



Free Discipleship Tools for Prisoners



## The Fields Are Ripe. It *Is* Harvest Time!

February 2011 Loaves & Fishes Report

Dear supporter,

Many years ago, four months before harvest time, Jesus once told His disciples to lift up their eyes and look at the fields. He said to them, "The fields are ripe; it's harvest time!"

In Luke 10:2 Jesus said, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." (NKJV)

What are these fields Jesus is talking about? What is it that's ripe? Who are the workers in the fields? In Jesus' illustration, the fields are the world. The ripe grain is those who are ready to receive the good news of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is telling us that there are throngs of people whose hearts the Spirit of God has "ripened." They are ready to enter the life of Jesus' kingdom or eager to learn more about it. A "bumper crop" is due, but there's a labor shortage.

Observing the busyness and self-sufficiency of society, you may wonder, "Where are these ripe fields Jesus is talking about?"

Lift up your eyes and look at the fields. The fields *are* ripe. It *is* harvest time. It's a matter of finding the field and becoming an effective missionary for the Lord of the harvest.

### Open Doors in Prison

If you have trouble finding a ripened field, go to your local jail or almost any prison in the USA. You won't have to look very long until you find a desire for **friendship**, a **hunger for reality**, and **time to listen**.

Our church has a weekly jail ministry in our local town. It is deeply encouraging to see *such openness* and hunger!

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**"Many women commented on how comforting the poems and stories were from the booklet we received at Christmas.**

"I personally work for the chaplain so I hear all the requests and appreciations that are passed around. Thank you, *Loaves & Fishes*."

Lora Barranca • Women's Prison in Chowchilla, CA



**Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!"** John 4:35 (NKJV)

Have you ever shared Christ with someone only to see them walk off and literally (or figuratively) throw your message into a trash bin? In the free world many people are too busy or complacent to pay attention. In contrast, while many in prison also close their hearts, the demand for truth far exceeds the supply.

**Tens of thousands of hungry people have asked us to speak into their lives with requests such as these:**

- “I read a copy of your *Loaves & Fishes* magazine. May I please get my own subscription?”
- “With your help I found Jesus, and I want to learn more about Him.”
- “Send me any books and literature that you have available to help me in my walk with the Lord.”
- “Can you send me a Bible study course?”
- “I’d like to have a friend to write to.”
- “Please send me a Bible.”

Basically, they are saying, **“Please speak into my life! Tell me something that can help me in my walk with God.”**

Imagine the opportunities! Here is access to thousands of *isolated* people who will receive and appreciate what we teach them and share it with their friends! Some of these already profess to know God and seek to be disciples of Jesus Christ; others are still in darkness, searching for meaning in life. Behind many of these requests is a person who desires to get their life on the right track and become the person, leader, parent, or spouse that God wants them to be.

**Let’s lift up our eyes and look at the fields.** They are ripe and harvest time *has come*. Let’s be busy reaching out to the hungry souls in our local jails and prisons and use the massive opportunity we have to impact millions with the printed page.

For the ripened grain,  
Lavern Gingerich

## Greetings From the Mailroom

February has been a busy month here in the mailroom where Verba and I are working two days a week trying to keep up with stacks of incoming mail. Most of the mail has been generated by the latest issue of *Loaves & Fishes*, which was sent out in December and January. There are the usual new subscriptions, Bible requests, and all sorts of questions the prisoners are facing in their lives.

We get a lot of pen pal requests from men. I believe we have all the ladies pen pal requests matched up, but that can change at any time.

The last week of January, Darold and I had the opportunity to spend a week in an Alabama prison with the We Care crusade. What an eye opener to the freedom I enjoy!

I was challenged in many ways, probably most of all by some of the very dedicated Christians I met there. Even in prison life and depressing situations, they are praising God, studying His word, and witnessing to their fellow inmates. One of them told me, “To me it’s a mission field—just one that I’m kinda locked into!” These men desperately need our prayer and support.

May God bless you as you represent Him!

Robert Miller  
Lighthouse Mailroom

## News and Prayer Requests

- Lavern and his family shared a presentation at four churches in PA and NY on their recent trip north. We want to thank each one for their warm reception and partnership in the gospel.
- Robert and Verba are working part time to handle incoming prisoner mail. The “fish” are really “biting.” Pray their boat wouldn’t sink!
- Pray the Lord would give us much inspiration and wisdom to prepare another issue of *Loaves & Fishes*.

### Stay Connected

**Blog:** Read our blog for photos and news online: [LighthousePublishing.org/blog](http://LighthousePublishing.org/blog).

**eNews:** To receive e-mail updates and prayer requests, send your request to [enews@lighthousepublishing.org](mailto:enews@lighthousepublishing.org).

[facebook.com/loavesfishes](https://facebook.com/loavesfishes)

### Donations

Donations to Lighthouse Publishing are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Our goal is to publish *Loaves & Fishes* every quarter. Each issue costs roughly \$30,000. This would equal 350 people each giving just \$1/day.

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