

PMA  
**Outreach**



Volume 11 Issue 1

The Newsletter of Prison Mission Association

FEBRUARY 2005

# PRISON MISSION ASSOCIATION 1955-2005

At the age of 23 while living the life of a vagabond and riding freight trains around the country, Joe Mason was led to the Lord. He describes that moment in this way:

"I was a university dropout, a man with a drinking problem and many other bad habits. It was when I heard Clyde give a personal testimony in a meeting one evening that I came to realize that my life was a mess. It was a life of deep sin, and selfishness, without time for any interest in our Lord Jesus Christ. So it was in the evening of November 4, 1933 I made the great decision – that is, I turned my life over to Christ to use as He wished, whatever that may be."

Several years later, while working in Albuquerque, NM Joe began visiting jails and prisons to share the gospel with inmates. Later he felt led to receive ministry training and studied at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA). While in Southern California his daughter died of polio and Joe and his first wife, Helen, left school and moved to Weatherford, TX, where Helen's parents lived. While in Weatherford Joe again started visiting county jails to share the gospel and teach the Word of God.

When one inmate was asked if he believed he had eternal life he responded "no" because he could not do the things promised in Mark 16, specifically speak in tongues, handle snakes and drink poisons. This bothered Joe and Helen considerably and they felt if they could not respond to that issue that they should get out of prison ministry altogether. One Sunday, however, Joe and Helen visited a small church in Mineral Wells, TX. They were amazed to hear the pastor, R.B. Shiflett, teaching a Bible lesson on the signs of Mark 16. Joe had never heard the explanation that Pastor Shiflett was giving to this passage, that those signs were part of a program that God had designed for the nation of Israel and that with the Apostle Paul God began a new, previously unrevealed "dispensation" in which the gospel of salvation by grace alone went to all men, Jew and Gentile alike, and that the signs were no longer necessary. Joe couldn't accept these teachings immediately but he committed himself to study these concepts more thoroughly. When Joe realized

the truth of the Pauline revelation he embraced it with an enthusiasm that few others have experienced.

The divine encounter at the Mineral Wells church took place in 1954. A year later Joe was led to organize a ministry dedicated to reaching prisoners for Christ and providing sound biblical instruction based on the principles of dispensational truth. That was the beginning of Prison Mission Association, which for the past 50 years has gone on to reach out to tens of thousands of souls, inmates and non-inmates alike, with the life-giving message of salvation and the soul-freeing truth of God's grace-centered program for the Body of Christ. PMA has never wavered from Joe's original vision and commitment.

After several years in Texas PMA moved to Phoenix, Arizona and eventually found a home in Riverside, California where Joe was able to recruit a number of volunteers to assist him in the ministry. It was here that the outreach of PMA expanded considerably. PMA continued to send out correspondence courses and continually were adding more lessons to their curriculum. From the Southern California office Bibles and Bible study literature were sent to thousands of inmates around the US and throughout the world.

During the years in Southern California many people worked with Joe in the PMA office. Among them was Ken Parker who served as the Associate director from 1972-1974. Tim Heath who also assisted Joe in the 1970's.

Besides lessons and Bibles, one of the most powerful ministries that Joe had was through personal correspondence with inmates. It is said that at one point Joe would dictate as many as 600 letters a month, each with a word of encouragement and hope for the recipient. The Pen Pal Fellowship ministry was so important to Joe Mason that he continued writing to inmates long after he retired from the work as director of PMA. Until very recently Joe was still busy writing letters to hundreds every month.

Joe Mason retired as the director of PMA in 1991 and today he and Ada live in the Phoenix area. In our next issue of the PMA Newsletter we will look at PMA's impact since 1991.

## A Note from the Director

2005 represents a major milestone for Prison Mission Association. This year we are celebrating our 50th year of ministry. How exciting it is to be a part of this special time! PMA is one of the oldest continuously active ministries to inmates in the United States. God has graciously blessed our outreach for the last half century and we expect Him to continue to do so for many years to come.

We are recognizing our golden anniversary with articles and special features that highlight the history of our ministry. You will also see on the opposite page a set of pictures which show images from almost 60 years of Joe Mason's life and ministry. We will continue this theme as well in our next newsletter in which we will focus on PMA's work since 1991 when Joe retired as director of PMA.

This issue also features a testimony by Pastor Lynn Dulakis, who serves as chaplain at the Macon

County Jail in North Carolina. Lynn is a longtime friend of mine. He was the person responsible for much of the spiritual training of my wife, Susan, when she was a young Christian attending the Community Bible Church of Wittenberg, Wisconsin where Lynn was pastor.

We continue with the eighth study of prisons and prisoners in the Bible. In this issue we examine the life and ministry of John the Baptist who continued to seek Jesus even while in a Roman prison cell.

You can also read about the exciting outreach that Arnie Selfors has among English and Spanish speaking inmates in Florida.

Enjoy this issue of PMA Outreach!  
In His Service,

*Don*



## Reaching Out by Reaching In

2005 started off with a bang. No it wasn't the fireworks that you could see exploding around the county, but it was happening in the detention center. No it wasn't an attempt to escape by blowing a hole in the wall. It actually started last fall with a sixteen-year-old girl, Melanie (not her real name), facing a possible life sentence. I first met her last fall. The woman who teaches the women's Bible study each week had told her

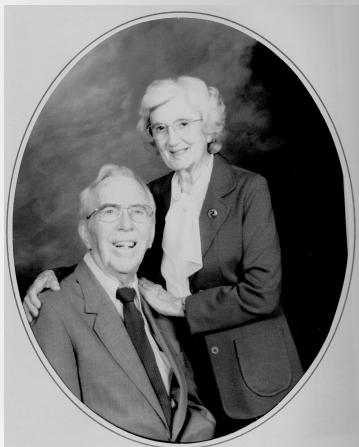
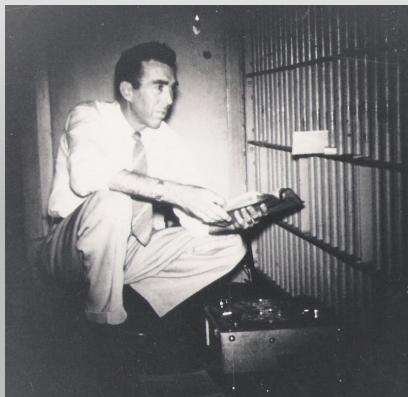
that she could speak to the chaplain if she asked. It broke my heart when I realized that she is only two years older than my granddaughter. She had rededicated her life to the Lord through the circumstances that caused her incarceration. With tears in her eyes she asked me to pray for her. She didn't ask me to pray that she would be released, but to pray that her faith would remain strong. I prayed with her then and have done so every week since. Unlike a lot of folks that I have known, Melanie was not content to sit on her faith. She has influenced almost everyone in the female unit of our center. Last week on Wednesday her roommate, Brittany (another pseudonym), asked to see me. She had been incarcerated, waiting trial, for some months but had never asked to see the chaplain. Brittany told me that she had run the largest meth-amphetamine lab ever busted in our county. She said, "I have never been a religious person." I told her that I

didn't care about religion myself and asked questions that gave me the opportunity to share with her that Jesus died for her sins and she could be saved by trusting Him right there and then. With tears in her eyes, she trusted Christ to save her from her sins, in a concrete block interview room of the Macon County Jail. She was set free. I don't know what consequence will come from our government's judicial system, but I know about God's judicial system, and Jesus paid it all. There are presently six women and four men who are actively involved in the PMA correspondence study course. Gene and Bev Lynn grade and correspond with each one. God is at work and I'm just happy to be a part of what He is doing.



**Pastor Lynn Dulakis**  
Sheriff's Chaplain Macon  
County North Carolina

# Memories from the Early Days of PMA



## Meet the Board of Prison Mission Association Marv Roosendaal—Treasurer



Hi, my name is Marv Roosendaal. I currently serve as a PMA board member as its treasurer.

I was born in Pease, Minnesota and lived with my grandparents until the age of five. They were God loving people, who in my childhood helped me understand the meaning of 2 Timothy 3:15. I was 15 when I moved to Washington State with my parents. It was then that I really better understood (through the teaching of my uncle, Pastor Robert Roosendaal) the word of God rightly divided and the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ and His finished work on the Cross of Calvary.

My working career of 44 years was spent with an electric utility in the State of Washington until retirement in 1995.

My wife Bette and I live in Silverdale, Washington. We have been married for over 51 years and have three grown children who also live in Washington. We are members of Grace Bible Church in Port Orchard and have attended there for over 15 years. I count it a privilege to serve as your representative on the board as we seek God's will for PMA. Thank you for your continued support.

# GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

This is the eighth in a series that examines references to prisons and prisoners in the Bible. This time we will look at John the Baptist and how he never wavered from his commitment to proclaim righteousness despite dire consequences. The story of John the Baptist can be found throughout the gospel records, but the clearest description of his imprisonment and execution is in Mark 6:14-29.

The life of John reinforces a theme that is repeated throughout the scriptures: how the godly are often persecuted and mistreated for taking a stand for what is right.

John was the fiery preacher who was called by God to "prepare the way of the Lord." He preached throughout Judea and Galilee for Israel to repent, turn to God and be baptized. At the time of John's ministry Herod Antipas was the "king" of the region of Galilee. This Herod was the son of Herod the Great who ruled at the time of the birth of the Lord Jesus. Herod the Great had another son, Philip, who was married to the beautiful Herodias. At some point Herod Antipas decided that he would like Herodias as his wife, something forbidden by the Mosaic law (Leviticus 18:6). Since Herod was at least trying to give the appearance of being a Jew (he went to Jerusalem for the Passover at the time of the crucifixion of the Lord) it was to be expected that he would be rebuked by a prophet such as John.

Herod was angry that John was openly preaching against his immoral behavior and so he had him thrown into prison. He did not want to execute John

because he was revered as a prophet by the Jews in Palestine. This is a good example of how prisons were used in the ancient world. Unlike today in which incarceration is used as a form of punishment, jails were commonly used by kings and rulers to keep political troublemakers from stirring up the people to rebellion without creating martyrs.

While in prison John was allowed visitors. We read in Matthew 11:2 that he sent some of his disciples to inquire whether or not Jesus was the awaited Messiah.

The king was not the only one offended by John's bold and forceful denunciation of his sin. His illegitimate wife, Herodias, was so infuriated that she wanted to see John dead. Her chance came when Herod threw himself a lavish birthday party and had his stepdaughter perform a seductive dance for himself and his guests. He was so carried away by lust and drink that he promised the young girl that she could have anything she wanted, up to half his kingdom, just for the asking. After consulting with her embittered mother she returned to the king and requested to have the head of John the Baptist delivered on a platter. Herod was forced to honor his promise since he made the statement publicly in front of his many guests.

Like so many heroes in the scriptures such as Joseph, Daniel, the three young Hebrews, Jeremiah and others, John the Baptist would not allow the threat of persecution, imprisonment or even death deter him from serving God with bold conviction. What is more, we can see that

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## 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.*

"God works in Mysterious Ways, HIS wonders to perform." It is always so interesting to see how He works. We have had quite an exciting time in our Tuesday English Class (and Bible Study....what began as English classes has grown into a Bible Study also, where we use the Bible Correspondence Fellowship lessons in Spanish from PMA). Without looking to reach out to the English speaking men, we soon found two or three in our Spanish group. One young man, Tony, is a very sharp Christian. So it turns out we teach Spanish to the English speaking, and English to the Spanish speaking...figure that one out. Thankfully we don't have a time limit. Now these Americans are asking for a time for themselves, so the Lord willing, we begin another session on Saturday mornings, sort of like a discipleship class or mentoring, as I will be able to take in different men with me to share in this responsibility. God is so good. We amazingly have received personal letters from men and women in 17 different states...we have no idea how many more are doing lessons from other states, plus 5 countries. We have prisoners from our small jail group here, who are now in about 15 different locations in Florida who are also receiving and doing the lessons....and they in turn all seem to get others going on them too. We have seen several young men come to Christ in these past couple of months, and we rejoice in the Lord for this privilege. Continue to pray for these who

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*God's Perspective continued from page 4*

John never lost his zeal for the Lord even while he was in prison. Even in chains he wanted to know more about the Lord Jesus and his ministry. So much so that he sent his disciples to find Jesus in order to get more information about his identity and the significance of his ministry. We see that John did not spend his time moping about his circumstances and feeling sorry for himself. Even in the dark, cold prison cell he wanted to know more about the one that would be his King and savior. Such should be our attitude so that we can say with the Apostle Paul that we long only to know Christ and the power of his resurrection

*Spanish Side continued from page 4*

are growing in the Grace and Knowledge of our Lord. God is good.

God willing, in April we hope to go to a Latin Leadership Conference in Bolivia, and on our way, stop off in Uruguay. We will then be able to see first hand how the BCF work is going in the prison there, as well as many others who are also doing these lessons.



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# KAREN'S KORNER

I'm so grateful to be a part of this wonderful ministry that is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

My first encounter with Joe Mason was in 1971 at the Altoona Bible Church. My husband, Cal, was the youth director there at that time. Joe came the for annual missionary conference. It was evident to me that Joe loved the Lord with all his heart. He had an energy about him that had to be of God. He loved to witness and he loved memorizing Scripture too. I know he made quite an impact on the church and in many lives.

Every time I read the comments from students written on our lessons I see Joe's vision of Bible corre-

spondence courses to men and women in prison, rightly dividing the word of truth. I am so thankful to God for Joe's endless enthusiasm, love of God and love of His Word. Thank you Joe! We love you and praise God for the plan He had for Prison Mission Association.

by God's Grace,

**Karen**

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

*"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6 NKJV).*

## ***Literature needed!!***

PMA needs 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.

## **Praying for inmates: an important ministry that anyone can do.**

Each week the PMA office receives requests for prayer from inmates. Typically these are requests for the well-being of their families, for spiritual strength and power to be testimonies for Christ in their circumstances.

We wish to honor these petitions for prayer and we want to have as many believers as possible interceding on their behalf. To do this we have set up a system to send these requests to individuals that are willing to commit to bringing them before the Lord. This does not involve writing to the inmates, in fact you will only receive first names and no addresses. You are simply asked to pray.

To learn more about the PMA Inmate Prayer Ministry, contact the PMA office.



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# Shelton Revival 2005

July 15-16, 2005

Every inmate that enters the state Department of Corrections goes to the Washington Correction Center in Shelton before being sent to a more long-term facility in which to serve their sentence. This is, for most inmates, their introduction to prison. It is a time when they are fearful, confused, uncertain, and open to spiritual truth.

For six years Prison Mission Association has been invited to organize a massive evangelistic revival at WCC – Shelton. The event provides a unique opportunity to reach the inmates at a strategic time with the gospel of salvation and the opportunity for them to experience new life through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Shelton Revival coordinates around 100 volunteers that interact with inmates using music, drama, preaching and personal contact to present the gospel to the inmates at the WCC. The highlight of the event is the demonstrations by the Freedom Team, a group of power and strength performers that use their skills to communicate the power of Jesus Christ to bring freedom from spiritual bondage. The revival reaches more than 1500 inmates and previous revivals have seen more than 400 people receive Christ as savior or recommit their lives to Him. This year we will have two special follow-up days in which each inmate that requests counseling will be individually contacted.

We can use your help!! If you can arrange to be in the Western Washington area during July and would like to help as a volunteer for this event please contact the PMA office for further information.

This event costs around \$2000 to organize. If you feel burdened to help support this ministry please send your gift to PMA with a note designating that it is for the "Shelton Revival."