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“Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He has chosen as His heritage.” Psalm 33:12 The Amplified Bible

Today is July 4th, Independence Day. As believers, we know that true freedom comes from the Lord and our relationship with Jesus Christ. As Americans, we should be thankful for the men and women who have given their lives to keep our nation free. America was founded on Godly principles. I wonder what our founding fathers think about the condition our country is in today?

We have had a busy two months since our last newsletter. Larry ministered at the Ouachita Unit in Malvern, the Tucker Unit in Tucker and Texarkana Work Release Center in Texarkana, AR. He was at the Ouachita Unit on graduation day for the Arkansas Correctional School System. They had a record eight hundred ninety-three graduates this year. He also spent a couple days helping Mr. Petty punch out cross pennies. On one of his lunch breaks, he met Steve, a young soldier who was on his way to Arizona on his motorcycle. Larry said they had a good talk about the Lord and we’ve had a couple emails from Steve since then. We made a trip to Ellis Grove, IL over Memorial Day weekend. It was good to visit with family and friends that we don’t see very often.

Our rodeo/revival at the Delta Unit in Dermott, AR had to be rescheduled to June 10-12 because of the flooding in that area. Larry and some of our team members went in on Friday afternoon to work the barracks and we had a chapel service on Friday night. We were back at the unit at 7AM on Saturday morning to take the motorcycles out on the yard. There weren’t enough team members to do the bike games so we visited with the men and gave rides around the yard to those who wanted to ride on the back of the bikes. There’s an older black man who makes it a point to find Larry as soon as he gets outside so he can go for his ride around the yard. The only shade we had was a small pop-up canopy that we brought with us and it was hot that day especially in the afternoon. They let four of the barracks come out in the morning and the other four after lunch. This was the first time in over a year that the administration allowed four barracks on the yard at the same time. You might recall that our fall rodeo/revival was cancelled last September because of problems at the unit. Praise the Lord everything went according to schedule while we were there. We also spent some time ministering in the barracks on Saturday. We never know what we will be up against in the barracks. Some of the men are genuinely glad we are there, are eager to talk to us and come to all the services. Some are too interested in what is on television to even notice we are there and there were a few who wanted to argue about the Bible. One of them told one of our team members that the God he serves is a myth. One of the men we met when we first went to the Delta Unit ten years ago is going home this month. We are rejoicing with our brother Clyde and know that God will continue to use him outside the prison walls. We had the opportunity to pray with another resident that was recently diagnosed with cancer. We had another service on Saturday night and ended the weekend with a Sunday morning service. All in all it was a good weekend and we look forward to going back in October. They are in the process of setting up a faith-based barracks at this unit, which will be a great program for the men there.

We left on June 18th to spend the week at the Sparks America rally in Sparks, OK. Larry went to their fall rally last October and we decided then that we would go back in June. We camped with

a group of CMA members. This was their 10th year at the rally. They give away ice water, Gatorade, tea and coffee as well as Bibles and tracts. The men helped work the gate and the group also cooks three meals a day and feeds the other gate workers and security staff. After spending one hot, sleepless night in our Bunkhouse camper, we went to the Wal-Mart in Shawnee and bought a small air conditioner. During the day there were several large fans going, one with a garden hose that sprayed a nice mist of water. That became a pretty popular spot in the heat of the day. Larry met Tony who owns the property and hosts the rally. We found out Tony was being taken to court by a man who used to help sponsor the rally. Tony owes him some money and now as we understand it the man wants the property instead of the money. Some of the group we were with knew the CPA who is handling this for Tony and we got together the evening before the court date and prayed. The court ruled in Tony's favor. We're hoping that Tony will see God's hand in this and will make some changes in his life. Tony's wife Margaret had torn the ligaments in her knee and was facing surgery. Tony mentioned this to one of the men in the group and asked for prayer for her. Amanda, Jerre and I went to their house and prayed and visited with Margaret one evening.

Since Larry had been at the rally last fall, we knew this was a pretty wild rally with a lot of nudity and partying going on. A couple of young ladies who were walking around topless stopped by the tent to get something to drink. Larry said he felt like one scantily clad couple was trying their best to embarrass him and then invited him to eat breakfast with them. Who knows what their motives were but it could be they just wanted to see how we would react. We had a chance to get to know some of the vendors during the week. One of the vendors had his pet duck Aflac with him. Larry enjoyed feeding him watermelon and other leftovers. At the end of the week, he told Larry if he ever needed a duck sitter, he would call us! Another vendor was celebrating her birthday during the rally so one of the ladies in our group baked a cake for her. She was really surprised to get a homemade cake with candles and a birthday card. Larry struck up a conversation with Tracy, a vendor who makes his living doing woodcarvings with a chainsaw. He is very talented and some of his pieces sold for several hundred dollars. We found out that he did time in some of the same Illinois prisons that Larry was in. One night around midnight Larry, Ed, Amanda and I were sitting at camp talking. A man named Roger came up and sat down next to Larry. He had a bottle of water in his hand but had obviously been drinking something other than water. He said he was saved but he asked a lot of questions. When he left, Ed invited him to breakfast the next morning and told him we would have a Bible study. Ed told us that Roger shows up at their camp every year and they have almost the same conversation every time. Roger knows what he needs to do but just can't seem to do it. It was a hot, dusty week but we enjoyed it and know that there were some seeds planted.

We are going back to Teen Challenge in Hot Springs, AR on July 16th. We'll have music, testimonies and fellowship during the afternoon and eat supper with the men. The weekend of July 29-31 will be our first visit to the women's prison in Pine Bluff, AR. Larry is planning to leave for bike week in Sturgis, SD on August 4th. We had decided not to go this year because we want to go to the 1st Tucker Bike Weekend at the Tucker Unit in Tucker, AR on August 13-14. But Larry was asked to do the Sunday morning service at One Eyed Jack's Saloon in Sturgis on August 7th again this year so he will be out there for the first part of bike week. We're excited about being able to get back in the Tucker Unit and the service at One Eyed Jack's Saloon. I think that covers what we have done the last couple months and what our schedule is for July and August. Praise God gasoline prices have gone down but we still need your financial support to help fill up the tank and cover other ministry expenses. Your prayers are important too. Thank God that people will give so that we can continue to go and thank Him for giving us the energy to keep going out and sharing the Gospel with whoever will listen.

Blessings,

Larry & Kathy