



OWPM COFFEE TALK

OWPM



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Freedom Behind Bars

Recently we received a letter from an inmate that completely explains the phrase "freedom behind bars". Here is Lisa's story in her own words (abridged for space, name changed).

My name is Lisa. I'm 27 years old and am a single parent. I want to share my testimony with you and let you know what God has done in my life and how he has blessed me and stood by me thru everything. In May 2004 I got arrested for multiple counts of ID theft due to my drug habits. I got a 4 year sentence. I was so scared, so lost, so depressed that all I felt like was to die. I really thought my life was over. I felt like there was nothing to live for anymore. My parents were angry at me, my friends all left me, my daughter was really sad, my boyfriend left me. I lost everything and everyone I loved.

I grew up in a family where there was no affection. My parents were gamboholics (Gamblers) so they really never stayed home with us kids when we were young. We were poor. I wore the same shoes for years, other classmates making fun of me. My parents weren't there to comfort me because they were at work all the time, and if not at work they were at the casino. I started using drugs when I was 13. I tried to escape reality and be in my own fantasy world by getting high on drugs. I got in so deep I couldn't get out and when I got arrested that's

when it all stopped and my life seemed as though it was put on pause. I felt helpless and very empty . Behind the cement walls inside this prison I started to rewind my past and I came to realize that I don't even know what the purpose of living for and why and who am I living for. Then one day I heard other inmates saying they are going to church and that it's a really good service. For some reason I decided to go. First time I ever went to church. It felt awkward, everyone



singing and praising. Christina was saying "God loves us so much he gave his only son to die so we can be saved". That night I read the bible OWPM provided. The next week I came back and the message was on forgiveness of sin and that it's never too late. That night I got on my knees and asked God to come into my life. I confessed my sins and asked for forgiveness. After that I felt so at peace for the first time in my entire life. My life is completely different now. **Freedom is not being free from prison. Just because you are out there doesn't mean you are free. Coming to know Christ is what has set me free inside and out. I came to realize when I was on the streets, I was a prisoner. But now that I know who He is, even though I'm locked up in prison, I could never feel this free!"**

Did You Know?

- ◆ Each week there are around 60 to 75 inmates that choose to attend OWPM discipleship services in one of the three areas of the prison at Coffee Creek ?
- ◆ Each week there are 8 women who give their time to minister to inmates at Coffee Creek in Jesus' name ?
- ◆ One of the biggest issues facing these women inmates is the anxiety they experience due to living

with so many other women, worrying about their children, wondering if they will get into certain programs or not, or whether their families will ever find it in their hearts to forgive them for what they have done ?

- ◆ Both the volunteers and the inmates need your prayers ? Volunteers need wisdom and discernment in order to better help the inmates and the inmates need the peace only Jesus can give them.



An Inmate's Story...

A week ago Michelle stayed after the discipleship service because she needed prayer. She was to be paroled very soon and needed housing for her family that would meet the parole board's requirements. Michelle stated that she had been praying for this for a year and had really given up hope. In fact, she stated that she didn't really believe that God blesses us with material things anymore, "only spiritual blessings". She really was out of hope. But fortunately she shared her need anyway and we had the privilege of praying and hoping for her!

Well, the very next week Michelle entered the classroom with a huge smile on her face and a completely new bounce in her step!

"We found a place to rent!", she beamed. "God is so good!" She went on to tell how the price was right and that it was 3 blocks from her son's school. It was wonderful to share the joy of this soon-to-be paroled inmate.

We've noticed that as women near their release date, often they become filled with anxiety. This struck us as strange at first. It seemed like they should be happy and excited. On the contrary, many of these women face tremendous pressure as they try to make arrangements from within the prison for their release. Many of them have nothing and end up staying in a hotel with many other ex-felons, both men and women, far from family and a positive support system (not exactly the best environment for maintaining sobriety and staying on the straight and narrow). The need is great for God's people to reach out a hand to help ex-inmates to grow in their faith on the outside. We all need God's grace and a little assistance.

Would you consider being a mentor for a woman who has chosen to follow Jesus while at CCCF? Or could you donate household and personal items? Or perhaps you have an apartment you would rent? Women like Michelle will be so grateful and you will be so blessed!



Many inmates face tremendous anxiety as they near parole.

The Truth Will Set You Free...

Luke 15:1-7) "Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country

and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need



What's Perking?

◆ The movie, "The Cross and The Switchblade", which tells the story of how one of New York City's biggest gang leaders came to know Christ, was recently shown in the minimum security area at CCCF. The story of Nicky Cruz is an inspiring one. Three decades later, Cruz continues to thrive and promote the gospel of Jesus Christ.

◆ A "Renovare" service will take place on October 17th in the Medium/Maximum area at CCCF. A renovare is a beautiful service filled with the reading of God's word directed at one subject, while beautiful instrumental music plays. It is worshipful, meditative and a

time to "be still and know that he is God".

◆ On Tuesday evening, Nov. 14th at 7 pm a fundraising event will be held at the River Lodge, 1900 Clackamette Dr., Oregon City, OR. Join us for an enjoyable, informative evening. OWPM director, Christina, will share about the ministry. We will also hear from a few former inmates about the impact God and OWPM has had on their lives. A special treat will be a viewing of a short film called "30 Days in the Hole" in which Lloyd Sharp will share about his experience in prison. Please RSVP by calling 1-800-784-6808. Don't miss this opportunity to see what God is doing at CCCF.



Inmate Prayer Requests

Kiva writes... I pray that I stay clean and away from the drug life and live in the light of my Father and am blessed with a family of my own.

Melissa writes...Please pray that my husband goes to AIP (Alternative Incarceration Program) soon and that my mother's heart warms and she writes me.

Delia writes...I would really like to have people's prayers for my walk of faith. I really need prayer to change from ways and bad habits, a change of heart. Take away depression.

Ashley writes...Pray for kids (Baylee, 8 & Logan, 4) to visit soon. Also pray for AIP and to lighten the pain on my kids' hearts.

Joyce writes... Guidance for where the Lord is leading me for my release. I need housing and clothes in Polk County.

Tara writes... I would like my family and children to stay in good health. Keep my children strong and patient and please let them be approved to come visit me soon! I need to stay positive and keep my spirits up until something happens (move to Treatment).

Jennifer writes...Pray for my family and pray my mom gets better. Pray that everything works out when I get out. Amen.

Stacey writes... I pray that I hear from my mom soon. I am worried about her health. I pray that my family is in good health, especially that the cancer stays out of my grandma. Also that I go to a good home and stay clean. Also that my prison stay is without trouble.

Fedosia writes... Pray for my girls. They are having a hard time with things at home. My 16 year old is having problems with her life and spirit. Please pray for them. God please heal my girls hearts and souls. Praise God.

Tiena writes... Pray for me to be moved or for me to just let God fight my battles while I'm still here. (releasing Oct. 19)

Kelly writes... Please pray for my husband on his out date. They are trying to give him 2 more years after they already told him he had 5 months left at his parole hearing and then they moved him to another prison. And pray for me going home tomorrow at 5 in the

morning. A chaplain will be there for me. Thank you and God bless. Take care!

Dianna writes... I want to forgive myself but have not been able to. Please pray for me that I will be able to do this for myself.

Gladys writes... Bring my family back together. Reunite me back with my children and husband that got deported. Help my brother and brother-in-law with their legal matters. For strength to think positive so I can make it out in time to get legal custody of my children.

Ginger writes... Pray that God's will is to show mercy and favor on my amendment by going into the hearts and minds of the judges & attorneys involved in my appeal. I pray that angels help guard my sons and that God brings them together that they may help one another. I pray they find Jesus. I pray for every woman under CCCF and all of you who come to see us. Thank you!

Laurie writes... My daughter, Miranda, needs prayer to keep her strong and keep her with her daughter. Joe and Jack, my sons, to keep them healthy. Pray for safety of my daughter from evil men, namely Phillip.

Susie writes... Please Lord, keep me safe and help me to have patience and to be strong. To help my 3 sons and family, my grandkids and mom to be well. And all my brothers and sisters too. And also pray for my kid to get in touch with and pray for my oldest son, that he's out of jail in Portland.

Crystal writes... Pray my dad and sister feel better and that I will be able to see my kids soon.

Michelle writes... God opened my eyes. God is returning me to my family a new re-born Christian.

Teresa writes... Pray for my youth ministry to get started soon and my sobriety, health and wealth.

Debra writes... Hallelujah! I made it to Minimum! Praise God. I also pray for Boot Camp. And ask God for a hand of protection around the family of those women here. And all of our church workers as well. I need physical healing & for God's will to be mine.



**“God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times.”
Rom. 1:9-10**

OWPM

Oregon Women's Prison Ministry
Dedicated to taking the message of
the Gospel of Christ to
women inmates.



Oregon Women's Prison Ministry
P. O. Box 91186
Portland, OR 97291
E-mail:
owprisonministry@hotmail.com

If you would like to make a
donation, you can do so through
the website at
www.owprisonministry.org
Just click on the PayPal link!

Vision for the Future...

While the current ministry of OWPM has proven to be very fruitful, it is limited to a relationship with the inmates only while they are incarcerated. It is becoming clear that these inmates need more in order to stay on the path they have chosen while in prison. Once they are paroled, they need jobs and housing, help with learning basic skills such as managing a checking account, writing a resume, filling out a job application, effective interview practices and parenting skills. They also need help finding a church in which to begin serving and worshipping.

God has given Christina a vision for a mission home. This home would be a place to assist women as they are paroled with getting on their feet and staying clean and sober in the process. Many have no option but to return to situations where they are almost sure to fall back into struggles that led to their arrest. The OWPM mission home would pro-



Coffee Creek Correctional Facility

vide housing, but also support and mentoring for that vital transition period between prison and successful living on the outside.

Christina also hopes some day to have a bakery in which former inmates could work and learn useful skills while providing delicious breads for the community.

Would you pray and consider giving a financial gift toward fulfilling the vision for a mission home and bakery? What a wonderful investment in the kingdom of God here on earth! If you can give, just go to our website and click on the PayPal link. (www.owprisonministry.org)

Other Ministry Needs...

- Bus Passes
- Office & Equipment
- Small Appliances
- Women's Clothing
- Toiletries/Personal items
- Land to build the mission home
- Storage space for donated items
- Apartments available for rent
- Secretarial Help
- Towels
- Sheets
- Recovery Bibles



**The Future is Now!
We need your help!**