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HOW MANY translations and paraphrases are there of the Bible? Nobody knows. William Tyndale's New Testament (three to six thousand copies), printed in English in 1526, was the basis of all English Bibles *until after World War II!!* Only 3 copies are still in existence. The last known copy was auctioned by Sotheby's in 2015 for 35,000 pounds (\$44,000 USA). The prior owner paid 25 shillings for it in a secondhand bookshop in the 1960s (\$1.25).

The Catholic Church objected to Tyndale's work and had him strangled to death and his body burned at the stake. Tyndale must take great solace as he stands observing from the golden strands of a Far Better Place today, knowing an estimated 900 versions are now available in English.

And Wycliffe Global Alliance states that translation is currently going on in 3,283 languages in 167 countries!

That explains why what you help us do in the prisons is of such great importance! When someone behind bars - or even in the "free" world - holds a Bible in

his or her hands and opens it, that person holds the key that opens the door to eternal life!

"When asked, 'What is more important: prayer or reading the Bible?' Spurgeon replied 'What is more important: breathing in or breathing out?'"

"In our prayers we talk to God; in our Bible study God talks to us; and we had better let God do most of the talking." — Dwight L. Moody

"It ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it's the parts that I do understand." — Mark Twain (Note: It's called "conviction.")

"The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly." Soren Kierkegaard (Danish philosopher)

"The Holy Scriptures are our letters from Home." Augustine of Hippo

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"WE go from Malachi to Matthew in one page of our scriptures. But that one piece of paper that separates the Old Testament from the New Testament represents 400 years of history - 400 years when there wasn't a prophet in Israel, 400 years in which God's voice wasn't heard.

"And that silence was broken with the cry of a baby on Christmas night." Louie Giglio

The 23rd Psalm is like a list of the good things the Lord has waiting for those who follow Him. So many blessings that - as David put it - his “cup” could not contain them all, it “runneth over.” This woman is a new Christian looking for help in filling her “cup:”

“I’m currently incarcerated in the County Detention Center. I recently accepted Christ in my life. . . . and am looking for any material or literature that may be able to help me strengthen my faith and knowledge and give me a better understanding of my every day reading as I continue to enjoy my new walk in life with Christ by my side. . . . God bless every thing that you do. . . .”

This man is in a federal penitentiary. He not only asks for books but even volunteers his assistance, if needed, while he is incarcerated:

“Greetings, I understand your ministry provides free books to prisoners. Would you please send me a list or info about your services? Also, please advise how I may assist your ministry from inside. I have 8 years remaining, and I have a bachelor’s degree in religious studies. My address is. . . . Thank you.”

Some people read magazines; others read their local newspaper. I’m reading the San Quentin News. Yup! A long-time inmate and VOT “client” recently requested another book and brought us up to date on happenings there by sending us a copy of the prison’s own newspaper. This edition is 16 pages long! Originally built to hold 250 men, *SQ now has 700 just on Death Row!!* Somewhat ironically, its official name is now San Quentin Rehabilitation Center.

Remember the man who asked us for a military family bible last month? Well, guess what: I came across one in my favorite online Christian bookstore last week. And it was in the “80% Off” section! (I love sales!) Of course I ordered it; we received it; and it’s already on the way to him. God is good!

Unexpected requests must run in pairs because yesterday we received another such letter. This inmate wants a special bible. God willing, we’ll find one in another “sale” section--

“I am hoping to get a copy of the NIV Daily Chronological Bible. . . . I am using one from

the chapel right now and am hoping to get my own copy. Thank you for your ministry and the wonderful work you do to spread God’s Word. God bless you!”

It’s a blessing to be able to help them all, but some really pull at my heart strings:

“I pray that at the time you read this correspondence you’re found with good health and great blessings from our Father. I have recently been imprisoned for 15 years and reached out to the chaplain for a Bible. The one I had in County Jail had to be sent home per regulations. They said I could ask for one at my next facility. They did however provide a bookmark with your information. So I want to say thank you and ask if I could please have a bible, books and another bookmark to share with others like myself, and any other literature you could share with me. It’s nice to know I’m not alone. You give me hope to continue with my scriptures. I am truly grateful and appreciate any and all that you help with. Thank you so much. Stay blessed.”

God's love, grace and mercy are exactly equal to the distance between the east and the west. You can never get to the end of either of them.

Lines of communication no place travel faster than within a prison. Gene once told me that inmates who "tested the system" in a prison where he was located learned they could get a brand new story from one end of the prison to the other within three minutes---

*"To Whom it May Concern,
I heard from a good friend of mine that you may be able to give me a bible. If so this is my mailing information Thank you. . . ."*

Of course, the prison Chapel is the best place to get "good" information:

"I received a book and another on 2 Samuel through our prison church. It had your address in the inside cover and said 'for free books and Bibles' to write you. I already have a bible but if I could get more books I would be very appreciative. I don't know if you do or not but I could use a composition book, dictionary and/or a concordance. But again anything is greatly appreciated. God bless y'all for what y'all do for us."

His name, by the way, is Levi. You might be surprised to know how many prisoners have biblical names. I suspect many parents may have been Christians, but their children grew up in a world that has taken them far from their upbringing.

His "thank you" card looks home made, but he always sends a note to say he appreciates the things we send to him - ongoing for nearly a dozen years. Needless to say, he's serving a long sentence:

"Hello there! Hope and pray all is okay and your day is going well! Guessing your new year is going well! Thank you for the great calendar for 2024 sent to bless me. Very kind of you! Prison buses have been coming in like crazy [bringing in new inmates] to keep us full to overcrowded. Anyone who says prison population is down doesn't live in here. Take care. . . Prayers are coming your way. In the love of our Lord Jesus. . . ."

For forty years Israel wandered in the wilderness between Egypt and the Promised Land because of their lack of faith. Though God never left them, and even provided food and water and safety for them, an entire generation literally walked away from Him. *Is this not what so many are doing today?* Those who are locked away in prison, beyond many of the world's "attractions," sometimes have a better chance of finding the pathway "home" than do those who walk the streets freely. And it gives us an opportunity to remind them of the words of Isaiah 30:21.



We're happy to send this woman in prison not only books, but several extra bookmarks, knowing she needs them to pass them around:

"Hello, and God bless you all. I was informed you can provide books for prisoners. If you can I would love to receive any books you can send please. Bookmarks, too, if possible."

This verse appears on our bookmarks for prisoners: “Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free. With the Lord on my side I do not fear. What can man do to me? I thank thee that thou hast answered me and has become my salvation.”

CHAPLAINS’ CORNER

This is another chaplain who says his work is not a job, “*It’s a calling.*” He’s writing to thank us for our last shipment, and to let us know they could use some more good stuff, such as:

“Hi, Dorothy. . . We received the shipment and appreciate the books, periodicals and journals that you sent. If you can continue to send the journals and address books, we appreciate it. We have a shortage of writing material for our classes, and if you have access to anyone who would donate Daily Bread, it would be a blessing. Another thing is that we need King James and New King James Bibles. Thanks, Ronnie”

I think the Bible itself is thrilling enough. But this chaplain asked me for a few hardbacks in a particular Christian fiction series. If he can’t get the inmates to read the bible, he said, he can get them to read popular Christian fiction and perhaps develop a curiosity for what “the real Word” has to say. Well, any which way we can! I pulled out the ones I had tucked away and included them in the boxes.

An email just arrived from a chaplain we haven’t heard from recently. He writes:

“Ms. Neill, Greetings, I would love to receive any donations that you may have for me this quarter! I would love to receive some notebooks as well! Blessing. . . .”

Note: Bibles and books are on their way - all 3 boxes weighing over 100 pounds!

Another chaplain (I know he is precious in the Lord’s sight) called to let us know - in his words --“*I received the books, the study books, the bibles, some really good books.*” When I asked if he could use anything more, he pounced! Smile. “*Study books on Acts and I Corinthians and any other books of the bible. . . .*” He even described the color of one book an inmate had already made off with. “*Teal green and yellow,*” he said, “and books by Knight. I’ll make sure they all get in the right hands!” Quite a job when you’re chaplain over two large units.

There was a time when all the chaplains in men’s facilities were men themselves. But not so today. I just spoke with a very nice woman who is one of two female chaplains in a large adult male facility in the northwest. The original building, constructed 150 years ago, disintegrated over time and has now been replaced with a facility that houses over 1500 prisoners. “*We can always use bibles, she said, and a few books would be appreciated.*” Boxes of each are on the way.

Although this next facility serves as a typical county jail, it not only holds “locals,” but also serves as an immigration jail. This means inmates come and go like a revolving door. They are held for a few weeks, and then they are picked up and transferred by U. S. Marshalls (if they’re U. S. citizens), or by Immigration officials if they are non-citizens. The Sgt. in charge sounded like the busy man he is, but he took time to talk to me, ask what we offered and requested a couple of specific items to meet the needs of their ever-changing population. Since the inmates are allowed to take the books or bibles they are given at the jail along with them when they leave, there is always an ongoing need for more of each!

As you've probably noticed, convicts will sometimes tell us about their plans for the future. Of course, we all do the same thing: Even New Year's resolutions are "plans" for the future. We plan to go on vacation, or to change jobs, or go back to college or get married (or divorced). Even when it's just wishful thinking, and we know it, we still day-dream. (Remember, Gene and I also sat in the prison visiting room making plans for the future that never materialized.) I wonder how many of us have ever asked God, *"What do YOU want me to do?"* *How sweet those words must sound on our Father's ears!*

It reminds me of the conversation between GOD and the prophet Isaiah:

"Then Isaiah heard the voice of the LORD saying, *'Whom shall I send and who will go for us?'*" And Isaiah instantly replied, *"Here am I! Send me."* (Isaiah 6:8) *No wonder Isaiah was one of the greatest prophets in the Bible!*

God is still calling today. Still seeking people "who will go for us." For Him, for His Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for being one of those!

Work for the night is coming,


Dorothy and Family

HERE ARE SOME OF THE PRISONS TO WHICH YOU HELPED US SEND BIBLES AND BOOKS AGAIN THIS MONTH:

Shawnee Correctional Center, Vienna, ILLINOIS
Sampson County Detention Center, Clinton, NORTH CAROLINA
Deer Ridge Correctional Inst., Madras, OREGON
San Quentin Rehabilitation Center, San Quentin, CALIFORNIA
Anchorage Correctional Complex, Anchorage, ALASKA
Reeves County Jail, Pecos, TEXAS
Ester Unit, Pine Bluff, ARKANSAS
Pueblo County Detention Center, Pueblo, COLORADO
Coffee Creek Correctional Institution, Wilsonville, OREGON
Holmes Correctional Center, Bonifay, FLORIDA
Riverbend Maximum Security Inst., Nashville, TENNESSEE
Kentucky Women's Correctional Inst., Pee Wee Valley, KENTUCKY
Ohio Correctional Reception Center, Orient, OHIO
EWCC Female Facility, Taft, OKLAHOMA
USP Hazelton, Bruceton Mills, WEST VIRGINIA
Jackson Correctional Institute, Malone, FLORIDA
Monroe County Jail, Madisonville, TENNESSEE
Two Rivers Correctional Inst.. Umatilla, OREGON
Quachita River Correctional Unit, ARKANSAS
Broward County Jail, Ft. Lauderdale, FLORIDA
Duel Vocational Institution, San Joaquin, CALIFORNIA
Knox County Jail, TENNESSEE
Los Angeles Central Jail, Los Angeles, CALIFORNIA
Huttonsville Correctional Center, Huttonsville, WEST VIRGINIA



GENE NEILL
Founder

THE VOICE OF TRIUMPH

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~ DATED MATERIAL ~
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT

Exodus 1:15 thru 12:33

GOD'S WAYS are not our ways. He's a whole lot smarter than we are. Remember when: PHAROAH told the Egyptian midwives to *kill all the male Hebrew babies when they were born lest the Hebrews overrun Egypt*. When that didn't work, Pharoah said, *"Throw all their newborn sons into the Nile."*

But the Hebrew mother of little Moses put him in a floating basket and placed it near the banks of the Nile. How was she to know Pharoah's daughter would come along and rescue Moses from the waters and raise him in Pharoah's palace?

What mockery! Pharoah says, ***"KILL THEM ALL!"*** Kill all the Hebrew baby boys! **And God says,** *"You do, and the only one you really have to worry about, I'll save and raise up in your own house, right under your very nose. You'll feed him at your table, dangle him on your knees, give him the best education and elevate him to royal status. And when he's all grown up, he'll leave for a while. But one day he'll return to your palace, and through him I'LL KILL ALL OF THE FIRST BORN SONS OF EGYPT! INCLUDING YOURS! NOT ONE WILL BE LEFT ALIVE!"* ***And so it was.***

We are not wiser than God. Whether we are in prison or out, if we have problems and give them to Him and really trust Him, in time He'll turn them around and make them a blessing. **Mark 5:35-36**