

**An update for
New Life Corrections
friends and supporters
on ministry developments
and opportunities.**

AUGUST 2009

NEW LIFE CORRECTIONS JAIL MAIL



TRANSFORMING INCARCERATED DADS

On Saturday, July 11, fifty-five volunteers and supporters of New Life Corrections Ministry came together for a six-hour "Jail and Prison Ministry Training Seminar" hosted by Chaplain Tom Beatty. This was the third one-day class offered and had the largest number of attendees to date.



The day began with a presentation by **Dr. Karen Swanson** entitled "Criminal Thinking and Responsible Thinking." Karen is the Director of the Institute for Prison Ministry at the Billy Graham Center of Wheaton College. (BillyGrahamCenter.com/prisonministry) Her information clearly explained how a person prone to crime and incarceration does not process

concepts such as being responsible, dependable, hard working and other traits in the same way that others do. Chaplains and volunteers who work in jails need to be aware of this fact and counsel people accordingly.

The second presenter was **Frank Chihowski**, who is a volunteer at the Kane County Jail. His message entitled "Where's Dad- A Call for Fathers with the Spirit of Elijah" was a Biblically-based discussion of fatherhood through the ages. In particular he discussed how fatherhood has changed in the past few decades from fathers being a major factor in the lives of their children to how the majority of fathers are now very removed from their families. This lack of fathers leading their children or being



nowhere in a child's life has obvious negative consequences. His focus was on Malachi 4:6. "He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers."

After lunch provided by New Life Corrections Ministry, there was a brief presentation by **Kathy Lang**. With **Chaplain Tom** playing the role of a prisoner receiving his first Bible, she walked him through an explanation of how the Bible is organized pointing out in contemporary terms how it relates and is important to the current reader rather than just another book to be read.



The day ended with **Lyndon Azcuna** from AWANA Lifeline (Awana.org/lifeline) and his presentation about what that well-known organization for helping children learn Bible verses is now doing to help male prisoners reach out to their children. Their program called Malachi Dads has the purpose of equipping inmate fathers to build a legacy for their children of faith and hope in Christ. One aspect of AWANA's program is an exciting project that began at Angola Prison in Louisiana called "Returning Hearts Celebration" where children of male inmates come to spend the day with their fathers to enjoy games, sports and more importantly, Christian programs. Pray that such a wonderful program could take root in the prisons of Illinois.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Back in the 1990's, I became aware of a ministry called Dad, The Family Shepherd. (Mike Huckabee was one of the leaders of this ministry.) I saw men getting excited about being "Godly Fathers"! In fact, I don't know of any subject that greater inspires men than fatherhood. The fact that many (most?) men in our jails and prisons were fathered by former inmates, and that many (most?) of these men do NOT want their children to follow in their footsteps inspires the desire to change. Don't we all want our grandkids to have better dads than our kids did?

I have long had admiration and appreciation for the AWANA ministry. Recently AWANA has initiated a program for inmates called Malachi Dads. (Awana.org/lifeline)



MALACHI DADS™

A Ministry of Awana Lifeline™

This subject, TRANSFORMING INCARCERATED DADS, was the theme of our third "One Day Jail and Prison Ministry Training Seminar." Attending this seminar were officials, Chaplains, and ministry volunteers from many Illinois correctional institutions. Specifically, I ask you to please pray that Malachi Dads will get started in the Kane County Jail, DuPage County Jail and other institutions in Illinois.



Chaplain Tom Beatty, Director

CHAPLAIN Tom

- What:** 1st Annual Celebration/Outreach Banquet
Why: Celebrate God's work behind bars and reach out to "new blood."
Where: 1st Presbyterian Church, 4th Street and Downer Place, Aurora, IL
When: August 22, 2009
6:30 p.m. - Welcome and Dinner
7:15 p.m. - Program

Testimony from **Tom Beatty**, Director of New Life Corrections Ministries
Testimony from **Jim Owings**, Ex-offender, Volunteer/Bible Lesson grader at New Life Corrections Ministry
Comments from **Al White**, Warden of the Fox Valley ATC
Comments from **Patrick Perez**, Kane County Sheriff
Keynote Address by **Mark Elfstrand**, WMBI Radio personality
Music by **Jed Brewer** of Mission: USA Productions

Would you please consider sponsoring a table for eight (\$100)? Whether you can be a Table Sponsor or not, you are invited! Tickets are free! (Please pray for "extra" Table Sponsors.)

I'm praying that God will raise enough Table Sponsors so that the offering received will go 100% to ministry.

Reservations are required! RSVP to newlifecorrections@gmail.com or call 630-723-3406

We promise to do our best to have everything finished by 9:00 p.m.

Bible Study Lessons

One of the most effective and well-received parts of our ministry is the Bible study lessons we make available to the inmates in both English and Spanish. These 224 lessons covering most of the New Testament and the book of Genesis were developed specifically for jail inmates by Good News Jail and Prison Ministry in Richmond, Virginia. The one-page lessons are designed to "force" the inmates to get beyond the "surface meaning" of the Word, down into the "meat", where true conversion, commitment and discipleship happen.

Each lesson consists of 54 questions taken directly from the Scriptures, followed by two short essay questions- *What is the primary message of this scripture passage?* and *How does this message apply to you personally today?*

The lessons are personally distributed to the inmates, collected after completion, graded, and returned by New Life Corrections volunteers. Some of the lessons are done by correspondence; most are distributed face-to-face. For every eight completed lessons the student receives a certificate.

Chaplain Tom and the volunteers promote these lessons at Stateville's NRC unit. From there inmates in state prisons all over Illinois are doing the lessons. Also Chaplain Tom and the Volunteer Chaplains distribute these lessons in the 600-bed Kane County Jail.

We desperately need more volunteers (English and Spanish) to join our Grading Team! Our Grading Team meets every Tuesday evening, 7-9 p.m. at Redeemer Fellowship in St. Charles. Qualifications: Born Again, an active church member, and able to work as part of a team.

If you want to join us or would like more information, please contact **Chaplain Tom** at tbeatty@waysidecross.org, or call **630-723-2406**.

The New Life Corrections Ministry

215 East New York Street, Aurora, Illinois 60505
awards this

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

to _____

for completion of Unit _____ of the Book of _____
in the

Good News Jail & Prison Ministry Bible Lessons

Date _____ Grader _____

CHAPLAIN Tom

ST. JOHN: LESSON 1

Bible Text: John 1:1-18

Introduction to Jesus Christ — the Word.

DATE _____ GRADE _____

YOUR NAME _____

YOUR ADDRESS _____


CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Instructions: This lesson is an open Bible test on St. John 1:1-18. Answer all questions from this passage *only*. The King James Version of the Bible should be used since the questions are keyed to the wording of the King James Version. *Grading Scale:* Excellent for 88-100, Very Good for 85-92, and Good for 77-84.

Section 1. TRUE and FALSE Questions (1 point each).
Circle "T" for "True" answers, or "F" for "False" answers.

1. T F John came to bear witness of the Light so that all might believe.
2. T F John said the life was the light of men.
3. T F All Christians have received of Jesus' fullness.
4. T F John said, "He that comes after me is preferred before me."
5. T F The Word (Jesus) came to His own (the Jews), but they did not receive Him.
6. T F The writer said the darkness comprehended (overcame) the light.
7. T F The Word (Jesus) dwelt among men.
8. T F Some men have seen God.
9. T F The light shines in darkness.
10. T F The Word was God.
11. T F John was a man sent from God.
12. T F Jesus did not have grace and truth.
13. T F Jesus makes everyone children of God.
14. T F Jesus (the Word) had nothing to do with the creation of anything.
15. T F The true Light enlightens every man that comes into the world.
16. T F John was the true Light.
17. T F Sons of God are born of their own will.
18. T F The world knew the Light (Jesus) because He made the world.
19. T F Jesus has declared God (made Him known).
20. T F The law was given by Jesus.

This Bible Correspondence Course from:



Grading Center
Good News Jail & Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 98

New Life Corrections -
215 East New York
Street, Aurora IL 60505

MATTHEW'S STORY

Soon after my arrival at the prison I found myself laying stark naked, freezing cold, stripped of my clothing and possessions, strapped down in five point restraint, hands and feet both tied down, and a huge leather strap across my chest. Because I was still not peacefully complying, and to deliver their intended message, the guards were threatening to place yet another strap, this one across the forehead to prevent even the lifting of the head. Thank God I was able to avoid that last strap, but only because the Chaplain was able to reach my shattered heart and soul, and thereby help to interrupt the self destructive path I was on.

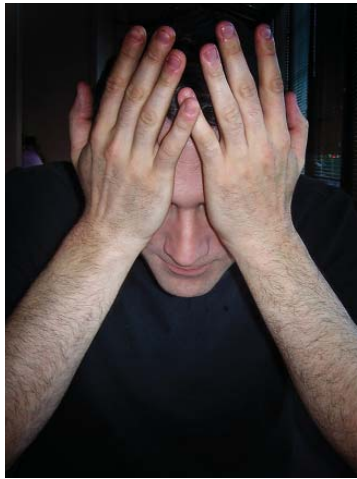
I was of the attitude that because life had not gone the way I thought it should have I may as well just destroy whatever was left of myself and my life. Still failing to accept responsibility for my situation, I released streams of vulgarities at the officers, blaming everyone and their mother for my problems. Aside from my own yelling and screaming, the noise level in a prison's isolation unit can be absolutely mind boggling. In a rare moment of relative silence in the cell block, I heard through the crack of my cell door a very soft, gentle, and faint voice saying to me **"Is this who you are?"**. I stopped all thought, listening, wondering if I had really heard it, or if I was in fact beginning to lose my mind there in that dungeon. Then again, softly, **"Is this who you are?"**. Demanding to know who was outside the cell door, I continued in my unruly tone. In the same quiet and well mannered voice he introduced himself as the Chaplain..

I contemplated th Chaplain's **"Is this who you are?"** question for hours on end. Was this wreck of a person I had become who I truly was? Could it possibly be? If not, then who was I, and how had I come to find myself in prison, and even worse strapped down in isolation? After many hours I came to the conclusion that, no, it was not "who I am". Far from being the end of the issue, I was then left seeking an answer to a new question, for if that was not me laying there in shackles, then who was I?

Still very young in my Christianity, and lacking any of the refinement that comes with living a Christian lifestyle, I still knew very little about God, and therefore hadn't a clue who I was either. I decided to make a mental list: **I AM.....a man, a father, a son, a brother, a hard worker, etc...** The list became quite extensive.

I was as alone in my cell as a person can possibly get.

Fortunately for me I had recently invited The Lord into my life, and He had accepted that invitation. He never fails to answer when called, and He never walks away when the going gets tough. I cried out in my desperation, "Lord, please help me to see the answer!" In classic Christ style, He provided me with an answer, but by no means did He do all the work for me. I began to feel as if the Holy Spirit were there in the cell with me, and I felt very strongly that He was prompting me to "Go deeper!!". So, I began a new mental list.



Taking my lead from the Holy Spirit, and trying to be honest with myself about where my addiction had led me and why, I began the new and more honest list. **I AM.....a drug addict, a liar, a man who can no longer be trusted, a man who is never home, etc...** I was sickened!!! I contemplated the contents of this new list. There was no question that here was a very large part of what had landed me in prison. Any logical person would know that there was no other way for it to end, it was either prison, or death, but I still felt

that I hadn't identified the true cause of what led me to engage in those behaviors in the first place. The Great Councilor continued with His prompting, and I could still sense the need to"Go Deeper". The next list got even uglier, and the next list even worse than

I AM.....

a child of God.

that one. I was becoming quite depressed and upset with the muck as I dug deeper and deeper into the ugliness that had become me, but right at the point where I was so disgusted with myself that I was about to give up it dawned on me that I had begun listing adopted character traits and behaviors, and not necessarily who I truly am as a human being. I needed another new list.

This final list was to be different than any before, for this final list had only one entry, and it wasn't something I had done wrong, or something I was ashamed of. All of the things I had learned from the Chaplains, volunteer Bible teachers, and Bible correspondence lesson graders began to swirl around in my mind and to mesh with all of the ugliness of the moment. Suddenly I began to calm down for the first time since being tied down to that cold concrete slab, and the anxiety began to fade away. The new list read quite simply: **I AM.....a child of God.**