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January 2012

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take.” Proverbs 3:5-6

We have never been ones to make New Year’s resolutions but these are good verses to meditate on as we begin a new year. We won’t go wrong when we trust the Lord, seek His will and follow through in obedience.

During November, Larry spent four days ministering at the prison in Malvern. He made a visit to Texarkana Work Release and the Tucker Unit in Tucker, AR. We went on the Swamprider’s Toy Run the Saturday before Thanksgiving. On Thanksgiving afternoon, we had a phone call from a young man we ministered to in the Arkansas prisons. He lives in Louisiana now and called to tell us his wife had led him in the sinner’s prayer the day before Thanksgiving. It is a blessing to get calls like that. The day after Thanksgiving, we spent the morning in Texarkana, TX picking up Ramen noodles, hot cocoa, cheese crackers and Starlite mints for the Christmas sacks. Darryl loaned us his enclosed trailer again this year so we had it and the ministry’s Suburban loaded down. In years past, we made several trips to Texarkana getting these items but this year we wanted to try to get it all in one trip to save time and gasoline expense. As we were loading up, I reminded Larry about the time a few years back that he was out of town and I had to pick up an order of Christmas goodies at Sam’s Club in Texarkana. I got in the Suburban shortly after 6AM and it wouldn’t start. The only other vehicle we had was a Mustang convertible. I asked God to show me how to get everything in that little Mustang and even though I am not good at packing, everything fit in the car.

Larry left at 2AM the morning of November 30 to make the 300 mile trip to the Little Debbie store in Gentry, AR. Little Debbie donates boxes of snack cakes to several Arkansas prisons each year at Christmas. The plan was for Larry to pick up the cakes and drop off the majority of them in Little Rock on his way back home. He had an exciting day to put it mildly. He has made the trip before without any trouble but this year he was picking up a much larger order which of course meant more weight. Larry was concerned about the load but he was reminded of something Rollie came up with before one of his surgeries. His saying was ‘I’m not worried because God’s got my back’. About 2:00 that afternoon, Larry called to tell me he was broke down on Interstate 40 between Ft. Smith and Russellville, AR. He had a blow-out on the trailer and his cell phone battery was almost dead. The phone charger he thought was in the Suburban wasn’t there. He called our friend Danny in Russellville for help. Before Danny could get there, God sent a man by the name of Don to help. Don told us later that he didn’t usually carry his high-lift farm jack with him but for some reason he put it in his truck before he left home. Don did time in the prison in Angola, LA but now he is a born again believer. They were able to lift the trailer up enough to change the tire. This was certainly a divine appointment. Larry’s cell phone kept working so rather than try to make it on to Little Rock with all that weight, he was able to make arrangements for vans from the prisons to meet him along the interstate and offload their snack cakes. He finally made it to Little Rock at 8:05PM. We appreciate our friends Dewey and Susan giving him a place to stay that night.

The chaplain’s Christmas party was Friday evening Dec. 2 in Pine Bluff. The following day we were going to the Maximum Security Unit in Tucker, AR to help hand out Christmas sacks.

Tucker is about 30 miles from Pine Bluff so we decided it would be easier to stay in Pine Bluff Friday night. I started calling motels and was getting frustrated at the high prices. They all wanted to know if we had AAA, AARP, etc. I thought to myself 'what kind of discount does a servant of the Most High God get?' I called the LaQuinta Inn, explained why we needed the room just like I had done at the other motels and asked the price. The man on the other end told me his name was Paul, he was a believer and he would give me the best rate in town which he did. Thank you Lord! We had a wonderful time at MSU the next day. The men in general population came to the chapel to get their Christmas sacks which gave us the chance to talk to them briefly and wish them a Merry Christmas. Larry was able to go to the infirmary and to some of the ad seg barracks to deliver the sacks to the men. The chapel praise team did an excellent job playing praise and worship music along with Christmas songs.

The Toys for Tots Christmas run in Texarkana, TX was Dec. 11th. It was sunny and 28 degrees when we left our house that morning but it warmed up and they had a good turn-out. The following Thursday Larry spent the day at the prison in Malvern helping distribute their Christmas sacks. On Saturday morning, Dec. 17th we took Christmas sacks to the 128 men at Texarkana Work Release and Regional Maintenance. That afternoon, we met our friends "Heavy" and Alice at the Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy (ALETA) in Camden, AR and delivered sacks to the 15 men there. One of them told us he had just used his last sliver of soap so he was happy to find a bar of soap in the sack. We left Camden and drove to Pine Bluff for a service and Christmas sack hand-out at the women's prison. There are 350 women at this unit and there must have been 300 or more at the service. One of the women who gave her testimony was a former resident of that prison. She is now helping women when they go home. We prayed with some of the ladies during the altar call; one was worried about her mother's health, another had just lost her uncle in an accident, one asked how to be sure she was saved. We saw groups of young women praying and crying out to God together. It was a very touching service and we were glad to be a part of it. The ladies were given two sacks after the service, one with hygiene items and one with food items. We went to the Department of Community Correction in Texarkana, TX on Christmas Eve to hand out their Christmas sacks. There are 475 men at this unit. On December 21, Larry, Darryl Fox, Billy Wellman and I took Christmas sacks to 86 prisoners at the Hempstead County Jail in Hope. I know the 6 women that I visited with appreciated getting the sacks and the time of fellowship and prayer.

We mailed 88 Christmas cards to prisoners and also made sure the prisoners at Hempstead County Jail, ALETA, Texarkana Work Release, and Cummins Unit in Grady, AR had Christmas cards to send their families. We set aside 10% of the money we receive during the year for outreaches like the Christmas sacks but we would not be able to reach out to as many prisoners as we do each year without your support. Whether you sent a special check just for Christmas or donated a pair of socks or a bar of soap, we want you to know we appreciate you. We believe that God can use those Christmas sacks to reach someone who might think that no one cares about them any more. With your help, we were able to buy Ramen noodles, hot cocoa, cheese crackers and Starlite mints for over 5,000 prisoners at 10 different units and the county jail. The prisoners at 4 of those units also received a date book, a bar of soap and a pair of socks.

We are looking forward to another year in the ministry and will be meeting with our board members this month to make plans for 2012. Our newsletter is mailed out to over 300 people every other month. We realize that not every one can help financially but we are in need of more individuals and churches who will commit to give each month. If your church wants to know more about our ministry, please call or email us. We would be glad to meet with your pastor or come to your church and talk about our ministry in the prisons and at the motorcycle rallies.

In Christ's Love,

Larry & Kathy