



Missionary Evangelism to Corrections

Sharing the gospel & Christ's love with those in corrections since 1982

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

COPE & Breathe the Fruits of the Spirit

One young woman asked for prayer for her mental health. This is a common request. Years ago, people would have been ashamed to ask for this in a church setting. A church I was a part of for years had division over the ideas that people following Christ's Word would not need counseling other than to perhaps talk with a pastor. Others could see that one way God would help and heal us was through understanding psychology (the study of the mind) and counseling. As the years have gone by many have come to see that mental health has a lot to do with thoughts and beliefs which bring us down or bring healing. I believe that our minds, hearts, beliefs and actions that result from them are part what Christ referred to as the inside of the cup.

One morning on my way to minister to the youth, the Holy Spirit "downloaded" into my thoughts, two tools to share with them.

These are helpful for coping with challenging situations, making decisions and when we need to turn off racing minds, relax to sleep, and "think on good things" (Philippians 4:8)

Breathe In, Breathe Out Fruit Cont.. pg. 2



MEC Newsletter January / February 2025

Spotlight Gary Irwin

As a child, I thought being with God would mean sitting on a cloud, playing a harp and pretty boring. Years later, I thought, I could not see, hear, smell, taste or touch Him. Good Ole Yankee engineering and education are enough for me! You live and die – end of story. Belief worked for some, but I wasn't buying it and was not going to join the believing people.

THEN - afraid time, desperate for anything because my mom was dying of cancer, I tried a little bit of the God stuff again. It didn't seem to work.

THEN - I met the love of my life. Our romance started out with a BANG yee oh sur!!!! In the middle of our Popcorn Pepsi kissing and hugging at the drive-in movie theatre, we came up for air. ... She blurted out, "God is very important to me!"

That was surreal – Why would she say that? I thought, "Better dial down my kisses, I must have blown these beautiful creatures mind, & We are busy, concentrate!"



Gary Irwin cont. pg. 3

C	Commit Sin	OR	C	Commit to God, His Love and Good
O	Sins of Omission - Not doing good, or not doing what you need to do	OR	O	Obedience to God, Christ, Love, Good
P	Permit sin & reap it's consequences	OR	P	Pursue God, & reap blessings. Pour out your heart to Him.
E	Emit sin Not loving, or bad attitudes or words	OR	E	Enter God's presence

**January -
February 2025**

Spotlight: Gary Irwin

Page 1,3&4

COPE & Breathing the Fruits of the Spirit

Page 1 & 2

Ministry Shout-Out: Correctional Ministries & Chaplains Association

Page 2

Praying the Names of God: **El Chay**—The Living God

Page 4

We know we are not alone in God's work. This month our **Ministry shout-out** goes to:

CMCA Correctional Ministries and Chaplains Association

www.cmcainternational.org

Correctional Ministries and Chaplains Association (CMCA) is a professional organization, through which Christians can celebrate their faith and passion for correctional ministry with others, develop professionally through online resources, trainings, and certifications; and be inspired through uplifting journal articles, networking, and conferences. They have summits and webinars. I did a workshop at the Billy Graham Center in Wheaton Collage in Ill. With them a few years ago. The next summit is in Florida.

There is a seminar coming up,, **"Curriculum that Works"** It will cover 3 that are successful in corrections ministry.

If you would like to take that by zoom, please e-mail me asap. So we can get a ticket for you.

It is next Thursday Feb. 27 at 2-3 pm

Breathe, Cont. .from pg. 1

Breathe In & Breathe Out *the Fruits of the Spirit*

(from Galatians chapter 5)

Breathing in and holding it for 5 seconds or longer, then breathing out and doing the same changes our the brain chemistry from active zone to calm. Trusting and pouring out our heart to Him (Ps 62:8) and meditating on God's Word helps us to know Him as the One who brings peace that passes all understanding.

Breathe in **love**

Breathe out **joy**

Breath in **peace**

then you will be able to -

Breath out **patience**
longsuffering

Breathe in **kindness**
goodness

Breathe out **gentleness**

Breath in **faith**
faithfulness

Breathe out **meekness**
self control

Strength
under
control

It takes time to grow fruit, nurture your faith so that these will grow in your mind and heart. I have a sheet with more detail of how I think of each of these, if you would like it, e-mail me and I will send you a copy.

Pray that the beliefs of the inmates, staff, volunteers and all of us are clear. Pray that the truth of Christ and His love replaces the struggles that they and we deal with so often. To know the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

This in turn will allow us to live in love with Him and others.

In Christ, Karen Selby

(pg 2 of 4)

I married this beautiful girl and soon she had us reading the Bible. I wasn't interested in it, but was interested in her. I had joined the believer's game, reading the Bible, but I did not know the rules. Early on, we went to a Billy Graham crusade, but both of us said, "Well, I guess that didn't really take." Later, we read a full page newspaper add about Jesus coming back. It asked if we were ready if He came today?.

My wife said, "No, I am not ready." I asked. "Who has been where? and Why did He not stay there? It had to be better than here." Does it sound like we were a bit lost? Yeh we were.

THEN – More afraid time! Mom was facing death. I'm desperate, thinking maybe God will help?! **For real**, I began to pursue Him earnestly.! We met Dick and Linda, who befriended, impressed and mentored us. Dr Brewer also mentored collage students, myself included. One night ,I walked into the hallway of our family's apartment. Standing near an ugly little table, I said to God. "I am frustrated, I mean **frustrated**. I cannot go on doing this any-more. It is like running around in mud. Are you real or not? **Please**, please, please! If you are, show yourself to me.

THIS GUY WHO WANTED PROOF, got nothing. I went to bed. In the morning, HERE HE WAS. Bigger than life. He said I am Jesus and I have seen what you have been doing. You and your wife are the house father and mother. There is a house full of young college girls renting upstairs and I have noticed how you are looking at them. Gulp! I see the big black cigars you smoke. Yikes! He kept going - and he was dead on. He knew I did not know Jesus from Mr. Anybody and he set the scene with a beautiful garden and dressed like royalty.

Then he said, "Because of your sins, I am kicking you out of the kingdom of heaven and you can NEVER become a Christian". Then he was gone.

I was cooked; red hot mad. I said to the unseen, unknown God, "I asked you to help me keep walking, shake off the mud, this unbelief and you kicked me out!" Cruel, unloving, unapproachable god, Well, same to you! You don't want me, then I don't want you." I told my pretty young wife I'M DONE. I'll go to church with you some-times. I'll be civil, but I am done. I told her why. We were both crushed, but I was also bitter. She KEPT her walk with Jesus. I broke off with my mentors, Dick and Dr. Bremmer. "*I believe there is no heaven and I pray there is no hell.*" is a song that I was living. I was CUT OFF.

THEN - **Eight years later**, I was coming home from work after a long 15-hour day, working to get my insurance company off the ground. Driving south on Hwy 10 just under the Hwy 242 bridge. ALL OF A SUDDEN, I **KNEW** two people were praying for me. I swore, doubled up my fist punched the dash, and turned up the radio - trying to drown this knowledge out. I told no one.

That week Pastor Lowell was coming to preach at the church we previously attended. He was the pastor who had come down the isle, put his hand on my shoulder and said what about it Gary,? want to get saved today?: That went over like a ton of bricks ... so I wasn't going. But Marilyn took the girls.

When they came home, my oldest, Carla said, "Daddy, can I talk to you?"

Here is the contest. In one corner, 170-pound daddy, sitting on the couch next to his maybe 70-pound (soaking wet) little girl. Fair fight? Talk about a setup! The Holy Spirit was backing the little one. I was about to find out who those two were who were praying so powerfully for me the previous Monday. Carla, my oldest and our middle daughter Jodi. Carla is nervous, so I put my arm around her to comfort her. God knew I would not let anybody talk to me about Jesus, so He used my daughter, my own daughter. Does Holy Spirit know how to do battle – or what? She read a little book I had already known, Steps to Peace with God.

She said, "Daddy, Me and Jodi and Mom are saved, and we want you to go to heaven with us. Will you accept Jesus so you can? Blown away, I stammered, Uhhu ** h – u. I'll think about it."

I raged = f-u-r-i-o-u-s__ God, How could you do this? You sent me away, yet you let a 10-year-old innocent girl believe she could see her Daddy get saved. How could you fool a little girl? I WAS FURIOUS.

And shook up. I paced. Up and down stairs, Up, down, ...back, again. At one point I lay down in the living room and listened to country western songs. I listened to cry songs and I cried. I did not know what was going on. My Holy Spirit did. He was fixing what satan had broken 8 years ago. Lost & confused, 'Could God really be willing to receive me?' Either He had changed His mind, or the other was not really Jesus. I cried all night. Near morning, the lie from hell began to lose its power and credibility and began to break apart. As the sun came up that morning, I knelt by our big living room chair. "God, I'm going to church with Marilyn and if they give an invitation, I will receive Jesus.

I went, they did, I did not. The pastor said there is someone God is calling to come, I

still DID'NT go. The fifth time, I found myself up front.

My wife hit herself over the head with a hymnal, Murial, the pianist was crying and the pastor said GARY, Do you mean it? YES! I SAID the Prayer, bought a little green Bible and ate the Words like candy. 52 years ago, that God who would not meet my terms, who never proved Himself to me. After I gave up and came to Him with no proof, on His terms, He has given Me proof, after proof, after proof that He is real.

At the jail, I am an individual Spiritual counselor. I tell people, I have 100 stories, God stories, starring God, costarring me. Things I could not possibly know in the natural world, He shows me. He shows us. Jeremiah 33:3 Call unto me and I will answer you and I will tell you great and mighty things which you do not know. If He saves us, why wouldn't He want to talk to us? He does. As I close this salvation story, I want you to know, I will share even more in the book I am writing, "*The Lions of the Silver Reign*".

Humor Me

Thank You Lord!

An elderly woman greeted mornings by opening her window and proclaiming, "God is good! Praise You for another day! Her atheist neighbor would shout back, "There is no God!

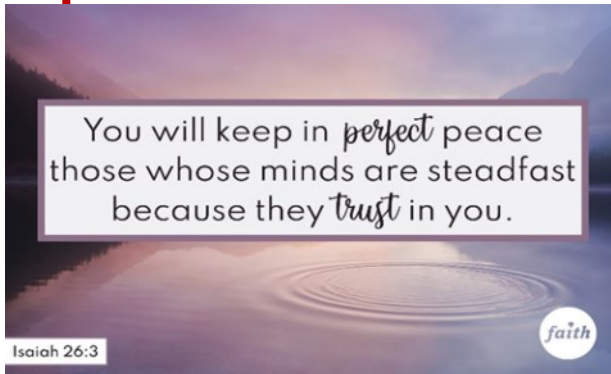
One morning the woman had no groceries. She opened the window and said, "God is good! Praise You for another day! And Lord, could you provide some groceries?

The atheist, trying to make his point, bought groceries and put them on the woman's step. She opened the door and exclaimed Thank You Lord, Thank You!

The atheist said - God did not buy them, I did.

Oh Lord. You are awesome. Not only did you provide groceries, You got the devil to pay for them!

From *Oh No! Another Senior Moment Inspired by Faith*
2010 Product Concept



Praying the Names of God

El Chay

"our God, the living God, the LORD of Heaven's Armies" (Jeremiah 23.36b)

How lovely is Your dwelling place, O LORD of Hosts! My soul longs, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; **my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.** Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she places her young near Your altars, O LORD of Hosts, my King and my God. How blessed are those who dwell in Your house! They are ever praising You. Psalm 84: 1-4

But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and eternal King. the earth quakes at His wrath, and the nations cannot endure His indignation. Jeremiah 10:10

Lord, You are the living God. Just hearing that, thinking on that amazes me. You, the living God give us life. That You the living God make your home in us and live in us is beyond comprehension, but the part we can comprehend is so good.

You invite us to abide in you, to dwell in you, to live in You. The saying "You are my Home" is so true.

Thank you for having always been there, creating us, being here with us now and always be.

To remove your name from our mailing list, please email us with REMOVE in the subject line, call or write. Please visit our website for articles, studies, prayer aides, resources or to donate.

www.mecjailministry.com, mec@usfamily.net (651) 408-1300 PO 542, Wyoming MN 55092.

Saul Selby Director, Karen Selby Associate Dir., Aubrey Winey Office Admin.