

WHY PRISON MINISTRY?

Matthew 25:35-40 (NIV)

³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, **I was in prison and you came to visit me.**'

³⁷“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

⁴⁰“The King will reply, ‘**Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.**’

This passage shows our Lord’s ever present concern for the poor and the oppressed. He identified himself with them. He teaches us that His concern should be our concern. Although these scriptures do not mean everyone should become involved in prison ministry, it does mean we should be open to this calling as to any other ministry.

What else does the Bible say?

Luke 4:18 (NIV)

¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,

Hebrews 13:3 (NIV)

³Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Psalms 69:33 (ESV)

For the Lord hears the needy and does not despise his own people who are prisoners.

Psalms 146:7 (ESV)

Who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free;

Isaiah 61:1 (NIV)

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,

Galatians 3:28 (NIV)

²⁸There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus

Luke 23:32-43 (NIV)

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.” There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Women who are incarcerated are living in a dark world. We believe the scriptures commission us to take the “Light” of the world, Jesus Christ, into the dark corners of the prison world.

Forgiveness is available from God for all who truly repent. We are His hand extended, reaching out to those oppressed.