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The Florida Prison Evangelist

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2021 in Review/2022 Outlook:

As we look back on 2021 we are reminded of the greatness of our God, the faithful brothers and sisters within the church, and the destructive illusions Satan serves to mankind. We think about those in physical and spiritual prison and our heart aches for these people while Satan grins and laughs; however, we find comfort in this battle, knowing God does not forsake. We are strengthened by His might. A special thank you to all brethren who helped us in 2021 and those who are joining this fight in 2022 to free the enslaved. We are excited to do God's work in 2022 and the years to come!

Gary Wyder: A Special Thanks

Thank you for your generous response to purchase World Bible School Bibles which will provide enough Bibles for 2022. Chaplains and inmates alike express their gratitude to you. Many inmates prefer our services. They like that we teach straight from the Bible and don't "preach at them" but rather let them ask questions and share. A former Baptist Chaplain told incoming inmates, "if you want to learn the Bible, go to the Church of Christ services." I appreciate your many prayers offered for my knee replacement done on February 8th (and for Pat as well, who is my caretaker). Prayer works! I miss the brothers behind bars and look forward to a successful recovery so that I can get back in prison. After 42 years of doing this "it gets in your blood." Christopher is doing a great job. The Lord sent us the right man at the right time.

Christopher Carter: Joyous Excitement and Laughter

Many exciting things are going on with the prison ministry and those lives we can impact through our diligent efforts of sharing the love of Christ in prison. First, let's talk about Super Bowl week! It was super indeed as I had the opportunity to baptize two inmates into Christ. One of which is a 29-year-old from "the hood" who is serving a life sentence. The other is a 46-year-old who is scheduled to be released in 2024. Although both of these men have been entangled with the deception and craftiness of Satan, I am confident in their love for the Lord and desire to live a Christian life going forward.

Second, I started a Christian comedy night at the Region Medical Center West Unit. I understand the stress of being in prison. It is not just the stress of being separated from the world and loved ones but also the stress of dealing with a variety of dysfunctional personalities. The dramatics of being incarcerated can take a toll on an individual. For example, in one particular facility 70 inmates are housed in an open dorm where they are two feet apart with no privacy. Can you imagine being around 70 individuals night and day with no possibility of a retreat? Don't take what I am saying the wrong way, these men have been convicted of crimes and are now dealing with the consequences thereof, but that does not change the fact it is a high stress environment, full of adversity. Therefore, I decided to take two hours each week and offer inmates a break and a chance to escape this with good clean comic relief. I have seen that a little laughter can make a difference in a person's mood! This has opened the doors to more men becoming familiar with me and learning that I care. It has also brought more men forth desiring one-on-one spiritual counsel and private study. One-on-one counsel and study is the best way I have found to make disciples for Christ.

The Youth

Q: What is the best way to spiritually impact the prison system?

A: To spiritually encourage the youth before there is ever a possibility of prison!

January 20th we were blessed with the opportunity to share with students at Santa Fe High School. We encouraged them to stay strong in the faith and not allow Satan to steal their identity, as is the case with those in prison. A special thanks to the Alachua Church of Christ for making this happen!



PAL Program (Principles and Applications for Life)

The PAL Program (Principles and Applications for Life) is an institutional betterment program at RMC West that covers principles for daily living, character qualities, commands of Christ to live by, uprooting anger and other curricula designed to incorporate abiding change into how to approach everyday decisions and life, financial affairs, becoming a leader/servant in the home, community, church, parenting, etc. We have been granted the opportunity by the administration and chaplain's office at this institution to teach commands of Christ. This program is a requirement in the "faith based" dorm and runs year-round. It is a set curriculum with a different command to be taught each week. This is "faith based" and "Christianity" as the world defines it, meaning some of the material is doctrinally inaccurate. However, we simply take the command (topic) set forth and just go to what the Bible says about it. We find this to be the best approach. This program and our involvement have opened more doors to individual studies. Individual studies are extremely beneficial as it allows inmates to open up more, whereas he may be more reluctant in the group setting.

National Prison Ministry Workshop

The dates for the next National Prison Ministry Workshop are June 8-10, 2022 in Wichita Falls, TX. The event will be hosted by the Edgemere Church of Christ, located at 4728 Neta Ln. Wichita Falls, TX 76302. For more information contact the associate minister, Stephen Wolf, via email at stephen@edgemere.org or by phone at 940-766-0107.

