



Alpha Prison Ministries Newsletter

May 2012 Edition

"I was in prison and you came to visit me." Matthew 25:36b

Storing Treasure In Heaven

Unless you're in prison or have been in prison, you probably don't give much thought to what life is like there. It's more than just bars, razor wire fences, living conditions, and dangerous—even life threatening—situations, there are economic challenges that are difficult for those of us on the outside to imagine.

We'd like to introduce you to Kenneth. It's not likely you will ever meet Kenneth in person. He has been in prison since 1993 and has no chance of parole. Men in his situation have nothing left to lose. He certainly would have nothing to gain by feigning Christianity hoping it will look good in a parole hearing.

Like other inmates, Kenneth has a job. You are probably aware that prison jobs don't pay much. Kenneth earns 33¢ per hour. That's \$13.20 a week, \$52.80 a month.

Many people assume that all the basic needs of prisoners are provided for. Although that is technically true, desperate conditions inside the prisons serve to promote theft and violence as prisoners try to compensate for the scarce provisions they are given.

Portion sizes of meals given to prisoners are small and getting smaller. A fast food Happy Meal for children is bigger than what prisoners are getting. Food quality is not a significant concern because cost is what counts.

Think of the process for food grade selection. The highest ranking member in the chain gets first choice. What they reject gets passed down to the next member who chooses the best of what's left and passes on what they don't want. Prison food is several layers deep in this chain.

Provisions as simple as personal care items are deplorable for any inmate who is not able to afford buying their own from the prison store. The little bit of money prisoners make is quickly absorbed compensating for these deficiencies.

Can you begin to see now how much even a \$5 donation from an inmate is a serious sacrifice for them? How much would you give if you were in Kenneth's situation?

Suppose you saved up and gave twice a year from less than \$690 of annual income. That's what Kenneth does. He has been donating \$400 a year (\$200 at a time) for several years!

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www.alphapm.org

- ◆ Marv, a dear friend to APM, long term volunteer and former Board member passed away April 29th. Please pray for Marv's wife Linda and the rest of the family, including a grandson getting married in July.
- ◆ Al, an in-prison Bible study leader is traveling on a mission trip to Africa in May. Please pray for his safety, wisdom, opportunity, and boldness.
- ◆ Elroy, another in-prison Bible study leader was recently re-approved by MDOC after having his approval status revoked for unknown reasons. Praise God for his obvious hand in getting Elroy reinstated.
- ◆ Pray for a favorable result as Bob, a faithful inmate Bible study leader for many years now, goes before the parole board for possible release.
- ◆ Praise God for Dale who has just graduated from college with honors.

Prayer Requests

MAY 2012

Please cut around these prayer requests and use this as a bookmark in your Bible.

Alpha
Prison Ministries

ADVOICATE

Former Resident Graduating From College With Honors

Leon:

Hope all is well with Alpha Prison Ministries as well as you and your family.

It is hard to believe that I have been free from incarceration for nearly 6½ years already. (1½ years longer than I was incarcerated) Once again, thank you for believing in an awesome God that can and does change people. Thank God, you, and Alpha Ministries for giving me a chance when the rest of the world, including my own family, had given up on me.

God never promised us that we would miss all the trials and tribulations just because we are saved but He does promise that He will be with us through whatever we are called to go through. As you well know, my Christian journey in the free world has not been without troubles.

I remember my mom passing away and getting laid off from my job within four days of each other. God used both of these instances for good. My mom is now in Heaven and is no longer suffering, and getting laid off afforded me the opportunity to go back to school.

God has now bestowed upon me the **honor of graduating from college in the top 5% of all 1750 students graduating this semester**, and, God willing, I am using that education to start a small business. This would not be possible without God's favor and He gets the glory.

This also would not be possible if God had not touched your heart to get into prison ministry and give people that are despised by the world another chance. So I thank God for all that He has done and continues to do through you and Alpha Prison Ministries and I thank you personally from the bottom of my heart for everything.

God bless you, your family, and Alpha Ministries.

Your brother in Christ,
Dale



APM Presented at Junior High

On March 29, seventh and eighth grade students at Excel Charter Academy were challenged during an assembly to consider the choices they make in life. Leon, APM's Executive Director gave a short overview of the ministry and then introduced Steve, a former inmate and former Alpha House resident.

Steve spoke to the 150 students in attendance about how the bad choices he made landed him in prison and the negative affects that has had on his life and the lives of others around him. He also shared how his good choices since that experience have benefitted him.

The profound effect of Steve's message was clearly demonstrated when students asked him a lot of questions and talked about it long afterward in their homerooms. This event was so successful that Steve was asked to speak at another school.

Be a Blessing, Get Blessed More

If you or someone you know has ever wondered what it would be like doing one on one Bible study with inmates inside prison, we have people who will gladly show you. It's only fair to warn you though, you could easily become addicted. That's why so many of our volunteers have been with us 10-15 years or longer.

Contact us for more information. You could soon discover how your own life will be enriched.

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We also offer easy access to an identical version of this newsletter so you can print extra copies. Please feel free to make as many copies as you need. Now it's easy to pass on the word about APM, supply a resource table, or make these available at your church. Get it at alphapm.org.

Alpha Prison Ministries is an **undenominational Christ-centered ministry** to prisoners and ex-offenders.

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