



Jenny and Eric

Personal Message by Eric Johnson, M.Div.

Our ministry relationally engages all adults with the grace of God. Our involvement at Northampton County Prison has increased 4-fold since last year through our volunteers. We are excited that many of our friends have been led to join us in this special work. It is very sobering, but filled with hope. Many prisoners have often said to me, “But Eric, you don’t know what we have done!” They wonder if God can forgive them. I take time to affirm that their awareness of sin is evidence of God’s drawing them to Himself and is necessary for genuine faith!

Eight Marks of the Blessed Life

In the Beatitudes, Jesus described the blessings that belong to those

whose lives show the marks of being citizens of the kingdom of God:

- poor in spirit,
- mournful,
- meek,
- hunger and thirst for righteousness,
- merciful,
- pure in heart,
- peacemakers,
- and persecuted for righteousness sake.

I wrote about the first mark – poor in spirit – in my last letter.

The second mark is mourning. Since these marks are exhibited by believers, Jesus must have been speaking of something more than the natural experience of every human to mourn. Spiritual mourning begins with mourning over our own sin.

In the Old Testament the prophet Isaiah saw the holiness of God in the Temple and he said, “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;

for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!” In the New Testament Simon Peter saw the great catch of fish that Jesus orchestrated, and he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” Isaiah and Peter encountered a holy God, and in response they mourned their own sin. And they both learned the astonishing fact that with God there is forgiveness. It is grace that makes us mourn over our sinfulness. These gifts of grace and forgiveness, given freely to people, come at high cost to God. God, too, mourns over man’s sin. His mourning led to the suffering and death of His own Son.

Our ministry in the prison is a source of great hope, because people today like Isaiah and Peter have their eyes opened to see the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is one man’s story. (See reverse side.)



VANTAGE POINT

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Prison Volunteer Mike Brown in center.

Ministry Update

Adult Life is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit ministry relying on private support – and your generosity. Your gifts are investments in the biblical counseling, discipleship, and evangelism of people who may have little hope, and need more faith. Please consider joining us now with a monthly investment. Adult Life is now doing business as Vantage Point Ministries – Enjoying Life from the Vantage Point of God's Grace. Use the enclosed envelope and make checks payable to "Vantage Point" or "Adult Life." Thank you!

Prayer for local mission with adults...

Eric and Jenny Johnson
Extending God's grace to all adults and helping them explore and mature in faith. Men and Women meeting in small groups will grow in grace. Our ministry to the prisoners at Northampton County Prison. Thankful for your partnership in this important ministry with adults.
New groups to begin.

Contact

Facebook – AdultLifeInc and
www.adultlifeinc.org
Adult Life, Inc. – 4416 Greenfield Rd, Bethlehem, PA 18017
ericjohnsonlv@hotmail.com
484-554-9129

A Prisoner's Faith

My 7-year-old brother Lewis was kidnapped when I was 5 months old. I didn't know him, but the aftereffects of that tragedy have followed me for the whole of my life. My parents would not allow me to go outside alone. I was trapped at home. I was a prisoner of my own life. I had no friends. I had no real chance of a childhood. No one to ever hurt me. I hated my life looking out the windows of my house in Allentown watching all the kids on the streets but not being allowed to join them.

My childhood taught me to get tough and to bottle up all my emotions. I was also taught there was no God. If he was real then he was a coward. He had no love or mercy. So I created my own God, and I chose me. As I grew, I was introduced to gangs. It was my own downfall – a mix between the gang's demons and my own. I was untouchable and unstoppable. On a gang mission – me and the brothers kidnapped a rival

gang member. We took him to a basement, stripped him, and beat him. The whole time he was crying out to God. He kept saying, "Jesus please save me. Help! Please Help!" At that moment my body tingled. It warmed and I felt my stomach drop. I looked up and felt that I needed to stop what was going on. That was the day I met Jesus Christ.

Through the prison ministry my walls were pulled down. I saw God's love, and He kept me near other believers. I used to see jail as a holdback, a punishment, but it's not. It never was and this program, the staff, and the volunteers have showed me that the love in my heart unfroze. I froze God for a long time, but now it is summer in my soul and spirit for the rest of my life.

Grace Opportunities

- Recommend us to another.
- Join one of our 15 groups.
- Help us start another group.
- Financially invest with us.
- Pray for us.

The Adult Life Ministry