

July 2018

→ **MINISTRY UPDATE** ←

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UPDATE

Financially speaking we're still waiting for the CPA before filing for the loan. We're doing okay otherwise. It irritates me though that our cash flow is being ate up high interest. If everything was perfect, I suppose I would find something else to complain about.

CHAPEL

Other than being hot, the three tents put together are making do for now. Since between the law and insurance the men are made a spectacle of when attending churches, we are organizing our own church. We have at least 20 men who are involved in the leadership. This does not include most of our staff that run the business end of the ministry. It also does not include the doctor, the lawyer, and highly educated men who live there. At Hand Up, race is not and issue, education is not an issue, and anything else that is divisive among people. It's very simple. I just don't allow it. The issue is simple. Will you keep the rules? Will

you attend the service and the G1 training. Will you work if you are able? And will you pay your program fees when you get paid? This program is "Jesus" centered. All that is taught is "Jesus" centered. We try to practice all that is "Jesus" centered. We encourage residents to attend the church of their choice in addition to the two hours of mandatory training per week. There is even three different service available to them on campus each week. One if full gospel, one is Baptist, and one is Anglican Epistiple.

Our number one objective is to provide a safe, clean and sober living place that helps people from prison to reintegrate back into society and become good citizens that don't return to crime. Our success rate has become so much better than anticipated that it has caused jealousy and attacks from the pro-prison groups that depend on the money generated by incarceration. And that is not small change either.

Part of the program is to change the thinking of each one so they become a success in life. Basically, this is all the teachings of Christ brought to life in everyday living. While may have accepted Christ in jail or prison, many more do so at Hand Up as they realize who Christ is. Some of these men were the worst of sinners before and have become the best of Christians now. They are already accustomed to

rejection and persecution so they may be more prepared for the end times than most people.

In our program, we deal with the (1) Physical— I.E. housing, jobs, transportation, food, etc. (2) Mental— I.E. attitude, belief, how to think, budget, etc. (3) Spiritual— I.E. relationship with God, fellowship, giving, good fruit, etc.

I didn't realize how comprehensive our program was until I sat in so many meetings for years hearing about every kind of organization and every kind of idea and plan. Every organization out there depends heavily on donations and grants to survive. There's nothing wrong with that, except a severe recession would cause some to go under. Our program is designed to grow by the hand of the men themselves. It's people helping people, with everyone involved. How fast it goes from here is quite exciting to think about. May God's will be done.

SPECIAL PRAYER REQUEST

My co-producer of this newsletter has been through more than most men can endure. I won't go back through all the previous stuff, but he has been diagnosed with lupus. The pain is excruciating. The only help was to take chemo every week. He's been doing that for months. It makes him sick and about as bad as the pain was. Jeff Wendel has been with HUM for 10 years and runs the campus where the married couples and

single women live. He has done a superb job, but Satan would like to kill him. Please pray for him.

Also, our music director has been down with lupus. He is married and doesn't live at the ministry. He needs our prayers.—*David Nichols*

TESTIMONY

I attended a Christian church from the age of seven until I was thirteen, and then I quit going to church, and I started drinking alcohol and using drugs. I started with smoking marijuana, but within three years I was shooting up cocaine. I would drink up to three fifths of alcohol in one night. When I was thirty-seven years old I came to Oklahoma (from Texas) in an effort to get away from drinking and using drugs. It didn't work. I kept drinking and using drugs, and I was introduced to crank.

I was arrested in June of 2002. I was in the Oklahoma County Jail, and I started studying the Bible. I hadn't seriously studied the Bible since I was thirteen years old. I was baptized when I was in the county jail, and I participated in Bible studies in jail and in prison. The Lord opened my eyes on how to live a godly life. I took a class called Evangelism Explosion, which taught people how to speak to others about Christ. I took another class on evangelism, but this class went into more depth than the previous class.

I was in the Genesis One Program at a prison called Jess Dunn, and David Nichols came to that prison and he spoke about Hand Up Ministry at a Genesis One meeting. David came back another time, and he spoke to us in more detail about Hand Up. I applied to Hand Up in January of 2013, and I came to Hand Up in April of that year. Since my arrival at Hand Up I have learned how to communicate better

with others, and I have also learned how to take advice.

God has shown me how to follow his will, and He has also shown me how to help others in their walk with Christ. Not only has Hand Up provided a home for me, but Hand Up has also shown me how to be a better Christian. I have learned how to show Christ's love to others. All of my friends at Hand Up have been a blessing, and I try to be a blessing to them. —*Abelardo Garcia*

TESTIMONY

I lived in Illinois until I was seven, and then my family moved to Oklahoma. We attended Church of God of Prophecy in Broken Arrow. One of my older sisters was killed in 1962, and my dad started drinking again after my sister died. My family was dysfunctional after that. I still went to church when I was in high school, but I didn't take it seriously. I joined the Army when I was twenty-one years old, and I was on active duty for two years. After the Army I worked odd jobs until went to work for Wells Fargo in 1990. In got married in 1986. I met my wife at a Baptist church we attended. My wife and I separated in 1999, and she passed away before the divorce was final.

I committed my crime in 2003, and I was in prison till 2008. I accepted the Lord in prison when I was attending the Evangelism Explosion class. I heard about Hand Up Ministry when I was in prison.

I came to Hand Up in February, 2008. My mom died in September, 2008, and I left Hand Up in March, 2009 because off financial difficulties. I attempted suicide in March, 2009, and I went to a mental hospital. I was allowed to come

back to Hand Up in April, 2010 and my Social Security was approved in June 2010.

I became a Genesis One leader in 2012. I visited people who weren't able to go to Genesis One meetings. I became Hand Up's Genesis One chapter Prayer Warrior in 2014. My walk with the Lord is stronger because Hand Up gave me a second chance. Because of my Genesis One duties I am growing in my faith, and I am fulfilling my calling in the Lord. If it wasn't for Hand Up I probably wouldn't be alive today. I thank David Nichols for giving me a second chance, and I thank God for Hand Up.

—*Paul Johnson*

PRESEVERANCE

There are many inspiring true stories of men and women throughout time who have accomplished fantastic and impressive things. However, they were not always great athletes, business people or military personnel, but sometimes very average people, people who were highly motivated by a cause they deemed greater than their own lives. With perseverance they were able to achieve astonishing successes, and sometimes stunning victories against seemingly insurmountable odds. And perseverance was the key ingredient in every success story.

After more than 10,000 attempts at inventing the incandescent light bulb before he was successful, Thomas Edison said, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."

Perseverance is steady persistence in a course of action, a purpose, especially in spite of difficulties or dis-

couragement. Determination, tenacity and patience also are closely related qualities.

Many examples of this kind of resolve can be found in the Bible. Genesis gives the account of Noah who built the ark over the course of 120 years, surrounded by corrupt and contemptuous unbelievers. Moses led the hard-hearted Israelites for 40 years in the wilderness. The Apostle Paul, however, serves as a superstar example of perseverance.

Paul's ministry, from his unique conversion to his tragic execution spanned about 30 years. During that time he took three missionary journeys. According to Christian History Magazine, he covered about 14,000 miles, mostly on foot. In two years and three months, under the ministry of Paul, all Asia Minor heard the word of the Lord Jesus, according to Acts 19:8-10. Throughout his travels Paul was constantly dealing with obstacles. Some scholars say he was stoned to death, but was revived and continued to preach.

Second Corinthians 11:24-27 describes in vivid detail the hardships that Paul endured: "From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." In addition to all of this, Paul always had in mind a concern for all of the churches and the people he had won to the

Lord.

Throughout church history, men and women have persevered for years while suffering religious opposition and persecution. For example, Martin Luther, considered by many the father of the Reformation, preached, wrote and raised a family over the course of 25 years, all while coming under the scrutiny of the Church. In modern times, some might consider Reverend Billy Graham a "hero of the faith," who persevered for more than 65 years. Reverend Graham preached Christianity to live audiences of nearly 215 million people in more than 185 countries and territories, and hundreds of millions more through television, video, film and webcasts.

For most people, getting through a day, or a week or a year is about all the perseverance they can muster. Working full time jobs, raising children and being involved in church and/or social clubs or activities fills all of their time. Perseverance is not limited to maneuvering through crises or disaster, but enduring the day-after-day faithfulness to get up and do what is needed, regardless of obstacles. As Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, said, "**Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did.**" —*Jeff Wendel*

We appreciate all our partners and donors. It is your support that enables us to assist individuals back into society as new brothers and sisters in Christ.

