

Twelve needs of jail and prison inmates
corresponding to the twelve jewels on the High Priest's breastplate
in four rows of three each.
Exodus 28:15-20

A. Obedience to God.

1. Juveniles
2. Unserved adults
3. Believers

B. Relationship with others

1. Unforgiveness and resentment
2. Marriage and family.
3. Influence of friends

C. Bondages

1. Chemical addictions: drugs, marijuana, alcohol, tobacco.
2. Sexual addictions
3. Depression, anger, emotional bondage and baggage.

D. Leaders

1. Inmates who are spiritual leaders, short and long termers.
2. Jail and Court personnel: judges, attorneys, officers, guards.
3. Chaplains, volunteers, and those behind the scenes

A. Obedience to God

1. Juveniles (Juvenile Detention Center) and Youth Offenders (Brevard Correctional Institution), both in Sharps, Florida (between Titusville and Cocoa).

a. Juveniles are still young enough to change; the older they get, the harder it is to quit lifestyle habits. Yet they are the least likely to change. Why? Peer pressure! Peer pressure is the overwhelming need for acceptance and love. It is the strongest human driving force in the world, originally created to attract us to God but "corrupted" by Satan (Ez. 28:17).

b. Pray that God will get through to them one way or another, through the drawing of His Spirit, dealing with their parents or guardians, empowering the JDC volunteers, and whatever means He uses. Pray that God will give them a hatred for sin and bad company.

2. Unserved adult inmates

a. Five kinds of criminals live in our jails and prisons: (1) hardened criminals bent on evil with no intention of changing, (2) criminals not yet hardened but for whom crime is a lifestyle, (3) criminals who've come to the end and want to change if only they knew how, (4) non-criminals who ended up in prison for doing something stupid, (5) and a small percent (5-7%) who are innocent.

b. Pray that the Holy Spirit will (1) bring deep conviction and the fear of God on those who have no intention of changing, (2) draw and enlighten those who want to find a way out of sin, (3) get the attention of those don't think of themselves as criminals, and (4) move on the innocent to turn their attention from the failure of the court and begin to seek God for a new relationship with Him provided by this tragic circumstance.

3. Believers in prison, most of whom accepted Christ after incarceration.

a. Most of them struggle with the guilt of not living up to the righteous standards of the Word. Their typical and chronic sins are (1) bad habits—smoking, cussing, masturbation, pornography, and even drugs; (2) carnal living—junk TV & reading materials, fellowship with the ungodly, and the pride-anger-depression triangle; (3) lack of responsibility and purpose: complacency,

laziness, ignorance.

b. Pray that God will (1) draw them to get serious enough to begin hating sin and walking in what they know about faith and love, (2) open the eyes of their understanding as in Ephesians 1 and Romans 3-8, (3) draw them to seek to *Know Him* as the answer to their habits, carnal living, and irresponsibility.

B. Relationships with others.

1. Resentment (unforgiveness).

a. The “Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous states that “Resentment is the ‘number one’ offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease...” (3rd Ed., p.64)

b. There are many ways to pray for their deliverance in this area since its causes are related to every other problem in this list. Pray as the Spirit leads you.

1. Marriage and family.

a. Those with baggage from the past carry the same thing into their own families.

b. Pray that husbands and wives will find reconciliation and forgiveness through Christ, and that the hearts of fathers and mothers will be restored to their children and their children to them. Also this great need: that God will open their eyes to the need for commitment in marriage, and that they will receive wisdom to navigate through some of the tangled relationship situations and find God’s will.

2. Influence of friends

a. Friends of inmates, especially when they (inmates) get out, largely determine which direction they will follow.

b. Pray God will give them the strength to break with bad friends and connect with a local church and submit to discipleship and accountability. This is a big order, for most of them fail in this one area, despite their good intentions. So dare to believe for the Himpossible!

C. Bondages

1. Chemical addictions: drugs, marijuana, alcohol, tobacco.

a. These are the symptoms of the above problems but can be cured through an encounter with Christ and His Church.

b. Pray that God will lead them in the right direction. Some need a drug-program, some will make it without one. Ask God to open the right door for each individual.

2. Sexual addictions

a. Pornography, homosexuality, fornication, or adultery are the norm among inmates, even among the “believers.”

b. Pray that the Holy Spirit will bring deep conviction in these areas and that the chaplains and volunteers will be led and empowered by the Spirit to address these sins in God’s timing and wisdom.

3. Depression, anger, emotional bondage and baggage.

a. Breakdown in relationship with God and people, and physical and financial problems are common roots of depression. Combine that with chemical abuse, incarceration, and rejection by friends and family, and depression can be overwhelming, leading to a vicious cycle of more substance abuse, rejection, and crime.

b. Those who've struggled with these problems know the despair and agony they feel. Identify with them in intercession, even "with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26). Pray in the Spirit, pray with tears, with travail. Birth them into freedom through Christ.

D. Leaders

1. Inmates who are spiritual leaders, short and long-termers.

a. Believing inmates can obviously have the greatest influence among their peers in jail and prison. But, sadly, they also create some of the greatest problems for those attempting to find good role models. Remember, however, they are together 24/7 and "all things are naked and open" before one another. How would we fare under those conditions?

b. In this area we have the strongest biblical mandate: Matthew 25:31-46, where the sheep and goats will be divided according to their responsibility to help the needy and *Christ's brothers and sisters in prison!*; and Ephesians 6:18, where "spiritual warfare" is summed up in "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication *for all the saints.*"

2. Jail and Court personnel: judges, attorneys, officers, guards.

a. These are the leaders who affect the destiny of inmates. Some are conscientiously concerned, some merely (or barely) do their duty, and some are vain, even profane. Officers sometimes have the attitude "they got what they deserve" and treat inmates with disdain, mental abuse, and in prison even physical abuse. Some lawyers and judges are men of integrity, while others apparently fail to understand the Higher Law to which they must eventually give account.

b. Here's a major challenge, to influence through intercession the outcome and decisions of countless inmates. Pray for an invasion of the "fear of God" in our courtrooms, jails, and prisons. Pray for "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Is. 11:2). The security of our county and nation depends on it!

3. Chaplains, volunteers, and those behind the scenes who give money and time in board meetings, planning and prayer, or in helping inmates and their families after their release.

a. This is the *heart* of the "department of corrections" without whom "correction" means little more than punishment, leading to more crime. Every chaplain I know in Brevard County and at the Orlando prison (CFRC) is a genuine man of God, evangelical, rooted and grounded in truth, walks in the Word and Spirit, and is dedicated to winning and discipling the lost. There are hundreds of volunteers, many and probably most of whom are of the same caliber.

b. Here again is the Ephesians 6:18 prayer of spiritual warfare, with the addition of verse 19: "and for me [above leaders and volunteers], that utterance may be given to [us] that [we] may open [our] mouth[s] boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel." Pray that God will deliver us from luke-warmness, that the Holy Spirit will keep us fired up, fervent in spirit, patient in tribulation, not "weary in well doing" (Gal. 6:9). And "pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Mt. 9:38). And don't forget yourself, that God will draw you by His Spirit into His Secret Place of intercession, that your work will not be "of yourself" but of Him, in His *rest* (Heb. 4:11). Thank you!