
★ McCracken Memo ★

ATHENS, GREECE

MAY/JUNE 1993

Dear Friends and Partners in Ministry,

The following are excerpts from letters we've received from prisoners in recent months...

"Right now it is so difficult for me to concentrate on many things. I am scared to death of what will come of my court. If I could only go back in time and change things. But I know I cannot. So I wait for the punishment." Later, she was sentenced to 15 years, and she wrote..."Every night (before my court) I read my Bible and prayed, and asked for God's help. But yet I feel like He has left me. I stood in court and I felt so alone. Is it because I did something so bad in His eyes? ...I'm trying so hard not to lose my faith and hope. Please tell me some sections of the Bible to read that may help..." (from a 22-year-old American girl who later met Jesus in prison)

"I will be going for my parole in September, '92...for four years now I have not seen my children or parents...I am hungry to go out to preach the Word of God and tell people of His wonderful saving power..." (a Nigerian man, still in prison, who came to know Jesus while incarcerated and wants to become a pastor when released)

"I want to thank you for the books you sent me last time. It helped me a lot, especially Joni. This is my worst time in prison. I am depressed because of the outcome of my court. What I expected is not what I got due to the mistake of my casemate... I will be expecting you on the 8th... I must talk to you about something that is disturbing me too much, I don't sleep anymore and I have nobody to relate to except you..." (a young man from Nigeria)

"Thank you for responding to my letter with such a dynamic sermon which can even knock off Lucifer himself. I really understand every word... I will be glad to receive any other materials which could revive my faith..." (a man from Barbados, in response to a Gospel message)

"I am now in the psychiatric unit of the prison, receiving therapy due to my illness done to me by the South African Apartheid Police... they really hurt me by giving me doses of unknown injections each day, and it has affected me badly so that without using tablets I am not myself and become nervous and weak in the body with severe headaches... but since I have given myself entirely to the Lord Jesus Christ I am really getting on fine with my health... I feel happy today that I am in the Lord Jesus Christ and also He is in me..." (a young South African man who met Jesus in prison)

"Do you know how many days and nights I cry for being in here? For any and every little sin I do, that I'm aware of or not aware of?"

Many, Scott, many... Thanks for being there... Thanks for your ear, your shoulder, and your understanding..." (a young American man, sentenced to 22½ years for two counts of attempted murder and two counts of attempted robbery)

"Sometimes I blame God for allowing me to be in prison, and sometimes I thank my God... When I was outside I enjoyed myself and did all sorts of things without thinking much about God. But this prison has given me the opportunity to come closer to my God..." (a young Nigerian man)

Including requests for Bibles, Christian literature, stamps and stationery, magazines, reference letters, cassettes, radios, notebooks and other things the following questions are typical of what we often are asked by prisoners:

"How can an all-powerful and all-loving God allow so much suffering in the world?"

"Who was Cain's wife?"

"Which Church is the true one?"

"What is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues?"

"What are the spiritual implications of heart transplants and brain transplants?" (not a real typical question)

"What are the 'secret things that belong to God'?"

"Is masturbation a sin?"

"Is it wrong to fight in a war?"

"Why doesn't God help me change when I keep begging Him to help me?"

"What does the Bible say about ghosts?"

"What does the Bible say about prisons and prisoners?"

"Was Paul and Saul the same person?"

I normally defer all the tougher questions to Vicki.

Please pray for us as we continue to bring liberty to the captives, through the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit. As you can see, we really need your prayers.

Your partnership in this ministry through your prayers and/or financial gifts is GREATLY APPRECIATED!

In the Vine & in the Vineyard,

Scott & Vicki