



Alpha Prison Ministries Newsletter

July 2014 Edition

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

APM: Quick Summary

One of the goals we seek to accomplish through this newsletter is to occasionally summarize the mission, purpose, and strategy of Alpha Prison Ministries. Most newsletters use tidbits to outline what we do, how we do it, and why, but we believe it's important to use specific reminders on a regular basis.

Going back through old newsletters, I discovered we haven't done this in just over 4 years. Wow, time flies! Here is the APM mission statement:

To evangelize and disciple men who happen to be prisoners and former inmates

Since our annual banquet is coming up, and a *Save the Date* card is included with this newsletter, this makes an ideal time to reiterate what APM is about, especially for new supporters, volunteers, and people you would like to introduce this ministry to.

At the top of every newsletter are some fairly well known words spoken by Jesus Christ: "I was in prison and you came to visit me." Society and even many Christians would write these prisoners off but the Lord doesn't do that. He is specifically concerned about prisoners and APM operates through his blessing.

So how do we do it?

- ◆ APM volunteers do one-on-one Bible studies with men in prison who often minister to other inmates
- ◆ APM sends Bibles and Christian literature into prisons
- ◆ Alpha House provides a supervised living environment for former inmates who are accepted as residents to help them make a successful transition back into society
- ◆ APM has volunteer mentors who provide discipleship to Alpha House residents
- ◆ Alpha House residents receive Bible study and emphasis on developing strong Christian character
- ◆ APM encourages inmates and former inmates to become involved in ministry
- ◆ APM is a decidedly "Christian" ministry that believes only Jesus Christ has the power to truly transform the human heart through the Holy Spirit

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- ◆ Praise God for Bill, an Alpha House resident who moved into his own home on May 12. If you were at the 2013 banquet, you heard his daughter Michelle testify how the ministry of APM helped reconcile this broken family.
- ◆ APM continues to face financial challenges but thank the Lord that he is our source and we don't have to worry or fret. We neither hide the fact that the challenges exist nor pressure anyone to give. We do ask that you seek the Lord on your role so you don't miss what he wants to do through you, and that no one else called to give would miss out either.
- ◆ Please pray that everything God wants to accomplish through our upcoming annual banquet happens, that his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Pray that more supporters and volunteers will be gained as we raise awareness.

JULY 2014

Prayer Requests

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

Alpha
Prison Ministries

ADVOCAATE

Why We Minister to Men

Leon, our Executive Director since 2001, ministers directly to every Alpha House resident in addition to several other duties that include responding to inmate letters, processing applications, screening and interviewing prospective residents, and much more. He also keeps detailed records that put faces and names on otherwise dry data.

For those of you who attend our annual banquets, he also provides the current tally of men who are or have been Alpha House residents since he took over the position after APM founder Bob Whitehead went home to be with the Lord. Right now, Leon has overseen 198 residents since 2001 and 192 of them have come from broken homes.

Statistics tell us that without a father in the home, children are seven times more likely to end up in prison. Leon's head count confirms the sad reality of this statistic. Fatherless homes are either responsible for or significantly contribute to the ills of society.

Just a few other examples are:

- Poverty and homelessness
- High school dropouts
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Domestic violence
- Teen pregnancy
- Suicide

The complete list is long. It's also been confirmed through studies that when the father is a spiritual leader and committed to attending church with his family, his children are almost sure to follow the example. No matter how faithfully the mother tries to set the same example, without the father, the success rate plummets.



It's no accident that Satan has strategically targeted the family and fathers in particular. It's a strategy the devil has used successfully throughout history to rot societies from within, much like the large tree shown here taken down by the wind storm that hit Grand Rapids on June 18.

There is another dangerous myth that has permeated our society in regard to what a Christian father should be. The church has too often endorsed this myth. The idea that Christian men should be docile nice guy sissies has wooed many a deceived father into not being a true spiritual leader.

Christianity is not for wimps! We're told very clearly in the Bible that our enemy the devil prowls like a roaring lion seeking someone he can devour. He can't devour just anyone. If he could he'd devour everyone. But he does devour weak/uninformed Christians and unprotected families.

Real Christian men who understand the Bible keep a shield of faith firmly in place and carry a whopping big sword (God's word) to dash the enemy's lies to pieces. They surround themselves with other Christian men who will help them remain strong whenever there's a temptation to let up from fighting the good fight of faith.

All men need this, but prisoners especially understand and experience the consequences when the father is absent from the home: be it physically, spiritually, and/or emotionally. Regardless of their past, prisoners have the opportunity to reverse a curse put on them in the past. They become men of God, spiritual leaders, and true fathers.

Men who have experienced prison have seen the depths possible when the devil's rule is carried out to completion. Prisons are extremely dark places, so dark that about 80% of prisoners **never** attend a church service. For those who will, we have a message of hope and rescue—a declaration that Jesus Christ is head over every principality and power.

For these reasons and more, that is why we minister to men.

APM 2014 Banquet on October 6

The annual APM banquet serves a few key purposes: to show tangible appreciation for our volunteers and supporters, to raise awareness of the ministry and how it impacts people's lives, to provide the opportunity to give to the ministry, and to have a good time and a good meal together with others that believe in prison ministry.

You'll find a *Save the Date* card included in this newsletter for the banquet on October 6, 2014. We will be hosting the event at our usual location, The Ground Floor facility at Resurrection Life Church in Grandville. We are honored to have **President Joe Stowell of Cornerstone University** as our guest speaker this year.

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APM Financial Summary January-May 2014

Total \$ Income:
38,195.00 (budget)
31,406.00 (actual)

Net \$ Expense:
40,081.60 (budget)
39,362.49 (actual)



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APM is an **undenominational Christ-centered ministry** to prisoners and ex-offenders