

Worldwide

Impacting Our Region

Acts 16: 6 - 40

Week 5 of 8

By the time of his 22nd arrest—following a dramatic chase through Miami [that involved] many police cars and much shooting—John Sala had reached the end of the line. Guilty of the attempted murder of a policeman, aggravated assault, and grand theft, he was headed to jail for a long time. But jail, of all places, turned out to be his saving grace...

Sent to a prison in Avon Park, Florida, John eventually met Chaplain Warren B. Wall, who shared the good news of the gospel. John dove right in, accepted Christ, and immersed himself in every opportunity for Christian growth.

Assigned to the tape ministry of the chapel, he listened to Bible teachers while organizing and labeling tapes. The chaplain found someone willing to underwrite a seminary correspondence course for John, who became a passionate, disciplined student of the Bible. "God was birthing something new in me," he says today. "Before, I wanted to take. Now I wanted to give, love, encourage, and nurture." John also found his musical voice in prison and performed with the prison choir in local churches, singing solos and giving his testimony. After serving his time, John walked out of prison in 1983 a freer man than ever before. "I'm not coming back!" he declared, not knowing that, in time, he would indeed be back ... but not as an inmate.

After his release, John went on to form All Things New, a ministry to prison inmates and their families. Years later, after he'd married his wife, Eileen, the ministry developed beyond his wildest imagining. John and Eileen changed their ministry title to Little Lambs, Inc., with the mission of loving inmates into the ministry's family and, ultimately, into the family of God. Through in-depth Bible correspondence courses, visitation, counseling, services, concerts, and classes, the Salas began with approximately 100 students in 1998. Today they have 2,750 students and graduate about 250 per year. "Little Lambs offers inmates a family connection that helps satisfy the need for belonging and being cared for as a lamb that has gone astray," the Salas say.



northeast daily reading

October 10 & 11, 2009

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John's book, *I'm Not Coming Back!*, is now in the hands of thousands of prisoners who identify with him. John knows their mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual pain. And, though he may not have seen himself as a shepherd to this unlikely flock, it was God's plan nonetheless. His book has since been translated into Spanish (*No Volvere!*), as have all the Bible correspondence courses, by an inmate (and professional translator) who came to faith in Christ while in prison. The book has also been translated into Russian...

There's no question that John and Eileen Sala have certainly introduced many men and women—all Little Lambs in training—face-to-face with a Shepherd who loved them all along. [*Jan Merop, "Feeding His Lambs," Today's Christian (January/February 2008)*]

One converted inmate made an enormous impact on the people to whom God sent him. The daily reading this week covers Paul's introduction to the city of Philippi (where he was temporarily incarcerated) to the letter he wrote to them a few years later. Witness what an impact God had on this church through Paul.

- DAY ONE – Acts 16:6-40
- DAY TWO – Philippians 1
- DAY THREE – Philippians 2
- DAY FOUR – Philippians 3
- DAY FIVE – Philippians 4

Memory Verse:

"It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of your share in God's grace with me." (Philippians 1:7)