

Restorative Approaches to Offenders / Ex-offenders

How do congregations give
pastoral care to Offenders?



What do Offenders need?

A synopsis in four short stories



Where are your accusers?

Story I - John 8: 2-11

John 8: 2 - 11

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

3 And the scribes and the Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

8 And again, he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which hear it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

Acceptance Accountability

- Accept the person – not their act
- Let the Judge be the judge
- Let the congregation ‘give’ acceptance
- Provide space for Accountability
- Let the offender ‘take’ responsibility

- Sometimes we get it wrong.
 - 1.6% exonerated
 - 4.1% estimated could be exonerated
- Sometimes we get it right.
 - Wilmington College staff





Ye Came unto Me

Story II – Matthew 25: 35 - 40

Matthew 25: 35 - 40

35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

If these people can visit . . .

- Guidelines for ministry:
 - Provide resources
 - Establish relationship and networking opportunities
 - Become role models and mentors
- Awareness Retreat Team





Thy Brother is Come

Story III – Luke 15: 11 - 32

Luke 15: 18 - 24

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Luke 15: 25 - 32

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew night to the house, he hear music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out and entreated him.

29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

Returning Home . . .

- 97% of offenders will return to society
- NIMBY
- How do we receive offenders in our neighborhoods, in our churches and in our homes?
- Stone Church ministry
Marti / Jason
- Dog Programs





“Bring my soul out of prison . . .”

Story IV – Psalms 142: 7

What do you see, now?

