

A MESSAGE OF HOPE, comfort and freedom in Jesus Christ

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“The Importance of the Holy Spirit” by Kyle Murphy

Message of Hope Jail and Prison Ministry will be celebrating our 5th year in existence in just a few weeks! While we are very excited for this milestone, we recognize it is only through the power and leading of the Holy Spirit that we have been able to accomplish anything. That being said, we would like to take this opportunity to look more closely at the importance of the Holy Spirit in our lives – and in our ministries.

There are many ways the Holy Spirit works in the lives of those of us who love the Lord. As our quarterly scripture verse states, we can be overflowing with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13). Power is only one of many benefits we receive through the Holy Spirit. Paul goes on in Galatians 5:22-23 to list the fruit of the Spirit. These are: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. All these can be manifested through us because of the Holy Spirit. They come about by our yielding to His wielding.

In another of his epistles, Paul again provides a list of things we receive through the Holy Spirit. These are found in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 and are: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in different kinds of tongues and interpretation of tongues.

The other biblical writers have much to say in regard to the Holy Spirit as well. Throughout the Old and New called

to. Testaments we are given other glimpses of the gifts He provides. Just a few examples of these are: Anointing (Luke 4:18-19), Joy (Luke 10:21), Truth (John 14:16), and Counsel, Might and Fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2).

The writers also have many different names for the Holy Spirit as well as descriptions of Him. Depending on which translation of the Bible you use, He is called Comforter, Advocate and Helper (John 14:26). He is said to instruct us (Nehemiah 9:20), to intercede for us (Romans 8:26) and lead us (Mark 12:12; Acts 8:29).

Luke provides an example of the Holy Spirit preventing Paul and his companions from preaching in Asia (Acts 16:6) as well as an occurrence where He suddenly took Philip away after he had baptized the eunuch (Acts 8:39).

Much is said about the Holy Spirit throughout the Bible. It is important, then, that we realize a relationship with Him is imperative for each of us in our Christian walk and in our Christian ministry. In the same way we strive to develop a more intimate relationship with God and Jesus, we should be striving to gain a closer walk with the Holy Spirit.

To illustrate this point, we can look to some of Jesus’ final instructions before He ascended to heaven. The first, and probably most widely known

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Quarterly Scripture Focus:

Romans 15:13

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”



A growing area of concern for Message of Hope is in regard to Outreach Volunteerism. An outreach volunteer is someone who visits one-on-one with a friend inside. The requests for visits far surpass what the current volunteers could possibly meet. In fact, “far surpasses” doesn’t even come close to explaining the disparity between the requests received and the number of individuals available to meet these needs. Message of Hope is committed to addressing this but we need your help!

According to a study published by the Minnesota Department of Corrections, “decades of research indicate that visits improve institutional behavior and lower the likelihood of recidivism.” They continue in this 41-page study to cite numerous references and provide a great deal of statistics to back up this claim.

We agree whole-heartedly with their findings – especially after hearing directly from many of our friends inside on this matter. But our motivation for encouraging more people to get involved as outreach volunteers goes much deeper than improving behavior or reducing recidivism.

Many of our friends inside have little or no contact with their loved ones and rarely, or never, receive visits. Visitation can have a powerful, lasting impact and help to restore hope. As an outreach volunteer, you can share a message of hope, comfort and freedom found in Jesus Christ with others – as He calls us to do!

Please prayerfully consider becoming an outreach volunteer. Visitation can be done according to your schedule. It can also be done in pairs. Training is available (and required) at your convenience.

If you are interested in getting involved or finding out more please contact us!



Our Next Step Christian Recovery is going well! We have had three more classes graduate at Carson City Correctional since our last newsletter. The programs at Macomb Correctional and Macomb County Jail are also going strong with many new members. We thank God for the healing and restoration He continues to bring to all of us that are a part of the Next Step Christian Recovery program.

In addition to the Next Step programs inside, there is also a group meeting at Macomb Christian Church on a weekly basis. Addiction affects us all – regardless of where we are in life. Everyone could benefit from the truths we discuss in the Next Step program.

If you are considering starting a program at your church we would be more than willing to assist in any way we can!



In our next newsletter we hope to share pictures and updates from our upcoming Easter Card Assembly Party.

We are excited for the opportunity to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with our friends inside by sending cards of love and hope.

Check out our Facebook page over the next few weeks or stay tuned for the next newsletter!

Happy Easter!

Message of Hope Jail and Prison Ministry

THANK YOU TO HUNGRY HOWIE'S OF NEW BALTIMORE!!

Due to the generosity of Hungry Howie's of New Baltimore over the last two years, Message of Hope has been able to provide quarterly Staff Appreciation Dinners to the officers and staff at Macomb Correctional Facility.

Kyle & Keri Murphy, co-founders of Message of Hope, recently had an opportunity to visit Hungry Howie's and present its owner, Mark Hurley, with Certificates of Appreciation for 2015 and 2016 for the generous and loving donations that have been provided.

If you are in the area, we would encourage you to stop in and support Hungry Howie's with your patronage! The address is:

Hungry Howie's
Store #: 00076
37595 Green Street
New Baltimore, MI 48047



Mark (pictured on left) and Kyle (pictured on right)

Voices for Christ @ voices4christ.org

Another ministry we provide that we would like to call your attention to in this newsletter is Voices for Christ (V4C).

V4C provides a way for those inside to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the world. We accept submissions such as: words of encouragement, lessons, poems and testimonies. These submissions are reviewed to ensure they fit within an established criteria and then published on the ministry's website. Via the Internet, the authors of these works are able to literally "go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." To find out more about how to submit your inspired works for publication please contact V4C at:

Voices for Christ
PO Box 381054
Clinton Township, MI 48038



If you have not already been utilizing the Message of Hope Prayer Team, we would like to invite you to do so! We have a team of loving Christian men and women who would be honored to lift your prayers and petitions to God.

Whether you are currently inside or have a friend or family member inside, please feel free to share your prayer requests with us and allow us the opportunity to pray for you.

You can submit your prayer requests via email at prayingforyou@messageofhope.org or through the Message of Hope website at messageofhope.org. You can also contact us by regular mail and we will forward your requests along to our Prayer Team.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Voices for Christ submissions

“Easter Blessings”

By Bob Perron

God's love is so abundant
 He sent Jesus down for us
 To save us from our sins
 And die upon that cross
 But He could not be held
 Death could not claim its stake
 He rose again from the grave
 So heaven we could partake
 Each day continues to draw out
 And the sun shows off its power
 As the warmth from its graceful beams
 Shine down upon us each hour
 You can now feel the spring air
 As the flowers begin to bloom
 Trees are sending out their shoots
 As birds are showing off their plume
 We see God's beauty all around us
 And life is in everything He does
 From the expanses of the universe
 To every bee letting off its buzz

“Jesus Saves”

By George K. Walker

Macomb Correctional Facility

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners: of whom I am chief" 1 Timothy 1:15.

Paul tells us in part "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Not only was Jesus born to die for us but He was to die for those that lied, stole, committed murders and for those that didn't care about Him and wanted Him killed.

I feel like Paul when he talks about Jesus dying for sinners "of whom I am chief." I am in prison for murder but thanks be to Jesus I too am forgiven.

In verse 16 Paul says: "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

I am thankful to God for His mercy because I need it. Now He uses me as an example of how loving and forgiving He is - thank you Jesus!

"Who We Are"

By Matthew Nawrocki

Newberry Correctional Facility

We're the salt of the earth (Mt. 5:13)
 We're a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1)
 We're the light of the world (Mt. 5:14)
 We have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16)

We're the children of God (Rom. 8:16)
 We're new creations (2 Cor. 5:17)
 We're living stones (1 Pet. 2:5)
 Christ is our foundation (1 Cor. 3:11)

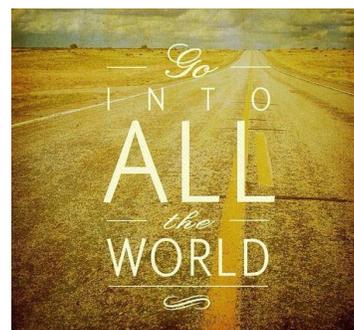
We're called by God (Rom. 8:30)
 We're heirs to His throne (Gal. 3:29, 4:7)
 We're temples for His Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16)
 'Til He calls us all home (2 Cor. 5:1)

We're ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20)
 We're righteous in Him (2 Cor. 5:21)
 It's no longer us (Gal. 2:20)
 But it's Christ who lives (Gal. 2:20)

We're masterpieces (Eph. 2:10)
 We're works of art (Eph. 2:10)
 We're sanctified (1 Cor. 1:2)
 Christ has set us apart (1 Cor. 1:2)

We're a sweet aroma (2 Cor. 2:14)
 We're the fragrance of Christ (2 Cor. 2:15)
 We're God's fellow workers (1 Cor. 3:9)
 Christ bought us at a price (1 Cor. 6:20)

So let us live out every moment
 In the way He's defined
 Knowing what He says about us
 Keeping whose we are in mind!



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command He gave His disciples (and us) was to "...go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19). Many well-intentioned individuals take this command to heart, which is great, but they go and make disciples in and through their own power.

A closer look at what the gospel writers recorded in regard to Jesus' last days reveal that prior to Him telling the disciples to "go," Jesus told them to "wait." He instructed them to wait in Jerusalem for Him to do as He had promised – that being, He would send the Holy Spirit. (Luke 24:49).

That same principle applies to us today. Applying these instructions to myself, if we would have gone forward with Message of Hope without first waiting for the leading and power of the Holy Spirit, we would have been guilty of going and making disciples in and through our own power. We would most likely have either failed completely or found ourselves, after five years, to still be limping along. This certainly would not have brought glory to God or been in accordance with what Jesus commanded us to do. We all need to take Jesus' teaching to heart, in its entirety, and put it into action.

The Holy Spirit is among the greatest gifts we are given. So, my challenge to you is this: first, if you have not already done so, put your faith in Jesus Christ and receive the tremendous gift of the Holy Spirit. Second, through His anointing and leading (rather than your own), go and mightily accomplish whatever God calls you to do – with power, joy and truth!



As we briefly mentioned in our lesson, this year marks our 5-Year Anniversary! Message of Hope Jail and Prison Ministry officially began in May 2012 and we are beyond grateful for all that God has done and continues to do through this ministry. I personally am thankful to be allowed to serve God through this ministry and pray that He will allow me to continue in His service in this avenue for years to come.

There are so many people who have been a part of Message of Hope over the last five years that we couldn't possibly mention you all. Please know that your time, efforts and donations have been put to great use for the Kingdom of God. Many lives have been touched for the sake of Jesus Christ through Message of Hope and that would not be possible without your loving support.

"Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else" (2 Corinthians 9:13).

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