

Dear Friends,

"For we are laborers together with God." (I Corinthians 3:9)

In his letter to the church at Corinth, we see this great reminder that we all have a part in God's redemptive plan of salvation. As we get close once again to the end of another year of ministry, I wanted to say "thank you" on behalf of the men and women whose lives have been changed for time and eternity because your prayer and support have made it possible for me to fulfil God's calling on my life.

I have enclosed just one of the many letters that come to my mailbox from inmates who have been transformed from the power of darkness into the glorious light of the gospel. I wish I could send every letter, but I chose Darin's letter because he perfectly painted a portrait of both the devastation and despair that addiction brings and the amazing power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to transform any man or woman who will simply accept Christ's invitation in Matthew 11:28-30. Rehabilitation without salvation ends in total frustration, and the godless programs that men and women are made to attend are not only clueless as to the heart of the problem, but certainly fail to introduce the ultimate solution (II Corinthians 5:17). I continue to bring the same message that delivered me from a horrendous heroin habit over thirty years ago. I never get tired of seeing the mighty hand of God touch a man and the transformation that unfolds as they surrender to Him. I wanted you to hear the heart of Darin. His heart is overflowing with gratefulness and he now realizes that he did not get arrested, but rather, he got rescued and captured by grace. This is just one of the many lives that you have partnered with me in prayer and support to reach. I hope you enjoy this letter that you helped make possible, and hope that you will pray for Darin.

I just returned from Missouri where I spent some time visiting and preaching in a boy's home. The dorm houses thirty boys and the program is patterned much like the one that God used in my life. It is an amazing place, and I saw the Lord do a wonderful work in some of the boys' lives.

My primary mission field continues to be the same jail in downtown Houston where I sat as a defeated addict. There are well over 10,000 inmates at any given time, and I never dreamed I could say I love going back to that jail. The difference now is I get to go in and tell them how to really get free. (And I get to leave!)

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

Pray for me concerning the following:

- Monday and Tuesday- Conducting church services for high profile violent offenders and counseling one on one with inmates.
- Wednesday- Conducting leadership class for inmates using the Word of God as the textbook and counseling one on one.
- Thursday- Conducting Bible-based recovery classes for inmates in the county drug program.
- Traveling to preach in churches, prisons, Indian Reservation in Arizona, and programs across the US.
- **SPECIAL PRAYER REQUEST** - I am now working closely with a group of inmates who are Veterans and have come home from war and lost their way. Many of them have turned to drugs and violence. We have started a cell block just for them to deal with their specific needs. This is close to my heart because of our own son John was involved in combat in Iraq.

## **ANSWER TO PRAYER**

I had asked many of you to pray for a safe place for men to go when they get out, and God heard and answered in a big way. Several years ago a young man who was locked up for selling cocaine attended one of my services. Unknowingly to me, he received the offer of eternal life, and was mentored by another inmate. Upon his exit from prison he proved himself, and he began his own prison ministry that God has wonderfully blessed. God has used him in a mighty way, and he saw the need for "safe houses" where men can continue on in life without old bad influences. We now have over thirty beds for men. They are in a structured program and held accountable to maintain a testimony for God. Thanks for praying and **THANK YOU LORD!**

Chaplain John Downs

8/31/14

Dear Pastor Downs,

Well my stay here at the Harris County Inn is almost over. My discharge date is Sept. 14, 2014, which will put my stay here around 575 days.

When I arrived here I was broke, homeless, and without any hope; in fact I had attempted suicide by cutting both wrists. While in jail I received divorce papers from my wife after 28 years of marriage and lost custody of my 3 children. In very simple terms I had lost everything in life that had defined who I was including my career as a CPA and CFO.

For the first 3 months I could not even get out of bed. The emotional pain and depression was like a thousand pound blanket that was suffocating me slowly each day.

But then something amazing in my life began to happen. I started attending church services here, including your services Mr. Downs. As I attended your service I began to have hope. I had hope because you accepted me as a person and you treated me with love and respect.

I remember each service you letting us know, "We don't have a drug problem, we have a spiritual problem." When I first heard those words from you...I just heard them. Today, I understand those words with perfect clarity.

God has saved my life, changed my life and given me a new life. God has used you Mr. Downs to reach me and I want you to know what a personal impact you have had in my life.

God tells us that we are to build our house upon a strong foundation with Jesus Christ as the Chief Cornerstone. You Mr. Downs are now part of the foundation of my new house. Your ministering of the Word and the truth is done in a straightforward manner surrounded by and supported by our love for God.

God shines through you Mr. Downs. I want to personally say, "Thank You" Mr. Downs for giving me hope, faith, love, strength and teaching me to never give up...there is nothing too big for God.

May God bless you and your family and may you know Mr. Downs that every day you are making a difference.

Sincerely,

Darin Sabol, a brother in Christ Jesus