

“Letter From M.O.M.”

The **Monthly** newsletter of Moving On Ministry

WWW.MovingOnMinistry.com

www.PrisonMinistry.net/MovingOn

Volume 55 – March 2010 (Published since Oct. 2003)

“I Can Only Imagine”

As you receive this volume of **Letter From M.O.M.**, we have many new writers of articles, we are putting some more of the testimonies of “How God Changes Lives” as well as some of our own written articles. We can truly say that the “high” that many of our inmates have been trying to get through the wrong methods, is being surpassed by those putting God in ownership of their lives.

Watch our website

www.MovingOnMinistry.com

We are affiliated with International Prison Fellowship

<http://PrisonMinistry.net/movingon>

and Good News Jail & Prison Ministry Volunteer

www.GoodNewsJail.com



Chaplain John & Chaplain Bob doing prayer at ministry banquet

Intentions & Wishes

The intentions of this newsletter are to allow an understanding of jail & prison ministries. It is our intentions to get input from those incarcerated as well as those “free” to visit. Life experiences of the faith and fellowship from those locked up in the facilities are always desired to let others know of the value of “visitation”. I am certain that each of us have many stories of the miracles God has done in our lives.

Our wishes are that we would have a list of supportive churches that individuals might look forward to attending once released.

A list of services, such as housing, employment, and counseling services, as well as some individuals available for friendly fellowship are also much needed items.

God’s Word says if a man stumbles, how can he continue lest there be another to help him up. **Ecc. 4:10** “For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him [that is] alone when he falleth; for [he hath] not another to help him up.” **Proverbs 24:17** “Rejoice not when thy enemy falleth, and let not thy heart be glad when he stumbleth.” **John 11:10** “But if a man walketh in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.”

Please help us with input for this newsletter as we strive to serve God. We appreciate any articles or input.

Addresses to contact Ministry Volunteers

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For 2010, Bob is doing Bible study at BWDF on Mondays.

The Sunday after the 2nd Saturday of each month is Moving On Ministry's assigned day for 3 to 5 chapel Services at Corcoran State Prison ("Old" Corcoran).

Bob and Linda will also be checking on doing services at SATF Corcoran prison, Avenal Prison, Calif. Men's Colony, San Luis Obispo, and looking at some of the other prisons on a special appearance.

We are now a part of "Awaken Church" with the prison/jail ministry. Pray that we will reach laborers that God has called.

M.O.M. Needs

- Pen-pals to write inmates
- Finances
- Testimonies
- Possible sale of Squaw Valley Property (Camp Clarius)
- Development of Nevada property
- Development of Arizona property
- Graphics artist for books
- Drawings to publish and share

A true Christian is one who has
COME OUT of the darkness

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:



NOTE: Heather Layne will be doing more concerts;

Corcoran State - - - - Apr. 11, 2010
VCPW Chowchilla - - Oct. 9, 2010

Ask for a copy of our complete
"Resource Supplemental Letter"

The Footsteps of Eli,

Last month we had the article on “*Improving On Nothing*.” We were reminded that we must act and be active about the Lord’s business. We learned that to ignore a situation is SIN ! We must get our hands dirty and do the Lords will. Let’s look at the story of Eli and his seemingly small mistake and the great curse that came with it.

The name Eli means “*My God*” as it was used in Matt. 27:46. Realize that the names we choose for our children need to be chosen on purpose. Although this may have been the intentions of Eli’s parents, we will see in the story that he only filled the position of high priest, and spiritually caused a great downfall of the family.

First Samuel of the Old Testament contains a story about the Priest Eli who ran the Temple in Shiloh, and his immoral sons, Hophni and Phinehas. The story is relevant to cultural Christians today. Eli’s sons, became acclimated to the culture of their day, and they knowingly disobeyed God’s Law even as God’s royal priests. Their disobedience was so severe it caused harm to the spiritual health of their charges, and God eventually said, “**The iniquity of Eli’s family will never be wiped out by either sacrifice or offering.**” Eli’s family was also removed from their status as servants of The Most High God.

American Christians often get caught up the American culture of materialism and selfishness. Like the culture during the Days of the Judges, in America folks pretty much do what they want. (The Bible characterizes the Days of the Judges as a time when “everyone did whatever he wanted.” **Judges 21:25**.) Therefore, the sons of Eli were

living in a time not unlike today. This post looks at the circumstance of Eli’s sons, and argues that we can learn a life lesson from their failings.

It is important to understand the historical context. In Eli’s generation, Israel had no king over her. Israel was unusual as a nation in this way. The days of the Judges were a time period that began after God handed down the Ten Commandments to Moses and entered a conditional Covenant with the Hebrew people. The days of the Judges ended when Israel received her first King, Saul.

Before Eli and sons were born, Israel had entered a Covenant with God at Mount Sinai. God planned for Israel to become a nation of priests, adhering to God’s Law (Ten Commandments), and a light to other nations. In exchange for this vow by the Hebrew people, God promised to bless his Covenant People (Israel) with many blessings.

Deuteronomy 7:12-16, and make them “My kingdom of priests and My holy nation.” **Exodus 19:6**. However, God cautioned that His Covenant people should they fail to comply with the commandments, or they risked death. **Deuteronomy 8:19**.

Israel’s first King came later on, after Eli’s generation passed on. Incidentally, the King was not God’s idea for the Hebrew people. Using scripture, Thomas Paine, a philosopher who lived in the 1700s, argued in his revolutionary pamphlet **Common Sense**, that the Hebrew people begged to have a King so they could be like the other nations instead of a nation of royal priests set apart. Paine used this stupid decision by the Hebrews as an argument against heretical monarchy and in favor of American independence.

Unfortunately, even before they demanded a King, the Hebrew people did not stick to the Covenant they made with God. They failed to be the nation God envisioned. During Eli's generation, the entire nation was off track, everyone doing as he wanted and living for himself.

In the midst of that culture we find Eli. Eli was a remnant seeking to do God's will in a culture of selfishness and corruption, but he was worn down by the people and culture around him. Eli operated a sacrificial system at the Temple in Shiloh, but he delegated much of that work to his two sons. Eli continued to let Hophni and Phinehas run the sacrificial system even though Eli knew they were corrupt. Still, he was a priest who heard God's word. This is clear because God specifically warned Eli about the activities of his sons and the damage they were doing, [1 Samuel 2:27-36](#). Clearly, Eli heard God's warning. [1 Samuel 3:11-18](#).

In response to God's warning, Eli at least told his sons the truth about the dangerousness of their continued rebellion. [1 Samuel 2:24-25](#). Thus, Eli's sons understood and knew their actions had dire and **eternal consequences**. Nevertheless, they were more interested in satisfying their own temporal appetites than they were in the disciplined service of God. This unrepentant attitude was a huge problem for Eli's sons.

Eli's sons were wicked men; they had no regard for the LORD or for the priests' share [of the sacrifices] from the people. When any man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged meat fork while the meat was boiling and plunge it into the container or kettle or caldron or cooking pot. The priest would claim for himself

whatever the meat fork brought up. This is the way they treated all the Israelites who came there to Shiloh. Even before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, "Give the priest [some] meat to roast, because he won't accept boiled meat from you—only raw." If that man said to him, "The fat must be burned first; then you can take whatever you want for yourself," the servant would reply, "No, I insist that you hand it over right now. If you don't, I'll take it by force!" So the servants' sin was very severe in the presence of the LORD, because they treated the LORD's offering with contempt.

[1 Samuel 2:12-17](#).

You get the sense that the bad decisions Hophni and Phinehas were particularly bad because they created a barrier and impediment for the worship of God by others. In other words, by their active corruption, they actively blocked people from an improved relationship with God. (The Bible says in Proverbs that the "knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." [Proverbs 9:10](#).)

Hophni and Phinehas actually interfered with the people's sacrifice and attempt to worship God. Their actions took away hope for forgiveness of sin. Unforgiven sin in our hearts is the thing that impairs relationship with God. People brought sacrifices they knew were necessary for forgiveness of sin. They sought to come to a place where God could be found. But Hophni and Phinehas made that journey more difficult and frustrating.

Biblical Christians understand that the Levitical priests (the role Hophni and Phinehas should have filled) and the sacrificial system of the Old Testament were established by God to demonstrate

how another royal priest would one day come to provide the sacrifice needed for forgiveness of sin. See [Hebrews 6:15-20](#). Thus, Jesus is like a Levitical priest of old in that he rescues us from God's coming wrath and saves people from their sins. [Matthew 1:21](#) ; [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#).

Fortunately, God did not place the future of history into the hands of Hophni and Phinehas. Instead, God raised up "a faithful priest for Myself. He will do whatever is in My heart and mind." [1 Samuel 2:35](#). That promise from God could have had a double meaning beyond the time of Eli. It also was clearly a reference to the Prophet Samuel, a young man, the son of [Hannah](#), who served Eli in the temple with the proper heart. His life was not his own. He gave his life to the Lord. [1 Samuel 1:28](#).

Samuel was an eager servant who carried on the work of the Temple in Shiloh with a proper heart for God. Unlike Eli's biological sons, Samuel, a young man at the time Hophni and Phinehas's active corruption, eventually became a Prophet and the Books of 1st and 2nd Samuel refer to him.

Before that, however, we find that as time passed, despite the warning of Eli, their father, the actions of Eli's sons became even more corrupt. They had knowledge of God and no excuse for their corruption and knew they were interfering with the growth of God's glorious Kingdom, but they despised their duties and abused their positions as God's servants. The Lord Jesus warned us about a type of action that is unpardonable. That warning deals with the knowingly unrepentant heart of a man who knows the truth, but is still unwilling to give his heart to the Lord:

Anyone who is not with Me is against Me, and anyone who does not gather with Me scatters. Because of this, I tell you, people will be forgiven every sin and blasphemy, but the **blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven**. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man [i.e., the Savior], it will be forgiven him. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the one to come.

[Matthew 12:30-32](#). The warning from our Lord and Savior should chill us because it means that knowing unrepentant actions have devastating spiritual consequences.

When Eli's sons persisted in their wrongful actions, God eventually made Samuel His Prophet and said, "**The iniquity of Eli's family will never be wiped out by either sacrifice or offering.**" Thus, Eli's sons would find no forgiveness for their unrepentant mindset.

The lesson for modern, professing, American Christians is that we should ensure that we do not knowingly refuse to trust our life to the Lord, twisted into selfishness and immorality by our culture. We must change our paths away so that we are walking with God instead of another direction. As believers, we are God's Royal Priesthood in modern times. We should stand in the shoes of Samuel, our lives given to God . . . rather than in the leaky shoes of Hophni and Phinehas carried away by selfishness and the current of their time. When we as believers know the truth and still overtly and continually refuse to trust our lives to God, we risk grave danger to the spiritual health of ourselves and others.

Happy Valentines Day Linda



Linda's Valentine gift from Chaplain Bob – A Kawasaki Ninja Motorcycle



Bob's Fierro 600 in background
Linda's Ninja in foreground.



Cute little bike. It was actually too tall for Linda to reach the ground.



Doesn't she look good on it? We had to lower the motorcycle 3" to get it low enough for Linda to ride.



Chaplain Bob Skydiving
MARCH 2010

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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



Chaplain Bob's Fiero 600
APRIL 2010

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Tools of Ministry

We have written articles in the past, on “**Tools of Ministry**.” In each article we used items such as



Chaplain Bob’s Python Boots

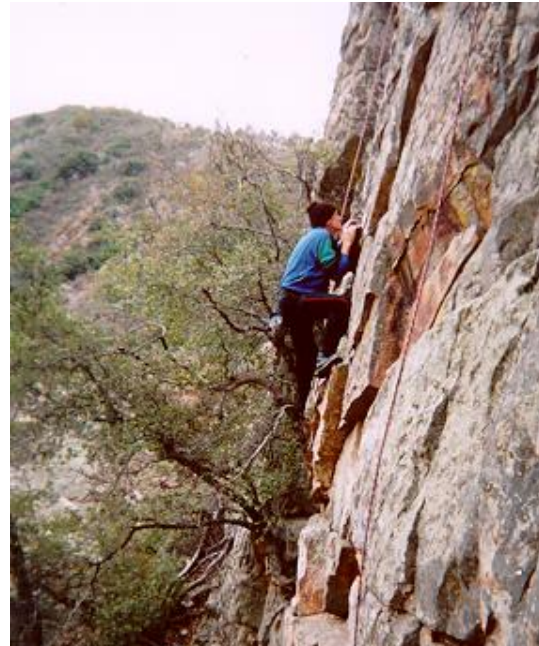


Chaplain Bob Skydiving
Good lessons on faith & trust.



Chaplain Bob’s Fierro 600

Know which tool to use, when to use them, and how to use them. We need to develop skills with the tools we have.



Chaplain Bob doing Climb at Hospital Rock.

Testimony

My life before I met Jesus was one of gang membership and smoking meth. But to begin, my past, I grew up in Madera, CA. Amongst the ghetto, I quickly picked up the English language. We only spoke Spanish at home. When I was a teenager, I got jumped (*'jumped' is a term of initiation, where the other gang members jump into pounding the new recruit*) into a gang and I was drinking alcohol with drugs.

Consequently, I got locked up for car theft in juvenile hall. I was put on probation and house arrest, then became award of the county. I was in a couple of group homes in Fresno, CA and Reedley, CA, which gave me a sense of a functioning family setting. However, my ties with the gangs and dope kept on, then I went to C.Y.A. (*California Youth Authority*). Now this is my third time in prison. I'm lucky to be alive and still have some of my brain cells left to share my story. It's hard for me to go into the details, the hurt I caused people and my feelings of resentment I felt as long as I

can remember. Now I am 34 years old with a little bit of time till my release, if I make it out. When I was alone in a Madera County jail cell, I was in anguish thinking of suicide and scared for my life. Well, a Christian brother was relentless in his testimony to me and sharing with me the Word of God with Bible in hand. I realized I needed Jesus for salvation. I came to terms that I don't want to burn in the lake of fire that I deserve. I continue to ask for forgiveness for my many sins. Now I read my Bible daily and pray for strength. Now I'm not in gangs no more. I haven't hurt no one yet. I'm working on keeping strong ties with my family. But first comes Jesus Christ, for He strengthens me to continue to live. I share with others what God has done in my life. I don't plan violence no more nor crave alcohol or drugs. So let God come into our lives.

Cruz S.

Continuing to Respond to His Calling

Once or twice a week, an officer or an inmate approaches me and shares how they saw me on *Dateline*, or *A&E*, or read about me in "*Rolling Stone*" or "*Sports Illustrated*." Now as a Christian, they have no idea how little their regard for my crime means to me, how much I am to my past, but I must relive my sin everyday, perhaps God's way of reminding me of what He has saved me from, much like He wanted the Israelites to remember all that He saved them from.

In 1997, when I was 19 years old, I killed a man during a bungled burglary.

You Bob, are an inspiration to me, and I'll tell you why. I was reared in a Christian family, my father taking the pulpit when I was in my teens. As a preacher's son, I was expected, and I played the part, to know the Bible and obey the Bible. I did know it well and even preached a couple of sermons to the evening congregations. But inside, I was a rebel against God. Sin crept slowly into my life, certainly not all at once, but it went unchecked for so many

years, everyone thinking I was perfect. I became a thief, began to carry guns, then killed a man who crossed my burglary path.

I had everything, Bob, even an Olympic future. Money, family, girlfriend, a job, . . .

I've been incarcerated for about 12 years now. I wasn't saved until 2003 though, as you see in my file/paperwork, so that shows you that I fought God's calling for a little while even after I was looking at 'life in prison.' I am the first to admit that not all of my days are thriving with excitement to burst out of my cell and boast of God's goodness. Sometimes I cannot see past the barbed wire at all. Sometimes hope evades me, though I never deny what I know of God's love and my security with Him in eternity.

My ministry in prison has gone in cycles the last few years, it would seem. Lately, I seem to have waited for the lost or inquiring to come to me, and with help of my parents and friends, I always have a Bible ready to give away, as well as some literature. And once or

twice a year, god directs me toward someone who needs some prolonged discipling, and this is where I feel most useful.

For several years now, one of my prison ministries has been the newsletter "A Voice in Athens." I've enclosed one of the most recent ones. We have a few subscribers in a couple different states. I'm originally from the state of Montana, which is where I began my prison time for this crime, and later transferred to CA. (thus, I'm not a California State inmate, only housed here).

The way you inspire me . . . your newsletters and resources are so packed full of hope and love, God's love especially, which you invest in men and women who are seemingly lost. Sometimes I don't feel like continuing with certain parts of ministry, but I recall those who are in need of His Word. . . and I continue. It is my calling. Thank you for continuously responding to yours. Keep up the good work.

D.I. Telbat (pen name)

Letters that Express it All

We like to post real life situations, because God works in real lives and He is the one that gives "Eternal Life." Every week we get many letters that state "*I love hearing the testimonies*." There are so many, we cannot publish them all, and the sad part is – people not involved in jail / prison ministry do not get to read the many letters we receive daily (average 2 to 11 each day) and we try to keep up with them and answer.

Bob and Linda are currently writing to 294 individuals on the active mailing list. Pastor/Sister Denise is writing about 135 individuals, and Sister Andrea is writing 202 individuals.

Please note that we have had numerous letters returned because of individuals paroled, or relocated. Some letters return because of having wrong ID numbers (usually from unreadable envelopes received. Please make sure to write legibly

Lighter Side

A student assignment was what a child wanted to be.



(Here's the reply the teacher received the following day)

Dear Mrs. Jones,
I wish to clarify that I am not now, nor have I ever been, an exotic dancer. I work at Home Depot and I told my daughter how hectic it was last week before the blizzard hit. I told her we sold out every single shovel we had, and then I found one more in the back room, and that several people were fighting over who would

get it. Her picture doesn't show me dancing around a pole. It's supposed to depict me selling the last snow shovel we had at Home Depot. From now on I will remember to check her homework more thoroughly before she turns it in.

Sincerely, Mrs. Smith

Benefits of Incarceration

Dear Chaplain Bob,

My older cousin, Robert, passed away in 1999. During his time with us, he was a great influence in my life. When I was younger, he was sent to prison. After which he told me something that I've found to be both the truth, and best advice one can have if ever incarcerated. I feel this is something beneficial to anyone incarcerated, and also in life in general, and wish to pass the knowledge on.

There are three positive things one can get from being incarcerated;

(1) Better physical shape

Drive, drive, drive. When you work out, you release positive endorphins to your brain, thus causing you to feel better and sleep better. These both make you less likely to be irritated and snap on or seem irritable to someone that you are around all day, everyday (this is especially beneficial to cell mates). Plus let's be honest, everyone wants to get out looking good.

(2) Smarter

Read, read, read. Read everything you can get your hands on. Not only read, but when you're reading, and come across a word you don't understand, look it up. If you don't have a G.E.D., get one ! Learn a trade if you have enough time, such as welding, fiber-optics, electronics, etc. Be slow to speak and quick to listen.

(3) Most important of all – A better, closer relationship with God as you understand Him.

Not what anyone tells you or says. Personally, read your Bible slowly, fervently, study it, and pray for discernment before you do. Ask that your ears will be attentive for whatever He (God) intends you to do or receive. Pray, pray, pray. Talk to God personally, He listens. And the more you do this, the easier it will get!

This friends, is called doing your time, so that it won't do you. Life goes by so quickly. When we're incarcerated, we're missing out on life. However, if we can get even just one of these things from our time incarcerated, then at least we didn't truly waste our time, and we've made the best out of an otherwise bad situation. God bless

Ron H.

Poetry Section

Life's Eternal Road

As I travel down,
Life's long rocky road,
I face numerous tasks,
And many a heavy load.
A sinner I may be,
Far from a perfect man.
With Jesus in my life,
I'll do the best I can.
I'll keep my head held high,
A strong faith deep in my soul.
Walking in the Lord's will,
Is my one true goal.
Though I may stumble,
Trip, slip, and fall.
I know in my heart,
God's there through it all.
I truly have a mansion,
Where I'll never be alone.
Though it be not made,
Of brick, wood, or stone.
It's made of spirit,
It's filled with love,
It's up in Heaven,
With my Father above.
Where pain and sorrow,
Are a thing of the past.
In my Father's home,
Eternal life at last.

Jeffrey R Price

I Refuse

I refuse to be discouraged,
To be sad, or to cry.
I refuse to be downhearted,
And here's the reason why.
I have a God Who is almighty,
Who is Sovereign and Supreme.
I have a God Who loves,
And accepts me for Who I am.
He is all wise and powerful.
Jesus is His name.
Though everything else is changeable,
My God remains the same.

I refuse to be defeated;
My eyes are on my God.
He has promised to be with me
As through this life I plod.
I am looking past my circumstances
To Heaven's throne above.
I give thanks to Him in everything;
My eyes are on His face.
The battle is His, the victory mine;
He will help me win the race.

Brian M. Vest

My first Painting! By Rocky Wells



When I started this Ministry I knew there was a lot of talent in Prison. Through my own experience. And besides it is hard to escape that fact for some of the evidence I have I wear on my own body,” Which by the way I considered an awesome talent. “You know art work.” I remember being in Prison with most of you who are reading this and saying you guys that can draw have an great gift and you should never stop using it. And I also remember saying their is no way that I could do such a thing. And I remember how I rambled on and on about that. Well, one evening after being blessed by having been given the privilege to come in there spending time with you all the Lord began to Minister to me. In His way, how He captures all of our attention, you know? In that small still voice. He says to me “Rocky” to which my response was, yes, Lord” what is it? He continues on by asking me a question.(Isn't that usually how it begins?) Why is it that you keep on saying you cannot do this you cannot do that. I said what do you mean Lord? “The Lord speaks” I am getting tired of hearing you say what you cannot do. To which my response was, ok... What are you getting at? He says to me. Do you see that picture of that painting their on the wall? “I said, “yes, He says, I want you to paint it. Well you know how we do sometimes when He asks us to do something that seems out of the ordinary of our realm of possibilities? We doubt, and question whether or not we

are really hearing from Him or that its just us,” not really Him.” What I am trying to say is, it is easy to reason God out of any equation but I have found that usually He will ask us to do something that we think we cannot do so that He may prove us wrong. God has planted gifts and talents in us all but until we are ready to develop the ones we know we have much better, we will never experience the ones we do not know we have unless we remove any doubts that keeps us at the doors of unbelief in His ability to work in and through us. I have come to understand the Words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ “ For who ever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but who ever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. Matt:13:12

I believe the Lord is saying to us all is do not hide your gifts and talents in the ground, but use them for His Glory and do not allow anybody or anything created in this world to keep you from trying new things. (God things) We all must remember it is the creator of the universe that lives within us, and all things are possible with those who believe. Think about that for a minute. He calls all the stars by their names and knows every hair on our head and feeds all of the wild beasts of the earth. And when He came into your Spirit and made you whole and complete He gave you everything you need to become successful in this life and first and foremost it is His Word that says This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. His Word also says that when we continue in those things to do them then He will make us the head and not the tail, above only and not beneath, and all that we put our hands to will be blessed. Blessed coming in, and Blessed going out, Blessed in the city, Blessed in our storehouses. God is good!

Inmate Art by
Ivan Martinez

