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SENT BY GREATER WACO BAPTIST CHURCH WACO, TEXAS

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## January - February 2024 Newsletter

Dear Pastors, churches, friends and family,

Thank you for your prayers and support.

Proverb 3:5,6 "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." When I go through the razor wire fence in the juvenile facilities in Mart, Texas I pray for God to show me the place I am needed the most. I am the only person that is ministering in those two facilities. One day recently after I was cleared by the metal detector and the search I prayed for God to direct my path. I went to the security unit inside the girls facility. Once again I have to get cleared to enter the security unit. I stepped inside one cell block and a case manager was waiting for me and thanked me for coming. She said that a girl in here was just informed that her mother died yesterday. Inside that cell was a fourteen-year-old girl with a broken heart. She was troubled with shame and regret that she was in a juvenile correctional facility while her mother had died. She did not get to say goodbye and hug her neck as cancer took her life. We talked and I started grief counseling and we prayed together. Her mothers funeral was scheduled a week later and she was wanting to go to the funeral but was denied by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. I don't know how she didn't get bitter toward the state. I'm sure it was God's grace that sustained her during this tragedy. I followed up several times with this girl and she trusted the Lord as her Savior.

While visiting juveniles from cell to cell in solitary confinement an officer wanted me to talk to a thirteen-year-old suicidal boy named Nathan. They opened his cell and let us sit at a table and talk without interruptions. This boy was in a suicide suit. A suicide suit is like a tightly sewn, stiff blanket with a hole in the middle, similar to a poncho. It is stiff so the boy can't tear off strips to make a noose and hang themselves. They can't wear under garments for the same reason. I began to ask him questions about his home and his family. He had developed depression at an early age and was taking medication for his mental illness. He had scars on his wrists from past suicide attempts. His aunt (who raised him) had passed away months ago and he can't seem to get past the grieving process. He hasn't had a visit from any family members in six months. Nathan had made a profession of faith in a county juvenile facility so I gave him a Bible. This mental illness will haunt him with thoughts of despair and hopelessness. He had a bandage on one wrist where he tried to end his life recently. I pleaded with him not to hurt himself and encouraged him in the Lord. I will visit him weekly to encourage him and give him a visit from someone in the free world (as they say). I want to thank Mission Possible Ministry for 100 nice Bibles. I distributed 79 of these Bibles to boys and girls in trouble. Juvenile crime has gotten worse in America but you have made difference in that problem. Many of these youth never go back to the old life of crime that they were involved in. Your prayers and donations have made it possible to go and reach thousands of young people in the Juvenile Criminal Justice System.



Paul Jhant  
Your Missionary