

PMA
Outreach



Volume 10 Issue 2

The Newsletter of Prison Mission Association

SEPTEMBER 2004

THE SPIRIT OF GOD MOVES AT SHELTON

Every year for more than five years Prison Mission Association has coordinated the revival at the Washington Corrections Center in Shelton. This year, once again the Lord blessed the event and used it in a tremendous way to give over 2000 inmates exposure to the saving gospel of Jesus Christ.

During the two-day event, held July 16-17, there were 398 individuals that responded to the challenge to make a decision for the Lord Jesus Christ. A total of 112 inmates indicated they had made first time decisions to trust Jesus Christ as Savior and 241 indicated that they had recommitted their lives to the Lord. One hundred and seventy one requested further follow-up by asking to be visited by a chaplain.



The Freedom Team of Bend, OR

one on Friday and three on Saturday, in total breaking more than 500 bricks. During that last demonstration on Saturday night the gospel message and invitation were delivered by Nathan Whitham, the former PMA director and current board member. The Freedom Team was accompanied by *On Foreign Soil*, a band that performed before and after the strength and power demonstrations. Although the acoustics in the gymnasium were far from

ideal the group still was able to have a powerful impact on the inmates.

Joining the team was the New Life Prison Ministry team coordinated by John Thaler-Sanborn. This team performed and counseled men in one of the dining facilities as other groups were watching the Freedom Team in the gym.

The Thurston County Jail and Prison Ministry coordinated by Art Brown and Paul Thompson ministered to three units of inmates, close to 1200 men that are kept separate from the rest of the population. They performed three shows and had opportunities to counsel with hundreds of men also.

Special thanks goes to the softball team from Grace Bible Church of Port Orchard, Washington led by Dave Cassell that helped by playing two games against the inmates in 80 degree weather. Also assisting in making the event a success was the Christian Motorcycle Association that brought in several large bikes to attract the attention of the inmates and allowing the bikers to start up conversations and hand out literature.

PMA wishes to express our deepest appreciation to the administration and staff at the Washington Correction Center for their openness and cooperation. Chaplain Gregg Garringer and his staff did a tremendous job working with the Department of Corrections officials to make the event run smoothly.

Praise the Lord for the success of this year's revival event. Plans are already being made for next year!



Pastor Tom, Freedom Team Leader, Breaking Bricks

A Note from the Director

The Shelton Revival has come and gone. We praise the Lord for the success of this year's event and we look forward to how He will use future revivals. Although the Revival is the biggest single event that PMA coordinates, it is only one part of our total ministry to reach out with the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost behind prison walls.

This edition of *PMA Outreach* contains an exciting testimony of how the Community Bible Church of Bitely, Michigan is reaching out in its own community through a church sponsored jail ministry. After having an enthusiastic response using the Bible Correspondence Fellowship lessons provided by PMA, Pastor Ken Lyon found the need to write more lessons to provide further instruction for the men he ministers to in the Newaygo County Jail. This type of enthusiasm for ministry thrills me and it is my prayer that by reading about what this church is doing others may be

motivated to reach out in their communities as well.

I encourage everyone to read about the work that God is doing in Uruguay through the work of Gustavo Vergara. He is the pastor of the church started by Arnie and Sally Selfors in Montevideo, Uruguay and has now started a ministry in a local jail using BCF material.

As always, you can read an update from Karen Bodeutsch, our office manager and testimonies from inmates around the country of how PMA has impacted their lives through our lessons. A brief article also reminds readers of the ongoing need for literature to include with our mailings to the inmate students.

Enjoy this issue of *PMA Outreach*!
In His Service,

Don



Reaching Out by Reaching In



I minister to inmates incarcerated in the Newaygo (Michigan) County Jail twice a week using PMA Bible studies along with other dispensational studies in the Old and New Testaments. We are seeing clear evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit impacting the lives of many of the inmates.

At this time, Vanessa, Mary Lou, Ina, my wife Regina and I correct about 300 Bible studies each month. Each Bible study covers an entire book of the Bible. We have received many comments from inmates that these studies have opened the Word of God to them in a clearer way than they have ever known before. They have said that now the Bible truly makes sense to them and they love studying God's Word (Eph. 3:2-4).

We know why they are experiencing this joy in the study of the Scriptures. When one studies the Word of God according to its distinctive God-given programs then the Holy Spirit can illuminate the beauty of the gospel of the grace of God. We thus can clearly understand the calling, responsibilities and blessed hope for the Body of Christ.

Our God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33), but confusion runs wild when we do not teach sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to the trust of the Apostle Paul and is now committed unto our trust (1 Timothy 1:3; 10-11, 6:20-21; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; 3:10-12).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." For this reason we support and encourage the ministry of PMA.

PRISON ECHOES.....

This Bible study has increased my understanding of what being a Christian means to me. Thank you for sharing your knowledge of God's word with me. I look forward to the next Bible study.

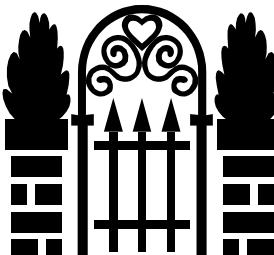
Jaqueline—Pennsylvania

So far this has been the most enlightening study you have offered. Never before did I know of the dispensations. I eagerly look forward to every study you send. Thank you.

Ron—Wisconsin

Thank you so much for the Bible. I just wanted to let you know I received it. I also wante you to know that I am enjoying the Bible study I'm doing through PMA. Thank you again for the time you take to make the Bible studies available

Roy—Texas



I really enjoyed reading the lessons. I am excited about getting a clear and better understanding of the Bible.

I am so happy that you offer correspondence Bible lessons (BCF), I am ready to start the course as per your program. Thank you and may God bless you all.

Stop!! Don't Throw Those Bulletin Inserts Away!!

PMA needs unused literature that might just be thrown away after it has been distributed to the congregation.

When we mail new lessons to inmates we are able to send them at standard rate postage, which means we can put 3 ounces in one envelope for around 18 cents. The lessons weigh barely over an ounce and we then stuff the envelope up to its weight limit with valuable Christian literature.

PMA can use any sound Christian literature that weighs about 2 ounces or less and can fit into a 9"x6" envelope.

Examples of what we need:

- Bulletin Inserts such as: *Power for Living, Focus on the Family, Have a Great Day.*
- Devotional Booklets such as: *Our Daily Bread, Amazing Grace*
- Booklets, pamphlets and tracts that meet the size and weight criteria.

If you can help us out, pack up the literature and mail it to the PMA office.

Meet the Board of Prison Mission Association Minne VanDerHoek, Board President

Minne was born in the Netherlands and immigrated to the U.S. in 1963 and began dairy farming near Riverside, California. Through the ministry of Pastor Bob Petrovich he came to understand the message of God's grace. In the early '60s PMA founder, Joe Mason, moved the ministry from Arizona to California. Minne graciously offered one half of a duplex house he owned to PMA to use for its ministry office and at the same time joined the board of PMA. In 1978 Minne and his family moved to Sumner, Washington and for a number of years did not serve on the PMA board. When Vernon Bigelow became PMA director in 1990 and transferred the headquarters to Western Washington, Minne again joined the board of PMA as president and has served in that capacity ever since.



Minne has been married to his wife, Trudy, for 40 years and together they have three grown children.

GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

This is the seventh in a series that examines references to prisons and prisoners in the Bible. This time we will look at the prophet Jeremiah and find out how his commitment to preaching the words of the Lord landed him in prison on more than one occasion.

Jeremiah's ministry lasted over 40 years, beginning in 626 B.C. during the reign of king Josiah and ending some time after the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 B.C. During much of that time Jeremiah was in captivity because he insisted on preaching the words of God rather than what men wanted him to say.

During the time of Josiah, Jeremiah was a trusted confidant and advisor to the king. That changed dramatically however, after Josiah's death. During the reigns of the next four kings of Judah (Jehoiahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah) Jeremiah was either in prison or in danger of being put in prison. He was imprisoned not for being a wrongdoer but for saying what needed to be said. He boldly proclaimed, as a prophet of God, that Judah had allowed herself to drift away from the laws of God and that they would be punished through the invasion of the Babylonians and the destruction of Jerusalem.

The leaders of Judah did not want to hear Jeremiah's message. They wanted to hear that God was going to give them victory and deliverance from their enemies. Rather than heeding the warnings of the prophet they chose to disregard them and persecute the messenger because of the message. Consequently, Jeremiah was either imprisoned or restricted at least eight times during his ministry.

Jeremiah's plight teaches us that often those that choose to obey God and to say what needs to be said in the face of opposition often suffer as a result. It is in direct contradiction to those that

would say that when people put their faith in Christ they should no longer suffer or experience problems. The Apostle Paul reminds us that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12.) God's message is often in direct contradiction to what the world wants to hear.

Peter, the primary Apostle to the Jewish Christians, explains that being beaten or imprisoned for the sake of Christ is a blessing (1 Peter 3:16-17). Peter's epistle is primarily directed to believers that will endure the great tribulation on earth that will take place after the rapture of the church, the Body of Christ. It is a time when all those who are willing to identify themselves as Christians and stand up for him in opposition to the authorities of this world will be persecuted in a way never before experienced.

To some extent we can all expect some type of opposition as we stand for the truth of God. Most likely we will not be persecuted to the extent that Jeremiah was or as the tribulation believers will be. We may be mocked and ridiculed, perhaps ostracized and ignored. We must be willing to accept this type of "low level" persecution with the same resolve that Jeremiah had when he stood face to face with those that would do him great harm.

Jeremiah is often called the "weeping prophet" because he had to deliver such a horrible message of destruction and judgment on Judah. However, he was not just a messenger of gloom and doom. Jeremiah was able to look beyond the death and destruction and see the day of hope and restoration for the nation of Israel. Many of Jeremiah's prophecies picture a glorious restoration of Israel as the Messiah returns to establish his reign of justice and righteousness upon the earth. We, as members of the Body of Christ, also have a "blessed hope" that allows us to see beyond the evil and degradation of the world around us and fix our eyes upon the glories of our savior that will soon appear in the clouds to call us to be with him.

THE SPANISH SIDE

SELFOR'S UPDATE

PMA's Spanish language ministry is coordinated by **Arnie Selfors** in Largo, FL. The following shows the impact that their ministry has in the Hispanic community here in the US and in Latin America.

We wanted you to rejoice with us as we have seen God working in the prisons. Did you ever think that the Lord was in prison also? William Gonzalez and I have been going into the Federal section of this prison for about two months now and have had an average of ten men every Tuesday at 1 PM for an hour and a half of study. Please pray with us for these men, we have had three make decisions to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior. William has been great and freely gives his testimony, for you will remember that he is the one God permitted me to reach for the Lord about 35 years ago in Bolivia. Just maybe there is another one like him here that the Lord will lead us to. Pray!!

Now we have been given the opportunity to open another class in Maximum Security. There have been 12 requests from prisoners to begin this class, so we are praying that in August this might become a reality. Pray!!

Good news from Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay. Gustavo Vergara, our lay pastor, has become part of our expanding work of Prison Mission Association (The Spanish version is called Berean Bible Studies, or EBB) in South America. A prisoner, who had found a piece of literature INSIDE the prison with our church's name and address, called and asked for his help.

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Prayer & Praise

Praise— For the successful revival at the Washington Correction Center in Shelton. The Lord was active in every step of the preparation and throughout the weekend as every event took place with no major problems.

Prayer— For the spiritual growth of those that made decisions during the WCC-Shelton Revival. This is a crucial time for new and recommitted believers to become seriously involved in Bible study and to find strong Christian fellowship in order to grow in their walk with the Lord.

Praise— For faithful volunteer correctors that make it possible for us to process our Bible Correspondence lessons. The devoted servants review each answer on every lesson mailed to the PMA office, over 200 lessons each month.

Prayer: For families of inmates that suffer financially, emotionally and spiritually .

Praise: Spanish literature donated. Thanks to RBC ministries and an individual who made it possible for us to get 2250 booklets to be sent in prison.

Prayer— For more volunteers willing to help PMA as pen pals and prayer partners. We have many more requests from inmates for Christian pen pals than we can ever meet. We also have a prayer ministry in which we send the prayer requests of the inmates to those that commit to praying for those needs.



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KAREN'S KORNER

“It’s all about you Lord!”

There are times I wish you could sit at my desk and read the mail I receive. The last page of our lessons has a space for questions or comments. Most all of the lessons have the space for comments filled out.

I know God is using the ministry of PMA to change the lives of men and women around the world. Every person who volunteers their time to correct lessons, every person who gives to the ministry and every person who faithfully prays for us has a part in God’s eternal reward (Philippians 4:17).

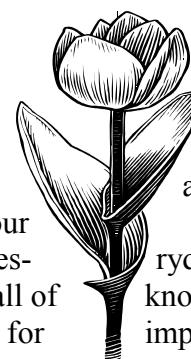
Words cannot express my joy in being a part of where God is so clearly working. Let me share some of the notes I have received lately.

“I thank my God always for you and your support of me in my walk with Christ. These teachings of Bible truths are the Light in which I walk in a cold and dark prison.”

“I welcome the opportunity to learn from your lessons the world of God. Though I am incarcerated here at Cumberland, I count it all joy in Christ that I am here because out of His chastening of me, he brought me back to His family of faith.”

“I was in the world, now I do my time more peacefully and with hope that He who began a good work in me will complete it to the coming of our Lord.”

“Very good Bible study! It



showed me how far off the mark I am in being a baby in Christ. I also found several verses I had sought for a while. God bless you!”

See what I mean? Everyday I am encouraged by the knowledge that PMA is not just imparting knowledge to prisoners, but is the instrument of God in changing their lives. I think I have the most wonderful job in the world!

By God’s Grace,

Karen

Karen Bodeutsch is the office manager at PMA's headquarters in Port Orchard, WA

PMA Materials Can Help Your Ministry

The Bible study lessons that PMA has developed over the past 50 years of are not just for prison ministry. This material can be valuable training tools for Sunday School classes, small group Bible studies, evangelistic outreach, youth groups and a variety of other ministries in the local church.

All of our material is designed to be used by anyone. The lessons can be reformatted and the logos and contact information can be changed to that of your church or outreach ministry.

All our lessons and studies can be accessed through our website:
www.pmabcf.org. You may also contact the PMA office to receive the lesson on CD



Prison Mission Association

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Gustavo went into the prison, met José, led him to the Lord, and now he goes weekly. José has now led another to Christ, and there are 22 people enrolled in the lessons, not only inside the prison there, but also different church members, two of whom are doing the lessons on the internet, for they are now living in USA. PRAISE the LORD. Gustavo now has his own copy machine, office and people helping him correct the lessons. This is such an answer to our prayers for extension. God is SO good.

The following is a translation of a letter received from a Hispanic inmate and shows the impact the Spanish correspondence lessons have had.

I greet you with a beautiful passage from Scripture: 1 Thes. 5:23. "May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

By means of this letter, brethren, I wish to express my thankfulness for your lessons, they are very very important for my life. I plead with you to please keep sending them to me, more and more Bible studies, for my own spiritual growth. Certainly you have heard of the old proverb that says 'Give a fish to a hungry person, and you will satisfy his hunger for a

moment. Teach that person how to fish and you will give him the ability to satisfy himself for life.' Brethren, that "soul" that is hungry is mine. I am hungry for the Word of God. If you instruct me through these lessons, I will be able to help out others for their own spiritual growth.

I was born in Iguala Guerrero, Mexico. I have a life sentence without parole in this prison, but that is nothing. Do you know why? Because I am HAPPY, brethren. I have Christ in my heart, and because of His love, mercy and grace, I am FREE spiritually, and am living in His kingdom and there is no pain, adversity or testing that can overshadow my joy that now lives in my heart because of His Son, Jesus Christ. Now I can understand why I did not die in the electric chair, and have been BORN AGAIN in order to SERVE my Savior, and even though I have lost my whole family, I feel the most privileged amongst all men that now I have a GREAT family in God. I can now say that my family is ONLY those who love God and are truly doers of His Word.

Brethren, I wanted to share my testimony with you, so that you can know that I love God and with His love I can do all things, that love so pure with which He loved us first. Gloria be to God, Your "hermano en Cristo"