

Biola

FALL '08

The Greening of Evangelicals

A growing number of Christians are embracing the “creation care” movement. It’s not a bandwagon, they say. It’s biblical.

Apologetics Study Bible

Good Stewardship in Tough Times

Real-Life “School of Rock”

Biola

Evangelicals and the Environment

As the “green” movement gains momentum, many Christians are taking a closer look at the biblical call to stewardship. Biola, too, is stepping up its efforts to care for God’s creation — with everything from eco-friendly buildings to “spud spoons.”

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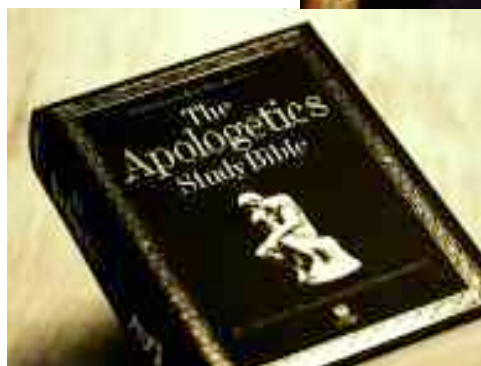


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Taking God's Love Behind Bars

Alumna Works to Transform the Lives of Troubled Teens



Juan Carlo / Ventura County Star

Rosalinda Vint, a Biola alumna and founder of Women of Substance and Men of Honor, brings hope to young people at the Ventura Youth Correctional Facility. "If nothing else, when we leave them, we know we left God there," she says.

The young people who meet Rosalinda Vint usually have little reason to hope. Some of them have killed. Many have stolen. Most have otherwise landed on the wrong side of the law.

But where others might see ruined young lives, Vint — the founder of a Southern California nonprofit that ministers to incarcerated youths — sees broken people who need to hear a simple message: Just because you're locked up doesn't mean you can't be free.

"I just don't want to see anyone lost eternally and I don't want anyone to feel they are lost," said Vint, who graduated from Biola's BOLD degree completion program in 2003. "I'm proof that God can restore, replenish and set free. I'm not there to commute their sentences. I'm just coming there to share Jesus."

As the driving force behind the Newbury Park-based Women of Substance and Men of Honor (www.wosmohinc.com), Vint, 47, has devoted herself to bringing God's love to troubled teens. Both while they are incarcerated and after they're released, the young people are able to turn to Vint for mentoring and aid — such as hygiene products and food.

She also gives them the Word of God, providing them with Bibles and Scripture cards in the hopes that their lives will be transformed by God, just as her own has been.

Growing up, Vint said she experienced many of the same challenges as the young people she now mentors: abandonment, rejection, abuse. She had brothers in and out of prison.

Removed from her mother's care when she was young, Vint lived in numerous foster homes, was abused and became a ward of the court. She was so poor growing up that she had to glue her shoes together.

But after she and one of her brothers were placed in a Christian foster home when she was 9, it was her foster mother who instilled in her the importance of giving back, Vint said.

"The one thing I learned in life is that it only takes one person: one person to believe in you, one person to see you how God sees you," she said.

Vint's own realization of her calling to work full-time with troubled and at-risk youths didn't come until fairly recently. She had spent her professional life working for FedEx, rising to a management position, when, in January of 2000, she and her husband began praying the Prayer of

Jabez. That prayer led to numerous changes in her life: Biola, a new career path and — now — countless touched lives.

Deshawn Reeves, who met Vint at the Ventura Youth Correctional Facility in 2006 after being convicted of robbery, credits her with helping him turn his life around.

"She's been a really, really great help," said Reeves, 20. "She's like the mom I never had. She just took over all the responsibilities of a parent. If I ever needed anything while I was inside, she gave it to me. When I came out and I didn't have anywhere to go, she was there for me."

Reeves, who was released about a year ago, recently married and is taking massage therapy classes. He said Vint is a special person.

"There is nothing but love coming from her," he said.

Aliceson Parker didn't get along with Vint when she first met her in a youth facility in Ventura, but today Parker sees Vint as "the greatest thing that's ever happened to me."

Parker, now 28, had been in and out of foster homes and juvenile hall before killing someone. During her 10 years of incarceration, Parker and Vint became close. Parker began to realize how loving and sincere Vint was.

"She helps everybody," Parker said. "She'll do anything to help us better ourselves."

Parker said Vint serves numerous roles in her life.

"She's my mentor. She's my mom. She's my chaplain. She's my aunty," Parker said. "She's everything I don't have."

Vint said her relationships with the young people have allowed her to realize why she has faced so many struggles in her own life. It was all meant for good and for God, she said.

"There was a lot of spiritual warfare coming against me when I was going to Biola," Vint said. "I knew God was going to do something with the degree I was going to obtain."

And while not everybody she reaches out to is willing to accept her message, Vint hopes that seeds are being sown.

"If nothing else, when we leave them, we know we left God there," she said. "Whether they decide to change or not, we know that they know there is a real God and all they have to do is call him." — Lisa O'Neill Hill and Jason Newell