



EXPECT GOD TO SHOW UP

I have no way of knowing who has come to my chapel services when I am in prison or the Harris County Jail. I always begin with prayer and identify myself as one "who sat where they now sit." (Ezekiel. 3:15) I know that as soon as they know I am an ex-drug dealer and heroin addict I have their ears. My desire is to see God get their heart!

On one particular day I had a man in my service who was a notorious cartel member who had made national news for supplying the guns that ultimately resulted in the death of a federal agent. When he was arrested he had 500 AK-47 assault rifles. What Juan Carlos did not know this day was that he himself was getting ready to get shot in his hard heart with the love of Jesus Christ and the good news of the gospel! On that day Juan Carlos was transformed from one of the most dangerous men in America and Mexico into a new creation in Christ. *He made up his mind his repentance would be more notorious than his sin!*

Juan Carlos called me his spiritual dad and over the months his new life brought revival to every cellblock he was housed in. Even the guards could not believe the love and gentleness they observed as he served other inmates in the cellblocks.

The day came for Juan Carlos to be sentenced. I had him come to my office for prayer. There were eight federal agents at his trial to testify that this man is so dangerous he must never be allowed out. They gave Juan Carlos life without parole that day. The authorities were afraid that he would retaliate and so assigned special guards to escort him back in shackles. When he got back to the jail they locked him away in isolation separated from his cell mates and from my church service. This would be his first service to miss.

Because his faith was so notorious, I was able to get one of the toughest guards to agree to bring him to church. The only stipulation was that he had to be in chains. I told Juan Carlos that today he would be bringing the message. I told the men we had a special speaker and when Juan Carlos walked in they were in shock. Word had already gotten out that he had gotten life in prison.

Juan Carlos brought a soul stirring message about moving from boyhood to manhood as a Christian. He declared he was no longer the devil's punk but a preacher of the gospel. He ended with a statement that revealed the perspective he now had. He said, "You know, Chaplain Downs always tells us that our trials don't ruin us, but instead, reveal us. Today, in court, I joined Chaplain Downs as a full time Chaplain as a result of my life sentence, and I look forward to seeing what God is going to do." There was hardly a dry eye in the room as he finished and we prayed over Juan Carlos.

I never know what is transpiring as I bring the Word of God but I always **EXPECT GOD TO SHOW UP**. Please pray as Juan Carlos begins his journey and pray he will touch many more lives.

ALWAYS AT WORK

In the fifth chapter of John, we have the narrative of our Lord delivering a poor man out of a horrible situation he had been bound in for 38 years. When questioned about the miracle and His character by the religious police of His day, our Lord sums up His mission and lays out what should be the mainspring of all our lives and ministry in one verse: in John 5:17, our Lord says, in essence, that the Father is **ALWAYS AT WORK** in broken people's lives.

I am just partnering with Him as He touches lives. That, my friends, is what it is all about and that is what Lighthouse Prison Ministries is all about. When I enter into lockup facilities every week I have the confidence that our Lord is going to honor his Word. My goal is to simply partner with Him in changing lives for time and eternity.

I want to thank you for being a part of what He is doing by praying and standing with us as we partner with our Lord and watch Him do great and mighty things.

PRAISES AND PRAYER

- We now have a web site at www.lighthouseprisonministries.org!! (Work in progress)
- Still thanking God for a precious family who donated a vehicle to drive to facilities!!!
- Please pray for the following young men and their relationship with God: John-Colby-Chandler-Gilberto

Chaplain John Downs