

Florida Conference Prison Ministries Training Manual

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Chapter 1: Spiritual Qualifications for Service

Do I rob God?

But Israel did not fulfill God's purpose. They forgot God and lost sight of their high privilege as His representatives. The blessings that they received brought no blessing to the world. All their advantages were appropriated for their own glorification. They robbed God of the service He required of them, and they robbed their fellow men of religious guidance and a Holy example. 8T 26

What is His plan for service?

It is His plan that men are to work for their fellow men. - AA 109, RH 03-02-1911.16

God "could send means from heaven to carry on his work; but this is out of his order. He has ordained that men should be his instruments, that as a great sacrifice was made to redeem them, they should act a part in this work of salvation, by making a sacrifice for one another, and by thus doing show how highly they prize the sacrifice that has been made for them." 1T 174

"All that the apostles did, every church member today is to do." 7T 33

What if we neglect to do His will?

That is, if one neglects the duty Christ has enjoined, of trying to restore those who are in error and sin, he becomes a partaker in the sin. For evils that we might have checked, we are just as responsible as if we were guilty of the acts ourselves. - DA 440

Are God's promises for real?

When we realize that we are working together with God, His promises will not be spoken with indifference. They will burn in our hearts, and kindle upon our lips. To Moses, when called to minister to an ignorant, undisciplined, and rebellious people, God gave the promise, " My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. " And he said, " certainly I will be with thee. " Ex. 33:14; 3:12. This promise is to all who labor in Christ's stead for his afflicted and suffering ones.

Love to man is the earthward manifestation of the love of God. DA 641

How much education do I need?

God can and will use those who have not had a thorough education in the schools of men. A doubt of his power to do this, is manifest unbelief; it is limiting the omnipotent power of the one with whom nothing is impossible. O for less of this uncalled-for , distrustful caution! GW 488, 9T 259

I can do it on my own!

"All the good qualities that men possess are the gift of God; their good deeds are performed by the grace of God through Christ. Since they owe all to God the glory of whatever they are or do belongs to Him alone; they are

but instruments in His hands. For if one comes to lose sight of his entire dependency on God, and to trust to his own strength, he is sure to fall." - PP 717

I keep running into opposition!

Obstacles to the advancement of the work of God will appear; but fear not. To the omnipotence of the King of Kings, our covenant-keeping God unites the gentleness and care of a tender shepherd. Nothing can stand in His way. His power is absolute, and it is the pledge of the sure fulfillment of His promises to His people. He can remove all obstructions to the advancement of His work. He has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be delivered. His goodness and love are infinite, and His covenant is unalterable. 8T 10

How does this happen?

Every obstacle to the redemption of God's people is to be removed by the opening of His Word and the presentation of a plain "thus said the Lord." 8T 10

But nothing happens!

The plans of the enemy of His work may seem to be firm and well established, but He can overthrow the strongest of these plans, and in His own time and way He will do this, when He sees that our faith has been sufficiently tested and that we are drawn near to Him and making Him our counselor. - 8T 10

What else hinders our success?

I asked the angel why there was no more faith and power in Israel. He said, "ye let go of the arm of the Lord too soon. Press your petition to the throne and hold on by strong faith. The promises are sure. Believe ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them." I was then pointed to Elijah. He was subject to like passions as we are. And he prayed earnestly. His faith endured the trial. Seven times he prayed before the Lord, and at last the cloud was seen. I saw that we had doubted the sure promises, and wounded the Savior by our lack of faith. EW 73

"It is the absence of the Spirit that makes the Gospel ministry so powerless. Learning, talent, eloquence, even natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them the channel for the outworking of the highest influence in the universe." COL 328

Answered Prayer Delayed

"I saw that if we do not feel immediate answers to our prayers, we should hold fast our faith, not allowing distrust to come in, for that will separate us from God. If our faith wavers, we shall receive nothing from Him. Our confidence in God should be strong; and when we need it most, the blessing will fall upon us like a shower of rain." 1T 121

Answer to Prayer

Let your heart break for the longing it has for God, for the living God. The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised.

Let the glorious conceptions of God possess your mind. Let your life be knit by hidden links to the life of Jesus. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness is willing to shine in your heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will take the things of God and show them unto you, conveying them as a living power into the obedient heart. Christ will lead you to the threshold of the Infinite. You may behold the glory beyond the veil, and reveal to men the sufficiency of Him who ever liveth to make intercession for us. COL 149

Prayer Delayed

To the sincere suppliant God will send an answer to every petition uttered in humility and faith. He may say "Yes," He may say "No," or He may say simply "Wait." Sometimes answer to prayer may be delayed because a change must come about in our own hearts before God can answer it (see DA 200). BC

There are definite conditions to answered prayer, and if there seems to be delay, we should inquire whether the difficulty may be with us. It is an insult to God to be impatient with Him when we have not complied with the conditions under which it is possible for Him to answer prayer. - BC on Luke 11:9

Obstacles to Prayer

The central lesson of the parable is, of course, steadfastness in prayer. The parable also defines the kind of requests for which our Lord counsels steadfastness—prayers whose object is the blessing of our fellow men and the extension of His kingdom. "All that Christ received from God we too may have" (COL 149). BC on Luke 11:9

Fickleness in prayer is not pleasing to God, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). He who is fickle in prayer is not really expecting anything of God. "He that wavereth" need not "think that he shall receive anything of the Lord" (James 1:6, 7). BC on Luke 11:9

What promises do we have?

Prov. 3:5,6 NKJ --" Trust in the Lord with all (your) heart, and lean not on (your) own understanding; V. 6 In all (your) ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct (your) paths."

Prov. 16:3 NIV --"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."

"Those whose affections are set on God will succeed." 7 Test. p. 90

"To every worker I would say: go forth in humble faith, and the Lord will go with you... The power is of God. Work in dependence upon Him, remembering that you are laborers together with Him. He is your helper. Your strength is from Him. He will be your wisdom, your righteousness, your sanctification, your redemption... He will be your comfort, your rest." GW. p.38

"If the servants of God will walk with Him in faith, He will give power to their message. They will be enabled so to present His love and the danger of rejection the grace of God that men will be constrained to accept the Gospel. Christ will perform wonderful miracles if men will but do their God-given part." COL. p. 149

Who is responsible to open doors?

Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord. - 2 Cor 2:12

Why do we need spiritual help?

"for though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. v. 4. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to diminish strongholds. v. 5. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." - NIV 2 Cor 10:3

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the Savior of his knowledge by us in every place. - 2 Cor 2:14

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. - 2 Tim 3:16

Why do we have these problems?

"My brethren count it all joy when you fall into various trials, v. 3. Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. v. 4. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing." - James 1:2 NKJV

I can't wait to get started!

When we follow the humble Bible way, we shall have the moving of the Spirit of God. All will be in sweet harmony if we follow the humble channel of truth, depending wholly upon God, and there will be no danger of being affected by the evil angels. It is when souls get above the Spirit of God, moving in their own strength, that the Angels cease watching over them, and they are left to the buffeting of satan. EW. p.116

"Wait on the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." - NIV, Ps 27:14

Do I need to teach doctrine?

Christ is to be their text. They need not dwell upon doctrinal subjects; let them speak of the work and sacrifice of Christ. Let them hold up His righteousness, in their lives revealing His purity. The true missionary must be armed with the mind of Christ. His heart must be filled with Christlike love and he must be true and steadfast to principle. Testimony V. 7, p. 228

I don't see any results for my labor!

The good seed may for a time lie unnoticed in a cold, selfish, worldly heart, giving no evidence that it has taken root; but afterward, as the Spirit of God breathes on the soul, the hidden seed springs up, and at last bears fruit to the glory of God. In our lifework we know not which shall prosper, this or that. This is not a question for us to settle. `We are to do our work, and leave the results with God. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in evening withhold not thine hand." Eccl. 11:6. Christ's Object Lessons, p. 65.

The Most Important Lesson

God is not dependent upon men of perfect education. His work is not to wait while His servants go through such lengthy, elaborate preparations as some of our schools are planning to give. He wants men who appreciate the privilege of being laborers together with Him-men who will honor Him by rendering implicit obedience to His

requirements, regardless of previously inculcated theories. There is no limit to the usefulness of those who put self to one side, make room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts, and live lives wholly consecrated to God, enduring the necessary discipline imposed by the Lord without complaining or fainting by the way. If they will not faint at the rebuke of the Lord, and become hardhearted and stubborn, the Lord will teach both old and young, hour by hour, day by day. He longs to reveal His salvation to the children of men; and if His chosen people will remove the obstructions, He will pour forth the waters of salvation in abundant streams through human channels. Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students p. 409

Unity

May be one. There would be diversities of gifts (1 Cor. 12), but there was to be unity of spirit, objectives, and beliefs. There were to be no strivings for supremacy such as had recently plagued the Twelve (Luke 22:24_30). The unity springing from the blended lives of Christians would impress the world of the divine origin of the Christian church. BC John 17:21

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: John 17:21,22

Is it truth? Are we Bible believers? Is Christ glorified in us? I want you to consider this. He is speaking of the oneness and that unity that shall exist with Christ and His disciples. In that unity, in that oneness, Christ is glorified in us. Now I would have you consider how very light a matter many of us make of seeking to preserve this unity. Why, this unity with believers in and through Christ is the great strength of the church! The oneness, the love which through their faith and unity exists with God's people through faith in Christ, is a power. Sermons and Talks Vol. 1

Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin (MS 111, 1903). 5B page 1148

Credentials From Heaven

These are your credentials from Heaven as your possession of authority over all the power of the enemy. Your acceptance of these credentials along with the HOLY SPIRIT is all that you need to accomplish His goal in your life. Sooner or later we shall awake to the fact that the Lord is a God of method, and that blessed are all they that work with Him.

The Lord's Work

Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. - Zech. 4:6

Need for Daily Prayer

Our daily prayer should be, "Lord, help me to do my best. Teach me how to do better work. Give me energy and cheerfulness. Help me to bring into my service the loving ministry of the Savior." MH p. 474

Chapter 2: Pen-Pal Program

Regeneration ONE-TO-ONE

How Does The Program Function

All requests for a spiritual correspondent friend from inmates will be directed through the One-to-One coordinator. Inmates and spiritual correspondent friends will be matched together by the One-to-One coordinator.

All correspondence from inmates to their One-to-One friend will be directed through the coordinator. This is to help avoid problems that may arise, and inmates are never to be given their One-to-One friend's address.

A program to provide inmates with spiritual correspondence friends.

Chapter 3: Florida Prison Ministries Organization

Florida Prison Ministries will be under the direction of the Church ministries Department. It will be under the leadership of the Florida Prison Ministries Coordinator. Each church in the Florida is encouraged to have a prison ministry program to work with inmates, their families and friends in their area.

Most families do not know how to deal with the situation of having loved ones incarcerated. This is a perfect opportunity to witness to those who are hurting and need encouragement and understanding.

The Florida Prison Ministries will be so organized that a roster of approved Lay-Chaplain workers will be published, so that as prisoners are transferred to a different part of the state that prison ministry unit will know who in the new area they can call on to take up the fellowship with the inmate.

The goal should be to encourage not only ministry with the inmate but ministry to the family also. All of the prison chaplains ask all the time, what program do we have to minister after the inmate is released? Most of those ministering in prison do not have any after care and this is a big thing with prison officials. Florida Prison Ministries will attempt with the grace and guidance of God, to organize in such a way to over come these objections.

We encourage everyone now working in Florida prisons to unite with the Florida Prison Ministries to form a cohesive unit of ministry that will give us the power to have workers qualified in all areas of the state. We will have a network to minister to anyone, track and fellowship anywhere. We need to become one in our efforts and purpose. We are the only church that has the present truth and God wants us to take this truth to all creatures. We can not lose if we commit this effort to him. Prov. 16:3 NIV "Commit to the Lord what you do, and your plans will succeed,"

Each Lay-Chaplain Coordinator would have a roster of committed trained Lay-Chaplain workers throughout the state to call on to support the inmate and his family when he is released. This transfer will allow the inmate to receive spiritual support and fellowship. Some of the inmates that have taken the Bible lesson studies in prison and return to prison after they get out say it was because they got away from their spiritual life.

Training

1. All Florida Prison Ministries workers are required to be trained by the FPM authorized personnel. Training requirements and categories of volunteers (see page 10).
2. Each Lay-Chaplain will be required to fill out the FPM application form (see page 9, for example) and be approved by their own Church board or nominating committee. This form will be submitted to the Florida Prison Ministries Coordinator for final approval.
3. Every Lay-Chaplain worker will be issued a Certification card by the FPM program. This is to insure the prison authorities that these workers are approved by the Church.

Three Categories of Volunteers

Lay-Chaplain Coordinator

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The first category of layperson will be a Lay-Chaplain Coordinator an individual elected as the leader of the local prison ministry organization. She/he becomes the liaison between the local Church(es), institutional official(s) and the FPM Coordinator. Responsibility is to supervise and insure the adherence of all penal and FPM restrictions/regulations. Minimum 8 hours required FPM training program. They will fill out the required form and submit it to the local church board and the pastor for approval. This form will be submitted to the local conference for approval and certification. This position will be on an annual basis and proof of prison visitation will be required for the local church board to approve the renewal.

Lay-Chaplain Associate

The second category of layperson will be the Lay-Chaplain Associate who will support ministering to inmates. Minimum 4 hours required FPM training program. They will fill out the required form and submit it to the local church board for approval. This form will be submitted to the local conference for approval and certification. This position will be on an annual basis and proof of prison visitation will be required for the local church board to approve the renewal.

Lay-Chaplain Assistant

The third category of layperson will be the Lay-Chaplain Assistant support worker. Who will be involved in correcting lessons, ministering to relatives and friends outside of prison. Minimum 4 hours required FPM training program. They will follow the same procedure as above.

To apply to become a volunteer, please download and print out [this form](#).

Note:

Persons filling out this form agree to follow and promote the Florida Prison Ministries guidelines and objectives. To unite in an effort to build an organization dedicated to the cause that every inmate or their relatives/friends will have the opportunity to know Jesus Christ and be saved.

Chapter 4: You Can Start Your Own Prison Ministry

"Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners." - Heb. 13:3 NIV

The Florida Prison Ministries outreach has several basic spiritual and social objectives. The spiritual objectives could be summed up as follows:

1. To present the gospel of Jesus Christ
2. To share the love of God
3. To express the meaning of faith
4. To show the power of prayer

Some of the social objectives are:

1. To provide a link between the community and the persons confined in correctional institutions.
2. To prepare persons confined for re-entry into social (physically, mentally, morally and spiritually).
3. To serve the families of persons confined in correctional institutions.
4. To help a person find a redeeming religious experience involves his finding the same in the people around him.
5. To know the meaning of forgiveness involves being forgiven and offering forgiveness to others.
6. To know the meaning of love involves being loved and a chance to love.

It is difficult for an inmate to worship the Lord in terms of praise when he is untaught in terms of Christ dying for him. It is difficult when he has never known praise himself. He builds his religion from generous portions of his family experience, bad, good or indifferent. One of the purposes of prison ministry outreach in a correctional setting is to provide the means of interpreting God's love to the inmate. Simply stated, the overall objectives of prison ministry are stated as follows:

1. Through Christ every inmate is redeemable.
2. To reconstruct the whole person.
3. To bring to the inmate's family a new lifestyle based on Christian methods.

Chapter 5: Qualifications For Service

Pointing lost souls to Christ is the grandest, the highest and the holiest business known on earth or in Heaven. The individual engaged in prison ministry (layman prison workers) should have the same concern as that of his Lord who stated plainly that he came to seek and to save lost souls. There are certain basic qualifications or personal traits that a layman prison worker must possess.

Consecration

The first and no doubt most essential qualification is consecration. "Christ asks for an unreserved consecration, for undivided service. He demands the heart, the mind, the soul, the strength. Self is not to be cherished." -- Christ Object Lessons, pp. 48, 49.

"He who loves Christ the most, will do the greatest amount of good." -- The Desire of Ages, p. 250.

Faithfulness

To have success in prison ministry outreach the layman prison counselor must have the quality of faithfulness in keeping appointments and being on time. A Christian leader ought to be faithful to the promises he makes, cost what it may. It is a wonderful thing to find a person whose promises are as sure as the rising of the sun, whose simplest word is as good as his oath, who does just what he says he will do at the moment he says he will do it. This is the kind of faithfulness God wants.

Perseverance

In the name of the Lord a prison ministry worker should work with the same untiring perseverance and unflinching zeal that Christ brought into his labors. (Don't get discouraged).

Tact and Wisdom

"In the work of soul-winning, great tact and wisdom are needed. The Savior never suppressed the truth, but he uttered it always in love. In his intercourse with others, he exercised the greatest tact and he was always kind and thoughtful." --Gospel Workers, p. 117.

Genuineness

"There must be no pretense in the lives of those who have so sacred and solemn a message as we have been called to bear. The world is watching Seventh-day Adventists, because it knows something of their profession of faith, and of their high standard, and when it sees those who do not live up to their profession, it points at them with scorn." --Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 23.

These are only a few essential qualifications for successful service in prison ministry outreach. In addition to these qualifications there are other basic character qualities that are most essential for laymen prison counselors.

1. **Love** -- is an outgrowth of unselfish concern for all persons involved.
2. **Empathy** -- is the ability to feel with people and put one's self in their place.

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3. **Sense of mission** -- a desire to give this priority, a belief that this is something he or she would rather be doing than any thing else in all the world.
4. **Spiritual growth** -- a Lay-Chaplain must not only lead others to new spiritual growth but likewise must be willing and anxious to grow as well. We must search our hearts and lives and see wherein we lack in any of these qualifications for successful service.

Chapter 6: Communicating With the Inmate

Laymen prison counselors should learn how to communicate with an inmate. In the first visit spend the time listening to the inmate as he tells his problems and background to you, the counselor. Listening is one of the finest tools the counselor has. He must likewise understand the inmate's point of view. Following are several rules of listening.

1. Face the speaker.
2. Listen to the speaker.
3. Listen for ideas and underlying feelings.
4. Allow for your own bias.
5. Keep your mind on what the inmate is saying.
6. Make a conscious effort to evaluate the logic of what you hear.
7. Don't judge ideas by the inmate's appearance or delivery.
8. Don't interrupt immediately if you think a statement is wrong.
9. Let Christ, who is the answer, have the last word, not yourself.
10. Don't judge the inmate's motives.

This first encounter sensitizes the trainee and the inmate to each other. You must never begin the session by telling the inmate what you think is wrong with him, or that the reason he is in jail is because he did not go to church. He has probably heard this often from his arresting officer, or the judge, or the social worker, or the court attorney, or the correction officer.

Begin by asking, "how can I help you?" Generally this is not only a good spiritual approach, but also a good psychological approach. Right away we are attacking the problem of the inmate's basic needs and concerns. First, what can we do? Then, here's what Jesus will do for you. Motivate the inmate, put him at ease. Share with him your Christian experience.

There are other basic viewpoints that a counselor must bear in mind as he communicates with the inmate. The counselor must understand fully the social and spiritual needs of the inmate. Many inmates who are completely sincere in their conversion are disappointed that the individual involved in leading them to their conversion actually stops short of giving the help they so greatly desire and that is so essential when they are released from prison. The freedom that the inmate yearns for is also the freedom that he dreads. The inmate looks for and longs for his liberty but likewise dreads the freedom that deprives him of employment because of his past sins against society. This view-point and employment problems are matters that the church and those involved in prison ministry outreach must deal with.

Instruction for Lay-Chaplain Counselors

Here are some basic guidelines that must be adhered to, and a counselor should never let his sympathy outweigh his/her good judgment to break any of the following:

1. Do not make promises to the inmates that you know you can't keep.

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2. Do not in any way reprimand them about their previous conditions or what they "may" have done to be placed here.
3. Do not give any money or anything that can be converted into money. This is against the law.
4. It is against the law to give anything to an inmate. If you have anything for him, you can give it to the guard and ask him if he can give it to the inmate.
5. Do not make the mistake of letting an inmate think he can run a game on you (con you, or fool you) simply because you are a Christian. Be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.
6. Do not bring into the prison or jail a tape recorder of any size, or a camera.
7. If a doubtful situation arises, consult your leader or prison ministry coordinator.
8. If someone's name is not on the entrance list at the prison at least two weeks ahead of time, do not try to get them in at the last minute.

We have dealt with some "don'ts." Now let us take a look at some positive factors that a layman prison counselor must consider:

1. Do write to the inmates to whom you have spoken or who have impressed you.
2. Do meet and arrive together--as a visiting group of laymen counselors this is essential--at the designated prison or jail, and arrive on time.
3. Do make a list of the inmates who come to the meeting, and how many workers were present.
4. Do remember that the responsibility you assume as counselor is a very serious one. Every action you undertake in behalf of the inmates must be taken with utmost dedication.
5. Do remember that in many cases, until you see the inmate the following Sabbath, you hold his love, his hope and future in your hands. Guard these well and remember that through Christ every inmate is redeemable.

Chapter 7: Learning To Know Inmates and How to Talk to Them

Some individuals find it difficult to converse with an inmate. How do you get to know an inmate? How do you talk to one? Is there a secret way to do so? There is no secret in conversing or communicating with an inmate. One must remember that the inmate is a human being, just like any other person. This is where most people make their greatest mistake. Often a person, many times a professed Christian, will go into a correctional institution with the idea of "going to the zoo to see the animals" and at the same time he or she is trying to cure all of humanity's problems.

We must never lose sight of who an inmate is and why he is incarcerated. Every inmate is there because he has allegedly broken the laws of society and must pay with the loss of his freedom. Some are innocent, some are guilty. Some are there due to the greed and selfishness of others. Some wanted only to provide for members of their families and were not given a decent chance to do so. A counselor must consider all of these things.

One inmate who had been incarcerated for seven years after being sentenced to fifty-one years, felt that ignorance was the real crime. Of ignorance he stated, "too bad someone can't capture it and convert it into a tangible. With ignorance locked in a box most of the world's troubles would be solved." This inmate is presently enrolled in the college program in his prison and is very close to earning an Associate of Arts degree.

A layman prison counselor must learn how to gain the inmate's confidence and respect. Here are listed seven suggested ways in which a counselor can gain the confidence and respect of an inmate:

1. Always display concern, especially in your words and attitudes.
2. Know when to talk and when to listen but make sure that you are in control of the situation -- not the other person.
3. Never give a false impression -- explain what you can and cannot do.
4. Make only promises you know you can fulfill.
5. Never compromise your ideas or standards.
6. Try to handle problems yourself by relying on prayer and divine wisdom.
7. Encourage the inmate to express his thoughts or feelings on the subject at hand.

If the counselor follows these suggestions he will seldom have problems in relating to the inmate.

It is rather difficult to empathize with an incarcerated individual unless you have shared a similar experience. One should never say, "I know how you feel" if you have never been in prison, because you don't. Better to say, "it must be very difficult for you." By your actions and words an inmate can determine your prison experience and even the sincerity of your efforts.

A counselor should offer friendship first, teaching second and preaching third. Once you are accepted by an inmate the battle is half won because then he is more apt to listen to what you have to say. Remember, first the inmate must accept you as a friend, and in so doing he learns to accept himself as a valuable human being.

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Getting the inmate to realize that not everyone "on the outside" has rejected him plays a major role in learning to know and relate to him.

The first question usually on an inmate's mind is "what's in this for you?" He is skeptical about anyone from the "outside" as he has often been lied to, had unfulfilled promises and been disappointed and frustrated by many "do-gooders."

You can go into an institution talking about "Jesus cares" but the inmate sees you. He wants to know, "do you care?" Once he/she has decided that you do care, then you can begin to explain that God works through human instruments. In other words, you should first approach an inmate with a statement such as, "I am here because I love you and care about your physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Because I care, I'd like to share the source of my happiness with you, so that you too may know real joy and peace."

Not everyone will accept you with friendship. Some are there with the same attitudes that crucified Jesus, thus we must as the Scriptures say, "be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." It will take "pure, unadulterated love" to deal with some of these attitudes.

Let's take a closer look at the inmate to whom the counselor must minister. Most inmates are unchurched and few attended church till time of their arrest. According to the board of rabbis in the United States there are very few Jewish inmates, about 100 Jewish inmates in a prison population of approximately 11,000.

Many inmates are black or Hispanic. However, the common denominator is poverty. This is true almost by definition. Being poor is a substantial element of their problem. If they were not poor, many would not be in prison.

Most inmates come from ghetto communities, many were jobless when arrested, most have limited education. Many Hispanic inmates speak little English. Many inmates do not even understand the charges against them. Some do not even know how much their bail was set for. Few have any plan for dealing with their situation.

Many young offenders are drug addicts. Their alleged crime is usually drug related -- that is, possession, use or stealing to support the drug habit -- as well as an anti-social behavior due to the use of drugs.

Many inmates have been convicted of previous crimes.

To sum up, a typical inmate is unchurched, poor, has little education, was unemployed when arrested, and, if a youth, was probably charge with a drug-related crime.

In concluding this chapter on our relation with the inmates, the following points are listed that all Lay-Chaplains must abide by, with some repetition to emphasize the importance:

Don'ts:

1. Don't make promises you can't keep.
2. Don't try to be a theologian.
3. Don't have a "holier-than-thou" attitude.
4. Don't come as an expert or reformer.

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5. Don't come to help yourself.
6. Nothing is to be given to the inmates -- no stamps, no letters, no clothing, no pencils, no pens. Absolutely nothing. There is a procedure by which inmates may receive articles that they need. Consult the officer in charge in the prison where you are working for proper procedures.
7. Don't take anything out of the prison.
8. No telephone numbers are to be given to the inmates.
9. Don't give money to an inmate.
10. Don't ask why a person is or has been in prison.
11. Don't be "preachy" or push people into making a decision for Christ.
12. Don't criticize staff, an institution, other races, countries, or religions.
13. Don't enter any personal or business transactions with prisoners. It could be a FELONY and you could be prosecuted.
14. Don't forget to check the rules if you are an ex-prisoner going into prison.
15. Don't run on prison grounds.
16. Don't take any chewing gum into prison.
17. Don't shake hands with inmates through prison bars.
18. Don't take camera or recording equipment into prison without permission.
19. No worker's home address is to be given to an inmate at any time.
20. Do not allow the inmates to become personal with you. You are either "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Miss," or "brother" or "sister". Remember familiarity breeds contempt. The counselors are there to do a job for the Master and everything that is done must represent Him. Therefore, it is necessary to do all things in decency and in order.
21. No person of the opposite sex will be allowed to have a one on one relationship with an inmate.
22. No hard back books are to be given to inmates.

Do's:

1. Follow the prison rules.
2. When in doubt, ask.
3. Be a Christian friend to inmates.
4. Share your faith with inmates.
5. Keep your objectivity.
6. Give the name and address, of your church or P.O. Box only.
7. Be dependable.
8. Be patient.
9. Be honest.
10. Be a good listener.
11. Your name must be on the gate entrance list.
12. Do dress properly.
13. Do be careful about physical contact.
14. Do be aware of con games.
15. Do be trustworthy when someone shares with you personal or confidential information.
16. Do be prepared to handle flirting or romantic advances.
17. Do try to find ways to encourage and give hope.
18. Do stay with your group.
19. Do be very kind and courteous to everyone.

20. Do be natural.

How-To's:

1. The prison chaplain and the volunteer: a ministry team
 - a. Understanding the role of the prison chaplain.
 - b. Understanding the inmates as individuals.
 - c. The Christian inmate.
2. Your ministry (inside)
 - a. Visitation
 - b. Group activities
 - c. One-on-one activities
 - d. Literature
3. If while counseling, an inmate relates some dire hardship his family is experiencing, this request should be passed on, if possible, to the layman church prison coordinator for investigation and implementation.

Chapter 8: How to Start Prison Work

One of the services of the church is prison ministry outreach, each church is encouraged to have a prison ministry outreach program. Any person who has a real concern for lost humanity can be a successful layman prison worker. However, love for the work and for souls must abound. Dedication and conversion must surmount any other level of interest. A layman prison worker dedicated to prison ministry outreach can vary anywhere from five to twenty-five persons or more. The layman prison ministries church organizational structure is very simple. The following is recommended:

The Coordinator - This individual must be a leader who can arrange for compatible people to work together. It is most essential that there be a coordinator, especially in large cities where there are several churches. He/She coordinates the various groups from other churches into the designated institution. The coordinator meets with the superintendent and Chaplain during the planning stage and in some cases with the program director of the prison. The coordinator is the liaison between the local church, prison administration and the FCPM coordinator.

The Prison Counselor Leader - The leader implements the over-all program agreed upon. For instance, the leader is at the door or front gate of the correctional facility to supervise all of the counselors signing in. Along with the coordinator, the leader evaluates the progress of the counselors and submits over-all progress reports of the work to the FPM Coordinator. The leader plans the weekly programs. He supervises and adheres to all penal restrictions and group regulations.

The Song Leader - This individual should be strong and dynamic. Songs chosen should reflect high standards. The song leader encourages inmates to form quartets and singing groups.

The Literature Secretary - This individual must be responsible for the literature, Bible lessons and Bibles to be used in the correctional facility. He must keep accurate records of all literature used and report to the church contributing the literature.

The Recording Secretary - This very responsible person must record the spiritual aid extended to inmates, ex-offenders and their families. Copies of the records should be available to the program director of the correctional institution.

The Health and Welfare Secretary - This person must work directly with the community services leader of the church as he must direct the supplying of the needs of the inmate himself and/or his family.

The Lay Bible Teacher or Instructor - This individual holds a very important position -- probably the most important. Usually two or more individuals are involved in this aspect. These should be individuals who are good Bible students and who can make regular visits, even during the week or whenever the prison regulations permit Bible studies and midweek services.

The Vice-Prison Counselor Leader - Where necessary it is recommended that there be a vice-counselor who will assist the leader.

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One cannot begin a prison work without respecting rules to govern behavior. You must remember at all times, no matter how often you enter a correctional institution, that it is a facility of custodial care. It is not a mundane office building, but rather an institution operated on a para-military system. The men and women employed there are referred to as Security Officers (not guards). This is the first lesson in "on site" training. These rules learned will give you the confidence necessary to work in close association with custodians. These persons may view you in the beginning as everything from bleeding hearts to most do-gooders until you win them over with the respect you have for them, yourself and the unwavering principles Adventist Christians live and work by.

In every city, town and village there are usually two extremes of care, custodial and spiritual -- the jail and the church. The doors to all churches have always been open to all concerned parties interested in its benefits and functions. This is not true of jails.

There are a limited number of methods used in gaining acceptance by the institution as a valid religious program, particularly if you do not represent a major religion. Most religions have a high representation of their adherents in jail. The law states that the resident, or inmate, must have the service of whatever persuasion he happens to be. Since most Seventh-day Adventists do not go to jail, we have to address ourselves to another method of entry. (Depending on the jail)

1. One recommended method in beginning, or starting, prison work is the distribution of tracts or leaflets which offer Bible courses. The church receiving the return applications, dispatches Lay-Chaplains to that institution. Most institutions will not reject a request of this nature coming from the inmate because it would be in violation of his civil liberties to deny him a bona fide religious request.
2. Another method in beginning prison work is to open our doors to the state, or city work release program (inmates are paroled to programs that allow them to live out of the prison setting). We must make ourselves available to the proper agencies (correctional, city, state and private) and offer to share our special skills with the prison in such areas as art, teaching, remedial reading, etc. We can likewise offer to newly released inmates help in finding housing and, most important of all, employment. Our community services also could offer food and clothing.
3. Yet another method to begin prison work, or open doors is through offering some such social services as the stop smoking plan, understanding personalities, health seminars, complete with literature and exhibits. There are several other social aspects that your prison ministry can incorporate which will help the church to gain entrance. Halfway homes that can house the released inmates for a short duration until they can make the adjustments in the free world and find employment, can likewise contribute largely to that end. Your prison ministry program may provide employment through a job developer or be in contact with several job referral agencies that you can suggest to the ex-offender. A follow-up extension to your program that will fit into the needs of the family will be considered in a separate chapter.

Chapter 9: Giving Bible Studies To Inmates

Prison inmates are persons with mixed hope and despair for the future. Many are seeking a way out of the delusion and confusion of their life's experiences. There are many in correctional institutions who are not reached by the Gospel message and they will return to society more embittered by their experiences and subject to more and greater crimes against society. Giving Bible studies in correctional institutions is a glorious opportunity for any evangelistic-minded Christian. In correctional institutions there is a vast harvest to be reaped.

Preparation for Prison Bible Studies

1. The very first step for the lay Bible instructor in preparing to give Bible studies is to be led by God's Holy Spirit. This can be accomplished through prayer, study and fasting. This preparation helps to put the teacher in the frame of mind to receive and to be led by the Spirit. This important work should not be attempted in one's own merit or strength.
2. The lay Bible instructor must be well acquainted with the subject of his study -- Jesus Christ. A personal experience with Christ is necessary in order to teach others of Him.
3. The lay Bible instructor should have Christian love for his inmate brother or sister. He must have a commitment to work, to sacrifice and to dedicate his talents toward sharing this love and his knowledge of Christ. As the lay Bible instructor and inmate student become better acquainted with each other through spiritual lay prison work, true Christian love emerges and grows. This love takes root in the inmate's heart from his exposure to the message, and he discovers God's supreme love for him through the love demonstrated to him by the lay Bible instructor.
4. In giving the inmate Bible studies, the lay Bible instructor is to be aware, and likewise to be sensitive, to the social, economic and political environment and conditions from which the inmate comes. The majority of inmates come from the lower social-economic scale. Many could not afford good legal services and had to rely mainly on court-appointed attorneys for legal defense. In many cases the accused is counseled by these court-appointed lawyers to plea-bargain rather than to seek to plead innocence. Some inmates have waited in city detention centers for months before their trial. Many cannot afford the high bail that is often set. Inmates often react to these conditions in the judicial system with anger, despair and hopelessness. The awareness by the lay Bible instructor of these conditions helps the instructor to meet the inmate on his own level.
5. The lay Bible instructor should be very familiar with the topic for each study. He should be prepared to answer vital questions. Some people come to a Bible study just for the purpose of challenging. The teacher must be prepared to defend his faith in the spirit of love.
6. The lay Bible instructor should be sensitive to some of the inmate's stereotyped notions of Christianity.

Chapter 10: Giving the Bible Study

The following points should be considered in the actual conducting of the Bible study:

1. See that all inmates have their own Bibles and encourage them to lookup, read and follow the Scripture texts in giving their answers. This method helps the inmate to become more familiar with the Bible.
2. Do not become easily discouraged. Sometimes the most difficult inmate may in time become the most spiritual. They should be kept spiritually active. Many of these individuals are quite talented and their appropriate talents should be utilized for God's service.
3. At times baptized inmates and others contemplating baptism are released from the correctional institution during the course of the Bible study sessions. These individuals should be followed into the community and work with them should continue as the situation permits. Those that are reunited with their families may desire the families to begin studies. Many times Bible studies can be started with families and friends before inmates are released. Entire families have accepted the truth as taught while the inmates are still incarcerated.
4. Former inmates who have been baptized should be encouraged to visit, worship with and work with the church, as soon as they are released. Stressing the importance of regular Sabbath worship for released inmates should be the teacher's first priority. Ties should be made with other church workers to help follow through with these newly released individuals immediately.

The Florida Prison Ministries Bible study program has been developed using two sets of lesson studies as outlined below.

1. A six-set of lessons "Steps To Eternal Life" with "Happiness Digest" will be distributed to inmates. This lesson will have presented the Gospel to lead a person to Christ. The sixth lesson will ask if they want a second set of thirty-two lessons " What The Bible Say".
2. The thirty-two lesson studies are for the prisoners to study on their own in their own time. This will insure that what they discover, they can say that the Bible told them this truth. This will eliminate conflicts between you and the chaplains in charge, that will disagree with Bible truths.
3. Upon successfully completing the thirty-two lesson studies and enrolled three other inmates or family/friends in these lesson studies they will be presented with a certificate of completion. This should be presented to them in front of the class.
4. We only believe in studying "Bible Readings for the Home" with the inmates at these study lesson sessions.

Note: Florida State says, we cannot proselytize in prison, this means our goals cannot be to convert inmates to our denomination, but we can present the Bible and allow the Holy Spirit to lead.

Christ is to be their text. They need not dwell upon doctrinal subjects; let them speak of the work and sacrifice of Christ. Let them hold up His righteousness, in their lives revealing His purity. The true missionary must be armed with the mind of Christ. His heart must be filled with Christ like love and he must be true and steadfast to principle. Testimony V. 7, p. 228

Florida Prison Program

1. Prayer at the gate
2. Alleluia (song)
3. Opening prayer
4. Praise the Lord (Next page)
5. Responsive reading of the "ten commandments" *After prayer
6. (Point out Ex 31:18) "Written with the finger of God"
7. Jer 17:5 "Thus says the Lord: "cursed is the man who trusts in man..."
8. Jer 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?
9. Jer 17:7 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord."
10. Acts 5:29 " We ought to obey God rather than man"
11. Welcome new students and give out new lessons. Give out certificates in front of group.
12. Special music
13. Bible study classes, consisting of three or four students only if possible.* Prayer before and after class. *
Study from "Bible readings for the home."
14. Fellowship time, time to get to know and share the inmates concerns.
15. Alleluia (song)
16. Closing prayer

Praise the Lord

Praise the Lord
Praise the Lord
Thank you Jesus
If the Bible says it,
I believe it!
If God commands it,
I will do it.
If it is good enough for Jesus,
It's good enough for me!
So study-study-study
God's word daily
Praise the lord

Chapter 11: Ministry to the Family

Large numbers of families in Florida today are being affected by having members incarcerated including Seventh-day Adventist. The trauma that incurs is almost overwhelming to these families.

The goal is for lay prison ministry volunteers to witness for Christ weekly in prison. As the inmates responds to spiritual truths, a reciprocal relationship of trust and understanding between him and the volunteer ensues and a bond of friendship is established.

Unafraid now, and without embarrassment, the inmate begins to talk about his past life, why he was incarcerated and his desire to be a better person. It is usually at this point of time that an earnest request breaks through. "Will you please call my father and let him know I'm O.K.?" Or "could you contact my mother and tell her I'm changing my life and learning to know God?" A case in point: "I have such a good wife at home and three lovely children. I want my wife and children to learn about God's Word just as you have taught me here in prison." The counselor silently rejoices and assures the inmate that his family will be contacted. Requesting his signature of approval to visit his family.

Chapter 12: Steps to Take in Gaining Entrance to a Prison

1. Have a Florida Prison Ministries training program in your church.
2. Vote a leader from your church to be Lay-Chaplain Coordinator of the group.
3. Meet every two weeks for prayer, study and planning.
4. When everything is right, make an appointment to visit the Superintendent and ask for permission to minister in the prison. He will probably send you to the Chaplain.
5. Make an appointment to visit the Chaplain, explaining your plans and your connection to this State wide network of Florida Prison Ministries. Emphasis should be on that this is a Bible based program only.
6. If you get turned down, pray some more and return back to see the Chaplain again. Repeat this till the prison doors open by the Lord in His time. Amen!

Chapter 13: Handling Emergency Situations

The safety and security of visitors, staff and offenders are the most important concerns in any correctional facility. Department of Corrections staff are trained and have planned for emergency situations ranging from mediating a fight between two offenders to handling a major disturbance. The following are a list of emergency situations that, while unlikely, you may encounter while volunteering for the institution.

Hostile Offenders

1. Talk calmly to the offender and avoid being argumentative.
2. Signal to get a staff member.
3. If you are alone with the offender, maneuver yourself into the vision or hearing range of a staff member.
4. Do not attempt to resolve the situation on your own--get assistance from staff.

Offender Fight

1. Summon staff
2. Do not put yourself between offenders.
3. Stay clear of the altercation and do not try to break up fight
4. Tell them firmly to stop
5. Await the arrival of staff
6. Follow Staff directions

Riot

1. Do not intervene
2. Remain where you are
3. Find cover
4. If a telephone is available, contact staff to notify them of your position
5. Await the arrival of staff

Fire

1. There are fire escape plans posted in all areas of the facility. Locate them and familiarize yourself with the appropriate escape route(s) and emergency phone numbers.
2. In case of fire:
 - a. Remove yourself and others from area following posted escape route
 - b. Pull the fire alarm nearest the emergency if one is available
 - c. Call the emergency number for reporting a fire at the institution. In other facilities call the Fire Department and notify staff. Be prepared to provide the following:
 - i. Name of the caller
 - ii. Location of the caller
 - iii. Location of fire/emergency

- iv. Type of fire/emergency
- d. Follow staff orders

The emergency number at _____ is _____

Hostage

The likelihood of being taken hostage is remote; however, if you are taken hostage follow these guidelines:

1. DO NOT be heroic. Don't try to attack.
2. Be cooperative and obey hostage-takers demand. Failure to cooperate increases the potential for violence.
3. Look for a protected place to dive or roll if either authorities or offenders attempt to assault your area.
4. Remain calm.
5. Keep a low profile. Avoid the appearance of observing crimes that rioters commit.
6. Do not make threats against hostage-takers or give any indication that you would testify against them.
7. Avoid physical resistance. In the event of sexual attack, offer verbal resistance and passive physical resistance. Do not risk your life.
8. Try to drink water and eat even if you are not hungry.
9. Act neutral and be a good listener if your captors want to talk.
10. Appear friendly. It's harder to hurt someone you like.
11. Do not attempt to negotiate. Your credibility as a negotiator is nonexistent.
12. Even though you must appear disinterested while being held hostage, observe all you can.
13. Do not argue.

Assurance of Success

Remember that the Lord Jesus is the Master Worker. He waters the seed sown. He puts into your minds words that will reach hearts. - 9T 41.

To every worker for God this thought should be a stimulus and an encouragement. In this life our work for God often seems to be almost fruitless. Our efforts to do good may me earnest and persevering, yet we may not be permitted to witness their results. To us the effort may seem to be lost. But the Saviour assures us that our work is noted in heaven, and that the recompense cannot fail. - 6T 305

When God opens the way for the accomplishment of a certain work, and gives assurance of success, the chosen instrumentality must do all in his power to bring about the promised result. In proportion to the enthusiasm and perseverance which the work is carried forward, will be the results given. - PP 263