

ASSAULT

By James W. Harkleroad

One prisoner assaults another prisoner. Beating the other prisoner unconscious and then kicking him in the head.

The response by other prisoners to those who sought to inter-~~vene~~ ~~ter~~vene was typical.

"Stay out of it. It's none of your business."

When the assaulter walked off.

"Quick, clean it up!"

Never mind that the whole episode was caught by the cameras. The criminal mind is always about avoiding responsibility.

(Reputation - yes; responsibility - no!)

And the answer to the obvious question - No, the officers (two (2) of them) knew nothing about the assault until many minutes afterwards. Preoccupied with required paperwork they could not monitor the activities in the dorm.

When the victim was finally discovered and reported to the medical department it took around five (5) minutes for the nurse to arrive with medical equipment.

It was sometime later, after the video record had been reviewed and the assaulter taken away in handcuffs, someone in authority directed that we all be ordered to lie face down on our backs. Our hands behind our heads.

(Try this sometime and determine how long it takes for the position to become painful and how long you can maintain that position.)

Why torture us? (We had to maintain that position for over an hour.) We had done nothing wrong.

Who can say? Obviously the higher-up staffer was mad. A major inmate-on-inmate assault on their watch does not look good in ones work record.

Eventually we were allowed to move into a more comfortable position and given the opportunity to use the toilet.

Only to be re-ordered back to the face down position once again because the crime scene investigators had arrived at the

institutions. They eventually made their way to the dorm and did their job. (Even though most of the scene of the crime and some of the evidence had been disturbed and/or cleaned up.)

During this investigation time the victim (I ~~was~~ later learned) was taken to the Orlando hospital by helicopter. (He was returned to the institution the next morning.)

So what was the beef about?

Nothing.

The assaulter simply felt like beating somebody up.

There is nothing unusual about any of the events related here. I have written this because of a very difficult question that has arisen in my mind.

When does my neighbor stop being my neighbor?

Which raises another question - What do I, as a Christian, do when my neighbor is being victimized?

People commit crimes when they have the opportunity to do so. When there is no one present to prevent them from doing so.

We are taught, beginning in childhood, to do nothing when we witness someone doing wrong. To stand back and let those in authority handle the situation.

The result is the creation of victims who are vulnerable to those who have no respect for others (or themselves, for that matter).

The creation of those who are ignorant of what they can, and should, do when they are a witness to a criminal act.