

# Mission Report

Fall 2015

## PRAY FOR PROTECTION

As we move rapidly toward the fulfillment of the Lord's promise of His return (**John 14:1-6**), we also are seeing the conditions that are so clearly spelled out in **II Timothy 3:1-6** and **3:12-14** ramping up at an incredible pace. The spirit of this age is affecting the ministry inside the jails and prisons in many ways. False teaching abounds and doctrines of demons are being embraced at incredible rates. Addiction to hard drugs has quadrupled as people try to fill their spiritual vacuum and kill the pain of being raised in godless, fatherless, violent homes. As we move more and more toward a Christ-mocking world, I have watched firsthand the violence in the jails and prisons escalate at alarming rates.

I help oversee several hundred volunteers at the 3rd largest jail in America. I recently told them the violence is so bad that I cannot promise their safety once they were inside the facility. I have seen blood spilled in almost every chapel we have in the jail. I have had more fights break out in my services this year than since I started to minister in the Harris County jail in 1982.

I recently had a huge fight break out in a service, and I am thankful for God's protection as well as the inmates who love God that surrounded me and shielded me from the violence and blood that spilled in the chapel. It was an attack on a man who was in my Foundations Class and has been on fire for Christ. The attack happened while we were praying.

The enemy would love for me to quit (and sometimes my flesh does too), but the Call and the Commission remain, and I still know that when I am telling drug addicts how I got out of my heroin addiction into the glorious grace of God, there is a peace and a joy I cannot explain.

Please **PRAY FOR PROTECTION** for the inmates and the jail volunteers, as well as for myself.

## NEVER LOST THE WONDER

Recently, a young man, who I feel like is now one of my own sons, asked me if he could talk privately with me. He has now been locked up for four years awaiting trial for a capital murder he committed when he was seventeen. I have watched him since he gave his life to Christ, and for the last four years I sat and watched him devour the Word of God and bring other inmates to Christ as he has awaited the outcome of his sentence. I knew he was facing a life sentence and had been going to court on his case. He told me he had just come back from court and met with his attorneys. He then told me something that once again reminded me of just how powerful the gospel is to bring a man to full biblical repentance. He said, "Chaplain Downs they have offered to only give me 30 years in prison since I was not the one who actually shot the man, and the Lord immediately impressed me to tell them that I wanted them to talk to the victim's family and if they think I should get more time then I want to honor them because it's not about me, it's about them."

That, my friend, is a heart that has been radically transformed by the Love of God and the Word of God. I **HAVE NEVER LOST THE WONDER** of seeing this with my own eyes as the power of God changes monsters into men of God. Thank you for standing with me in proclaiming this message.

I have not lost the wonder of the amazing grace of God. Only I know personally just how deep the pit of heroin addiction I was in at the time of my conversion in 1978. Thank God for a man named Lester Roloff who believed there was no pit too deep for the grace of God. I have never lost the wonder of the Word of God. It is through that Word and only that Word a man or woman gets the new birth, a new mind, and a new roadmap for life!! My plea to you today is that, if you have lost the wonder, then simply come home. Begin again as though you'd never known Him.

Please pray for me as I preach in jails, prisons, and churches across our nation. Again, I want to thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and support in fulfilling the calling upon my life. As drug addiction continues in epidemic proportions across our nation the message has never been more needed.

Telling the Story,

John Downs

### LIGHTHOUSE PRISON MINISTRIES, INC.

"Shining forth the light and love of Jesus Christ"

PO Box 11943

Spring, TX 77391-1943

Website: [www.lighthouseprisonministries.org](http://www.lighthouseprisonministries.org)

Email us: [LPM@lighthouseprisonministries.org](mailto:LPM@lighthouseprisonministries.org)

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John Downs, Director