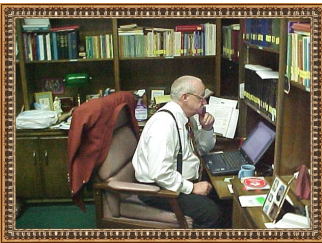


Prison
Ministry

Freedom Through Truth

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2011

From the Pen of Chaplain Baggett



New Challenges

So much is going on that it's difficult to just focus on one particular activity. The great work being done in the Honor Dorm continues, with so many volunteers devoting time and effort to this work. Now we are approaching the time for our bi-annual meeting of NLB. Martel Pace and his team have done an excellent job arranging speakers for this very important event. We are thankful to the University Church for making their facilities available .

Occupying a large part of my time away from Limestone Correctional is the work that is under way with Project Rescue. We are so happy that Ronnie and Jeannie Crocker have moved the operation to the Tennessee Valley, right here in Alabama. At the present time negotiations are under way for a great facility in Morgan County. It is our hope that by the time this paper is available for the public, that these plans will be finalized.

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We already have residents in Alabama participating in this program. Ronnie and I will be contacting congregations throughout the southern states, setting up appointments with elders, to discuss this work and ways that you can be involved. Above all, we seek your prayers as this work moves forward.

Martha and I will be looking forward to seeing many of you in Montgomery for our NewLife Behavior of Alabama meeting. See you there!

(Charles E. Baggett, Beltline Church of Christ)

From Behind the Fences

At the beginning of your sentence you count up. Toward the end of your sentence you begin to count down. But in between hopefully you have worked through your problems, and completed programs that resolved all of the turmoil in your life. Me? I've completed all that the state had to offer, and then some. I've even earned a degree or two ... but more than anything what helped was having a strong Christian presence in my life. Church life matters. Especially because I was an addict.

People that look at me now wouldn't recognize me from my days of drugs and alcohol. I took every pill I could get my hands on, smoked what I could smoke, and drank what I could drink. I guess I should tell you that I became a member of the Lord's church in the late seventies - and still had my addiction problems. Eventually I found I simply couldn't overcome my addictions on my own - and having nobody willing to help (sometimes understandably)

It isn't enough to KEEP you sober. To remain sober, there has to be something that you want more than you want drugs or alcohol. There has to be a reason to STAY sober that over-

- I ended up in jail, and finally prison.

Here in prison I found a program that helped. It was the one that the state offered. But the key component in my recovery was the Bible. Sure all of the other secular things helped. But I found that it isn't enough to simply want to be sober. It isn't enough to KEEP you sober. To remain sober, there has to be something that you want more than you want drugs or alcohol. There has to be a reason to STAY sober that over-rides all else. And that something else has to represent a standard that is rock solid, that won't fail, and that won't change. I'd like to say that my family could be that, but most of them chucked me away years ago. But God didn't. I fell - but he was always there to pick me up. I failed - and He was there to forgive me and receive me back. More than that God was there to provide a WAY back. And because of that, I am now celebrating my 27th year of sobriety.



More than that I teach others how to stay sober, and to refuse the cravings that come with a life of addiction.

Sometimes the church is really good at meeting the needs of others. But meeting some needs aren't so popular. Going to help a nation that an earthquake hit, or that a hurricane devastated is something we all can understand. Providing medical missions in faraway lands, or being a missionary in a jungle ... these are more popular ways of providing the needs of others. Sort of like that benevolence program that provides for the poor. People that do these things should be com-

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:38)

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mended for obeying God. Helping drunks get sober, or helping drug addicts come down off their high? Not so popular.

And yet there are brothers who are stepping forward to help addicts in the church, and sometimes outside of the church. Freedom Through Truth is working with Project Rescue Recovery Program to meet this growing need, that often has a blind eye turned to it. They will need the prayers of every single Christian on this monumental effort. Not many can claim that their lives haven't been touched by someone in their family with a drug or alcohol problem. Secular recovery centers abound. But can any of us search our hearts and say that there is any better healing than the one God gives?

Here is the truth: Addicts have to be given not only a VISION of recovery, but also a VALUE system commensurate with a life of recovery. And then they have to be given a VEHICLE of recovery.

Here is the truth: Addicts have to be given not only a VISION of recovery, but also a VALUE system commensurate with a life of recovery. And then they have to be given a VEHICLE of recovery. That vision of sobriety is what gives them hope, the values they learn in the Bible give them the power to overcome, and the support group in the church is the vehicle that helps them move through life *staying* sober. Pray with Freedom Through Truth about this undertaking - and help if you can.

May God bless all of you in the coming year. *(Preacher, LCF Church of Christ)*

I Hope I'm Standing Close By When God Judges Clyde!

Most of you don't know about Clyde Thompson. A friend of mine, Don Umphrey, wrote the story of his life. Titled it the "Meanest Man in Texas" or something like that. Seems Clyde killed a man and went to prison. And while in prison he killed several more. He was so feared that they locked him in the prison morgue in solitary confinement for years. Not wanting to provide him with potential weapons, prison officials forced him to eat with his hands. He would wake at night to the tickling sensation of roaches and mice eating the crumbs and grease from his fingers.

But something happened to Clyde. He found Jesus in that morgue. Studied the Bible correspondence. Even married the woman who dutifully sent those courses. And emerged from prison a changed man. When I met him, he was a minister to prisoners touching hundreds of hearts with the saving message of Christ.

For it's not the way of our world to look past a single, glaring mistake and certainly not a multitude of errors. Yet, that's what God will do for those who seek Him.

I hope I'm standing close by when God judges Clyde. I want to see the expression on the faces of those around him when the story of his life is told. I want to feel the sense of justice and indignation rise as they hear of the men he killed. And I want to hear the incredible gasp that will escape their lips when pardon is granted.

For it's not the way of our world to look past a single, glaring mistake and certainly not a multitude of errors. Yet, that's what God will do for those who seek Him.

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I sit with people on a regular basis who want to judge someone else based on a single act. It doesn't seem to matter what good they have done or what amends have been made. One wrong is sufficient to condemn. And nothing will ever change that position.

The biggest barrier to getting along with others is the inability to forgive. Don't get me wrong. I believe that consequences should follow our actions. Penalties and punishments are appropriate consequences. Withholding forgiveness is not.

"Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times? Jesus answered...' Well, you know what Jesus answered. (Matthew 18:21-22 NIV).



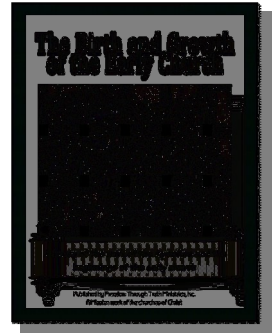
(submitted by Bill Edwards—Madison Church of Christ)

"I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me." (Matthew 25:36, NKJV)

Freedom Bible Institute

Freedom Through Truth has just completed its latest study book in the Freedom Bible Institute series. This latest installment is pictured here. Its primary focus is the book of Acts, though the history of the early Christian church is covered.

Those who have not taken advantage of our studies may feel free to contact us for a CD with our complete set of books, which includes complete survey studies through the Bible, studies on Islam, The Joy Filled Life (*death and dying*), Romans, Proverbs, and Judges. This complete set was over fifteen years in the making, and has been a joy to compile for your benefit.



COMING IN THE FALL: *"The Unveiling—A Study of Revelation"*

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: " (Acts 10:34)



Baptisms
at Limestone
Correctional Facility
For 2010 — 264
For 2011 to date — 20
Tracts Distributed — 347
Prayer Requests — 44

UPCOMING EVENTS:

**NewLife Behavior Network of Alabama
Annual Prison Ministry Workshop**

FEBRUARY 18th—19th, 2011

*Hosted by the University Church of Christ
Montgomery, Alabama*

Contact Martel Pace at:

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**39th Annual Prison Ministry
Conference
Louisville Kentucky
June 8-10, 2011**

Hosted By:

**Midwest Church of Christ
2115 Garland Avenue
Louisville Kentucky, 40211**

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