

SEPTEMBER 2017 REPORT ON THE

WORK IN CORRIGAN, TEXAS

RAIF.ROBERT@GMAIL.COM

936-239-1887

ROBERT RAIF

171 CALDWELL ST.

LIVINGSTON, TX 77351

My Dear Brethren,

I hope all of you are well. It has been some month for some brethren in Texas and Florida. We were far enough north and high enough that we were not affected, but we know brethren will be “digging out” from this for months. It makes us remember that our earthly possessions are moth eaten, and that our treasure in heaven is eternal. How beautiful heaven will be where we are sheltered by our God from all pain and sorrow and death. Our prayers are for you all.

There are no new conversions to report. I simply go to all my studies and sow the seed. Will any respond? How sincere are they? Will they remain faithful when they get out of prison? These are questions people ask. #1 My job is to sow the seed, not convert. The gospel converts them. I need to get the seed out to as many as I can that the good and honest heart might get a chance to respond. #2 I can't judge the heart whether they are sincere or how deeply committed they are.

#3 How many of those baptized will be faithful once out of prison? I don't know. When I look over the people I have baptized over my last 42 years of preaching and I can get discouraged. I labored hard and taught publicly and house to house, night and day with tears. And then I would follow up with extra studies to ground those who were baptized. But looking back I see so many have gone back to the world. I'm going to have the same disappointment with these brethren who get out of prison. Because they are not sincere? No, because they are going to be thrown into a situation when they get out that is going to be tough on them. I have learned it is extremely hard to stay sound when one gets out. He has entered a new world. Many haven't been out in 20 years. He is pulled so many different directions. The state requires so much from them, or back they go to prison. Getting a job, the classes you must take and pay for, the miles you have to drive each week and show up for class, the limitations on going to worship. (Eric Bricker has been out 2 years and parole still won't allow him to go to worship. And it will likely be longer). These men have a hard road when they get out.

But I can tell you this, that in all my preaching years I have never had people come up to me and ask if they can study the Bible with me. It is common at the prison for me to preach on my designated Sunday and have someone come up and ask how can they get into one of my study groups. At least once a month we get a new student. One of these has been in the class two months. He came up last week and said, “You know, I never knew you needed to take the word of God so seriously and that we will be judged by it. I never knew we could study it like this and learn it and obey it.” I've seen God's word change the attitude and character of several to a new creature. All these men were lost, and now they have hope.

So, the prison work goes great - - I only wish I could have been involved with this all my years of preaching! The work with the Corrigan church goes well - - the brethren are being encouraged and the seed is being sown in the community. My heartfelt thanks to all of you who see the value of spreading the word to those lost in sin, and who have joined with me financially in trying to do that. There is no greater work. Jesus came for this very purpose, “to seek and to save that which was lost.”

In Him who saves,
Robert