



How to Start a Pen-Pal Outreach

By Rev. Lacie Love Hester

Lacie Shares About Her Childhood Church Experience

My church experiences are not like most peoples experiences. I went to Christian school in 1st and 2nd grade and really enjoyed it. It really was a whole lot of fun. But the message was always disturbing. I always heard that I was going to hell. It did not matter what you did you are going to hell. It was a horrible message! As a little child you do not want to hear that just because you didn't do what your mommy told you to do you are going to hell. Just because you did not eat all the vegetables on your plate means you are going to hell. A horrible message! It is fear based and you are trembling cause God is going to send you to hell over anything. Growing up this sort of message was always in the back of my mind. The poor message however is small potatoes compared to what I experienced in my teenage years.

I Was Pimped Out to the Deacons

My adopted Mom actually pimped me out to the church deacons. It wasn't just once or twice, this continued often. She would pimp me out and they would molest me and rape me. She would then get money for this and purchase crazy things that poor people have no need of. Sometimes she would buy food. So I kind of felt like well is this what church is supposed to be about? Why is it that I am being punished? I could not even pay attention to the sermon cause i was worried about what was going to happen to me after church. My feelings about God have changed since my early years. Do in part to the presentation that my wife shared with me about God being a Loving Heavenly Parent. This really changed things for me. Also, being a parent changes things. I could not see myself as a parent ever hating my child. So I do not see how God could hate a child of His own. This is why one of the goals of Oasis Interfaith Ministry is to proclaim that God is not mad at you. One time I saw a bumper sticker that said Jesus is coming and boy is He mad. That is just insanity. God is Love! Plain and simple. Now what happens is that God has created man in His own image and we have decided to return the favor. Many churches simply reach there prejudices and hatred into the Bible and thus create a God that looks like them. A God that hates what they hate, etc. So instead of having God as the Loving father we get the godfather. The bottom line is that nobody is on the chuck it list.

Mental Disorder

So due to these experiences and others I suffer from PTSD. I have however, found a way to achieve calm. I have found a way to relax and that is through my Pen-Pal Ministry. Now I have a positive self-image. Now I am on a mission to change the world one letter at a time. So I started with one Pen-Pal and now I have over twenty today. Most of them are inmates. The key is to understand that doing good works actually changes your how mental emotional make up.

How to Create a Pen-Pal Outreach

It really is easy to start an Pen-Pal Outreach by simply sign up with www.friendswithpens.com and creating a profile.

Some Guidelines

As for some guidelines I have come to learn that it really is important to state up-front that you are not seeking a relationship. It is really important to simply be a friend. In your letters remember that to them nothing is mundane since for a lot of them we are there only connection to the outside world. A one page letter can really brighten someones day.

The Cost

Well all you need to stoke up on is stamps, paper, envelopes and some pens. All of these things (besides the stamps of course) you can get at the Dollar Store.