

Email Letters from Marie

July, 2007

Dear Email Friends,

This was sent to a 19-year-old inmate at Orange County Women's Jail.

My Fellow Sojourner,

What a wonderful age to awaken to your need for God. I was 46. I had everything the world had to offer. Drugs, alcohol, etc. were not my problem. My need for Christ to change my life was my problem and also yours. When I met Him, as painful as His awesomeness and purity was, His beauty of truth and righteousness compelled me to Follow Him.

My old life with my sweet children, faithful husband, nice house, etc., all became a shadow. Ah, sweet mystery of His wonderful breath of life. My life took on a purpose. I was never depressed or lonely again. My heart was filled with His wonderful reality. Suffering with Him became my bread & butter as I joyfully gave up me and took on He.

He didn't pamper me. As a matter of fact all my game playing and manipulating and lust had to come to an end as the light of my old world dimmed and finally went out and I began to shine forth with His glory.

If you love me, you love Him and will throw yourself into His protective arms. If you acknowledge Him in all things, He will direct your path. Make Him your new addiction. Read this to your bunkies. Study the word and die so He can live.

Your fellow sufferer and rejoicer,



Marie Kolasinski

Josh's letter to pen pal inmate Tony in prison.

Dear Tony,

My name is Josh. I received your letter you sent to Piecemakers asking for Words of Life book 1, and a pen pal. I consider it a privilege to be your pen pal. First off, forgive me for

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my late response. I've had your letter a few days now and I'm finally "making" time to write. Your letter touched my heart. The despair you feel will soon come to an end. The Bible tells us to "acknowledge Him in all things, in all ways, and He will make your path straight." Prov. 3:6 I can't even begin to imagine what you must be going through right now, but now is the time to lean on the arm of the Savior, our Savior, Jesus the Christ. Opportunities like the one you are faced with right now sometimes only come around once in a lifetime. I'm talking about the opportunity to humble yourself, seek His face, trust Him with all things, change from your ways, and forge on into the unknown. (Read 2 Chron. 7:14).

I want to share with you about my prison. I am in a prison without walls, a prison of my choosing. I have been walking with the Lord for about 15 years now. I was, and in many ways still am, an addict. I was addicted to the world and all the things in it, sex, drugs, sports, gambling, you name it. I was addicted. I finally learned that nothing in the world satisfies. I thought to myself, This is it! This is all the world has to offer? There must be something more? Well, that something turned out to be Christ. I was fortunate that I didn't have to look that far like some people do. Piecemakers was always there for me, but I wasn't always there for them, or God for that matter. So in a nutshell, I went from being a prisoner of the world to a prisoner of the Lord. Everyone is in some type of prison, not all people know it though. Some prisons lead to death, and some lead to life. I'm not trying to minimize the prison you are in, I'm trying to relate to you the best I can. I am unable to go where I want to go, do what I want to do, with who I want to do it with and so on. I'm trying to become His will, and to become His will, we must give up our own will. Much easier said than done. Anyway, in short, that is my prison. I'm not trying to preach to you, I want to try to help you through this time in your life if I am able. I have learned a few "gems" while on this walk through hell, and that's just it. We walk through it, not around, but through. Your simple letter taught me a great lesson. I take so much for granted, and I get lost in feeling sorry for myself for several stupid reasons. The things that really matter like helping one another, lifting the burdens of those who are unable, going beyond self, etc. Your letter helped me put all in perspective. So thank you for that Tony. I pray this letter finds you praising God, for today is the day that the Lord hath made, for you. So praise Him and the spiritual prison walls will crumble. For no one, no man will be able to steal your joy of the Lord. That is what I want for myself and for you. I am not there yet either, but I am trying. God bless you brother and I look forward to hearing from you.

Josh

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Debbie's letter to pen pal inmate in prison.

Hello Linda,

I am so sorry I have not gotten back to you before this. The job level here has been tremendous. My job here is to pay the bills, computer work, etc. Now with all the letters coming in from jails and prisons, Wow!! I finally had to share my wealth and let two of the other girls help me out with it all. It's wonderful what is happening there at Live Oak and Chowchilla. We also get a lot of mail from Orange County Jail. Let me give you a little background of how this started.

To start the story I have to go back 30 years when I met Marie Kolasinski. Her heart was and still is sold out to God completely. She has been such an example to me all these years I have been walking with the Lord. She shows us how extreme God can go, but there is always joy at the end with our selves gone and replaced by Christ. It is not an easy trek, but it's so worth it.

Now onto how the prison/jail "fire" got started. Piecemakers has always taken a stand against the laws of the government that are ridiculous and choke the businesses and people. Needless to say, the government agencies don't look too kindly at that. We had a little tea room here at the store where we served sandwiches, soups and drinks. Nothing fancy, just good home cooking! Well, the Health Dept. started coming in and wanted us to change a lot of things here (3 sinks/hole in the kitchen floor/sneeze bar/mop closet sink changed — we don't even use it, etc.) None of these things pertained to cleanliness. In fact, they told us it had nothing to do with that. The kitchen and tea room are kept so clean you can eat off the floor. Each time they would try to come in and inspect we would not let them in. Well, they finally got fed up with it October 25, 2005.

On that day around 11:30 a.m. we were raided by District Attorney Police, Inspectors, Costa Mesa Police (probably around 25 total.) They had on bullet proof vests, guns like we were some big threat to them. All we are is a Country/Quilt store trying to serve the people stay in business. We of course were not making it easy for them. One inspector started putting in thermometer in the soup on the stove and Marie tried to take it away from him. The Police officer grabbed her and said, "that's it." He pushed her out the door and they arrested her for assaulting an officer. To let you know, Marie was 84 years old at the time, 5 feet tall and could not assault anyone. They also arrested Doug and Judy who were charged with the same. We got them out on bail and a trial date was made. We went to trial on January 17, 2007. Right off the bat you knew that the judge hated God. She was awful to Marie. Made her feel like she was scum of the earth. All because she was standing up for what is right on running your business without government interference. The trial lasted about three days (with a jury) and they were found

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guilty. They were told by our lawyer that if they took probation they would not get any jail time. So they agreed. They stood in front of the judge and agreed to probation. She gave Marie 10 days in jail and Doug and Judy 30 days CalTrans service. So she totally lied.

You could tell she despised Marie in all she stood for in Christ. So they took her off to jail (luckily she only served seven days). They had her in the infirmary (she had pneumonia). That is where she met the girls that she calls her angels. After she went through the loop she arrived in the infirmary around 3:00 a.m. and the girls went crazy. They said they just had an angel arrive. They started doing prayer sessions, seeking Christ in their lives, reading their Bibles and really gleaned from Marie's life. There was one particular girl in there named Donna. She ended up going to Chowchilla and that is how it all started there. And from there on — it is history. Needless to say, we are still standing against the government's ridiculous laws. I love that bumper sticker that says, "I love my country, but fear my government."

I hope I'm not rambling on. Also I hope you don't mind me typing this. My brain works faster than my hands, so typing it helps.

How are things going for you? Your letters are wonderful. It sounds like God so has His hand on your heart. What can go wrong? Even in the darkest times remember that He is there for you. I love that poem that shows one set of footprints in the sand and we wonder why only one set — God where are you? And He says, "that is when I was carrying you."

I will contact your son and give him some encouragement. Know that his life is also in God's hands. Keep him in your prayers and his life before God and He will take care of him.

I hope to hear from you again soon.

Debbie