

Case Studies

All Names Have Been Changed to Protect the Identity of the Parties

Case Study 1

Tony always calls his mother every morning before he gets to work. Every year on her birthday they either go to lunch or dinner.

Joe is Tony best friend and they take turn driving to work every week. Joe mother died on his birthday and it has been very painful for him to celebrate on any ones birthday.

Tony got upset with Joe because he always asks Joe to celebrate his mother birthday with him by going to lunch or dinner.

Joe and Tony got mad with each other one day going to work because, Tony asked him to have dinner with him and his mother on her birthday.

Joe told Tony, "you just don't get it do you." I lost my mother on my birthday and birthdays bring a lot of hurt and pain to me. I remember the joy and fun we shared together on her birthday.

Tony did not know what to say because he still has his mother. What should Tony say to his friend?

Case Study 2

Jack is in prison for murdering one of his gang member's cousins. Jack has giving his life to Christ.

Jack has a son name Jimmy who was killed by his ex-gang member.

Jack was called to the Captains office and was informed that his son has been killed.

His ex-gang member killed Jimmy because Jack had murdered his cousin.

Jack is in pain and hurt from the loss of his son. Jack knows he can still make calls from prison and have his ex-gang member killed. Jack does not know what to do but if he makes this call to have his ex-gang member killed it will start a war.

Jack is confused about what is going on in his life. He is crying out to God for strength and not to let him make the wrong choice that he may regret.

Jack goes and talks to one of his Christian brother to help him with good advice before he calls home.

What do you think his Christian brother should tell him?

Case Study 3

Ray takes a leadership and mentor position at the Celebrate Recovery prison outreach program where coffee and Kool-Aid is served upon completion of each class.

Ray is responsible for ensuring that each class member gets both coffee and Kool-Aid.

During the span of this class there is also another class running in an adjacent room, which ends about 30 minutes before Ray's class ends. When this class ends, their members tend to sneak over and try to get the coffee from Ray's class.

One day during Celebrate Recovery Ray sees a man sneaking around and approaches him in a disarming way to let him know that what he is attempting is inappropriate. The man then asks Ray to step outside and fight him.

Ray has two options he can go outside and fight this man and hurt his witness or he can just walk away.

Ray knows as a Christian he should walk away but in so doing Ray also knows that later on there will be much bigger battles not just with this man but with several others.

How should Ray respond knowing his life is possibly in danger?

Case Study 4

Larry is a 20 year old white male who has never had a job more than a month. Larry is new to the prison setting and has a 20 year sentence. He has little support on the street from his Mom and Dad.

Barry is a 35 year old African American male that grew up on the streets. He has been incarcerated for 10 years and has a 40 year sentence. Barry never knew his Dad and his Mother died 2 years after Barry was locked up. Barry joined a gang and advanced in rank.

One day Larry went to the infirmary for his checkup. While Larry was gone, Barry was sitting on Larry's bed talking on a contraband cell phone. The dorm Officer came in the dorm to walk around. Not wanting to be caught, Barry dropped the phone in a paper sack that is used for garbage and went to the restroom.

When Larry came back from the infirmary and noticed the garbage bag was full, he emptied it, not realizing Barry's phone was in the bag. After the officer left, Barry returned to Larry's bunk to retrieve his phone.

When Barry noticed the garbage was empty he asks Larry for his phone. Larry did not know anything about a phone and told Barry he had no idea what Barry was talking about. After Barry told Larry that he placed the phone in his garbage Larry ran to where he emptied it. He was too late because the dorm trash had already been emptied.

Barry slugs Larry while he was trying to apologize and demands 350 dollars in two days for the phone. When the two days are up five guys surround Larry with knives wanting the 350 dollars. Larry tries to explain that he does not have any way to get the money. Barry informs Larry that it is no longer 350 dollars but now it is 700 dollars and Larry is beaten just so he knows Barry means business.

Case Study 5

Tim is a mild-mannered Christian with a heart for the lost. He reads his Bible in the dormitory often. Although it is not his intention for this to be noticed by others in the dorm, it is.

Willie is a man whose persona and physicality are imposing. He is mostly unknown to Tim although his associates are dubious at best. Willie approaches Tim one day asking questions about the Bible.

Based on innumerable previous experiences in prison and some admittedly subjective impressions of Willie's demeanor, Tim is concerned that Willie seeks to exploit the Bible discussion as an inroad to a homosexual advance. Also based on previous experience, Tim knows if he abruptly dismisses Willie's approach he will likely avoid what can become an obsession that can turn dangerous.

Tim wants to share the truth of Scripture with Willie; he has a concern for his soul. Willie may pose no threat. But, Tim cannot afford to open himself up to any sort of victimization, especially the variety he thinks Willie may have in mind.

Case Study 6

Sam has an extremely bad reputation in the prison as a homosexual, drug addict, thief, and con-man. No one will deal with or speak to him.

Bill, a Christian, approaches Sam to share the Gospel. After a couple of conversations, Sam comes to profess belief.

Bill wants to be a good brother in Christ and show some generosity to Sam who receives no help or financial support from the outside world. Sam is still ostracized by everyone but the drug dealers and homosexuals. The Christians in his dorm think this is just another con.

Sam approaches Bill asking for help. He says he is about to be beaten up by one of his 'creditors' and needs just a little 'prison money' (coffee/tobacco) to stave-off an assault. The last time he was beaten so severely he lost his hearing in one ear.

Feeling compassion, Bill wants to help Sam but knows this could be a scam. He neither wants to enable Sam's drug use nor alienate this new believer. For safety's sake Bill simply cannot deal directly with anyone to whom Sam may be indebted. If Sam's entreaty is genuine Bill's help will not be forgotten. If it is disingenuous not only will Bill be enabling Sam's habit but an on-going, ever-increasing, con-game is established.

Case Study 7

Mack is a married man in prison and is a Christian. He has three children from a previous relationship. Mack's wife Janet is not a Christian and they have a son together. Mack has been in prison for three years and his mother and father have contributed money to help him in prison and to his wife on the outside.

Janet feels like Mack's family does not help her or treat their son the same as Mack's other children. Mack and Janet argue all the time about this problem. Mack has confronted his parents and they feel they make no difference.

Janet is also angry about his relationship with his other children's mother. She does not want him talking to her or helping her in any way. Mack knows that he has to maintain some type of relationship with his children's mother and has tried to reason with Janet but it only ends in a fight.

Janet has told Mack she is no longer in love with him because he takes up for his parents and goes against her wishes by having a relationship with his ex-wife. She says she just needs time to think and consider what to do. Mack loves his wife and does not want her to leave him so what should Mack do?