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Bring My Soul Out of Prison

To make the inmate, regardless of his past, aware of the gospel

**Under the oversight of
Garland Street Church of Christ
700 Garland Street
Plainview, Texas**

**MINISTERING TO THE WHOLE MAN
Huntsville Institutional Ministry/HIM
Freddie Anderson-director**

I've had to do a paper purge 37 years of prison ministry. Luke Curtis, Ron Chitwood, Pinky Bates; Richard Shaffer and Ray Clyde are no longer with us/me but papers from them are still here. Ray's wife came to get some of his things. From the start, Luke insisted we keep letter logs of letter sent to inmates and received. While purging papers I read some letters sent to Ray, for example. Inmates would express how much they appreciated Ray and what he meant to them. Looking back, if all Ray did was answer inmate letters that would have been a ministry of its own. He did more than that. He gave those souls hope, a connection with a person who cared. I had some of Luke's writings. They were powerful. I couldn't keep all the papers. To get rid of them hurt but I had to. In addition, there were bible lessons; inmate property; and inmate writings. I miss Luke, Ray, Pinky, Richard and Ray. I appreciate all they did for those souls in prison. Men like them are not easy to find but their influence lingers after so many years.

Twenty-Twenty>2021

Am I the only person in America who wasn't rushing the end of 2020? I did not know what 2021 was going to bring. Maybe worse than 2020 and I didn't want it to come too quickly. 2021 started in an unexpected way. The prison had an exceptionally hard time, for one, because the workers and inmates are trapped in that situation. The virus exploded behind bars! Inmates wrote to tell me deaths and disease behind bars. The first casualties of the virus among staff was a chaplain I knew for nearly 40 years. To think, we are almost back to March when all of this started. Other things that have happened among the inmates we minister to is that some of them were transferred to other units; a few of them have been released. Like the country, there are changes in the prison that will never go back to the way it was. One place we served closed all together. 300 men at the camp have been sent to other units and the guards, too. Virus management necessitated it. The chaplain on that unit has contacted me about serving elsewhere (but I won't be able to get outsider to visit there like I used to). Another change: inmates cannot receive envelopes with labels; greeting cards; papers with color; only those who visit can send them money. No, I didn't want to rush the end of 2020. The unforeseen. Changes have occurred. Who knows what the rest of the year will bring? What we (all) need to be is the "Faithful and wise servant" of Matt. 24:45. We can thrive even during times of upheaval. The "Faithful and wise servant" finds ways to get the gospel message out even in difficult times like these. The "Faithful and wise servant" ministers no matter what. The "Faithful and wise servant" finds the hidden treasure: I got the chance to fellowship with supporters more than in times past. That was good. I didn't want to rush into 2021 or rush an end to 2020. In all things God gets the glory.