

GOD'S SPECIAL TIME

Volume 17 #1

Spring 1999

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

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"I'M TERMINAL"

A few weeks ago during Retreat introductions, an inmate in a wheelchair said, "Hi, my name is John Doe, and I'm terminal." And yes, he had been in hospice care since before his Kairos Weekend last November at Territorial. But why did he tell us about it up front?

We can only guess. Since I already was acquainted with him and had listened to his story on several occasions, I guessed (to myself) that he wanted us to know how close he was to leaving this life and what effect that has had on his spirituality. To be admitted to hospice care, some authority has to determine that the patient is "terminal." That usually translates to less than six months to go.

About the time this determination was being made for John Doe, he came into a new and deep relationship with the Lord. He totally cast off his previous belief system and lifestyle and embraced Jesus Christ, not only as Savior, but also as Lord — and then set out to let God be in charge on a daily basis.

In a sense, we are all "terminal." It's just a matter of how long we have to go — or how long before Jesus comes back. One assumes that everyone in the Kairos ministry has accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, and that we all look forward to the salvation provided for us on the Cross. But how many of us really want Jesus as Lord, on a daily basis, our "self" being surrendered to the Spirit of God, willing and ready to be with Him completely? Do we have to face bodily shutdown to want to get ready? Do we have to be "terminal" to get ready?

Jesus tells the story of the ten virgins, as recorded in Matthew 25:1-13 (NIV):

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.' 'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!' But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.' Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour."

Why bother, we're saved anyway, aren't we? Yes, we have the salvation, the eternal life. But there's so much more! Our spirit doesn't have to wait until the body shuts down to be in the Kingdom of God. He wants us **now!** Let us have the "terminal" mindset of being completely ready to give the very best of ourselves to God as we share His love with the inmates, staff, and fellow team members.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS

FROM TERRITORIAL #26

This was a special experience from the word go. I was a Christian but I had no trust. I'm from D.C. and you know you don't trust nobody there. I was pushing people away. But here I met Christians who don't act like they're "holier than thou". This sharing really strengthens us.

I came dead. For years I searched in the dirt for truth. Which doctrine is right? That was my excuse. I learned that God isn't found through doctrine, but through surrender to Jesus as Lord of my life.

You challenged us to be apostles for the Lord, to stand up and be counted. I remember the story you told us the first night – about the king and the farmer, and how, when asked, the farmer gave the king only one grain of his wheat and the king gave him one gold coin out of his bag. Well, I got the whole bag of gold this weekend.

We went from the table of St. John to the family of St. John. We were all spiritually weak, though Christians. This was a good turning point. We found love, peace, fellowship of the Holy Spirit, God's word and presence, a new relationship with God, a new family of St. John and in Kairos.

I give thanks to God for Kairos. I found a better attitude for life and understanding of His word. I will take this with me when I leave here to my new wife and son.

I grew up in church for 16 years. I learned the most in confirmation class with that peer pressure. After that I stopped going to church and life went downhill. Thank God He brought me to prison where I could find Him again. Now I follow God out of love, not fear.

I had lots of tears of joy reading all those letters. I thank God for choices and that you chose to come down here for us.

I was hiding from God. I found you can't hide from the love of God. He cleansed my soul with tears yesterday. This was a wonderful weekend. I hope I can carry that back with me, so others can come next time.

I met the Spirit of the Lord every step of the way.

We came in different conditions: a mess, a wreck, weak, struggling. Kairos showed us that it's OK to come as we are. God took our messes and turned them all around. He gave strength to the weak, and showed us that struggling is OK. We found all different personalities, strength, peace, love, and that God's love shown is different. We're taking family, love our family shows, God's Spirit, and trusting to share back inside.

NEEDED: MENTORS!

"Friends in Transition" is seeking volunteer mentors to "assist juvenile and adult inmates in changing their lives and becoming productive and useful citizens....The volunteer regularly visits the inmate in prison and offers support during the difficult transition period back to the community." Training is provided. One-on-one matching is done only after interviews by Friends in Transition. For more info, please call 719-634-0700 (Tuesday or Thursday only) or 303-756-9285. By DOC guidelines, **current** Kairos volunteers cannot participate, but the rest of you can. Please tell your friends and inform your churches of this additional way to respond to Matthew 25:36.

**Make a friend, be a friend,
Bring your friend to Jesus.**

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Lee Abeyta, Moses Archuleta, Bill Blakely (CTCF), A.J. Luckey, Duane Medina, Jane Merritt, Gerri Quintana, Bill Tipton, Ted Van Horn, Chuck Weida, and Rectors of upcoming weekends.

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

KAIROS of COLORADO

We are Christians reaching out to inmates in Colorado prisons with the Good News of God's love, forgiveness, and new life, which are available to all who repent of their sin and submit to Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

We are volunteers, with no paid staff, who depend on God to meet expenses through donations from our team members, churches, and friends like yourselves. Please use our pre-addressed envelope for donations and other inquiries, or write to the address on this newsletter.

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1999 KAIROS KALENDAR

Fremont	#33	Mar 18-21	#34	Sep 16-19
Women	#30	Apr 15-18	#31	Oct 14-17
Delta	#15	Apr 22-25	#16	Oct 21-24
Territorial	#27	May 13-16	#28	Nov 18-21

BOARD ELECTIONS

On 14 January the Board elected the Rev Dave Schoger, Joseph Mares, Ken Huard, and Bruce Carlson to replace the Right Rev Bill Davidson, Art Wise, Dave Tillack, and Paul Garcia. Subsequently Donna Wood has had to resign. All of these Board members served with love and resolve, for which we are very grateful. On 7 March the Board elected Tom Guidera to serve out Donna's term.

OUTSIDE WEEKEND INFORMATION

Walk to Emmaus, E: Randy Detter, 719-632-2740
Walk to Emmaus, W: Janet Keenan, 970-963-1030
Cath Crsl, Den: Fransisco Mondragon, 303-429-3464
Cath Cursillo, Colo Spgs: Dan Furzi, 719-392-8404
Episcopal Crsl, E: Marge Humphrey, 303-973-5448
Episcopal Cursillo, W: Jan Smith, 970-325-4409
Via de Cristo, Luth: Mark Carnes, 303-924-7192
Koinonia, Denver: Tom Starnes, 303-421-9305
Koinonia, North: Julie Wilson, 970-226-5925

COLORADO DISTRICT BOARD

President:	Ken Grosse	719-598-3508
Vice Pres:	Bruce Carlson	719-531-7109
Secretary:	Ken Huard	719-598-8329
Treasurer:	Jim Strub	719-634-2821
Nat'l Rep:	Joseph Mares	303-975-0567
Spiritual Dir:	Rv Bill Cooper	970-407-1520
Spiritual Dir:	Rv Dave Schoger	719-687-9390
Supplies:	Tom Guidera	303-730-2148
Training:	Jack Burson	303-499-3024
Facility Coordinators:		
Women:	Jean Yancheck	719-599-8280
Fremont:	Dick Evans	719-597-6726
Territorial:	Dave McGee	719-594-9390
Delta:	Bill Bennett	970-626-3855

Editors: Peggy and Jim Strub "Spiritually Speaking" by Jim Strub

BOARD RETREAT

The Colorado District Board met on 7 March at the John Wesley Ranch near Divide. During a brief business meeting the Board chose our committee members for the positions you see above. The rest of the day was devoted to a prayerful look at our mission, prison environment, people, vision, and what actions need to be taken. There were many findings and several action items, such as:

- The Board is establishing ad hoc committees to work toward establishing Kairos programs in the new Women's prison in Denver and in the Limon men's prison. These programs could start as regular monthly reunions, or more.
- The four Advisory Councils are to stress the recruiting of team members — new people and those who have served but are now inactive. Every current team member should bring in one additional member.
- The four Advisory Councils are to give additional attention to adhering to the guidelines set forth in the national Manual and by the Board — for example, that team members be people who are regularly attending church and participating in small prayer and share groups, and that they honor their commitments to attend retreats and monthly reunions.

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

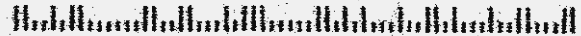
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Bob Schmidt of Rifle served on many Kairos and Emmaus teams over the last ten years. Even in his last days he was trying to save strength to serve on Delta #14. As God would have it, Bob could not attend physically, but he was able to pray the whole weekend. God's servant to the last!

All through his remaining days, even when he was down physically and mentally, he would pray for others. One could go in with a verse to uplift him and pull out Bob's Bible only to find that verse not only underlined but highlighted — and come out wondering who had ministered to whom. He could always sense when somebody was down, and then offer a prayer.

His spirit and body finally parted company on 13 December. The funeral was really three services in one. Kairos friends and his Rifle Correctional Facility community opened with praise and prayer. The men from the camp played their music and testified to the blessing he brought into their lives. (Earlier they had prepared a tape of that music and testimony so that Bob could hear it — an act of love that really blessed Bob and his wife Lucy!) Then Pastor Rich Stoakes led the eulogy from the Rifle combined United Methodist/Presbyterian Church and Emmaus friends. Finally a very traditional Lutheran service honored Bob's life. Afterwards the whole crowd feasted together as "One in the Spirit."

Bob's spirit is now with the spirits of many Kairos brothers and sisters we have known and loved — Ray and Jackie and Gene and Gordon and Sue and Dave — earthly lives that have touched us all!

<i>"I was in prison and you came to me." Matthew 25:36</i>
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