or, created law) of man for the Lord's sake,

Verses 11,12 are noteworthy because of their relationship to the command to submit to the civil law in verse 13, which begins with the word "Therefore." That word looks back at what verses 11,12 said.

Christians are to see themselves as they really are, "sojourners and pilgrims." Those words mean the followers of Christ are those who dwell beside others as resident aliens. Truly, God's children are citizens of a foreign country - HEAVEN, and they are temporarily left here on earth to dwell beside the earthlings as representatives of the kingdom of God.

More importantly, believers are to abstain from FLESHLY LUSTS that wage war and strategize against what they really want to do in the new man of their heart. Saved people want by good deeds to be attractive for God, so that others would also come to believe in Christ. THEREFORE, they are to be in submission and subjection to the laws of man. From the flow here it's obvious that one of the fleshly lusts that would make a believer a bad testimony is that lust or desire of the flesh that wants to FIGHT AGAINST AUTHORITY.

I want to relate a true incident that illustrates this fleshly trait. Years ago, when we were still living in California, we got new neighbors. I noticed two bumper stickers on the wife's car. One said "Eschew Authority" and the other "Reject (actually it was a 5-letter expletive that meant to reject) Guilt." She obviously had issues with submission to authority, she was even advertising it!

"Eschew Authority!" could be taken as a political sentiment, but "blank-blank-blank-blank-blank Guilt" goes farther and suggests rebellion against God's moral standards.

Praise God, in time both the husband and wife did repent and believe and begin to follow Christ. As she continued to follow Christ, her heart changed and those stickers came off! Inmate's hearts need to be changed on this issue too! As soon as possible after they've made a profession of faith in Christ for His salvation, they need to be taught and challenged on this issue.

The passage continues in verse 13, 14 and makes no doubt about who believers are to be in submission to.

13 ... whether to the king as supreme,

14 or to GOVERNERS (not just elected Governors like each of our 50 US States has, but LAW OFFICERS), as to those who are SENT BY HIM (that is sent by the Lord) for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

From this verse and others in Romans 13:1,4,6; teach the inmates that the corrections officers and jailers, even the unsaved ones, are God's servants in the role they are to perform!

The passage continues in verses 15-17, and again stresses the importance of being a good testimony before a watching world

15 For this is the will of God, that BY DOING GOOD YOU MAY PUT TO SILENCE the ignorance of foolish men

16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, (like supporting a riot against the correctional authorities) but as bondservants of God.

17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. (The Holy Spirit gave Peter these words to write WHILE NERO was still Emperor, and was wrongly blaming Christians for the great fire that destroyed most of Rome in 64 AD)

Next the Holy Spirit through Peter spoke to those under extra authority, besides the authority of the civil government, in verses 18-20.

18 Servants, (literally, "house slaves") be SUBMISSIVE to your masters with all fear,

Inmates, by their crimes and sentence, have placed themselves as slaves under masters. They then must be obedient to their masters, who while incarcerated, are the correctional officers. They also must do what they are told WITH RESPECT to their masters - the officers the government has put over them, for that's the sense of "be submissive to your masters with all fear."

Interestingly He (the Holy Spirit through Peter) continues:

18 ... not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.

As you and your partners in ministry teach these verses to inmates, point out that God knows and will hold responsible all human authorities that are harsh. Remind them that Christ subjected Himself to sinful human officers of the law who went out of their way to abuse and mock Him, yet, the very first thing He said after being crucified was a prayer for them! "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." (Luke 23:33,34) He even prayed that prayer as they were gambling for His clothing.

As 1 Peter 2 closes the Apostle even reminds his readers of the example of Christ (verses 21-23).

"...Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, ... who, when He was reviled, (by officers of the law) did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but kept on committing Himself to Him who judges righteously;"

And in verses 19, 20 He again taught that believers who suffer wrongfully at the hands of the authorities are a good testimony IF they take patiently wrongful chastisement. In that case they are seen as favorable by God.

19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully

.20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable (favorable, seen as beautiful) before God

Earlier I said these passages identify officers of the law, as God's servants in the role they perform. What was written in 1 Peter 2:14 about rulers including correctional authorities, being "sent" by God is further amplified in Romans 13, verses 1, 4, and 6.

Romans 13:1 says the authorities are appointed by God, verse 4 twice calls them "God's minister," and then again verse 6 reiterates they are God's ministers (literally, public servants).

Romans 13:1-7 (was written in 57-58 AD)

According to verse 1 "... there is no authority except from God." I mention this because it's important to note that all human authority IS DERIVED FROM GOD and His plan, rather than BEING INTRINSIC WITHING THE INDIVIDUAL IN AUTHORITY.

Rulers are to follow and uphold God's moral standards for society. Their authority then is not to be based on who they are within themselves intrinsically, or simply according to personal whims. Part of what this means is that anytime anyone is in any authoritative role, they represent God's ultimate authority and are THEREFORE ACCOUNTABLE TO HIM for how they ruled or exercised that God given authority.

Sinful abuse of authority will be judged by God (See Isaiah 5:20-24).

In the Bible the harshest words of judgment from God were always for those who abused SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY, and MISREPRESENTED GOD AND HIS WAY. To God, that's even worse than any abuse of military, political, parental or other social authority (see Jeremiah 23:9-40; Matthew 23:13-36).

So, before God, a bad Chaplain who misrepresents God's truth is even worse than an occasional evil corrections officer or administrator!

Furthermore, Romans 13:1 sets the main point of the passage before the reader.

1 Let every soul (or life) BE SUBJECT TO the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, AND THE AUTHORITIES THAT EXIST ARE APPOINTED (have been ordained, i.e. placed) BY GOD.

Throughout history people have had to grapple with this truth, especially when the human head of state was an evil, dictatorial sinful man. The Holy Spirit gave Paul these words to write WHILE NERO was Emperor! But God never makes a mistake and all things are working together to bring about His perfect plan.

So the MAIN POINT IS that HUMAN GOVERNORS ARE PART OF GOD'S WILL for the inhabitants of political realms. The first sub-point comes in verse 2.

2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God (that which God has decreed as a law), and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

In other words, FIGHT AGAINST THE GOD-ORDAINED RULE OF GOVERNMENT AND YOU ARE FIGHTING AGAINST THE LAW OF GOD, so sure JUDGMENT FROM GOD can be the only ultimate outcome.

Verses 3 and 4 go a bit further and put a human face on it. That face is the officer of the human government's law, and yes that also means the correctional officer when he is officially discharging his job to uphold and enforce the law.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same

4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister (or servant, the word is literally, "deacon" a table waiter serving up God's justice), an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

By the way, in relation to "an avenger to execute wrath," near the end of verse 4, the phrase "bear the sword" refers to the officer's right to use it to slay offenders. That actually happened by means of swords in the first century Roman world.

This right is part of the "teeth" of the God-ordained plan for human government. After 20 centuries, God has not annulled this right. So – we come to the final sub-point of the passage in verses 5-7

5 Therefore YOU (believers) MUST BE SUBJECT, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake

.6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers (public servants) attending continually to this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Believers especially MUST SUBJECT THEMSELVES UNDER THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES RULES. Obedience to this principle is supported by two great motivating facts in the text of verse 5, the wrathful JUDGMENT (wrath) of God, and a CONSCIENCE that as a Christian, you want to be a good testimony.

By way of testimony believers are to pay their taxes, realizing they are in part going to provide for a police force that serves God's plan of order and justice in society. Along with paying taxes and tolls (customs, verse 7) believers are to hold in respect and honor all public officials.

As stated earlier, inmate culture finds these teachings offensive and wants to reject them. But, God changes hearts. And that heart that is truly, miraculously changed to love what it once hated, is a testimony to the inmate that God is SUPERNATURALLY at work within them.

Wouldn't it be wonderful this Thanksgiving if you had inmates that showed they were truly THANKFUL TO GOD FOR THE OFFICERS HE HAS PLACED OVER THEM?

As you and your assistants teach Romans 13:1-7, carefully remind them from Rom.13:2, "whoever resists" the God-ordained "authority" in effect resists God. Most inmates I've talked to over the years don't really want to do that.

In closing I need to bring out one more biblical truth. There is ONE EXCEPTION in God's word to obeying the laws of the governing authorities. When the law of the land orders Christians to DISOBEY GOD, then and only then are they to DISOBEY THAT SPECIFIC HUMAN LAW.

The religious authorities (backed by Roman political and military power) ordered the early Christians to stop preaching about Jesus, and forbade them to even mention His name.

The Spirit filled Apostles answered in Acts 5:29 "We ought to obey God rather than men."

After further being told by those same authorities not to speak in the name of Jesus, Acts 5:42 says "and daily in the temple and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ."

Then, later in the first and early second century, Rome made it law that at least once a year every adult had to take the pledge and publicly declare, "Caesar is Lord!" So, like their earlier brethren the Apostles, the early Christians disobeyed and ceased not to say only Jesus was supreme LORD!

Dear Chaplain, may God bless your ministry of His word to the inmates and staff.

Rich Hines - Minister To Chaplains, Aurora Ministries
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Bruce Mills, from Simpsonwood, GA, April 2002 - Session 4 **“A Biblical View of Failure”**

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Steve Kreloff - From Snow Mountain Ranch in Colorado, August, 1999 four messages on

“Biblical Evangelism” Sessions 2, 4, 6 and 8

Carey Hardy - From Riverside, CA, February 2004 **“The Big Picture”** Tape 6 side 2

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