



Alpha Prison Ministries Newsletter

July 2016 Edition

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

Nothing Beats Prayer

When you read Ron's letter, an inmate from Detroit who wrote to thank us for providing a Bible, his request to pray for those in authority is a direct mandate from the Bible he was thanking us for providing.

I had the privilege of hearing my pastor speak on this subject in a series of messages recently. When Paul and other writers of the Bible gave us this command, not only were they intimately familiar with being in prison, they were asking us to pray for leaders who were far worse than anyone we have the task of praying for now.

To be honest, that series of messages hit me hard. How easy it is to lament about the condition we see this country in now compared to the near story book contrast we got to experience in the past. It's far too easy to complain and criticize when our response needs to be prayer.

The need for prayer resonates through pretty much every letter we receive. You'll see it in the ones published in this newsletter as well as those in other newsletters. The challenge my pastor issued, and the one I pass on here, is to apologize to our leaders for not

praying enough. We fail our leaders through lack of prayer.

Our enemy the devil is a master of getting us to focus on the things we see, on circumstances, instead of on faith. Prayer and faith changed the ancient world and it can change the one we live in now.

There are those who proclaim America is too far gone to pray for any more; they go so far as to publish articles saying so. As we just celebrated 240 years now since the Declaration of Independence, shame on them! Never stop praying! Never give up!

The conditions we see currently are cause for more prayer, more Christ-like love, more godly stamina, more showing what we're really made of, not a pathetic surrender because things are tough. A classic military strategy is *divide and conquer*. We certainly see that in the present political climate.

It's easy to see unrest both inside and outside the prisons. Politics though cannot save us. The results of the upcoming election are crucial to policies and our future as a country, but only the prayers of God's people truly make a real and sustained difference.

Visit us online at:

www.alphapm.org

- ◆ Please begin praying for the upcoming APM banquet which will be held at Resurrection Life Church on Monday, September 19, 2016. This is also your invitation to attend.
- ◆ Thank the Lord that APM is able to operate Alpha House facilities that help former inmates get a strong start back into society in a safe Christian environment. Since these men have nowhere else to go, APM supporters are helping make the difference between success and failure in their transition.
- ◆ Also, pray for our Alpha House residents while thanking God for the difference you are helping to make. Current residents are: Andy, Bob, Hanson, Jeff, Joe, Justin, Rob, and Tom.
- ◆ Pray for our country, our President, and leaders at every level of authority.

Prayer Requests

JULY 2016

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

Alpha
Prison Ministries

ADD VOICED

The Bible—Contraband in American Prisons?

Dear Alpha,

I received the Bible, the *NIV Study Bible*, today, but it didn't come without a fight. Satan's at work here in this prison. First, the mail room rejected the Bible. Then, I requested a hearing and fought and argued with the inspector. I finally got the Bible after 3 long weeks of battling.

I finally got down on my knees and told God about this situation with this anti-Christ administration. He answered my prayers. God came through...

People don't have morals or values in this country any more! **This prison's officers bring in drugs and pornography, but they reject Bibles.** America is digging a hole deeper and deeper with God. It's sad!

The Bible you sent is beautiful. It's the best gift I ever received. I love it. I pray God blesses you and your ministry. I ask that you'll pray for these people in authority in this prison, please. Thank you.

Your brother in Jesus,
Ron

Drug Addiction to Bible Addiction

My name is Eric. I'm 33 years old and I currently reside at Parnell Correctional Facility in Jackson. I've spent 12 years of my life in prison for various crimes I've committed in order to support my drug habit.

About seven years ago, I had gotten to a point in my life where the drugs were no longer effective in suppressing the guilt and shame and I could no longer live with myself. The weight of my sin began to crush me and I realized that there was nothing I could do to change my situation.

I was without hope. In that moment of desperation, I cried out to God, and what followed was an encounter with Christ that changed the direction of my life. He met me in the deepest, darkest moment and began to set me free even as I sat in the very symbol of bondage...a prison (Isaiah 61:1).

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners...

Since this encounter, I have not touched a drug in seven years, and now have dedicated my life to proclaiming this message of hope (in word and deed) to a lost and dying world. During these last seven years, I have been a diligent student of the Word, I work as a chaplains's clerk, and I have been teaching two Bible studies.

Anyway, the purpose of this letter is to help me determine the Lord's will concerning parole placement. Due to my behavior while I was lost and enslaved to drug addiction, my family no longer wants anything to do with me.

I will be seeing the parole board in June or July and my release date is December of this year. I'm from Wayne County and I do not wish to return there. Someone gave me your information and told me that you have a ministry to help people like me. If this is true, would you please send me some information about your ministry.

Thank you and God bless,
Eric

Al's Story—A Former Alpha House Resident

My life was full of death. I was cursed with every addiction from a young age, so much that I was self destructive. Drugs, alcohol, lust—my life was out of control. As a desperate act I tried to control others, thinking I was in control. That act led me to the state penitentiary for 30-60 years.

It was a wake up call. Christ found me, saved me, delivered me, rehabilitated me, redeemed me from my destruction. For 25½ years I was a believer in Christ in prison. I walked in love and victory. God blessed me at every turn.

August 25th I was released from prison. God blessed me with a good job, an excellent church, and good friends. I am more blessed than I ever could have imagined. Jesus is Lord. Every day I tell someone my story.

Clarification on May Newsletter

We had multiple recent letters from inmates advising us of policy changes at facilities restricting their ability to participate in religious activities. A couple of those letters were highlighted in our May newsletter. These inmates were informed by prison officials that the policies were mandated by Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC).

After further inquiry into the matter, we were informed that the policy is not required department wide, but perhaps a response to the specific needs of certain facilities. Apparently, inmates were correctly informed that it was MDOC policy, but the policy is not being unilaterally enforced or mandated.

Although the enforcement of the policy is not being viewed by prison chaplains as a trend, it's still certainly a concern and should be a subject of prayer. For that matter, any issues regarding prisoners is a subject of prayer, as is praying for those in authority as Ron requested.

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Newsletter written/edited by APM Board member Steve Chittenden

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

APM Financial Summary
January-May 2016

Total Income: \$38,572.15

Total Expense: \$42,071.29

Net Income: **-\$3499.14**



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