

# Set Free Prison Ministries

*Rehabilitation by Regeneration*

If the Son Sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:36

*Since 1971*

*Merry Christmas &  
-Happy New Year -*

Dear Friends:

*December 2019*

We would like to wish you a wonderful Christmas and a blessed New Year. What a joy it is to remember the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ - and to have Him as our Lord and Savior is even greater joy!

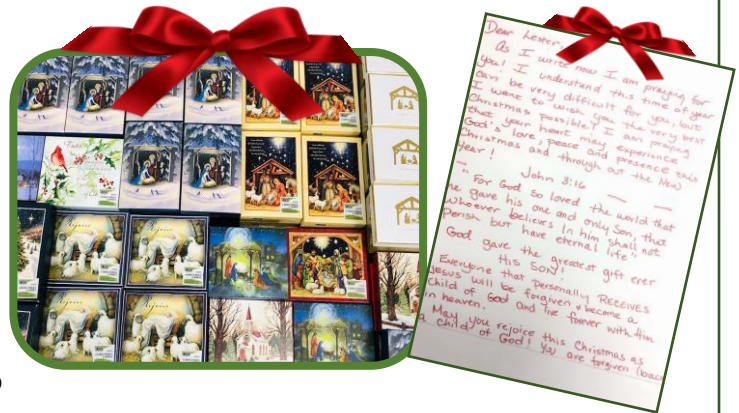
Even though this is a very special time of year for most, it is not for those in our jails and prisons. In fact Christmas time is, by far, the most depressing, lonely and most difficult time of year to be incarcerated. You can almost cut the gloom and tension with a knife.

Over 80% never receive a letter or visit from the outside world. This year, we were so blessed to receive a donation of 12,000 Christmas cards from Heart Gift Ministry directed by Helen Haidle in Oregon and the Robert Keck Family in Riverside, California. **This has enabled us to launch a major Christmas Card Outreach Project to encourage our students.** Our goal was to brighten their Christmas and let them know they are not forgotten and there are those on the outside who really care about them. And most importantly, our goal was to share God's love and the true meaning of Christmas.

In the beginning of November we began mailing blank Christmas cards to our students which would enable them to send a Christmas card to their family or friends. **Over the past seven weeks, over 9,000 cards have been mailed to our students who are in hundreds of jails and prisons all throughout the United States. Additionally, we were able to have over 2,000 Christmas cards personalized and sent directly to our students.** Volunteers from Rock Church in Northern California and Magnolia Church in Riverside, along with our 140 graders, poured out their hearts and precious time into this project to be a blessing to others. Everyone shared the Gospel. Many wrote and emphasized, "Christmas is a birthday and God is saying to you- I love you!! He demonstrated His love by sending His Son to be our Savior.

Personally receive Him and you will be forgiven and become a child of God. I have prayed for you today so that you may experience God's love, peace and presence this Christmas and throughout the coming years." We are so encouraged by our wonderful volunteers for their outstanding labor of love who ministered to the Lord as they reached out to the lonely and those beaten up and beaten down by life.

Please pray that the Lord would use this special effort to encourage, bring hope and love to our students. Most importantly, pray for the lost to open their hearts and receive the greatest gift ever given- Jesus Christ.



**SPECIAL THANKS** to Amy, Bob, Carol, Deanna, Falinda, Harold Heidi, Keith, Oralia and Serena for coordinating the Christmas Card Outreach Project. Also our Set Free 140 volunteers, all of them are a great blessing from the Lord.

In May of last year, Al Stoltz, the Prison Ministry Director of Emmaus International, graciously invited me to take part in a prison ministry conference in Dubuque, Iowa. He asked me to share with those directing prison ministries in various states how the Prisoner Correspondence Course Ministry began. Our time at Emmaus was a very special time!

A year later, this past May, Al and I attended a national prison conference for jail and prison chaplains at the Billy Graham Center in Wheaton Illinois. At our display table we acquainted prison chaplains and others involved in prison ministry with our curriculum. Many excellent contacts were made.

Earlier this year I asked Al if he would be willing to develop a postage-paid Emmaus enrollment card for Set Free to distribute to our inmates. **We have over 4,500 active students completing our courses. Additionally, monthly we mail "Today in the Word" to over 1,600 inmates. It is an excellent daily devotional published by Moody Bible Institute.** Al thought that was a great idea. While I was writing this letter, Al texted me that Emmaus has received 3,842 new enrollments already this year. We are both rejoicing and the inmates are truly the big winners. They are now receiving Bible courses from two of the finest curriculums in print. It's amazing how much can be accomplished when we work together in love and cooperation.

**The last part of October we were blessed by a visit from Al Stoltz and Louis Dooley. Our staff and volunteers enjoyed meeting them.** Louis was incarcerated and serving a life term + a 100 year sentence in a state prison in Missouri. He was saved in prison and started studying God's Word through Emmaus Correspondence Courses with Set Free Ministries in Missouri. After serving many years in prison, he was miraculously released! He has been a full-time worker for many years and is conducting Bible study classes several days a week at Cook County Jail. He also speaks at churches, youth groups and high schools. He has an amazing testimony and a gift in sharing the Gospel. He wrote a book, "Prison Saved My Life," which was published by Emmaus International. It has been a great inspiration to so many.



**For us, the most exciting highlight of the year was the 1,836 inmates who responded to the Gospel and made professions of faith while completing their Bible courses. To God be all the glory! (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)**

Set Free is now in its 49th year and is truly the Lord's ministry. Every day as we operate a 100% free ministry to the destitute is a real miracle. All that has transpired and the many blessings of 2019 are because of the prayers and the Lord's provision through His loving people. **In my last newsletter I asked that you would pray that we would be able to close 2019 in the black, which would take a real miracle. We are so grateful to the Lord for each of you who prayed and those who have already lovingly sent gifts to help us reach that goal.** We still have a significant gap that needs to be closed, but great progress has already been made. We are very encouraged and would value your continued prayers to our miracle working God.

Thank you for your partnership in the furtherance of the Gospel. Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and the Lord's blessings on you and your loved ones as we enter 2020!

Because He Lives,

Phil Wagner

2 Corinthians 9:8  
1 Timothy 1:16



Al, Louis and Phil

## **I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU CAME TO ME. Matthew 25:36**



These study courses have made me realize that even though I have done wrong in the past, I can still turn to God. I can be saved. Thank you for providing this study course. A lot of questions I've had in the past about God have been answered simply because of this particular study, "The Good News" by William McDonald. I cannot thank God enough for sending this study my way. I have received Jesus Christ as my Savior after this study. James / Corcoran, CA

Thank you Set Free Prison Ministries for your Bible study courses. During the study of these lessons I have received the Lord Jesus as my Savior. I got baptized last night (11/25/2019)! Thank God for these studies. They are very helpful. Thank you all. Stony / Marianna, AR

I would like to thank you for your time and not giving up on an old Believer like me. I really enjoy doing these Bible studies. I would rather fill my time and my mind with God's Words than with all the bad around inside here. Thanks! Robert /Hopkinsville, KY

Thank you for sending me these booklets. The Word of God has had a ripple effect at this facility. I am in a cell on a block with five other people. There are six cells in a block. I am in Cell 3. I was occasionally talking with a guy in Cell 2 about the Word and the conversation was pleasant. I tried to pass the Word to Cell 5, but he wasn't ready. Later, he was dealt some adversity and was looking for answers. Along with Cell 2, we pointed him to the Lord. He caught fire and started studying the Bible everyday. Then Cell 4 joined in and pretty soon after Cell 6 was jumping in too. We all celebrate the Word of God because we could see in such a short period of time, how powerful God's Word can be. I used my study booklets to create a study session for other inmates. God's Word has truly taken root here because almost everyday we have deep study sessions on the Word. Just a few weeks ago, the conversation was very worldly, but at last, God's Word prevailed. I thank you for these booklets and the opportunity to study His Word. Your efforts are bearing fruit. God Bless. Peter / Clayton, MO