



Prison
Ministry

Freedom Through Truth

JUNE—JULY 2009

From the Pen of Chaplain Baggett



Looking Back on the “Next” Ten Years

It seems just like yesterday. Time passes so quickly when you do what you love; when you immerse yourself in working for the Lord; when you strive to bring precious souls to Jesus.

But it was almost 10 years ago, that Senior Assistant Chaplain James Williams set out to visit congregations of the Lord’s Church across Northern Alabama and Southern Tennessee, making a passionate plea for workers. While at Madison, he told us about great, wide-open doors of opportunities at Limestone Correctional Facility. Brothers from many different congregations immediately seized the opportunity; stepped through the door; never looking back.

In this article, I will focus mostly on Madison. I was among the first to volunteer from Madison. Little did I know what would happen during the next ten years. Little did I know that I was about to embark on the most important and rewarding missionary journey of my life.

Travelling on challenging journeys, not knowing what might lurk behind the next bend, becomes much easier when faithful friends and trusting fellow-laborers accompany you. Starting out with “baby steps”, Bill Edwards and I began to co-teach one Honor-dorm class per week. After a few trimesters, and as the need for teachers increased, we began to teach separate classes. We still drove together every week, using the time to encourage each other, to plan, and to dream about how to provide even

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greater service.

Bill and I became Assistant Volunteer Chaplains in 2004. In addition to teaching Honor-dorm classes, Bill began to spend time working in the Chaplain's office during the week, and I started going into the camp also on Saturdays and Sundays. Our dear brother Sam Drake joined us as an Assistant Volunteer Chaplain last year.

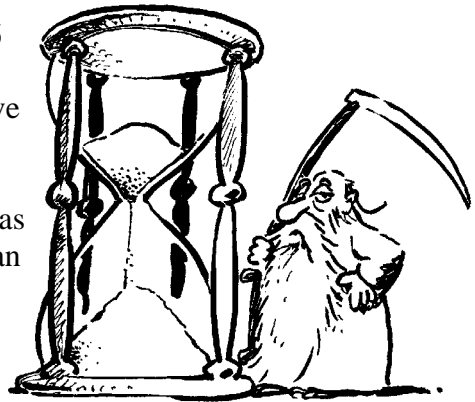
So much has changed at Limestone over the last ten years. The first Honor-dorm was established in September 1999 with 113 men-in-white. It took relatively few brothers to teach classes, since every man had to take only one class per week.

There was one congregation of the Lord's Church, meeting in the main chapel. Because of the different / distinctly separate parts of the camp, many men could not attend regular Bible studies or assemble with other brothers in Christ on Sundays to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Today, Honor-dorm H houses 400 men-in-white. When Madison assumed main sponsorship of the Honor-dorm in 2004, we started a second congregation in the camp; this one meeting in the dorm's chapel. Other congregations were added through the years; the third during August 2004 in the Special Unit (Dorms B + C); the fourth during October 2006 in Lock-up / Administrative Segregation (Dorm E); the fifth during February 2008 in Lock-up / Protective Custody (Dorm E); and the sixth late 2008 in Pre-release (Dorm F). Now that there are six congregations of the Lord's Church; every man in the camp has access to Bible studies and every brother in Christ can take part in the Lord's Supper every Sunday.

Teaching in the Honor-dorm has become a much more challenging endeavor, since every one of the 400 men-in-white must now take two classes and attend two services each week. 35 instructors are involved in teaching the classes; 30 are brothers in Christ; 15 are from Madison. Some brothers teach two classes. Additional brothers have volunteered to conduct services.

Madison's involvement and commitment has increased dramatically. We host 4 Family-nights each year for Honor-dorm H. So far, we have hosted 22 Family-nights, with over 80 brothers and sisters joining in fellowship with the men-in-white and their families, at different times. We now conduct two Gospel meetings every year in the



main chapel. Our Barnabas ministry, involving mostly ladies, sends notes of encouragement on a regular basis, primarily to brothers in Christ. We host annual Appreciation dinners for Limestone Administration, Staff, and Officers. We participate in the annual ADOC fish-fry events. And the list goes on.

My life has changed in so many ways. I now have an even greater appreciation for the value of one individual soul. I have been greatly encouraged and blessed, being able to witness and assist in the birth of hundreds of new children of God. I have seen men change. I have seen brothers, men-in-white and “free-world”, grow stronger and much bolder in Christ.

I am looking to the future with great hope and anticipation. There is still so much to do. We must sow even more seed; water; make disciples; teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. God has blessed Limestone, and all those that have stepped through the door He has opened. Pray that the door will remain open, and that brothers will continue to seize all opportunities.

I can hardly wait to be ... **Looking Back on the “Next” Ten Years** ... to see what God has done at Limestone Correctional Facility.

(Siegfried Bill, Assistant Chaplain at LCF, Madison Church of Christ)

From My Personal Experience

On December 1, 2007 I retired from the United States Postal Service. The timing had been well planned. For thirty-four years the Christmas season had always been very busy for me taking me away from family and friends with whom I would have loved to spend the holiday season. I would work unbelievable amounts of overtime processing tons and tons of Christmas mail at the General Mail Facility in Madison taking care of every body else's holiday but my own. But I promised myself that the Christmas of 2007 would be different. I would spend it with my wife, my daughters, and my seven grandchildren. As you can probably guess, it turned out to be one of the most enjoyable holiday seasons I could remember.

But what would happen when December was over? I would have no alarm clock to answer to; no tight schedules to deal with. What would I do with all this wonderful time God had just given me? It was at this time that a friend of mine, Jay Dryden, in-

vited me to join him in a prison ministry at the Limestone Correctional Facility. I had no idea what to expect: nor did I have any idea what a spiritual adventure it would become. For the last two quarters in the New Life Behavior program I have found myself in the H -dorm working with a class of about forty inmates. We have been studying in some detail the Life of Christ striving to see how the life and behavior of Jesus can have a dramatic affect upon the lives and behavior of us today as it did upon the multitudes that followed him through Galilee and Judea twenty centuries ago. When the class first began I could see a variety of attitudes on the faces of the students. Some were there with Bible in hand hoping for a fruitful and stimulating study. Others seemed distant and uninterested. But through the weeks that followed it has been gratifying to me to see all of these men gradually warm with growing interest in the story being told. By the end of the second quarter the students handed me a sheet of paper with almost all their names on it asking me to please take it to the chaplain's office with the request that they all be assigned to the same class next quarter so they could continue the study and not miss out For me as a teacher this whole experience has been a testimony to how powerful and life changing the story of Christ can truly be.

And so this quarter they are all back, and in our continuing study we are now looking at how the Life and Behavior of Jesus impacted the Lives and Behavior of the earliest Christians. Seldom do I see this kind of interest in the "Free World". So often our affluence and our preoccupation with earthly things are allowed to obscure our spiritual needs. Sometimes it is only when our lives hit rock bottom that we truly begin to reflect upon the deeper things of life and see the need for Christ and the Life Changing Behavior that he can bring.. *(Ron Little Shiloh Church of Christ)*



NOTICE:

Answer keys are now available for the Rightly Dividing the Word Bible Studies we produce. Those needing or wanting them should contact us. We look forward to serving you in a greater way!

We are the Light

There is an illustration found in the Sermon on the Mount describing the light of the world. The faith we have in our Lord Jesus Christ is that light. As we demonstrate our faith during the everyday activities life brings us, we are illuminating the world with the love of Christ. This is why Jesus commanded us not to hide our faith in Him.

As most Christians, I found myself setting my light on a lamp stand inside the structural church building. While spending most of my life preaching from the pulpit, my desire was that those who were walking in darkness would see the light from the church "building".

After reading the parable that will follow I realized that there are many who cannot come to where we are. Those who are in our prisons and jails throughout the world need to hear the Gospel of Christ. We as Christians need to take the light of our faith into the darkness of those confined spaces.

The need to take the light into the darkness has been heavy on my heart, it is a blessing to be allowed to come and share the Good News of Jesus Christ. As a minister of God I must bring this light to all those who do not understand or know that there is a light.

God is no respecter of persons, regardless of where they are or what they have done. Christ died for all, that each one may receive salvation for their souls. It is my goal in this life to tell as many as I can about the love of God.

The Cave People (Taken from Max Lucado's The Woodcutter's Wisdom and Other Favorite Stories)

Long ago, or maybe not so long ago, there was a tribe in a dark, cold cavern. The cave dwellers would huddle together and cry against the chill. Loud and long they wailed. It was all they did. It was all they knew to do. The sounds in the cave were mournful, but the people didn't know it, for they had never known joy. The spirit in the cave was death, but the people didn't know it, for they had never known life.

But then, one day, they heard a different voice. "I have heard your cries," it announced. "I have felt your chill and seen your darkness. I have come to help." The cave people grew quiet. They had never heard this voice. hope sounded strange to their ears. "How can we know you have come to help?" "Trust me," he answered. "I have what you need." The cave people peered through the darkness at the figure of the stranger. He

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was stacking something, then stooping and stacking more. "What are you doing?" one cried, nervous. The stranger didn't answer. "What are you making?" one shouted even louder. Still no response. "Tell us!" demanded a third.

The visitor stood and spoke in the direction of the voices. "I have what you need." With that he turned to the pile at his feet and lit it. Wood ignited, flames erupted, and light filled the cavern. The cave people turned away in fear. "Put it out!" they cried. "It hurts to see it." "Light always hurts before it helps," he answered. "Step closer. The pain will soon pass." "Not I," declared a voice. "Nor I," agreed a second. "Only a fool would risk exposing his eyes to such light." The stranger stood next to the fire. "Would you prefer the darkness? Would you prefer the cold? Don't consult your fears. Take a step of faith"

For a long time no one spoke. The people hovered in groups covering their eyes. The fire builder stood next to the fire. "It's warm here," he invited. "He's right," one from behind him announced. "It's warmer." The stranger turned and saw a figure slowly stepping toward the fire. "I can open my eyes now," she proclaimed. "I can see." "Come closer," invited the fire builder. She did. She stepped into the ring of light. "It's so warm!" she extended her hands and sighed as her chill began to pass. "Come, everyone! Feel the warmth," she invited. "Silence, woman!" cried one of the cave dwellers. "Dare you lead us into your folly? Leave us. Leave us and take your light with you." She turned to the stranger. "Why won't they come?" "They choose the chill, for though it's cold, it's what they know. They'd rather be cold than change." "And live in the dark?" "And live in the dark."

The now-warm woman stood silent. Looking first at the dark, then at the man. "Will you leave the fire?" he asked. She paused, then answered, "I cannot. I cannot bear the cold." Then she spoke again. "But nor can I bear the thought of my people in darkness." "You don't have to," he responded, reaching into the fire and removing a stick. "Carry this to your people. Tell them the light is here, and the light is warm. Tell them the light is for all who desire it." And so she took the small flame and stepped into the shadows. *(In Christ, Rodney Rice).*



Trimester Courses

Following is a list of the courses taught by members of the Lord's church in the Faith Based Honor Dorm Community for the current trimester (Some instructors teach more than one class:

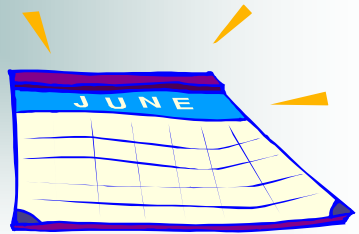
Course	Congregation	Instructor
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 1	Austinville	J. Hall
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 1	West Huntsville	B. Skipworth, D. Joyce
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 4	Cox Blvd.	J. Rhoden, R. Rice
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 4	Eastside	J. Gray
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 4	Hartselle	S. Paich
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 5	Madison	S. Drake, L. Smith
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 7	Elkmont	B. Bryant, B. Smith
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 7	Madison	J. Walton III, D. Benton
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 7	Madison	J. Walton IV, B. Curry
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 8 (C.A.S.A.)	Elkmont	D. Wallace. B. Smith
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 8 (C.A.S.A.)	Madison	S. Bill
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 12	Madison	L. Barnard
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 12	Madison	C. Lamb
NEW LIFE BEHAVIOR 12	Madison	J. James, T. Learned
Computer Basics	Madison	L. Cockerham
Life Changing Skills	Hartselle	T. Reynolds
The Life of Christ (Pt. 2)	Shiloh	R. Little
Leadership	Madison	B. Bell
One God in an Atheistic World	Madisonn	M. Houts



Baptisms For 2008
 at Limestone Correctional Facility — **125**
 For **2009** to date — **45**

Upcoming Events!!

**June 10-12 36th Annual Prison
Ministry Workshop, Kings
Crossing Church of
Christ, Corpus
Christi Texas**



Freedom Through Truth

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