[ARM Prison Outreach International](#)

"Ministers' Minute" Volume 9 Number 3

A COMMUNION MEDITATION

"Our Identity in Christ"

Romans 8:32

Editor's Note: This "MM" is the third email message of 2010 in a series that ARM is sending as an encouragement to preachers, chaplains, and Christian workers around the world. This issue is the 99th "MM" sent. All are archived -- just [click here](#) to see links to all messages sent since January of 2002.

This month's message is a communion meditation by Bill McCoy, evangelist of The Church at Sherwood, ARK. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and those you teach and lead.

May God bless your labors!   -- Rod Farthing, Development Director

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Communion Meditation

The June, 2006 issue of Reader's Digest featured an article on identity theft which defined it as "the use of an account or identifying information without the owner's permission." It goes on to say, "It's not news that identity theft is rampant in the United States. Federal and state authorities alike have labeled it the country's fastest-growing white-collar crime since the 1990's. And why not? We live in an age where everything from tax records to Social Security numbers to credit card data resides in databases that can be [accessed] by anyone with sinister motives and enough know-how."

"When it comes to high-tech fraud, one of the most common scams is 'phishing' (spelled p-h-i-s-h-i-n-g). The bad guys who do it send out bogus e-mails in hopes of scaring, enticing, or just tricking the naïve into giving up personal information at fake websites that resemble those of legitimate financial institutions and other commercial outfits."

And then there is "'pharming' (spelled p-h-a-r-m-i-n-g) in which legitimate websites are hit with malicious computer code that steers those visiting them to look alike sites. Data can then be harvested without a key being struck. In a twist, there's a crime wave that instead attacks browsers and does its pharming from there. Among the most insidious new cons: 'keystroke-logging,' in which software planted on a

computer (perhaps via a virus) records everything a user types and passes it back to an identity thief. And don't forget 'screen scrapers,' which can snatch and send images of what's on-screen.

Hackers have discovered how to "break into computer servers used by retailers to store and process debit-card PIN (personal identification number) codes collected when purchases are made. At the same time, and off the same servers, thieves swipe the key codes necessary to unlock the encrypted PIN data. With that information, they can easily create counterfeit debit cards, which they use to clean out bank accounts."

"Another ripe target for identity thieves is wireless networks that more and more computer users are setting up at home. In November of '05 a software company's personnel conducted an exercise in New York City. With a laptop running free software and a simple antenna affixed to their car, they drove through six different neighborhoods. Of the 5,700 wireless access points they found, 52% had no encryption whatsoever, making them available to anyone who wanted to hop on."

Of course there is still the old-fashioned method of digging through people's trash or raiding their mailbox to access valuable account information.

"Yes, consumers have gotten more savvy – cyber streetwise, if you will. We shred financial documents and unsolicited, pre-approved credit card offers; check credit reports regularly; keep Social Security numbers as private as possible; delete e-mail from unknown senders as soon as it arrives; and frequently update antivirus, firewall, and spam-blocking software."

We desperately and defensively try to protect our hard-earned assets from those who would steal our identity in order to steal our assets and use our credit. God, on the other hand, desperately longs to give away all of His assets. Romans 8:32 says, "He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?"

God has no interest in or need for document shredders or antivirus, firewall, or spam-blocking software. Everyone is welcomed, indeed invited to access everything he has. His account number is J-E-S-U-S, our access code is B-L-O-O-D, and our PIN code is F-A-I-T-H.

Jesus Christ Himself was an 'identity thief' and He invites us to use His identity. 2 Cor. 5:21 says, "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." Jesus posed as a sinner. He posed as you and He posed as me so that we might access His credit rating as one who had no sin debt and was rich in righteousness.

2 Cor. 9:9 says, "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you, by His poverty, might become rich."

As we consume these simple elements this morning, let's be thankful for our spiritual 'identity thief' Jesus Christ, and remind ourselves how rich we are because, through Him, we have full and complete access to heaven's account.

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