

ARM Prison Outreach International

"Ministers' Minute" Volume VI Number 3

THE WORD AT WORK IN US -- 1 Peter 1:17 thru 1 Peter 2:3 (part 2)

Editor's Note: This "MM" is an email sermon, the 2nd of 2007 --63rd overall-- in a series we are sending as an encouragement to preachers and Christian workers around the world. This message is the 2nd sermon of a two part series I recently revised; it is based on the wonderful truth that the powerful Word of God works in us. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and honor God. Use it as a devotional, edit it, share it, use it or components of it! May God bless your labors! -- Rod Farthing, Development Director

ARM QUICK FACT:

ARM's "Daughters of Ruth" home is now a rented building in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

We only have room for 13 in the rented facility. This is a fast-growing ministry! We are planning our own home (much like Rapha House) soon. Here is Boonlerd's recent report:

We have 6 children at the house. More will be coming. There were 21 girls who were the children of the prisoners. We have accepted 8 of them. The reason why we could not accept the rest of the children to our house was that our house started to accept the girls in May 2006 which was the time when school had already started. If we accepted more children, we would not be able to find school for them to attend. Therefore, this time we plan to accept these children, 13 girls, at the end of March 2007 which is school holiday.

Having raised the target goal of \$25,000 for half of the expected land price, and with an anonymous donor matching this \$25,000, Joe was able to purchase land on a recent trip! The Bible College (Lanna Christian College) in Chiang Mai is very close.

With the purchase of land, plans to build, and more girls coming soon, we are trusting God for the needed funds to grow this new ministry of benevolence, evangelism, and church planting. For web updates see www.daughtersofruth.org

Donations may be sent to **ARM -Thailand, Rt. 5 Box 159, Salem, MO 65560**

THE WORD AT WORK IN US -- 1 Peter 1:17 thru 1 Peter 2:3 (part 2)

Remember: Part one (and all MM) are archived
at <http://www.abarc.org/Resources/Ministers%20Minutes/Ministers%20Minutes.htm>

The first two main points were:

- 1. GOD'S WORD PURIFIES OUR SOULS! 1 Peter 1:17-22**
- 2. GOD'S WORD PRODUCES SINCERE LOVE! 1 Peter 1:22**

When we are sincere, intentional, and clean (by the Word) we can really LOVE AS WE'RE COMMANDED. The Great heroes of the Word have been those who love like God loves:

10 And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

12 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

13 So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

14 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

15 So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

16 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.

17 And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: **but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.** (KJV)

Beware of "Theological thoracic barrier syndrome!" What's that? That's what the Pharisees had. They had the words of God IN THEIR HEADS BUT NOT THEIR HEARTS.

Luke 10:27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. (KJV) Heart AND mind are in there, along with soul and strength. AND HEART COMES FIRST AND MIND COMES LAST.

David said, "Your word have I hidden IN MY HEART....THAT I MIGHT NOT SIN....!"

3. GOD'S WORK PROVIDES NEW LIFE 1 Peter 1:23-25

His word purifies our souls, produces sincere love, and provides new and eternal life! 1 Pet 1:23-25

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

In the parable the sower, the "SEED" is the Word of God! So it is here in 1 Peter 1:23 – the incorruptible blood of Christ was the price of our redemption (1 Pt. 1:18-19) and the incorruptible seed of the Word of God that lives and abides forever came within us TO PRODUCE NEW LIFE!

Jesus told Nicodemus "you must be born again!" We know that all thru the Bible that "SEED" refers to the children and grandchildren of a man. Consider these four consecutive occurrences of "SEED" in the New Testament:

Acts 7:6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years. (KJV)

Acts 13:22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. 23 Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:

Rom 1:3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

Rom 4:13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

The Greek word for seed is "sperma" – the translators have been consistent in this respect. The result of the seed – physically and spiritually – is NEW LIFE!

As in the parable of the sower, there must be receptivity – an acceptance of the power of the seed. AND WHEN THERE IS, THE SEED BRINGS NEW LIFE!

Recently, ARM received a letter from a former American Bible Academy student. We get lots of letters from current and former ABA students, but this one was even more special than most:

"Greetings in the Name of our Lord! When I was in jail in Maricopa County, Arizona a few years ago, I enrolled in American Bible Academy. I am now a missionary with the Zapateo people of southern Mexico. We are in the process of establishing a small Bible Institute here and would like to use ABA curriculum and translate it into the Zapateo language. Would you please send us some sample courses for translation? We also need one of your collapsible portable baptistries. Thank you. Leroy Smalley"

We do not claim that a great percentage of our prisoners complete their ARM Bible courses, are released from prison, then go to a foreign land to become missionaries! But it does happen!

The WORD OF GOD IS A SEED THAT PRODUCES NEW LIFE!

THE SEED BRINGS NEW LIFE! And people should be able to see it! Is your 'NEW LIFE' SHOWING?

4. GOD'S WORK PERPETUATES GROWTH 2 Peter 2:1-3

1 Pet 2:1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

The same Word that inaugurated our new LIFE in Christ will feed us and grow us into what God has always wanted us to be!

He wants us to be CLEAN, LOVING, ALIVE, AND GROWING. AND THAT IS JUST WHAT HIS WORD CAUSES US TO BE!

Rom 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

BEING LIKE JESUS DEMANDS GROWTH AND GROWTH DEMANDS THE FOOD THAT IS GOD'S WORD!

The same Peter who said, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." in Acts 2:38 is the SAME PETER SAYS – WITH THE SAME IMPERATIVE – THIS IN 2 Pet 3:17:

Therefore, beloved, seeing you know these things before, beware lest you also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. 18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. (KJV)

Is your growth in the Lord thru His Word obvious to others?

A youth group met in one of the home's of its members. The lad was from a wealthy family and they had a new maid who had come to work recently. One of the members of the group remarked that he had forgotten to bring his Bible. The host said he would quickly run and get his own. He looked for a while and then asked the new maid, "Hilda, do you know where my Bible is?"

"Yes," said Hilda, "I hid it."

"Hid it?" he asked with much surprise.

"Yes," she said, "The first thing I do when I go to work for a new family is to hide their Bibles."

"But why would you do that?" he asked.

"I wait to see how long it is before they miss their Bibles and then I know what kind of people I'm working for."

If you had a maid -- WHAT KIND OF FOLKS WOULD SHE BE WORKING FOR?

"Remain faithful unto death .." Rev. 2:10B

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Check out our web sites: www.arm.org www.abarc.org www.raphahouse.org www.daughtersofruth.org

In 2005, 127 ABA Bible courses was mailed from ARM every day!
In 2005, an ABA Bible course was mailed from ARM to a prisoner EVERY 11.3 minutes!