

SUMMER 2023 NEWSLETTER

WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT



YOUR SUPPORT HELPED US TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING MINISTRY

March 2023:

- Religious Classes: 170 (With 1,232 attendees)
 - One-on-Ones: 84
- Bibles Distributed: 59

April 2023:

- Religious Classes: 158 (With 1,136 attendees)
 - One-on-Ones: 88
- Bibles Distributed: 59

May 2023:

- Religious Classes: 146 (With 1,089 attendees)
 - One-on-Ones: 96
- Bibles Distributed: 69

June 2023:

- Religious Classes: 147 (With 1,183 attendees)
 - One-on-Ones: 103
- Bibles Distributed: 51

The Big Four Continued:

Acts 2:42 says that the early Christians "Were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." (NASB)

Most of the activities mentioned in this verse are rather easy to understand. We know what teaching is. We understand what personal and corporate prayer is. We usually agree on what fellowship is. "Breaking of Bread" is an entirely different matter. In the Acts passage alone we might think that the activity is comprised of solely eating together. This may be the case, but 1 Corinthians 11 seems to expand the practice into something much more exhaustive.

The early church was still meeting together and "Breaking Bread," but there seems to be a little more to it than that. There was still eating taking place, for sure, but the Corinthians were reprovved for making food and drink the main focus. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:20-21, "Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one of you takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk." In other words, they were supposed to meet together for the Lord's supper (a remembrance), but they had turned it into an excuse for partying!

Paul, and the Lord, did not take this lightly. Paul, using the Lord's own words, lays out exactly what is supposed to take place in this meeting. It is quite a list.

- It is a time to remember- "Do this in remembrance of me."
- It is a time of giving thanks.
- It is a time to remember God's covenant of love to us.
- It is a time to remember that Jesus died for us.
- It is a time to remember that Jesus is coming back.
- It is a time to examine our relationship with the One

whom we claim to love.

Two little phrases often give me pause in terms of my obedience to this passage. One is this: "When you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper." The early church was supposed to meet together for this very purpose. (I have fond memories of my college days walking to church every Sunday night just to celebrate the Lord's Supper. We never ran out of attributes of the Son to worship, nor did we run out of His works to remember). If I cannot fulfill this corporately, have I at least done the activities in this passage privately? (My young nephew memorized Isaiah 53 a few years back. This is a great passage to read when pondering these things). We can make it a point to read the passion passages in Mark. Or we can sing a remembrance song. One that still rattles in my head often has this line:

The bride eyes not her garment,
but her dear Bridegroom's face. I
will not gaze at glory, but on My
King of Grace. Not at the crown
He giveth, but on His pierced
hand. The Lamb is all the glory in
Immanuel's land!

Another part of the Corinthians passage is even more convicting: "Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:27). Do I take communion flippantly or while living in duplicity? Do I claim to know Christ, but claim His kinship falsely?

When inmates are leaving the jail we often remind them of the "Big Four" in Acts 2:42. We do our best to remind them to live in the center of those four walls of protection- Teaching, Fellowship, Breaking of Bread, and Prayer. May we, with them, attempt to stay in the center of those four sacred walls.

- Chaplain Tom



SUPPORT & DONATIONS

If you are interested in supporting The Mesa County Jail Ministry financially and/or through prayer; scan the QR code below or contact us at: 970.244.3351 Mesacountyjailministry.org

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VOLUNTEER TESTIMONY

Inmate Testimony- Answered Prayer

This past Easter Sunday I gathered with inmates in a Pod at the Mesa County Jail for a Sunday Service. Singing the old hymn "Low in the Grave He Lay," we recounted Jesus' death and resurrection. We praised God for His provision for us. As each inmate caught on with the song, voices raised in praise to God. While worshiping in the Jail, I always remind the inmates that the Lord inhabits the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3).

After we finished the hymn, one inmate, in their 40s, said with emotion "The last time I sang this song was with my grandmother when I was 11-years old." We dwelt on the significance of moments like this and those who love us.

Fast forward to the end of April. I was checking kites (inmate requests) and one kite was a request for a time of prayer. Making a mental note, I figured there would be time that afternoon to go and pray with the inmate. Usually, requests for prayer are related to some problem at home or about their criminal case. I asked for the inmate. When they came out to pray, it was the inmate mentioned above. They were asking for a time of prayer to praise God for them getting arrested. They recounted all the help they had received while in the Jail and that like the Prodigal Son, they had come to their senses and had come back to their relationship with God. As we prayed, it occurred to me that the grandmother had most likely prayed for this, their grandchild.

After a time of prayer, I asked the inmate about their grandmother and if she was still alive. "No, she is long gone," the inmate said. I asked them if they thought their grandmother had prayed for them? "Of course!" was the reply. Then I mentioned that their grandmother's prayers were being answered, all these years later, here in Mesa County Jail.

So, we should never tire or grow frustrated in our prayers. For we do not know how or when God will answer the requests we bring to His throne of grace.

-P. von Guerard 5/23



INMATE EXPRESSIONS

Words of thanks and testimonies from inmates/former inmates:

"I just want to tell you all, thank you, for your time and support. I don't know where I would be mentally without you guys. I can't express what you all mean to me. God bless you guys."

"To Tom and Assistant: I thank both of you greatly for your prayers, and I especially thank Tom for coming down to speak to me so soon, and for giving me the resources he did. It means a lot to me, the prayers and resources both. I'll pray for you both."

From former Mesa County Detention Center Inmates that are now housed in Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC):

"...I had many trials and fearful days, yet God got me through it all. Where I am, only God is making it good. It's a hard place to live. I am like Daniel in the lion's den. Every day is like a challenge for me, but it is not too much. God always makes a way. The brothers here are few among many, but our light shines, even if it is a smoldering wick. Life is hard, but God is good. God is very good. Praise Jesus! I miss our Bible studies, bro. You are a kind person. I know you care. Thank you for all your time...I miss singing to Jesus with you...Keep your eyes on Jesus."

"...You helped to teach me a lot in my time there at the jail. The importance of prayer in part. I find joy in speaking to our Father each and every day...He has given me such peace since I turned my life's path over to Him...You taught me well...and I thank you for all that you did for me. That stay in County Jail was meant to be - with meeting you and learning of God's grace through you and your teachings... Thank you for the integrity you instilled in me as I accepted my Savior."

"...Keep up your visits in the jail because you play a large part in the salvation of so many. You taught me a lot and helped me to overcome and enjoy all that comes with the knowledge of God and the joy of our salvation...I'm still doing many studies. I finished an 8 book study upon arriving here...I'm still doing the Set Free Prison Ministries through the mail. I'm on book 22. I was going to church and every Bible study possible that I felt was fitting here, ... but I finally got a job in the dairy..."

"Just wanted to expand on my last letter. You know I listed all of the different studies and programs I am involved in here in DOC. But the biggest and most important fact in my life is that God has entered my heart in a way that I never experienced. On Sundays at Church, we always sing "I could only imagine", and I just start crying. They are tears of Joy and love, of being moved by the Holy Spirit."

From a former Mesa County Inmate doing time in the Federal Prison System:

"Paul, I want to thank you, Tom, and the others for everything you did for me while I was at Mesa County Jail. I never thought I'd say this, but I really miss it there. What you guys do is amazing. We don't have books here or Bible studies. I even miss the food LOL. But most of all I miss my brothers in Christ, so please tell everyone I said hello."

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