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“For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.”  
Galatians 5:13

We will be celebrating Independence Day in a few days. Amid the cook-outs and fireworks, let’s not forget to thank God for our freedom and for those who have given their lives to keep our country free. I doubt that anyone who is a believer is happy with the direction our country is headed. It’s time we took a stand for what is right before it is too late.

During May, Larry ministered at the Ouachita River Unit in Malvern, AR three days, made two visits to Texarkana Work Release and spent one day at the Tucker Unit in Tucker, AR. On May 31, he picked up his penny press at Texarkana Machine. Now he can punch cross pennies at home and help fill the orders that come in to Mr. Petty. Larry spent the day at Tucker Max prison in Tucker, AR on May 29. We had a service there in February but it had been over a year since he had been able to visit the men back in the barracks. He went to all twelve barracks while he was there. The men were surprised and very happy to see him. A few weeks before this, we had received a letter from a young man at the max. We have known him a long time. He told us that he considered himself a pagan but asked us to pray for him. He was writing to tell us that his dad had bought him a MacArthur Study Bible and he was reading it and had a lot of questions. We were so happy to get that letter and like we told him, we’ll do our best to answer any questions he has. Another resident there who rarely went to chapel has started attending services, reading and studying his Bible. He said he is trying to be more Christ like in all his dealings with others. There is no doubt that God is at work in the prisons. We may not know what impact our witness will have on the men we minister to but getting letters like these is always an encouragement to us to keep on keeping on.

Our friends Jack and Mavis Patillo invited us to the homecoming at Sardis Methodist Church near Stamps, AR on May 27. After the morning service, they had a potluck dinner on the grounds and then gathered back inside the church for singing and testimonies. We met Jack’s mother and his brother David Patillo and David’s family. David has written over four hundred fifty gospel songs. It was a blessing to listen to him and his children sing and visit with them. Larry shared his testimony and talked about our prison ministry. After the service we talked to one of the women about her son. He is in prison and has spent most of his adult life in jail or prison. She told us she is not giving up on him but she prays he will make a change in his life. We wrote a letter to him and sent him a copy of Larry’s testimony. He wrote back and thanked us for our letter. He said he was saved when he was thirteen but strayed away and turned to drugs, alcohol and a life of crime. He told us he is tired of living like this and recently got on his knees, repented and turned everything over to God. He knows when he is released next year he will need to find a good church home and true Christian friends to encourage him.

Larry ministered at the Ouachita River Unit in Malvern three days in June. On Saturday June 2, we went to the Confederate’s bike show in Fouke, AR. We gave away several Hellfighter Bibles, cross pennies and earrings while we were there. Larry won first place in his class with his 1973 Low Rider. We bought the bike in February and Larry (with the help of several friends) completely restored it. We call it the Blood of Jesus bike. The tanks and fenders are victory red.

We plan to take it to rallies close to home and to prison revivals. The first time I rode on the back I said I wouldn't want to ride it to Sturgis but Larry reminded me that we used to do that back in the '80's. They had a blood drive at the bike show so Larry and Darryl decided they would donate and after much persuasion I agreed to donate too. When I was done, one of the staff members thanked me and said I had helped save three lives. Just think of how many lives the blood of Jesus will save. I would say the majority of the people we talk to at most bike rallies have heard about Jesus but do they know Jesus? Do they have a relationship with Him? Does God the Father call them His son or daughter? That's why it is important that we keep telling people about Jesus and sharing what He has done in our lives. We talk to people who have been hurt and wronged by people who call themselves Christians. Or they see people who profess to be Christians doing the same things they do and justifying it by going to church on Sunday. Non-believers can see right through this. We have to let the Light of Jesus shine through us all the time because we are being watched.

The following week Larry and Darryl started a Bible study for the parole violators at the Dept. of Community Correction in Texarkana, AR. They meet with the men two evenings a week and the men work on the study at their own pace during the week. They usually have ten or twelve men at the study. It's our hope that these Bible studies will change their lives. Most of the men will only be there for sixty or ninety days. One of the men told Larry his eyesight was so bad he couldn't see to read his Bible. Larry bought him a pair of reading glasses and said you would have thought he gave him a million dollars. One of the men asked if we would contact his wife and let her know he was doing a Bible study and wants to make a change in his life. She was glad to get the news. They are a young couple and have a small child. Another one of the men was concerned about his wife and children because they were going to be evicted. If these men could only see that their actions have an effect on their whole family, not just them. Satan makes the things of the world look so good that those he is tempting forget what the consequences are.

We went to the Swamprider's Annual party in Prescott, AR on Father's Day weekend. We hadn't been to the annual in two years so it was good to be able to go this time. Larry spent a long time with a Bandido probate while we were there. They talked about clubs, both outlaw and Christian. Larry gave him a little plastic red and gold cross (red & gold are the Bandido colors) and he put it on his vest right away. The following weekend we were in Ellis Grove, IL for the first Ellis Grove Reunion. I grew up in this little town in southern Illinois and Larry moved there when he was seventeen. It was good to see so many old friends and find out what was going on in their lives. They asked Larry to say the blessing before the meal. That was an honor for someone who at one time was known around town as a drug dealer.

Larry ministers each Wednesday at the Ouachita River Unit in Malvern. This past week, he and two of the inmates visited all of the intake barracks and handed out reading material. Larry has the opportunity to talk to the men when they first come into the prison system. The prison hospital is also at this unit. Larry met Curly when he first started doing prison ministry. Curly passed away a few months ago at the prison hospital and Larry got the chance to pray with him the day before he died. Curly was a believer and led many men to the Lord in the forty some years he was in prison. The next rally on our schedule is bike week in Sturgis, SD on August 6-12. We will be at the Tucker Unit in Tucker, AR on August 25-26 for a rodeo/revival. We're also working with the chaplain at Tucker Max to set up rodeo/revival. We are so thankful for the lower gasoline prices and hope they drop even lower! We appreciate all of you who give faithfully to support the ministry and those who pray for us. We can always use gas cards and postage stamps or if you can help fund our trip to bike week in Sturgis that would be a blessing.

In Christ,

Larry & Kathy