

# The Key: T.I.M.E for Christ Jail Ministry Newsletter



## The Chaplains Corner

Ted white



*We love because He first loved us.* 1 John 4:19

As Valentine's Day approaches, I pondered on how the message of the Church is that **God is love**. I wondered if that resonated with inmates? What does that kind of love mean to a person in jail? What does it mean to **me** as I minister to inmates in Bexar County Jail? First of all, God's love is not random. It is intentional. As I look at the book of Ephesians, I see how God put his love in motion when He called Paul to be an apostle. Paul was called "by the will of God" to take the *Good News* to the gentiles. They were a despised people, not the chosen people of God like the Hebrew children. God's plan was intentional. I reflected on how God called me out of the business world to become a Chaplain to a people I had no compassion for, no thought of and certainly no love for. That is how God works so that we will know it is not by our will but by His will that the lost are saved. In Ephesians, Chapter 3, it says Paul was made to be a minister according to the gift of God's grace. It goes on to say, "and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ." That is what I do along with a team of T.I.M.E. volunteers to take the gospel to a population of inmates, most of whom have no acquaintance with God's Word or His promises to redeem them. The average inmate is well aware that they are guilty of a life that breaks man's law, but they don't relate that to God's law. They certainly don't see themselves as a target for the love of God. A well-known teacher of the Word, Tim Keller, says, "the gospel is good news that changes your status forever." The gospel changes who we are, not what we did but what He did! These men and women at Bexar County Jail are in the same state the Gentiles were in, separated from God until He sent for His message of Salvation through the Apostle Paul. God equipped me just as He did the Apostle Paul. From the time I was a child growing up in El Paso, my buddies were Hispanic. I picked up speaking Spanish just naturally. Go figure that God would put me with a Spanish speaking population! I was set on His path for me when I was saved as a teenager, then He guided me to the best Bible teachers and books on the Scriptures, along with the

### *The Father's Love*

Recently two inmates were referred to the Chaplain's office at separate times. It didn't appear to be spiritually related because they were going to be sent up by the Mental Health Department at the jail. Often the mental health unit will use the Chaplaincy services as a last resort with very difficult inmates. Sometimes, this can be tough on the ministry but God uses these less overt interactions to teach us and provide an opportunity to encourage and share the gospel with an inmate.

The first inmate, who was in a specialized lock down unit for the most dangerous inmates, was the most concerning and we had to set it up with the utmost security. However, the Mental Health people requested it despite misgivings. When he came in, he was covered head to toe with tattoos. Even his eyelids were tattooed! This was not a young kid and he presented as a tough customer! His 17-month-old little girl had passed away, and this hardened inmate was heartbroken. Since he had not requested to see the Chaplain, I asked, "What can I do for you?" He said he didn't know but maybe, provide some comfort. This opened the door for me to share the story of King David who wept when his child died in 2 Samuel. King David said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept... but now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? **I shall go to him**, but he will not return to me." I told the inmate, like David's child, his little girl was in heaven. I said, "One day would you like to see her again? Would you like to join her in heaven?"

bible that transformed me into a student of God's Word. Over the years, He led me to have a personal relationship with Him. When the time was right, He took my job in the business world away from me and gave me a short-term assignment at the jail as a teacher. Here I am, twenty years later because God loved inmates so much, He had to prepare me for over 40 years to take on His assignment. It wasn't a fluke. It was God's intentional plan! He gave me a love for a people who have no hope apart from Christ. He saw "Jose, Bill, Emilia" and so many others He would call to Himself. When they receive Jesus into their lives, they understand that **God is love**. I know because I have witnessed it at Bexar County Jail over and over.

1 John 4:19 "We love because He first loved us."

**Our Mission is to evangelize and disciple inmates resulting in a spiritual awakening and an intimate love relationship with Jesus Christ, thus empowering them for an extended incarceration or return to society.**



**T.C.J.M. FOR CHRIST JAIL MINISTRY**

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*As we head into the season of Love, please pray for our inmates to experience the true love of Christ and that his love would shine through our ministry.*



**But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8**

...**The Father's Love** continued... The inmate teared up and said he would. Sometimes in a jail situation you can't beat around the bush. I told him he would not be welcomed to that heavenly place where his daughter was unless he acknowledged the sinful life he was living and call out to God to forgive him. I shared with him the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. He didn't pray to receive Christ at that time but he did ask for a Bible. He wanted me to underline the story I had shared about King David. Hopefully he will request another visit with me another day. I do know God allowed him to know there was a way he could see his child again one day through the plan of salvation. **The next inmate was also a "tough guy"**, in jail for a serious crime. When the Mental Health unit sent him to see me too; he was



sure, it was bad news. He had been in jail before and knew death messages were delivered by the Chaplain. He began to shiver when I told him I wanted him to take a phone call. It was indeed his son's mother and she told him that his son had been hit by a car and killed crossing the street. To my surprise, he began comforting her in Spanish and as I listened to what I thought was a soulless inmate, I heard the man, show he was a **loving father**, saying he would be praying for their family. After he hung up, the inmate shared that he was a **believer** and that his other son had been killed recently and then his own mother had passed away. He also shared that he had been sober for 7 years and fell back into his old lifestyle which would result in a long prison sentence for his crime. He was grieved by his losses and the situation he was in now but he acknowledged there were consequences of his addiction and failures. He thought his was a wasted life. I took the opportunity to talk with him about his future. I reminded him his life did not have to be wasted and that he could be a valuable tool of God. I told him that he could be used in the prison system to share the gospel with others. I said, "No matter what you have done or where you are, you are still a child of God. There is no "giving up" with God. **He loves you.**

**We hope you will consider supporting our ministry!**

**Time for Christ Jail  
Ministry  
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