

November 2018

→ **MINISTRY UPDATE** ←

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UPDATE

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. He moves kings like pawns and causes all human plans to work together to accomplish the end He has designed. We live in the last act of the play.

Human knowledge and ingenuity will increase. There will be good things and bad things along the way. Planes will soon fly near 2000 MPH. Flying cars will soon see mass production at a projected cost of \$60,000. Renewable energy will become the common, especially solar. Metal made with graphite will be paper thin and near impossible to penetrate. Many cures will come about for various diseases. And many other great things.

The bad: New bacteria that defies current medicine. One world order will expand as people are promised more. Instead of trust being put in God, it will be put in government. And if paid demonstrating doesn't accomplish it, then we see severe rioting. After that, it will be blood flowing in the streets. And all due to some politicians and ultra wealthy wanting one world government. And

all while the descendants of Abraham through Lot attempt to wipe out their cousins born of Isaac. Both claim to be the lineage of the Christ. Neither believe Jesus was the Christ. Also, for those who read Revelations, the people of Sweden seem to be the first to introduce the use of microchips in the hand to conduct some business. Not the whole nation yet, but at least 4,000. That's just things happening now. Who knows what is to come.

One thing we know, Jesus is coming back again. And for me, I'm ready now. But we're not in the days of Noah... YET! But we are fast approaching.

I have one question. Is your hope in the Lord, or in the government? Are you willing to suffer for His names' sake? Especially if you are doing or saying something that is not politically correct? I can assure you, it hurts to be looked at as evil when you are doing good. It hurts when government treats you as a criminal when you do right. It hurts when friends go with the accepted mentality and don't want to rock the boat. II Timothy 3:12 says, "And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer prosecution." How many of today's Christians are living Godly? And how many people really know what that means?

— *David Nichols*

TESTIMONY

LATEST

We're getting very close to getting our updated books. Hopefully next newsletter we will have filed for a loan to lower our interest. We added two more beds this month, but we have to do better. Another new law went in to effect on November 1st that makes it illegal for a sex offender to live within 2000 feet of a home daycare. The short version is that unless they own their own home, they are subject to being put homeless and Hand Up is the only known safe living space left in Oklahoma County. The new law makes it very plain that we are exempt. There is already nearly 500 registering homeless and over 1300 not registering at all. They could be anywhere. The good news is that the vast majority aren't dangerous beyond theft or drugs, There's not much choice. The bad news is, the future is bleak for them and us as citizens. For every action, there is a result. Our state and nation is not going to like the results. Hand Up has an obligation to its fellow man and must do more.

Another goal we want to achieve soon is a apples to apples recidivism study. We want to find a trustable source to do the study that will not be biased. — *David Nichols*

You are reading the testimony of a man who has no excuses for what he did wrong.. I wasn't abused by my parents and I wasn't raised by drug dealers. I wasn't raised by a single parent, nor was I abandoned as a child. I have no excuses when I try to rationalize why I went wrong. I had the blessing of being raised in a home with two caring parents and loving sisters. We had a strong social network, mainly through our church. We weren't rich but I had more than I needed. I was raised to know right from wrong. My family went to church at least three times a week. We went more than there times if there was a revival in the area.

I personally made the decision to follow Jesus when I was 16 years old and I began to be active in the church at that time . By age 19, I had served in almost all areas of church leadership, except for church boards and pastoral duties. I taught Sunday school and children's church and I served as an evangelism director, visitation leader, song leader, and youth pastor.

I got married when I was 19 years old and my wife and I were both very active in leadership in our church. We served in full-time ministry as youth pastors and we traveled for a year and a half as a part of a discipleship program sponsored by our church. I later served as Christian Education Director for about 54 Churches in Central Oklahoma. In this capacity, I provided resources and ideas for Sunday school, youth ministry, senior

adult ministry, and children's ministry. I also served as senior pastor for three churches, one which was in Missouri.

My wife and I had a full life serving as church leaders and training others to serve in ministry. What excuse could I have for sinning and committing a crime which would result in a 10 year prison sentence and an additional 10 years of probation? I have no excuse or rationalizations to offer.

I will remind you that all of us are human and subject to temptation and being led astray. I allowed Satan to isolate me late in life. He played on my selfishness and I ultimately failed as a church leader and as a Christian. I played into the Devil's trap and I shied away from people who would have held me accountable. I was arrested, and I was incarcerated in the Oklahoma County Jail.

Jail was a very sobering experience for me. I thank God for that because it slowed me down enough for God to speak to me again. With great sorrow I repented of my sins and my crime, and I found the great and awesome forgiveness of God in my life again. From that time I have done my best to serve God in whatever ways He has opened for me. I was determined to leave prison a better man. I got involved in the church inside prison and I also got involved in Celebrate Recovery. I worked on the issues which landed me in prison and nearly ruined my life.

David Nichols, President and Founder of Hand Up ministries, came to the prison and spoke about Hand Up. I later applied to Hand Up and was

accepted. My original plan was to stay at Hand Up for only a short time. I was trying to avoid accountability because I thought I didn't need it. I discovered very quickly, through the help of the Holy Spirit, that I will always need to be accountable to aid my spiritual growth. I also discovered that the world's view of felons is very hostile. Hand up is a safe place to be. I am accountable to Hand Up staff and to the residents of this community. I am safe from hostile thinking, and I am safe from certain temptations. Hand Up has provided me with an opportunity to serve.—*Ray Riddle*

TESTIMONY

When I was young, I believed the only thing a Christian had to do was to go to church on Sunday and listen to the preacher. I thought this was the sum of my Christian duty. I thought it was okay to do whatever I wanted the rest of the week.

I attended a revival one night when I was a teenager, and I gave myself to the Lord that night. As I got older, I began to explore all manners of sinful behavior. I thought it was okay as long as no one got hurt. I crossed the line and I lost everything in one day. I went to jail. I heard the cell door shut, and I thought I would never get out. I was locked in a small cell with two people I didn't know. I looked up and I called upon the Lord. He comforted my heart and forgave all of my sins. The Lord promised me that He would be with me, and He assured me

that my time in prison would be short.

I heard about Hand Up when I was attending a Genesis one meeting in prison. Hand up offered a Christian environment with Bible teaching. I knew Hand Up was the place for me. I served at Hand Up as a pastor for a few years and I helped organize the Genesis One chapter at Hand Up. Hand Up's Genesis 1 chapter has truly benefited the residence here . Praise be to God.—*Matthew Boyland*

TESTIMONY

Prior to becoming a resident at Hand Up ministry, I prayed for the Lord to remove me from my circumstances which I found myself in. He did and I was arrested and convicted and sentenced to prison. He also afforded me the luxury of asking for forgiveness and making reparations and repentance. Throughout this whole debacle He, in His grace, protected me and helped me find favor. When time came to be released I was able to come to Hand Up ministry.

Upon my arrival, the ministry driver picked me up and took me to McDonald's and purchased two hamburgers, fries, and a Coke for me. The day after, I was driven to various places to register and to set up probation requirements. I was also taken to get a phone and food stamps . That being done, I settled in and my only requirements were to seek employment and attend a Genesis One meeting and one church service a week. No problem I thought, until I tried to find em-

ployment.

I was able to find sporadic employment and eventually was offered a job for the ministry. The Lord blessed me with just enough to get by and brother, was I thankful. To whom much is given, much is required and at that time in my life, I was very aware of that fact.

I prayed to the Lord once again for the Holy Ghost to enter me and help me clean out a place to stay. I also prayed for Him to use me to bless others and keep me busy. Since then, I have seen a phenomenal increase and stay busy all the time. I have been able to make reparations for past sins and continue to do so. And in doing so, the demons that haunt me have little time to do their work. The Lord has delivered me once again into a safe place where I can plant my feet and grow. It also affords me the opportunity to be an asset and not a liability.

Living here, like anywhere else, is a privilege and not a right. I find the burden lights and not tiresome. We are encouraged to live right and in doing so, are relieved of the burdens of sin and regrets. Thank you. —*Glen Pike*

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.

