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"GOD'S SPECIAL TIME"

Volume 13 #2

Spring 1995

"I was in prison and you came to me." Matthew 25:36

— CALENDARS — ANNOUNCEMENTS —

FALL 1995 CALENDAR

Fremont #26 — Sep 21-24
Women's #25 — Oct 12-15
Delta #8 — November
Territorial #20 — Nov 16-19

Please put these dates on your calendar now. This will help you plan ahead. There is always a need for team members, Closing guests, and pray-ers. Contact any Board member for more information.

JULY 17-21, 1996
KAIROS SUMMER CONFERENCE

No, now is not too soon to be planning that far ahead. That's when this annual event will be held in **Colorado** at the YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch near Granby. We last hosted this event in 1987, and some of us old-timers well remember that we'll need lots of volunteers, so please be praying about how you can help.

HOUSE OF EMMANUEL

Some of our Kairos people are developing this "Aftercare" ministry for ex-inmates. Please pray that God will show them just the right building He has prepared for this purpose. If you would like to know more and/or offer help of any kind, please call Joseph Mares, 303-935-9324.

PROMISE KEEPERS

This amazing Christian men's movement has spread so fast that only five years after its founding in Boulder, there will be at least 13 stadiums all around this country filled with men for the 1995 events. The program is even active in a southern California prison as "Men of Integrity".

The next Colorado Promise Keepers is **June 16-17, 1995** in Denver and **KAIROS** will share a display booth there with **House of Emmanuel**. Come visit our display and pray that God will draw many promise-keeping harvesters into the ripe fields of the Kairos ministry!

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KAIROS of COLORADO is a Christian prison ministry reaching out to inmates in several Colorado prisons with the Good News of God's love, forgiveness, and new life available to all who repent of their sin, and submit to Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Our ministry is all volunteer (no paid staff), and depends entirely on tax-deductible donations to cover expenses. Use pre-addressed envelope for donations and inquiries, or write to the address on this newsletter. *Thank you for your prayers and support!*

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

TONGUES

Did you ever play a game called "Rumor"? You know, there's a bunch of people in a circle and one person starts by whispering something in the ear of the next person, and then the second person whispers it into the ear of the third, and so on until the last person whispers it into the ear of the person who started. Not surprisingly, what comes around is usually nowhere even close to what started; and the juicier it was, the more garbled it got. Each person either misunderstood a little and/or put a little of her own spin on it. Only the first person had the truth. From then on it became a rumor.

If this were just a game, it would just be amusing. But this happens all the time in real life. People hear something from someone and then spread it to others -- usually not in the same words. There seems to be a tendency in our human nature to distort and embellish, whether by accident or deliberately -- like, if it's juicy, make it juicier; if it's slanderous, make it more slanderous; if it's damaging, make it more damaging. Christians are not immune to this -- not even Kairos Christians. We all have a tongue, and we constantly choose to either use it or abuse it. Jesus was referring to this choice in Matthew 15:11: "It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles;" and in Mark 7:21-22, "For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: ..., deceit..., envy, slander, pride, and folly." (NRSV)

In the thirteen years of Kairos in Colorado, there have been certain periods when this variety of "tongues" has been especially damaging -- damaging to individuals as well as to the ministry, and in some instances, very damaging. Rumors and other vocal attacks have sometimes been so malicious and unfounded as to cause years of pain, deep feelings of rejection, permanent withdrawal from or avoidance of group events, ruined friendships, and other hardships. You might say, "Surely not in the Kairos community." But, yes -- in the Kairos community. And now is one of those times when it is again especially noticeable.

So, Kairos sisters and brothers, let's quit this tongue wagging. This kind of tongues is not the "gift-of-the-Spirit" kind. No, this kind is a gift of the devil -- one of the ways he takes advantage of the flesh, especially the flesh of God's people. So, be on guard! Remember, the battle still rages. Put on the full armor every morning, with special intentions regarding the mouth. When you hear something about somebody, ask yourself if it's something that could be damaging in any way -- and if it is, then for the Lord Jesus' sake, do not repeat it to anyone. Let it die its stinking death right then and there. That is your part in the battle -- the battle of your tongue.

James 1:26: "If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless." (NRSV)

James 3:4-10: "Look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no one can tame the tongue a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so." (NRSV)

THE PRISON STORY

"Can anything good come from Nazareth?"

Can anything good come from prison?

In 1992 one of the original founders of Cursillo traveled from Spain to attend the National Cursillo Encounter in Detroit. There he revealed that Cursillo was given its crucial push in its birth experience by two prison inmates. This is his story. It takes place in Palma, Majorca in 1949.

A group of young men, of the Spanish Action Movement, were attempting to renew the church, to get people, especially men, more involved and to counter the un-Christian world they were living in with its rise of secular values.

They had worked long and hard, but all their efforts floundered. Each attempt seemed worse than the last. They were on the point of giving up the whole idea. Then one evening one of the men received an unexpected call from the chaplain of the local prison, asking for a couple of volunteers to come to the prison and help him with a difficult problem. Two young men were scheduled to be executed the next day and they would have nothing to do with the chaplain. The chaplain thought perhaps a layman could reach them.

The man who received the call was frightened of the prospect of entering a prison. After considerable prayer, he called a friend to join him in responding to the chaplain's call. Neither had ever been in a prison, but they agreed to go.

As the two men entered the cell, they encountered the condemned pair playing cards and gambling with the guards. Prison rules required that two guards stay in the cell with condemned men on the last night before execution. Their cell was littered with pornographic magazines, the walls plastered with salacious pin-ups. The condemned men seemed bent only on swapping dirty stories and gambling the night away.

One of the men who responded to the chaplain's call was Eduardo Bonnin. He asked the governor for permission to let them take the place of the guards. When this had been done, they began talking to the prisoners, listening to their stories. Gradually they won the prisoners' confidence and, eventually, Eduardo said to them, "We came here to ask a favor of you."

At this the two men laughed loud and long. "A favor!?" Don't you realize that later this morning we..." and he made a gesture of being garotted.

"But there is something you can do," said Bonnin. "We only want you to recommend something to the Lord for us. You are the only people we have met who know when they will meet the Lord face-to-face. We want you to say something to Him. We feel it is so urgent. We have this wonderful project, from which we expect great fruits - but we have failed miserably, so far, to get it going. We want you to ask the Lord to help us." And, Bonnin proceeded to explain their hopes and anxieties concerning the program.

As the night wore on they spoke of Christ, of His love and mercy. They spoke of how the Good Thief had "stolen heaven", and they talked about forgiveness. Then the chaplain heard their confessions, and held a private mass. The two inmates, Bonnin, and his friend all received the Eucharist.

A short while later they were led to the garotting post. One of them cried out for Eduardo Bonnin, and Eduardo told of how that man died, holding Eduardo's crucifix in one

hand, and clasping Eduardo's hand with the other, as he knelt beside him, praying for him. The executioners placed the hood over the man's head and affixed the chain which would break his neck with a sudden jerk.

One of the condemned men wrote to his family that night. Here is a translation from the Spanish, preserving, as far as possible, the grammar and simplicity of the original:

Palma, Majorca, 1:00 a.m. January 28, 1949

Dearest Parents and Brothers, so close to my heart,

These lines I am writing are the last you will receive from your son and brother. I am writing them more with my heart than my pen...I am in the condemned cell, and only a few hours remain before I leave this life.

After my life of ill-luck..., God has granted me the extraordinary grace of enabling me to recognize my past faults, and of making my peace with him - he has given me this opportunity... (for) a sincere confession, which has opened, little by little, the Gates of Heaven.

It only remains for me to ask your pardon for all the heartaches I gave you during my life, with my straying - and to recommend to my brothers, whom I love with all my heart, never to stray from the path of duty which you, my parents, taught us to follow with your good advice.

I never remembered you with such affection as at this moment...The end of my career has arrived. Praise be to God, who gave me these moments to ransom my life, and to die as do those men who have faith.

For news of my last moments, write to our chaplain, who is called Father José Maria Fabian Rubio. He will tell you about the last hours I spent in this world. Be sure I am going to heaven to pray for you, my dearest parents and brothers.

Signed with my own hand, my last thoughts on earth are with you. Adios! 'Till eternity, Your Son and Brother who awaits you in heaven, s/s

The project which Eduardo Bonnin and his companions had in hand, and which they had been unsuccessful in launching despite all their trials and efforts, was the "Cursillo en Christianidad". The first Cursillo, as we know it, took place in January 1949 and faced an uncertain future. It was after the death of those two poor men on January 28, 1949 that the Cursillo movement exploded with the presence of the Holy Spirit, expanding to virtually every corner of the earth.

Surely we can conclude that Jesus said to them, as He said to the thief who was crucified with Him, "Today, you will be with me in Paradise."

Bonnin still wears the cross the young condemned man held at his execution.

NEWS FLASH!!!

Eduardo Bonnin is coming to Florida for the 20th anniversary of Kairos. The thanksgiving banquet will be in Jacksonville on Saturday, February 24, 1996, in conjunction with the Kairos Annual Board Meeting and Kairos #40 at Raiford (UCI). The location and date were chosen so that some of the attendees can attend the UCI Closing. That community will be celebrating 20 years of Kairos in Raiford, which was where the very first Kairos was held. For more information, contact Kairos headquarters in Winter Park, FL (407-629-4948).

(This page is excerpted from the national Kairos newsletter.)

NO MAIL TO FREMONT!!

The administrative staff of Fremont Correctional Facility has requested that Kairos people **NOT** send anything to any of the inmates in Fremont. This applies to anyone who has attended a Fremont closing or who has served on a Fremont team. The restriction applies to packages as well as letters. We ask all of you to cooperate, in order to avoid any damage to the ministry or to your own clearance status.

FROM THE CLOSING OF WOMEN'S #24

"I brought in lots of pain and guilt. I wasn't on speaking terms with my [natural] sister who is also in CWCF, but I gave her the cookies (you know, someone you need to forgive) and received forgiveness and a renewed relationship."

"I was standing behind the Lord, now I'm walking next to him. Kairos brought to me that I need to let go and let God. God -- I just love him; he's my life."

"I didn't have a family. Now [looking out at the audience] I have a family -- a big family."

"It's good to know that you, but for the grace of God, could be here with us."

"I'm in here because I let someone else lead me in wrong ways. Now I'm letting God call the shots."

"I found somewhere where I belong -- with God! Now, when I get out, I don't have to go back to the old gang. Instead of drugs and crime, I'm gonna be lookin' for Jesus."

As for the three basic questions:

(1) "What was your spiritual condition when you arrived on Thursday?"

"Fair to midlin' / Didn't have a spiritual condition / thirsty for spirituality / emotional wreck / low self esteem / fear of rejection."

(2) "What did you find here?"

"Learned about love / a lot of forgiving / learned to forgive myself / restored in faith / food for the soul, and for the body."

(3) "What are you taking away with you?"

"Our need for Christ in our lives / a personal relationship with our Savior / peace and joy / hunger for a relationship with Christ / The Word / pain of separation / walls torn down / a new ability to be vulnerable to others / risk of being able to share with those who didn't make the weekend."

FROM THE CLOSING OF FREMONT #25

The Table Family of Saint John had written down their answers to the three questions. Here's what they wrote:

"As we came to Kairos, this weekend, each of us were at varied points and levels in our spiritual life and our walk with Christ. We ranged from one being lost; to another enjoying close fellowship with Christ, being secure in salvation and experiencing peace, joy, contentment; and we covered several points in between, from trying our own way and being low in spirit, to searching for support.

"What we found here was more support than we ever thought possible, and receptiveness by both inmates and "outmates". We found understanding, listening ears, friendship, love, direction, advice, and compassion. We found good food, lots of coffee, and most importantly, one of us found the Lord. We also saw a picture of Christ, in thirty men we'd never met before, reaching out to us.

"As we leave, one of us takes the Lord with him for the very first time. We take with us love; new friends; fellowship; compassion for inmates and "outmates" alike; a greater burden for those around us; knowledge; and a desire and responsibility to pass on the understanding, knowledge, and experience we've gained this weekend. We also take with us a greater level of acceptance of others and their ways. We take joy for some who have possibly never felt accepted by anyone before; and now feel accepted by all of us in this room, but more importantly, by Jesus Christ.

"Finally, while we leave at various points in our walk with Christ, we all now have a closer resemblance to our Lord Jesus Christ."

Other Gleanings from Fremont #25 Closing:

"I arrived like a car out of gas that wouldn't start. They had to push me in."

"Last night I saw that the smoke from the burning forgiveness papers in that bucket was our prayers rising to God. That really moved me."

"This is my 7th trip here. Last night I learned to forgive. I've been hiding behind the man I thought the world wanted me to be. Sometimes God's greatest gift is unanswered prayer because I prayed and didn't want this particular prison. But because of Kairos here I don't hate nobody no more."

"Every time I'd try to get back on my feet, this same guy would knock me down. Last night I put his name on my forgiveness slip and burned it. I felt such a great release. That name was my own."

"People from my church who've known me since I was three won't come see me, but you came!"