

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

Prison Behind the Urban Walls of Church

A Thesis Project Submitted to
the Faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity

in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

By

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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The problem is that the men at the Federal Correctional Institution located in Safford, Arizona (FCI-Safford), which is located approximately 168 miles northeast of Phoenix, lack spiritual fulfillment through God. The purpose of this paper is to provide a guide for the men at FCI-Safford to seek and find spiritual fulfillment. The primary investigator conducted qualitative research and analysis through one-on-one interviews with twelve men at FCI-Safford.

God's Revealing, God's Redemption, God's Restoration

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Abbreviations

DMIN	<i>Doctor of Ministry</i>
LUSOD	<i>Liberty University School of Divinity</i>
FCI	<i>Federal Correctional Institution</i>
FBOP	<i>Federal Bureau of Prisons</i>
PS	<i>Project Subject</i>

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Federal Correctional Institution in Safford, Arizona (FCI-Safford) is located approximately 168 miles northeast of Phoenix, putting it essentially in the middle of nowhere. The building, which originally housed a work camp, looks like an old fort out of the great wild west. Its layout closely resembles a military compound. Constructed in the 1950s, the structure has deteriorated due to years of neglect. It is desolate, and it is dismal. The only notable scenery is Graham Mountain, which sets west of the institution. To the east, north, and south, there is nothing but endless desert.

As a minimum-security facility, FCI-Safford currently houses approximately 845 men in dormitories sectioned into eight-person cubicles. The facility employs a staff of about 150 people. The inmate population comprises people with very affluent backgrounds as well as those who have more humble beginnings. FCI-Safford also houses numerous high-profile individuals, such as politicians and former law enforcement officers.

Life within the prison walls at FCI-Safford and the prospect of returning to life beyond those walls are constant sources of stress and anxiety for inmates. Those new to the facility face the challenge of acclimating to their new, restrictive environment. Those well into their sentences deal with the stress of trying to maintain relationships with family and friends as well as coping with the social dynamics of the prison's inmate population. Those nearing the end of their sentences must face the intimidating reality of returning to civilian life in a world that may look vastly different from the world they knew before. Additionally, they face the dismal

probability of securing gainful employment and adequate housing as a convicted felon. Without effective intervention, these stressors can lead to despair and hopelessness. The goal of the FCI-Safford prison chaplain is to provide faith-based spiritual intervention to build or restore that hope by helping inmates discover, understand, and develop spiritual fulfillment.

Ministry Context

For the FCI-Safford Law Enforcement Supervisory Chaplain, ministry duties differ significantly from those of civilian clergy. As the title implies, a Law Enforcement Supervisory Chaplain is first and foremost a law enforcement officer. As an employee of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, a division of the Department of Justice, he must have all required safety equipment before entering the facility each day. This includes his stab vest, pepper spray, radio, and keys. Once inside, he must pass through a metal detector, four security doors, and a gate. He then walks another four hundred yards and passes through yet another steel door to reach the chapel.

Over the course of his day, he must adhere to all facility regulations, rules, policies, and procedures. Security is always the top priority, not only for the prisoners, but also for staff and visitors. Correctional officers conduct random shakedowns and searches throughout the facility, including the prison chapel, to ensure that no contraband is ever present. The chaplaincy department reviews inmate photos and profiles monthly or quarterly to become familiar with prisoners who have recently transferred into the facility, and more importantly, to note any who may be a danger to themselves or others. However, regardless of their offense, all inmates are informed upon entering the chapel that it is a safe zone where no prison politics are allowed; the chapel is a place of free worship.

The chaplain serves both the inmates and the facility staff. Psalm 20:2 states, “May He send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you out of Zion.”¹ Likewise, the chaplain listens daily to the issues of all who come, providing counseling and encouragement regardless of their background, race, creed or national origin, or religious affiliation. Facilitating more than sixteen faith groups, the chaplain is required to serve with religious neutrality, respecting all faiths and allowing all inmates equal time and access to the chapel for their gatherings or worship services. At certain times of the day, he stands by the doors of the chapel as a sign to inmates and staff that the chapel is open and that all are welcome to come in for worship, reading, or just relaxing in the house of the living God.

In addition to being adaptable to serve the many faiths within the prison population, the chaplain must also be incredibly inventive. Beyond the daily stress of life within prison walls, the men he serves experience the pressure of family life, such as financial strain, death of loved ones, and their absence from important life events. Some are better equipped to handle it than others, and some are not prepared at all. In the latter situation, he is there to assist. He must be creative and resourceful to devise the appropriate approach for any new problems he may be encounter. With an advanced degree in pastoral care and eight years of experience as an ordained minister, he is well-equipped for providing spiritual guidance. For emotional and psychological counseling, he draws from his nearly three decades of counseling experience, much of which he attained in the correctional setting, and his numerous certifications in areas including crisis intervention, suicide prevention, anger management, and drug rehabilitation.

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New King James Version.

The chaplain is the conduit through which the inmates come to know God. He helps them understand how a strong relationship with God provides the foundation needed to handle any situation in life. The men seek guidance from the chaplain because he provides a sense of hope and peace and shows kindness during great turmoil and chaos. He welcomes them into a warm place of peace and allows them to share their concerns with him. Whenever they enter his office, he instructs them all to say a prayer before speaking, which allows the Holy Spirit to take part in what is going on in their life. He then offers them words of encouragement by reminding the men that no one is beyond redemption and that they can have a better life through a relationship with God. As author and pastor Henry Blackaby states, “God did not create the world and then abandon it to function on its own. He has been actively involved in human affairs throughout history. Because of sin, humanity has been separated from a close relationship God.”² Additionally, the chaplain is there for those moments when the men have questions, doubts or just need guidance. Founder of North Point Ministries, Andy Stanley said, “If you've got questions about faith, the Bible, Jesus, maybe even the existence of God, you need to know we built this place for you. Our goal from the beginning was to create a church unchurched people would love to attend.”³ To that same end, the chaplain is committed to making the chapel a spiritual sanctuary for all who enter.

Due to lack of staffing in the Federal Bureau of Prison system, there was no chaplain at FCI-Safford for nearly three years. During this interval, the chapel and the prison ministry

² Henry Blackaby, Claude V. King, and Richard Blackaby, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 54.

³ Andy Stanley, *Deep and Wide-Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 238.

suffered from lack of oversight and leadership. Inmates did not have access to consistent spiritual counseling. The current chaplain was hired in 2019. In his book, *Crisis Counseling: A Guide for Pastors and Professionals*, Scott Floyd states, “On occasion the minister is facing a new challenge relative to a ministry crisis, and he or she is requesting guidance on how to proceed.”⁴ With no immediate predecessor and little site-specific training, the chaplain encountered many obstacles upon his arrival, such as lack of guidance, lack of acceptance by some staff and inmates, and substandard accommodations for work and worship. The roofing and air conditioner of the chapel needed repairs. Also, there was no cross, baptismal pool, or even basic supplies necessary to run a chapel. To face his “new challenge,” he sought guidance and counsel from ministerial colleagues at other correctional facilities. With their support, he made it his mission to restore the chapel and recreate the welcome environment to which the men had grown accustomed.

The chaplain opened the newly restored chapel by praying over it to cleanse it of all unholy spirits and to make it ready to welcome God’s holy spirit in the temple. With the assistance of several workers that he recruited as prayer warriors, he repeats this process daily. Some may consider this practice an insignificant ritual; however, he is continually consecrating the Lord’s house. Renowned author and New Testament scholar Wayne Meeks once wrote, “In one of Paul’s reminders, the conversion of Corinthian Christians from their former life of vice is summarized thus ‘but you were washed, you were made holy, you were justified in [or, by] the

⁴ Scott C. Floyd, *Crisis Counseling: A Guide for Pastors and Professionals* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2008), 163.

name of our Lord Jesus Christ and in [or, by] the spirit of God.’ (1 Cor. 6:11).”⁵ Just as the Corinthians had to be washed and made holy to fulfil their divine purpose, the chapel must be spiritually cleansed each day. Once completed, the chaplain opens its doors for services and classes.

The chaplain’s primary responsibilities include counseling, providing pastoral care, introducing spiritual fulfillment, and preparing inmates for reentry into society. The inmates’ concerns and thoughts when they are at this point can range from family situations, job placement, writing a resume, finding a place to live, getting a driver’s license, and fear of the unknown. As previously mentioned, some may have been locked up so long that the world no longer resembles the one they once knew. Others may have been incarcerated at such a young age that they have never had the experience or responsibility of navigating life as an adult. During their incarceration, the chaplain encourages the men to take full advantage of the resources and programs available to them, like residential drug treatment, group drug and alcohol recovery programs, and Graduate Equivalency Diploma classes to improve their chances of success upon release. Those who are preparing for release are also encouraged to participate in “Threshold,” a faith-based course, open to all denominations, that prepares the inmates for reentering society. Referring to young offenders, nineteenth century Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon said, “Many children of God who have imbibed these errors in early youth have had to drag along their poor wearied and broken frames for many a day, whereas they might have

⁵ Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. 2nd. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 150.

walked joyfully to heaven if they had known the truth from the beginning.”⁶ Like Spurgeon, the chaplain, through his work with the inmates, began to realize that many of these men were never taught effective life skills, including the importance of having spiritual fulfillment through a relationship with God.

Problem Presented

The problem this project sought to address is the lack hope and self-confidence in inmates at FCI-Safford which significantly impacts their ability to be productive members of their communities within the facility and outside of the facility upon release. As indicated earlier, the Federal Correctional Institution in Safford, Arizona houses about 845 men. The average length of stay for an inmate is 240 months. During that time, the men have access to health, psychological, and drug treatment services, and they are encouraged to take advantage of educational and vocational training opportunities. The facility offers numerous outlets for recreation including intramural sports, fitness equipment, a music room, and a library.

While FCI-Safford provides these channels for mental and physical wellness, the facility is by no means the “country club” cliché of a federal penal institution. Its intended purpose is to confine those convicted of crimes in a controlled, secure environment for a period deemed appropriate by the judicial system. During their incarceration, these men lose their right to make basic daily life decisions like when to wake up, when to eat, and when to go to bed. They lose the right to maintain communication with their families. The family’s ability and willingness to

⁶ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Spurgeon’s Summons Volumes 3-4*, no. 4 (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers), 146.

incur the cost of collect calls limits the inmate's ability to communicate by phone. Likewise, since the men are often in facilities hours away from their communities, they can only receive visits from loved ones if the family is able and willing to incur the cost of travel. At any given time, prison staff can revoke their freedom to move about the facility without notice. Many of the men come into the penal system from dysfunctional, traumatic backgrounds of poverty, abuse, or neglect. The prison experience often leaves an already broken person feeling defeated, bitter, and hopeless.

Approximately 150 men are eligible for release from FCI-Safford in any given year. Though the average civilian might consider going home a celebratory occasion, for many inmates, it can be a tremendously conflicting time of joy, fear, and apprehension. Again, the average length of stay is twenty years. The civilian world changes dramatically over the course of two decades. There are technological and social changes. Children grow older. Loved ones pass away. Once close relationships deteriorate. Prior to incarceration, many of the men had very toxic support systems, if any at all. Part of going home means making the conscious decision to return to that environment and risk making the same mistakes or changing their environment and risking social isolation and abandonment. Some of the men have no home to which they can return.

In addition to adapting to new technology, new surroundings, and new relationships, inmates nearing their release dates must think about how they will survive outside of prison walls. Decisions about when to eat are now coupled with how to acquire food to eat. Deciding when to sleep now entails finding and sustaining a place to lay their head. Becoming a self-sustaining, productive citizen can be a challenge for a person without a criminal record. It can

seem like an insurmountable task for a person now labeled a felon with minimal job skills and resources. Rather than facing the harsh reality that accompanies freedom, some inmates up for release after serving lengthy sentences sabotage themselves by picking a fight or breaking a rule to intentionally extend their sentences. They have no hope.

Recognizing the need to better prepare inmates for success during their incarceration and after their release, FCI-Safford implemented programs to equip these men with as many life skills and tools as possible so that they can more easily assimilate into society upon being released. The facility offers programs such as anger management, vocational skill training, educational opportunity, and even trauma support groups to ensure inmates have the life skills necessary to stay on the right path. One role of the chaplain in a penal institution is to go beyond the technical and soft skills and focus on building hope from the inside out. By helping inmates understand and develop spiritual fulfillment, a chaplain helps ensure that an inmate not only has the capacity to make better life decisions, but also the fortitude and self-assurance to persevere despite the social and self-imposed hurdles they encounter each day.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Doctor of Ministry study was to increase the levels of hope and self-confidence in inmates at the Federal Correctional Institution in Safford, Arizona by helping them develop spiritual fulfillment. For the purpose of this study, spiritual fulfillment is a connection with God through a one-on-one personal relationship with him. Spiritual fulfillment first requires an introduction to God. Friends and family often facilitate this process by inviting an individual to participate in religious traditions and practices. The individual can then begin developing this

divine connection through Bible study, prayer and meditation, spiritual guidance, and counseling. Spiritual fulfillment provides a person with a sense of inner peace, self-love, joy, and happiness. Attaining spiritual fulfillment is an on-going process; as knowledge and understanding of God continues to increase, so does spiritual fulfillment.

Working with the men at FCI-Safford, the chaplain observed how the circumstances they encounter often render them deflated and without hope. Often victims of a lifetime of abuse and neglect, he could see their self-worth is often indiscernible at best. They see their prospects of success outside of prison as bleak. This explained why it is so difficult to convince them to participate in self-improvement programs. When they do participate, it is often half-heartedly. He realized providing technical and soft skills can be enough to create hope and instill confidence in some inmates, but others need something more.

Others require a change that must happen on the inside. He realized that many of these men were never taught effective life skills, including the importance of having spiritual fulfillment through a relationship with God. Through participation in an eight-week program that coupled one-on-one spiritual counseling and faith-based instruction, this study sought to initiate that introduction to God and provide inmates with the tools to cultivate the relationship to develop spiritual fulfillment. The peace and self-assurance they experienced over the course of the program was intended to foster hope and increase their self-confidence. The interviewer used pre- and post-surveys to measure the degree of growth for each participant.

Basic Assumptions

The interviewer assumed he would remain in his role as Law Enforcement Supervisory Chaplain for the Federal Bureau of Prisons at FCI-Safford for the duration of the study, ensuring his proximity and accessibility to the study participants. The chaplain assumed that participants would participate in the study willingly from commencement to completion and answer all questions openly and truthfully to the best of their knowledge. To that end, the interviewer guaranteed their anonymity and assured them that he would not publish any personal information disclosing their identity. He did not anticipate any issues attaining the selected sample size of twelve men because in addition to the potentially beneficial outcomes of the program, he knew the group would likely gain participation points from the prison administration that could potentially shorten their sentences.

Definitions

Longitudinal survey: A research study technique in which participants answer the same set of questions multiple times, over a period of time, to evaluate measurable changes in attitude or behavior, usually based on some source of external influence

Minimum-security facility: a work- and program-oriented federal penal institution with dormitory housing and lower staff-to-inmate ratios, usually surrounded by an external security enclosure (e.g., a fence). The facility may also have mobile patrols charged with protecting the perimeter of the facility twenty-four hours a day.

Hope: the optimistic expectation of desired outcomes

Investigator: for the purpose of this study, the individual who developed, conducted, and reported on the results of this study, used synonymously with “interviewer”

Project subject: Non-identifiable term to reference study participants while protecting their anonymity

Reentry: the transition of an individual back into society following incarceration

Self-confidence/self-worth: an individual’s faith in his/her own abilities, attributes, and discernment

Spiritual fulfillment: connection with God through a one-on-one personal relationship achieved through reading and studying the Bible, prayer, and meditation, and through spiritual guidance and counseling. One can also be introduced to God by family and friends or through religious traditions and practices.

Threshold: a six-month, faith-based program for inmates nearing their release dates that teaches goal setting, decision-making, fiscal responsibility, and personal accountability

Limitations

There were some limitations that impacted the scope of this study. As the sole interviewer, the chaplain limited his pool of potential participants to current inmates at the Federal Correctional Institution in Safford, Arizona. Also, due to time, fiscal, and labor constraints, only twelve inmates comprised the study group. The rigid rules and regulations of the penal institution significantly limited the chaplain’s interaction with the participants. He only met with each participant one hour per week.

The onset of the coronavirus pandemic in early 2020 presented unforeseen limitations in relation to this study including limiting the ability to gather in order to protect everyone's health. In order to adhere to BOP protocol, the inmates were on full lockdown and required to remain in their respective units until such time as there was no danger of spreading the virus. The study could not be conducted during this time. Additionally, it was anticipated that two of the participants could have been relocated to another facility should they need care that could not have been provided for them at FCI-Safford. If that were the case, the study would have continued with the remaining participants. However, that situation did not occur.

Delimitations

The interviewer only solicited participation from men in FCI-Safford who, by their own admission, did not have a spiritual relationship with God. To ensure completion of the program, all participants had projected release dates of at least eight weeks after the commencement of the program. However, the study did not exclude men based on their level of education. All survey and interview questions were carefully worded to accommodate participants with limited literacy skills.

While the study references the topic of reentry as a stressor for inmates nearing their release date, the study focused on the level of hope and self-confidence in inmates only during incarceration. The interviewer limited the length of the study to eight weeks to comply with the guidelines and deadlines of the Liberty University Doctor of Ministry program. The study consisted of one-on-one interviews and personal sessions with the participants. Since the study

entailed qualitative research methods, the types of questions and the number of questions asked of the participants limited the amount and the quality of data collected.

Thesis Statement

While soft skills and technical skills can prove beneficial to preparing inmates for reentry to society, those skills do not address the emotional and psychological issues that render the inmates deficient of hope and self-confidence. FCI-Safford provides mental health services to inmates; however, the prison chaplain has come to believe that more spiritual intervention is required to restore hope and self-worth. Through training and one-on-one counseling with the chaplain, the stakeholders can come to understand and develop spiritual fulfillment, thereby increasing their level of hope and self-confidence and improving their probability of success for the remainder of their incarceration and even after their release.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

Due to a multitude of external and internal factors, the inmates at FCI-Safford suffer from a lack hope and self-confidence. This deficiency significantly impacts their ability to be productive members of their communities within the facility and outside of the facility upon release. As the sole interviewer for this study, the chaplain at FCI-Safford contends that by developing spiritual fulfillment through God, inmates can experience increased hope and self-confidence. Psalm 51:10-12 states, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.” The objective of this study was to enable these men to deal with life’s challenges and crises more effectively by providing them with the tools necessary to establish a personal relationship with God, renew their spirit and restore their joy.

Literature Review

This study serves as a creative biblical guide for men who could benefit from a spiritual foundation for their lives. There are numerous religious leaders and educators who have studied and produced scholarly sources advocating the importance of staying focused on and being connected to God through Jesus Christ, thereby supporting the interviewer’s thesis. These works cover three key theological components that impact the pursuit of spiritual fulfillment as identified by the problem statement: attractional churches, overcoming obstacles and barriers, and spiritual transformation.

Attractional Churches

The attractional church model is focused more on self-improvement or improving one's life, usually through acquiring material things or changing one's station in life rather than by glorifying and praising God. This histrionic approach, which seems to be increasingly popular in churches today, tends to overshadow the ability to deliver the word of God and to produce disciples, which is the primary mission of the church. In his book, *Real-life Discipleship*, Jim Putman addresses how one becomes a disciple, stating, "Spiritual growth requires both authenticity and accountability. When people are transparent about their struggles, they need to be held accountable to live out the changes Jesus wants to make in their lives."⁷ Henry Blackaby and his co-authors address how to gain a deep knowledge of God and the importance of developing a strong relationship with Him, which is the foundational way to have spiritual fulfillment.

Overcoming Obstacles and Barriers

Kelly, Floyd, Titus, and Blackaby, as well as numerous other authors, offer useful insights on how to apply God's teachings when dealing with and eventually overcoming any kind of crisis, including situational, personal, or spiritual crises. Kelly states, "The Bible is full of interesting people. Some of them walked with God and some of them walked away from God, and most of them did a little bit of both. It is fascinating to watch the people in the Bible making decisions. So many decisions are based on fear and so few are based on faith."⁸ Providing these men with ways to cope with any crisis by providing them with a spiritual foundation will enable them to better deal with those situations.

⁷ Jim Putman, *Real-life Discipleship* (Carol Stream: NavPress, 2010), 56.

⁸ Matthew Kelly, *Resisting Happiness* (Erlanger: Beason Press, 2016), 170.

As a convicted felon who served over twenty years in a federal prison, Pastor David Hairabedian proved to be an integral resource for this study because his personal life story parallels that of the men at FCI-Safford. While he professed God as his personal savior early in life, he still made some grievous missteps, yet he was still able to redeem himself through his strong faith in God.⁹ He founded Virtual Church Media as well as the Heart of America Prison Ministries, which focuses on God’s redemption for former inmates. Hairabedian’s book, *Jet Ride to Hell: Journey to Freedom*, presents his life story, including his redemption, in a compelling and relatable way that resonated deeply with the inmates at FCI-Safford. His philosophy is comparable to that of Jim Petersen, whose ministry is about treating people with respect. Petersen said, “No body of believers can fulfill God’s purpose for them if they live in isolation from the world.”¹⁰

Much like the ministry work of Hairabedian and Petersen, the Threshold ministry program is about creating opportunities for redemption. The faith-based program developed for correctional institutions is structured to allow inmates from all walks of life to learn about the spiritual man within them. It offers them the opportunity to improve critical life areas within the context of their personal faith or value system. During the six-month program, the men learn social and communication skills, financial literacy, how to be better men and fathers, how to treat others and themselves with respect and, most importantly, spirituality and how God intervenes in their lives. These authors also build upon the premise that God often speaks to an individual through a common thread of a family member or friend to convey His message and that it is only

⁹ David C. Hairabedian, *Jet Ride to Hell: Journey to Freedom* (Carol Stream: Virtual Church Publisher, 2018).

¹⁰ Jim Petersen, *Church without Walls Moving beyond Traditional Boundaries* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1992), 59.

during a crisis that man willingly listens to what God has to say and to receive His grace. It is the chaplain's mission to attract the men to the chapel to teach them about receiving God's spiritual gifts.

Two authors, Francis Chan, and Jared Wilson, speak to a couple of the central themes: attractional churches and the types of life crises. The similarity between these two authors is that they understand that people must lean on God for things to happen in a way of completion. Wilson said, "The typical application message tends to over-emphasize our good works while a good proclamation message will emphasize God's finished work."¹¹ In other words, God is sovereign in His ways, and He will resolve any crisis at hand. Each of these authors offers advice on the Christian walk that is practical and relatable.

Spiritual Transformation

Henry and Richard Blackaby and Scott Floyd each discuss viewpoints related to becoming a new creature in Christ through acquiring a deep knowledge and understanding of God and His influence over your life. Each uses the metaphor of death to explain the premise of becoming a new creature in Christ and its importance in our lives and in the journey of knowing God.¹²

Several of the selected resources address attractional churches, but Andy Stanley and John Fenn have the strongest viewpoints on this theme. Both Stanley and Fenn speak about the importance of not merely trying to fill the church for worship service but wanting to reach people on a deeper level. This is a similar issue noticed in the men at FCI-Safford. Some of the inmates come to the chapel just to get away, while others at times are more focused on what the chaplain

¹¹ Jared C. Wilson, *The Prodigal Church: A Gentle Manifesto Against the Status Quo* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 82.

¹² Blackaby, King, and Blackaby, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God*.

is wearing or what he will have for lunch rather than participating in the service to receive the word of God. Stanley said, “As I am constantly reminding our leaders, the sermon begins in the parking lot. By the time I stand up to deliver the message, everybody in our audience has already received a dozen or more messages. Many have already made up their minds as to whether they will come back the following week.”¹³ Both authors tend to speak in a direct and straightforward tone and do not “sugar coat” the issue which is an approach that works best when dealing with this particular congregation. Fenn addresses this by stating, “The example of Jesus teaching, preaching, and healing while living with his disciples in a sense of community is the pattern for today. The Jethro method is a relationship built around work, and then everyone goes home. Jesus ‘example is relationships walking through life together, perceiving the grace in each other and ministering (serving) the same to each other.’¹⁴

Titus and Bell have two truly opposite views about being renewed in Christ as well as views on evangelism. Bell focuses on one problem caused by the disconnection that the congregation may deal with when the evangelist is focused more on the love of money rather than preaching the gospel and promoting the love of God. Titus on the other hand, wants people to see that they can transform their lives through God and that God wants to see them through his Son, Jesus who makes believers renewed. Titus tells us, “When you condemn or belittle yourself, consider that God knew you before time began and made you in his image. What happens when you attack yourself? If you tear yourself down, you are directly challenging God’s opinion of you. If God thinks you’re spectacular and you think you’re inferior, you have no congruency

¹³ Stanley, *Deep and Wide-Creating Churches Unchurched People Love to Attend*, 157.

¹⁴ John Fenn, *Leaving the Church to Find God. Moving from Spiritual Dissatisfaction to Spiritual Fulfillment* (Indianapolis: Dog Ear Publishing, 2007), 144.

with God.”¹⁵ This particular point is crucial since it is important for the men to have the spiritual foundation through a personal relationship with God that will enable them to deal with the challenges that one faces throughout life.

Nineteenth century author, Charles Haddon Spurgeon agrees with C.S. Lewis of the early to mid-20th century, yet both are still relevant today when they speak of attractional churches and man’s tendency to think about themselves more than God, something man has done throughout the centuries. The reason for selecting these authors is that they are God fearing men who have also experienced life changing events and know first-hand that God’s divine intervention when facing a crisis is key to receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. Lewis said, “It is possible that such creatures exist aware of God as themselves, but of no fellow-creatures. If so, their freedom is simply that of making a single naked choice - of loving God more than the self or the self more than God.”¹⁶ Spurgeon teaches that, “We are “new creatures in Christ Jesus”. When God looks upon us with the eye of love, in conversion and regeneration, he makes us as opposite from what we were before as light is from darkness, as even heaven is from hell. God changes man,”¹⁷ Their thoughts and ideas on being renewed in Christ remain important and will be useful in defending this thesis.

Anyone who is familiar with the prison system knows that a prison is actually a “city within a city,” and each has its own set of rules and politics, leaders, and chiefs of the different gangs and organizations, and divisions along racial, ethnic, and religious affiliations amongst other things. It is because of these different dynamics that it is important to focus on men in

¹⁵ Larry Titus, *The Telios Man: Your Ultimate Identity* (Oviedo: Higher Life Development Services, Inc., 2010), 14-15.

¹⁶ C.S. Lewis, *The Complete C.S. Lewis Signature Classics* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 2002), 380.

¹⁷ Spurgeon, *Spurgeon’s Summons Volumes 3-4*, no. 4 (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers), 120.

prison as the subject of this thesis. However, once these men cross the threshold of the chapel all those affiliations stop being important, and everyone is equal. They discover the answers they have been seeking in life through Christ, which in turn allows them to find fulfillment with the love of God. “When the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1).

This study provided inmates valuable resources needed to accomplish the basic goals of life. These men have faced a situational crisis, personal crisis, and spiritual crisis while being incarcerated and in that order was the way in which Christ was able to introduce himself. Floyd address types of crises as well, saying, “Of the many types of crisis, James and Gilliland identify several, including developmental, situational, and existential crises. Individuals may experience these as well as interpersonal and spiritual crises.”¹⁸ They had to go through these tribulations in order to find Christ or get back to Him. Putman also addressed this when he wrote, “However, many people hear the gospel, believe it, and then are left to sort through the Christian life on their own. The result? Spiritually immature people representing Jesus to the world.”¹⁹

Theological Foundation

The men at FCI-Safford suffer from hopelessness and low self-esteem due to lack of spiritual fulfillment through God. This causes them to live with inner pain, often leading to a feeling of disconnection from others. Spiritual fulfillment comes from connecting with God through a one-on-one relationship. Knowledge of God and a connection with Him are achieved through reading and studying the Bible as well as through prayer, meditation, spiritual guidance,

¹⁸ Floyd, *Crisis Counseling: A Guide for Pastors and Professionals*, 26.

¹⁹ Putman, *Real-life Discipleship*, 89.

and counseling. As mentioned earlier, observing religious and spiritual traditions and practices with family, friends, and others in the community provide another way to be introduced to God. Jesus explains in John 16:24, “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” Thus, spiritual fulfillment provides inner peace, self-love, joy, and contentment. It is commonly believed that happiness is a fleeting emotion based on external forces—things that are happening around you—and is a concept based on experiences and possibly environment. Joy, on the other hand, is a state of mind based on internal factors and often a product of one’s relationship with God. A godly relationship rooted in consistent prayer in accordance with God’s instructions, can generally result in a joy-filled life. Joy enables people to discover a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives and forms a basis for good moral character.²⁰ Attaining spiritual fulfillment is an on-going process, as knowledge and understanding of God’s grace increases so does spiritual fulfillment.

In general, men are not encouraged to express their innermost feelings from a young age which often causes them to continue to mask their true feelings throughout their lives. Those who may suffer from a lack of spiritual fulfillment may display bad behavior, poor judgment, lack of personal connection with family and friends and may generally feel isolated from others. Prison, which have its own culture, rules and unofficial governance system that includes a monetary system and disciplinary rules may cause those who are incarcerated to feel that much more isolated than normal. The story of the one lost sheep in Luke 15:4-7 illustrates one who suffers from emotional isolation which is just as painful and devastating as being physically separated from your flock or your family and community. The men may feel lost and alone but

²⁰ Chuck Smith, "Fullness of Joy," Blue Letter Bible, https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/smith_chuck/SermonNotes_Jhn/Jhn_100.cfm?a=1013024.

the chaplain, who acts as the shepherd, is there to guide them and let them know they are not alone.

Putman addresses another important that point, “Spiritual infants are characterized by their ignorance, confusion, and dependence. They have accepted Jesus as savior and Lord, but they still don’t know much about what it means to be a Christian. They are in the honeymoon stage of their walk with God.”²¹ In his first epistle, John states, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9) That lost sheep, once found, has but to simply ask God for forgiveness and He will grant it. God is the only one who can judge His people, but He will cleanse them of their sins and will forgive them. Asking for forgiveness is the first step to restoration and to becoming a new create in Christ. Therefore, the inmates must be man enough to make themselves vulnerable by sharing their innermost feelings and issues to receive the grace of God’s mercy and forgiveness. God wants his children to know His love and to enjoy the fruits or gifts that he has provided for them. “And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:24-25) Kelly states, “My spiritual awakening ignited my love of learning. I suddenly went from being a kid who almost never finished an assigned book in school to being one who was not only reading everything for school but also reading great spiritual books on the side.”²²

Knowing and loving God allows one to experience a sense of completeness, connecting to others easier, and to have the ability to deal more easily with the ups and down of life. This is done by denying the flesh daily to overcome the affections and lust within one’s heart to walk

²¹ Putman, *Real-life Discipleship*, 89.

²² Kelly, *Resisting Happiness*, 72.

with Jesus. Jim Putman's philosophy and strategy for developing disciples based on coaching is demonstrated through his "5-stages of a disciple's growth" and parallels the theological perspective of this study which is also based on spiritual and pastoral counseling and coaching. Putman also said, "Jesus said in Matthew 4:19 that He would make us into something altogether different-that we would experience change at the heart and hands level too."²³ To become more Christlike, people must follow the examples of Peter, James, and John by taking up their burdens or crosses and following Jesus to achieve spiritual growth and fulfillment. Doing so enables them to develop a godly perspective on life that will allow them to deal with the unique situations and crises that they face. It will also help them find a connection with something other than themselves.²⁴

Theoretical Foundation

Researchers, psychologists, and sociologists have extensively studied the mental and emotional well-being of prison inmates. These scholars have developed numerous programs, both secular and faith-based, to address the common themes of hopelessness and diminished self-confidence among the incarcerated individuals. A significant portion of this established research supports the FCI-Safford chaplain's contention that by developing a deeper relationship with God, inmates experience spiritual fulfillment which provides meaning, purpose, and an improved outlook on life. The studies further support the premise that experiencing such spiritual fulfillment is key to addressing the inmates' hopelessness and lack of self-confidence.

²³ Putman, *Real-life Discipleship*, 48.

²⁴ David Guzik, "The Joy of Finding the Lost," Blue Letter Bible, https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Luk/Luk-15.cfm?a=988003.

Others prison chaplains in the field of Clinical Care and Pastoral Counseling, through research and practice, agree that providing inmates with spiritual and religious counseling will address the types of social and behavioral issues that often plague them. For instance, Dr. Emily Brault asserts that actively engaging with the inmates in a personally directed manner allows them to do the necessary soul searching and character self-analysis necessary to experience the transformation required to achieve spiritual growth.²⁵

Much like Brault's study and practice on prison ministry, Jim Putman places importance on the relational experience of becoming a disciple. Putman, as founder and senior pastor of Real Life Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho, tells how to make disciples who will become church leaders. While this project is focused on disciples who will become leaders for their families and in their communities, the concept is equally applicable in the correctional setting. Putman's philosophy is that both the teacher and the student must be fully transparent with each other throughout the process for the disciple to gain the benefit of the teacher's experience and knowledge. The leader, or interviewer in this case, needs to share his experiences and knowledge openly and honestly while being supportive of and non-judgmental towards the stakeholders in the study, pushing them to do the work.²⁶

Author and theologian, John Fenn's philosophy outlined in *Leaving the Church to find God: Moving from Spiritual Dissatisfaction to Spiritual Fulfillment* strongly supports the interviewer's theory on the importance of spiritual fulfillment. Fenn writes about leaving the traditional church and its customs that no longer fulfill people to establish a closer relationship with God. In one passage he says, "Tired of messages about prosperity and faith on the one hand

²⁵ Emily R. Brault, "Pastoral Care and Counseling in Prison: What Works?" *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling* 68 (2014): 1 - 10.

²⁶ Putman, *Real-life Discipleship*, 48.

or the call for deliverance or salvation on the other; I needed practical messages on how to become more mature as a disciple of Jesus.”²⁷ That message resonates with non-traditional ministries that seek to reach the lost, forgotten, and disenfranchised such as those in the prison setting.

Dr. Tony Evans’ Kingdom Man Bible Study series is a faith-based curriculum currently implemented in correctional facilities throughout the United States. The Kingdom Man Series teaches the concept of biblical manhood, enabling men to understand the authority, position, and placement that God has given them in life.²⁸ Dr. Evans starts with the doctrine that God created man in his image, but Evans goes a step further by asserting that being made in God’s image compels men to emulate God in word and deed, be a good steward over all the things that God has given his people, and be a leader by showing others how to live a godly life. The series teaches men to become godly men and to advance God’s kingdom but stresses to do so, one must also become spiritually mature.

A second faith-based program chaplains and prison administrators in the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP) employ is the Threshold ministry. Developed in 2009, Threshold is a six-month program that prepares federal inmates for reentry into society by equipping them with life skills, such as exploring beliefs and improving relationships, including their relationship with God. While Threshold was primarily developed to help men assimilate back into society, its teachings and philosophy are relevant to this study, particularly its focus on providing spiritual growth to the individual.²⁹ This thesis project uses some of the spiritual concepts introduced in

²⁷ Fenn, *Leaving the Church to Find God. Moving from Spiritual Dissatisfaction to Spiritual Fulfillment*, 2.

²⁸ Tony Evans, *Kingdom Man: Every Man’s Destiny, Every Woman’s Dream* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 2012).

²⁹ *The Threshold Program*, The Change Companies, 2007.

Threshold, however, where Threshold is geared towards group settings, this project's interviewer believes a more individualized approach would produce better results. Also, Threshold focuses on preparing men for life after release. This study aims to increase hope and self-confidence in all inmates at FCI Safford, whether they face six more months, six more years, or a lifetime within prison walls.

Chapter 3

Methodology

As previously stated, this study sought to address the hopelessness and low self-confidence in the men at FCI-Safford by creating or enhancing in them a sense of spiritual fulfillment. Again, for the purpose of this study, the interviewer defines spiritual fulfillment as a connection with God through a one-on-one personal relationship. The immediate aim of this study was to equip the men with the tools necessary to establish that personal relationship with God and develop the level of hope and self-confidence needed to deal with life's challenges and crises. However, the long-term, possibly more essential objective was to improve their quality of life, thereby allowing them to better assimilate to their social surroundings and to establish closer personal connections with their family and loved ones, inside prison walls and beyond.

The facility chaplain is uniquely positioned to address this issue. While serving at FCI-Safford, he has attained in-depth knowledge of the inmates' traits and behaviors and is familiar with the issues that this thesis addresses. In addition to his federal duties as staff and inmate chaplain, he is also a correctional counselor, religious services counselor, mentor coordinator and a member of the crisis support team. He is an expert in the field of law enforcement with thirty years of advanced training and experience at the local, state, and federal levels. His twenty-four years of experience in behavioral health and counseling coupled with his advanced degree in Communications and Training make him well-suited in evaluating and meeting the mental and emotional needs of the inmates at his facility. Having earned both a Master in Pastoral Care and a Master of Divinity, he is

also well-qualified in assessing and serving their spiritual needs, including the need for spiritual fulfillment.

As the study's sole investigator, the chaplain determined that the most effective method of developing spiritual fulfillment and bringing about any change in the levels of hope and self-assurance in the men at FCI-Safford was to implement a direct intervention comprising personal counseling and religious guidance. He devised a plan centered around weekly, one-on-one, private interview sessions with randomly selected project subjects (PS) over the course of eight weeks. He ascertained this period of data collection would be sufficient time for him to interact with the participants and observe any significant, measurable changes or patterns in their individual sense of faith-based traits, like self-love, self-worth, honesty, and service.

Intervention Design

The study's intervention design consists of three parts: Project Subject Solicitation, Data Collection, and Data Analysis.

Project Subject Solicitation

IRB Approval

Prior to initiating contact with potential participants and before collecting any personal data, the interviewer procured all required approvals. After obtaining the consent of his appointed thesis mentor, the investigator followed the Liberty University - Rawling School of Divinity guidelines to determine if the project required approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB). The review board ensures proper handling of all personal information gathered during a study, as well as any information that could identify participants or that otherwise should be considered confidential.

The IRB application process included completing the mandatory training course through the Collaborative Institutional Training. He also made sure to submit all draft copies of the study instruments with the IRB application, including the participant assessment questionnaire and any other related tools. Additionally, he provided details regarding how he planned to take and maintain any program notes and data during the study. To facilitate the evaluation process, the investigator responded to all requests for additional information and answered all questions from the review board accurately and efficiently. Upon reviewing the investigator's application, the IRB classified this project as a quality improvement study specific to a particular location that would not be used in other facilities. Based on that classification, the board determined the project did not require IRB approval.

Recruitment & Selection

After receiving the IRB's determination, the investigator initiated his plan to solicit inmates at FCI-Safford to participate in the study. He solicited and selected stakeholders from the general population of inmates at FCI-Safford to participate in this study. As mentioned in the Limitations section of this thesis, due to time and resource constraints, the goal was to enlist a maximum of twelve participants, or project subjects. He began the process observing the men as they were passing by the chapel, either on their way to the cell house or to the recreation yard. He paid particular notice to men he had not seen participate in any of the religious services held in the chapel.

The chaplain sought out inmates who seemed devoid of hope. He approached men who appeared to have a look of longing and loss and who seemed to keep away from the other inmates and isolated themselves. He was familiar with the challenges many of them were facing. Some were experiencing ostracism. Their fellow inmates treated them as social outcasts due to the nature of

their crimes or because of their sexual orientation. Others were suffering from fear and despair at the thought of facing decades behind bars. The reality of being separated from family and loved ones for that length of time sets in, and when coupled with the shame that their incarceration will bring on their loved ones, it is often too much for many of these men to deal with.

Some of the men actually experience abandonment by family and friends during their incarceration. Thus, just being in prison can lead to a lack of self-worth and feelings of despair. Practitioners, scholars, and psychologists have studied the affect that prison can have on one's psychological makeup, demeanor, and the way they present themselves to the world. Prisoners have been known to put on a "mask" to hide their fear and to instead portray a tough hypermasculine persona as a form of protection from the violent environment that they find themselves in. Prison is a difficult environment to become accustomed to due to its culture, value system, and rules established by the inmates themselves. Having to navigate one's way through such a system merely to survive makes for a difficult adjustment and exerts certain "psychological costs" on most incarcerated people, some of whom are more vulnerable to the ill effects of prison than others.³⁰

In determining the best candidates for his study, the interviewer consulted the facility's acting chief psychologist, who also coordinated the drug treatment program, to obtain his professional opinion of the issues that he observed the inmates facing during their incarceration. The psychologist estimated at least 75% of the men lack spiritual satisfaction. He stated the men lack vision, have no sense of self-worth, and have no belief in their own potential, often verbalizing their inability to accomplish anything meaningful. Some have no moral compass, which manifests itself in displays of violent, anti-social behavior. Because these inmates do not feel accountable for their

³⁰ Haney, Craig. "The Psychological Impact of Incarceration: Implications for Post-Prison Adjustment." *"From Prison to Home" Conference*. 2002. 77.

own actions, they play the victim role. Being in prison requires one to either conform or transform, but that transformation is not always positive.

The interviewer later discussed the inmate's demeanor and emotional conditions with the new chief psychologist to gain relevant insight for this study. The new department head gave a similar assessment as his predecessor and concurred that these men do suffer from low self-esteem and lack self-worth. He stated the men tell him that they do not feel that they should put forth any effort to improve themselves because they see themselves as being bad people who won't ever amount to anything. He said they deliberately fail at things simply to prove that they are worthless. His theory is that this behavior stems from the family dynamics of the parents working long hours and not being in the home which makes the child feel unloved. At times, the child may misbehave in order to get the parents attention but is left feeling hurt and detached when the father reprimands or harshly punishes the child. Furthermore, the child is confused and feels unloved when the mother does not intervene and stop the punishment. He continues to misbehave to get the parents' attention, which continues the cycle of punishment. Because no one explains to the child that behaving badly does not automatically make him a bad person, the child may in fact begin to believe they are bad and act accordingly.

After gleaning insight from his colleagues, the chaplain began to approach men he believed to be suitable candidates one-by-one. He shared with them the details of the project and offered them the opportunity to participate. All communication was verbal, and the chaplain explained the project in a simple and straightforward manner, inviting them to get to know his friend, God. He explained to them that the project could potentially improve their attitude and give them better coping mechanisms to face their new life situation. He also shared with them how being spiritually fulfilled and having a relationship with God could restore their sense of purpose and provide a

feeling of inner peace, a sense of completion and self-worth, and allow them to abide in the love of God. The chaplain concluded by telling the potential participants that spiritual fulfillment will not only improve an individual's relationship with himself but with others as well.

He approached a total of twenty men. Some declined, saying they had other things to do but offered little or no additional reasons for not wanting to participate. Those who expressed interest then had to undergo a screening process to determine their eligibility to participate in the study. In addition to the fact that all participants were current inmates at FCI-Safford, the men had to be considered by the facility to be in good disciplinary status. As noted in the Delimitations section of this thesis, the interviewer sought out only individuals who, by their own admission, did not have a spiritual relationship with God. Also, to ensure completion of the program, all participants had to have a projected release dates of at least eight weeks after the commencement of the program. Furthermore, because the facility does not house women, the study group comprised only male participants.

The chaplain presented a formal recruitment letter to those who showed interest in the project, agreed to participate, and met the eligibility requirements. He had them read the letter in his presence, taking time to answer any questions they had. He then had each man read the consent form. Again, he addressed their questions and concerns. Once he answered all questions to the men's satisfaction, each man completed the consent form by both printing and signing his name, as well as the specifying the date of completion.

Project Subject Preparation

Once the investigator met his goal of twelve suitable, eligible project subjects, he assigned each individual a subject identifier number or PS number (PS1, PS2, PS3, etc.) to maintain their anonymity throughout the project. The individuals selected were from diverse ethnic backgrounds

and ranged in age from 39 years to 71 years. He reminded the subjects of his open-door policy and encouraged them to schedule time to meet with him if they wanted additional information about the study before it commenced, as well as if they had questions or problems during the study. Upon agreeing to participate in the study, the participants signed a non-disclosure agreement to ensure their privacy. He also presented them with a Bible in their choice of English or Spanish and offered special accommodations to those who self-identified as having limited literacy capabilities.

Because he conducted the study at FCI-Safford, there was no need to secure outside resources or locations. His daily work schedule allowed plenty of time for him to conduct the required individualized sessions with the twelve participants. To compensate for unexpected delays or interruptions that interfered with his meetings with the study participants, he adjusted his work schedule to make up missed sessions by rescheduling them later in the current week or sometime the following week, whichever was most appropriate. Since the chaplain was the sole interviewer, there were no staffing costs. Additionally, the facility prohibited any financial compensation to inmates at FCI Safford for their participation in the study. Thus, the interviewer did not solicit funding, as he incurred no significant expenses in conducting the study.

Data Collection

Project Subject Materials

Once he identified the study group, the interviewer was ready to initiate the eight-week data collection phase. In his initial meeting with the subjects, he presented them each with a New International Version (NIV) Bible for use during the study. He allowed them to keep the Bibles at the conclusion of the study. He also gave the men a personalized folder containing all the materials required for successful completion of the program. Each folder included the following items:

- Project Subject Recruitment Letter
- Project Subject Consent Form

- Pre-program Survey
- Post-program Survey
- Weekly Questionnaire
- List of weekly Bible verses

In addition to individualized counseling, the chaplain chose to incorporate videos featuring Pastor Tony Evans that focused on spiritual warfare and/or spiritual growth. The pastor's philosophy involves advancing the kingdom of God and building disciples who have a strong, everlasting relationship with God and who would be willing to put God above anything else.³¹ This study project sought to instill this type of transformation in the project subjects.

Data Integrity, Confidentiality & Security

The investigator thoroughly considered all ethical matters in designing this intervention. He did not share any of the collected data or use it beyond the scope of its intended purpose. All study subjects participated and disclosed their personal information willingly, and they received no compensation for doing so. Though FCI-Safford protocols require the chaplain to disclose any information that could impact the immediate safety of others, as well as any information that would present immediate danger or harm to the subjects or others, fortunately, no occasion arose that would have compelled him to share such information.

He made sure to safeguard the integrity of all collected data. Every project subject received the same study materials. While he offered both English and Spanish versions of the Bible, all subjects opted for the English version and all received the same translation. By using structured interview questions, he made sure that each participant had a nearly identical experience. Every subject completed the same surveys with closed-ended, multiple choice questions to facilitate

³¹ Evans, *Kingdom Man: Every Man's Destiny, Every Woman's Dream*.

scoring. He used a uniform format for each participant session and scheduled the same amount of time with each subject. He also used the same weekly lesson for each participant session.

Study subjects maintained personal journals to document their thoughts, but they did not share the journals with the investigator. He kept his own journal of notes and observations. At the end of each session, he shared his notes with the participant to confirm the accuracy and completeness of their responses. Both the chaplain and the inmate signed the notes each week. In addition to ensuring accuracy, the signature on the notes served as proof of weekly participation. Another federal official, the religious services assistant, served as a witness to this weekly certification process. However, the assistant merely witnessed the signatures and did not have access to the actual session notes or journals.

Subject confidentiality was a priority. Conducting one-on-one sessions and spacing the sessions at least a half-hour apart ensured the participants never encountered one another. As an added measure, the chaplain instructed the subjects to enter his office from an outside walkway through the north entrance of the chapel. He then had them leave through a separate door that took them through the sanctuary to another exit leading outside. He did not record any of the participant sessions and took no pictures of the subjects. He also assigned the participants subject identifiers and refrained from using any identifying information in his notes or in this document.

The investigator took similar steps to guarantee data security. Throughout the study, he kept all notes and collected data in a locked file cabinet located in his office. No one had a key to the cabinet but him. He also made sure to lock his office anytime he left. He kept his appointment calendar, his notes, the subject recruitment and consent forms, and the subject surveys in the locked cabinet.

Project Subject Engagement

The interviewer conducted weekly, one-hour, pastoral counseling sessions with each subject. He dedicated three days every week to meeting with the men, seeing four participants per day. Based on the interviewer's experience as a counselor and a chaplain, he felt meeting with the subjects privately would be more productive than meeting with them as a group. He thought the men were more likely to answer openly and honestly in a one-on-one setting than among their peers. Additionally, because a person's relationship with God is a unique experience, he determined group sessions would be counterproductive.

The purpose of the sessions was two-fold. Firstly, they provided an opportunity to introduce the subjects to or better acquaint them with God and assist them in developing their spiritual fulfillment. Secondly, they provided an opportunity for the interviewer to collect data in the form of written surveys, oral interview questions and personal observations.

Initial Assessment

In his first meeting with each project subject, the chaplain conducted an initial two-part assessment. The first portion of the assessment entailed a structured interview to determine some of the issues and problems that they may have been experiencing. The second portion required the men to complete a survey designed to gauge their current levels of hope and self-confidence. The interviewer developed the survey for participants to complete at the beginning of the program and again at the conclusion of the program. He enlisted the aid of a colleague who has successfully completed the Doctor of Ministry program to evaluate the survey prior to distribution. The intent was to compare the pre- and post-survey results to evaluate the change in the men's level of hope and self-confidence.

Weekly Lessons

The interviewer created weekly lesson plans for each session with the participants. The plans included a weekly inspirational scripture, a counseling session in which the participants answer the same eight questions each week, and for most weeks, a weekly video from the Tony Evans “Kingdom Man” series. Several of the lessons came from the parables of Jesus found in the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The parables are familiar to most people, which makes them easily understood and relatable. Other lessons came from Psalms and Proverbs to help subjects obtain biblical wisdom and understanding. All the passages reinforce the importance of the presence of God and the belief in Him. The lessons were intended to develop or improve the participant’s level of spiritual fulfillment.

- Week One
 - Initial assessment
 - Inspirational scripture: Matthew 28:20
This scripture introduces the participants to GOD and teaches them that He is always with them. This scripture supports the benefits of believing in God. Meditate on why anyone would deny a God that will always be with them, for all time.
 - Discussion
 - Weekly questionnaire
- Week Two
 - Inspirational scripture: Proverbs 4:20-22
This verse provides the lesson that God wants His people to listen to Him and not to turn away; He wants them to keep Him in their hearts and always remember that God is always with them.
 - Kingdom Man Video 1: Wanted: Kingdom Men (24 minutes)
 - *This lesson sets the tone for the philosophy and principle teachings from the Kingdom Man series; God is looking for men to be the way in which He created Adam, the ultimate man. As God defines a man, not as man defines a man. This first lesson teaches that God has a kingdom, and he has a book that rules the kingdom, and a kingdom man must represent God by His book, the Bible. When there is no kingdom man in the house, the family, the community there will be conflict and chaos.*
 - Discussion
 - Weekly questionnaire

- Week Three
 - Inspirational scripture: 1 Peter 5:6-7
This scripture reminds subjects to humble themselves to God that he might lift them up and support them. He is teaching that He cares for his children, and they should not give into their anxieties and fears, but instead, rely on the Lord, who will always take care of them. Believers reverence God and should look to Him for help.
 - Kingdom Man Video 2: Greatness is Your Destiny (26 minutes)
The lesson here is that being a Kingdom Man carries authority and we cannot allow the enemy to come into your “house” and to take what God has ordained for you. God will teach you to trust Him by having you go through certain trials in order to build that trust in Him. And, that God wants you to achieve the reason for which you were created, which is greatness. God will not only transform you into the man He created you to be but wants you to maximize your influence in order to create other Kingdom men.
 - Discussion
 - Weekly questionnaire
- Week Four
 - Inspirational scripture: John 15:7
The lesson from this verse is that subjects should abide in the Lord and to let His word abide in them. If they ask anything of God, and if they believe, anything that they ask of Him will be granted. This is important because God wants his followers to know that they can rely upon Him for all their needs and that they should not place their faith in man.
 - Kingdom Man Video 3: Claiming Your Territory (27 minutes)
The lesson is important because it teaches that God supports you when you stand with Him, and that He will deliver your blessings when you are ready to handle them. The men learned that God has already provided you with what you need. He is waiting on you to take action so that he can give us the blessings that He has for us. When you submit yourself to the will of God, He will provide for you. An important lesson that the men learned this week was that a Kingdom Man does nothing without first seeking guidance from God through studying the Bible.
 - Weekly questionnaire
- Week Five
 - Inspirational scripture: John 3:16
The beloved verse teaches that God made the ultimate sacrifice to prove His love for His children by giving His only begotten Son, and that those who believe in Him will not die in spirit.
 - Kingdom Man Video 4: The Life of a Kingdom Man (27 minutes)
The lesson this week stresses the importance that man should be in alignment with God in all that he does. Man’s greatest challenge is that he wants to be “of God” but not “in God”, meaning that he is out of alignment with God by trying

to either walk in front of or behind God and not alongside God as God wants you to do. When you know God's will and His way you are walking in alignment with Him and, you will be able to see and receives the blessings He has for you.

- Discussion
- Weekly questionnaire
- Week Six
 - Inspirational scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6
This scripture shows that God will not let His children down and will not leave nor forsake those who trust in Him and follow His teachings.
 - Kingdom Man Video 5: The Home of a Kingdom Man (28 minutes)
This week's lesson reinforces what is learned in week four; spiritual change takes place as a kingdom man gains an understanding of and learns how to use the kingdom principles. It is the process of sanctification, or setting yourself apart from the world, leaving this world behind to become a part of Jesus Christ. While in prison you have nothing but time to work on yourself. There is time to work on oneself to manifest this spiritual transformation.
 - Discussion
 - Weekly questionnaire
- Week Seven
 - Inspirational scripture: Exodus 34:14
This verse teaches that God's name is also Jealous, and that His followers shall not have any other god before Him. In this passage God is letting believers know that He loves them, and they should not worship any other god or idol before Him because He will meet all their needs.
 - Kingdom Man Video 6: The Influence of a Kingdom Man (28 minutes)
The final lesson is that God is looking for men to take responsibility of his home and community and to take care of them and, He is looking for men to become Kingdom Men and disciples. These men must associate with other kingdom men and to serve in the community by mentoring other men and boys.
 - Discussion
 - Weekly questionnaire
- Week Eight
 - Inspirational scripture: Matthew 6:9-13
This passage provides a lesson that should be familiar to everyone, the Lord's Prayer. It provides guidance to all believers on how they should pray. It also explains that prayer is not always a public activity; it is a personal way to talk directly to God.
 - Discussion
 - Weekly questionnaire
 - Post-survey

These lessons, which required that the participants establish specific goals for themselves, played an important role in the men's development and helped them understand the importance of prayer, the meaning of love, the need for forgiveness, the way to respect others, good moral behavior, and other character building attributes. As Dr. Evans says in his video, "Wanted-Kingdom Men," "a Kingdom Man is a man who comes under the comprehensive rule of God," which clearly supports the premise that this study is based upon.

At the end of the lesson each week, the participants responded to the following eight questions:

1. Do you believe in God?
2. What was your first experience with God?
3. Describe your relationship with God.
4. How satisfied are you with your relationship with God?
5. Do you think that God loves you? Why?
6. Do you think having a personal relationship with God will make a difference in your life?
7. Do you think God is a jealous God? Why?
8. How often do you pray?

This longitudinal approach was a deliberate effort by the chaplain to gauge the impact of the weekly lessons. The expectation was that as the subjects progressed through the lessons, their responses to the questions would change, demonstrating a shift in faith, and in turn, a shift in hope and self-confidence. Reviewing and discussing the same questions and scriptures allowed the participants time to reflect after each weekly session with the chaplain. The consistent reinforcement enabled them to develop a deeper understanding of their faith and improve their personal relationship with God.

The interviewer collected data from the weekly interview sessions by taking notes of his conversations with the men and noting their reactions and impressions of the videos and scripture readings. The interviewer noted his personal observations of the men's behavior from week to week

and compiled his thoughts in his journal. If he observed a lack of progress in any of the men, he adjusted the Bible lessons and pastoral counseling as needed.

As previously mentioned, the interviewer also required each man to maintain a personal journal to document their individual thoughts and observations throughout the study. He encouraged the men to use the journals to organize their thoughts in preparation for their weekly sessions. The journals also served as a way for the men to note any questions or reflections that arose between meetings. They would then share those thoughts and questions with the chaplain the following week. However, the participants did not share their journals with the interviewer.

The interviewer maintained his own personal reflective journal, which he updated weekly. After each session, the chaplain reviewed the notes with the participant to confirm that his observations accurately conveyed what transpired during their meeting. He also reviewed the notes from each session privately to identify areas of growth in the project subjects, gauge the need to adjust the lessons, and glean a deeper understanding of the men and their spiritual needs. The interviewer repeated this process every week. At the conclusion of the study, in addition to evaluating his notes and observations throughout eight-weeks, the interviewer compared the initial survey results to post-survey results to measure the difference in the men's level of hope and self-confidence.

Other Considerations

The chaplain identified the following resources as being necessary and readily available to support this project: his office, the chapel, books in the chapel library, the videos, and books from Dr. Tony Evans' program, "Kingdom Man: Every Man's Destiny, Every Woman's Dream,"³² writing paper, pens, a copier, and file cabinet with a lock. The interviewer had no issues obtaining

³² Evans, *Kingdom Man: Every Man's Destiny, Every Woman's Dream*.

adequate resources to complete the study. Resources used for the study included Bibles, manila folders, paper and pens, the recruitment letter, consent form, initial questionnaire, weekly interview questionnaires, weekly scriptures, the final questionnaire, lessons based upon some of the principles of the Thresholds program, and Kingdom Man by Dr. Tony Evans and related videos for 6 weeks shown below. Dr. Evans bases the teaching of his Kingdom Man series on the philosophy that a Kingdom Man is transparent about his relationship with God and, his acceptance and devotion to God is evident to anyone that he interacts with in the community. This value system is a good way to teach the subjects about the type of relationship they should seek to establish with God.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

This thesis project is a qualitative study relying primarily on insights and concepts rather than numerical data. The principal investigator selected FCI Safford as his project site based on his role as Supervisory Chaplain and Department Head of Religious Services at the facility. His role, in part, entails serving as spiritual leader and advisor to inmates who follow or express interest in at least one of sixteen religious/faith-based groups. FCI Safford exclusively houses men over the age of eighteen serving sentences for federal offenses.

The research and data collection for the project took place over an eight-week period. The data came primarily from the weekly, sixty-minute, pastoral counseling sessions with the male participants. To ensure equal and consistent meeting time with the men, the interviewer developed a schedule of set time slots for each participant and adhered to that schedule for the duration of the data collection period. He used a wall calendar to keep track of the meeting schedule and stored the calendar in the locked cabinet in his office with all other study materials.

Changes in human behavior are rarely instantaneous. The chaplain observed that many of the men currently incarcerated at FCI-Safford have had life experiences that negatively impacted them and left them deflated and without hope. These detrimental experiences left the men with feelings of low self-worth and with futures that may seem bleak and hopeless. This is likely one reason why they have not sought a relationship with God. Even when they do participate in religious services, they may not get everything out of it that they can and should. The chaplain came to realize through his interactions with these men that some of them never developed critical life skills including developing a personal relationship with God that can foster spiritual fulfillment. They will begin to experience an improved level of self-confidence and self-worth once they are able to experience an increased sense of spiritual fulfillment

Therefore, allowing adequate time to work with each man was a critical component of the data collection process. The interviewer determined eight weeks of interaction with the participants was sufficient time to observe and record any measurable difference in the men's level of spirituality and spiritual fulfillment. Evidence of such differences included any changes or patterns in biblical traits like self-love, self-worth, honesty, and service.

Pre- and Post-survey

The interviewer developed a participant survey to assess each participant's level of self-confidence and self-worth. He administered the survey both before and after the study. He sought input from the Institutional Psychologist at FCI Safford in developing the questions for the assessment survey. The survey was not intended to test the participants' knowledge of the Bible but to provide the interviewer with insight of their prior experience with and exposure to God, as well as to understand their current belief systems and moral values. To make sure subjects would easily

understand the questions, the interviewer used common, simple-to-understand, everyday language and avoided any religious terms. The assessment included the following five questions:

1. How often do you feel lonely or depressed and disconnected from others?
 - a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Very often
 - d. Always

This question seeks to disclose the level of connectivity to God the men may have and shows if they know and understand that God will provide them with comfort, support and help that may allow them to cope better with life's challenges that may make you feel sad or isolated from others.

2. Please indicate your level of belief in God.
 - a. Strongly believe
 - b. Somewhat believe
 - c. Somewhat disbelieve
 - d. Do not believe at all

This question is asked to see if the men know that God exists and that He is always there for His believers, no matter what is going on in their life. He will answer whenever they call on Him.

3. Select the statement below that best describes your feelings about God:
 - a. He is a loving God no matter what you do
 - b. He is only there for you some of the time
 - c. He is forgiving and rewards you for the good things you do
 - d. He is harsh and always punishes you for the bad things you do

The responses to this question theoretically divulge an individual's overall opinion of God at a specific point in time. That opinion is generally dependent upon various factors, such as how the participant was introduced to God, if he was mad at God at the time, or if he feels abandoned by God.

4. Do you currently have a personal relationship with God?
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Somewhat disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree

The way in which an individual responds to this question will also depend upon how he was introduced to God and if he relied upon God to help him through various life events. More importantly, it indicates whether he understands that while life on earth is temporary, he can have everlasting life by accepting Jesus Christ as his personal savior.

5. Do you think prayer changes things?
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Somewhat disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree

The lesson here, which coincides with the last lesson taught in the weekly questions, is to see if the individual knows that there is power in praying. Their responses are also dependent upon where they are in their belief in Christ. A believer will know that prayer changes things. John 16:24 says that “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”

Though they may seem random, collectively the five questions actually depict the subject’s perception of their spiritual health. Their responses assist the investigator in guiding the men to discover their own faith-based belief system, how they can get to know God better, and how to ultimately reap the benefits of having a personal relationship with Him. The responses to all the questions range from extremely positive to extremely negative. The positive responses illustrate a close personal relationship with God and a healthy prayer life. The negative responses demonstrate little or no relationship with God and a deficient or non-existent prayer life.

Week One

The first week of the project the participants arriving early to their sessions, indicating how excited they were to be involved. The investigator started his individual sessions with the participants by inviting the them into his office and offering them a comfortable seat where

they could watch the videos. The chaplain's office provides a relaxing and homey environment with a scented diffuser, cooling fans and interesting books and pictures, something the inmates do not get to enjoy in their cells. The atmosphere made the men feel calm, welcomed, and safe. The investigator knew the PSs would feel secure in his office, which would encourage them to engage.

He presented each project subject with their Bible and participant binder for use during the project and in days to come. They then watched, and subsequently discussed, the first video in the "Kingdom Man" series. After the video, the interviewer introduced the eight-question weekly questionnaire. Because inmate literacy levels vary widely in FCI-Safford, for the first two weeks of the study, the investigator read each of the eight weekly questions aloud to ensure that the fully understood the questions and allowed time for them to ask clarifying questions. The investigator implemented this process to help the men to become familiar with the questions and ensure their understanding. He accommodated each individual who preferred to respond to the questions orally rather than writing them down.

Recognizing that men tend to be emotionally guarded, the investigator selected open-ended questions to encourage engagement. While, he was careful not to ask leading questions, he did ask probing questions such as, "What did you think of that question?" or "How do you feel about that question?" Even still, the men were initially apprehensive and slow to engage. The chaplain understood that men are typically visual learners and knew that the "Kingdom Man" videos would resonate with them because of Dr. Evan's style of motivational speaking. The internationally renowned pastor served as chaplain for the Dallas Cowboys football team for over twenty years and often uses football stories as icebreakers. These men are always involved in some form of exercise or physical activity and are drawn to the football Dr. Evans'

analogies. Several of the men were familiar with him through his nationally syndicated radio show. At the end of the session, the chaplain assigned them a scripture to memorize and reflect upon for discussion the following week.

At the end of the session, the investigator reviewed the information in project binder with each of the men. He shared his privacy practices and assured them that all study sessions and correspondence would be confidential. He then instructed the men to initial and date all the documents in the binder, including a non-disclosure agreement. The chaplain's staff assistant served as a witness to the signatures, however, she did not view the contents of any of the documents.

Week Two

In week two, the investigator advised each of the participants that they would follow a similar agenda each week. They watched the first video in the "Kingdom Man" series, "Wanted: Kingdom Men." The video describes a Christian man's role in his family and is community. They then discussed the scripture assigned the previous week. They discussed what the scripture was saying and how the men could apply the passage to their daily lives. The investigator was surprised to learn that all the participants actually attempted to memorize the assigned scripture.

The investigator took copious notes as he observed the men, particularly their body language and reactions to the videos, since they did not readily disclose anything personal. He continued to ask open-ended questions to encourage them to share more of their innermost feelings. He felt encouraged as he noticed the project subjects closely engaging with the video. He took great care to show them empathy and concern and treated each one as a man rather than an inmate number, hoping to earn their confidence. He was transparent with them so that

they might see Christ in him. The investigator assigned the scripture for the following week and again reviewed the participants responses. He recorded in his journal any perceived change or progress. More importantly, he reviewed his notes glean any opportunities for conversation with them the following week.

Week Three

In week three, the investigator continued to follow the same steps with each PS. To further document their progress on their spiritual journey, he continued to take ample notes of the men's reactions to the videos and their responses to the weekly questions. He also continued to focus on connecting with the men. Taking cues from their moods, facial expressions, and demeanor, the investigator changed the way in which he interacted with the men and let his guard down a bit to allow the participants to be more at ease with him. He helped them navigate their own feelings so they could begin to share what was burdening them. He moved from sitting behind his desk and sat closer to the individual to feel a more personal connection to them. Additionally, in order to have the men feel more a part of the process, the investigator had their participant folders waiting for them so they would not have to ask for it and allowed them to operate the VCR and to start the weekly video, "Greatness is Your Destiny." The video provided insight on pursuing and reaching one's divine destiny. Thus far the investigator had not encountered any challenges, setbacks, or any significant events related to the study and saw no need to adjust any steps in the intervention.

Week Four

During week four, which was the mid-point of the intervention, the investigator evaluated the progress of the participants. He gauged whether they were absorbing the lessons and if any of the men demonstrated any noticeable change. He prayed that God would reveal

Himself to both the men and to him. He prayed for God's transformative powers over the men. Considering this week to be critical in the process, he anticipated that someone would possibly share a brief testimony; however, none did.

He selected "The Life of a Kingdom Man" as the video for the week. It provides instruction on how people can align with Christ Jesus and shift their belief systems to be more Christlike. It offers a powerful message on how a person can connect with that which they have lost. He believed the video would create avenues for the men to speak more candidly about what they were experiencing. He felt the lessons learned from this video would lay the foundation for the men to continue to share more in the following weeks. After praying, he began to feel more relaxed and encouraged about how the study was progressing and about the responses he was getting from the participants.

Week Five

In week five, he continued following the normal agenda. They discussed the eight weekly questions. They watched the next video in the "Kingdom Man" series, "The Home of a Kingdom Man," detailing the importance of not conforming to the sinful world. He also talked with them about the scripture from the previous week. He also the scripture for the following week.

Week Six

The investigator continued addressing the weekly questions and showed the last video in the series, "The Influence of a Kingdom Man." This video teaches the importance of social responsibility, stressing the need for men to make a difference in the world through service and mentoring. As always, the chaplain discussed the scripture from the previous week with all the participants. He began to feel a sense of relief as the study neared its conclusion.

Week Seven

In week seven, there were no videos shown, so the investigator continued to address the weekly questions with the participants and discussed the lessons from the weekly scripture.

Week Eight

In final week, there was no video shown so the investigator discussed the eighth weekly questions and the scripture from the prior week. He also discussed Matt 6:9-13, which is the model prayer, the “Lord’s Prayer.” He presented the men with additional scriptures to provide them with encouragement and thought-provoking lessons to keep the men engaged as they continue to grow in their walk with God.

Overall, the intervention went as planned, and the investigator did not need to make any changes or adjustments to the intervention. There were normal occurrences at the facility such as death notifications and temporary lockdowns; however, none of these occurrences disrupted any of the participant sessions.

Because qualitative data is more subjective than numerical data, the interviewer employed a multidimensional data collection strategy. Through a combination of personal statements and observations, pre- and post-evaluation, and longitudinal surveying, the interviewer captured a comprehensive view of both the problem and the participants. His journal of observations and notes captured changes in both verbal and non-verbal communication. The participants’ responses to the pre- and post-surveys indicated measurable change in their level of spiritual fulfilment from the beginning of the study to its conclusion. The one-on-one interviews provided data on their progress from week-to-week. The interviewer used these short-term snapshots to assess the impact of specific lessons, videos, and scriptures. This data triangulation method helped validate the study’s outcomes and

address assumptions and expectations. It made it possible to demonstrate the measurable impact of adopting faith-based principles and establishing a relationship with God, in the form of better coping mechanisms, improved outlook on life, and an enhanced sense of self.

To identify any degree of growth in the participants, the interviewer compared and analyzed the pre- and post-survey responses. The responses were aggregated on a scale of one to four with one representing the low end of the scale and increasing with four representing the high end of the scale. The results of the two surveys were conveyed through two charts, one indicating the results of the initial questionnaire and one displaying the results at the survey that was given at the end of the eight-week study. As part of his analysis, he identified and addressed issues encountered during the study. He then outlined the weekly progression of the participant based on their responses to the weekly questions and their impressions of the weekly scriptures and incorporated his observations and analysis to document the results of the intervention.

Chapter 4

Results

Life within the prison walls at FCI-Safford and the prospect of returning to life beyond those walls are constant sources of stress and anxiety for inmates. Those recently incarcerated deal with becoming acclimated to their new, restrictive environment. Those well into their sentences deal with the stress of trying to maintain relationships with family and friends as well as coping with the social dynamics of the prison's inmate population. Those nearing the end of their sentences must face the intimidating reality of becoming acclimated to civilian life again, finding a job, securing a place to live, and rebuilding personal relationships. Without effective intervention, these stressors can lead to despair and hopelessness.

The purpose of this study was to provide a way for the men to seek and find spiritual fulfillment through God. For the purpose of this study, spiritual fulfillment is result of a connection with God through a one-on-one personal relationship with him. This study helped by providing these men with the tools necessary to help them in their path to restoring their faith in their preferred religion and to establish a personal relationship with God, which allowed them the ability to better deal with life's challenges and crises. Equipping these men with a way to increase their level of spiritual fulfillment made them more well-rounded and provided them with a sense of hope and inner peace. Essentially, this gave them a sense of self-confidence, self-sufficiency, and the ability to face some of the harsher issues of life and to enjoy the happier moments. Focusing on aspects of their personal sense of self helped these men to become more well-rounded individuals. Following is a synopsis of their individual results.

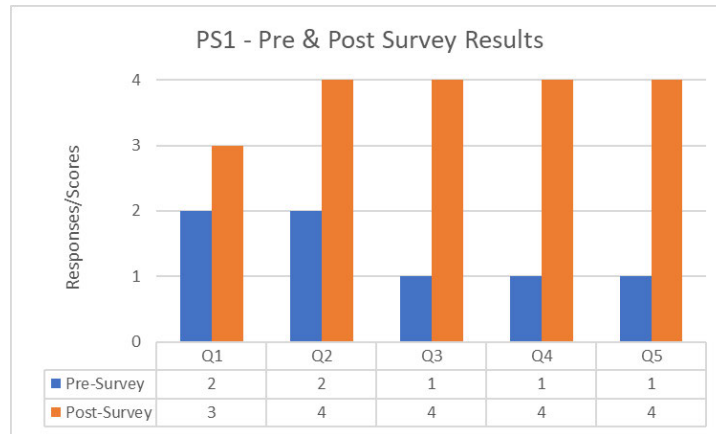
Project Subject Outcomes

Project Subject 1

Initially PS1 was very closed off and standoffish at beginning of his sessions. He only spent about five minutes answering the initial survey questions which gave the impression that he did not give much thought to his responses. The investigator noticed that PS1 was uncomfortable with him and was reluctant to share anything at first. He also seemed easily distracted and wanted to discuss other things during his session, so the investigator had to redirect his attention to the discussion and the weekly questions.

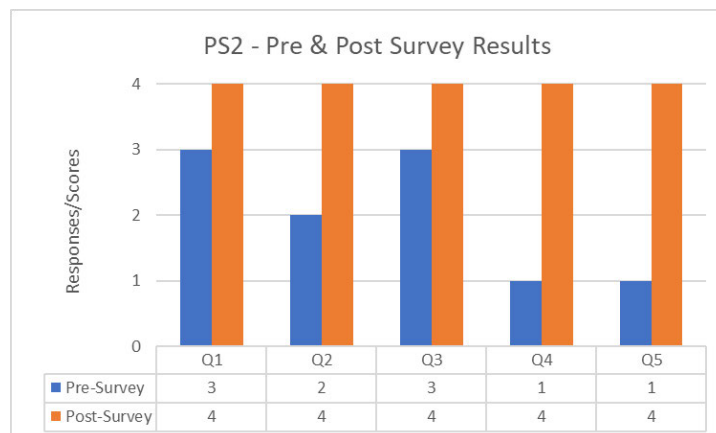
Over time, the participant became less guarded. During week two, PS1 stated that coming to the chapel gave him a sense of hope that he would be able to figure things out with his life and his family. It was during this session that he asked the investigator to pray with him. During week four, however, he had a big revelation and stated that he enjoyed coming to the chapel and that he wanted to live a saved life and professed that he wanted to be baptized. His temperament was more upbeat, and he was more engaged in the process, and stated in week six that he wanted to do the Lord's work.

A comparison of the project subject's pre- and post-survey responses did indicate measurable growth. On the pre-survey, he stated that he often felt depressed, he somewhat disbelieved in God, and he thought that God was harsh and punished people for their actions. His more positive post-survey responses conveyed a strong belief in God and a belief that prayer does change things. In his final week, he proclaimed that he found what he was looking for in Jesus.



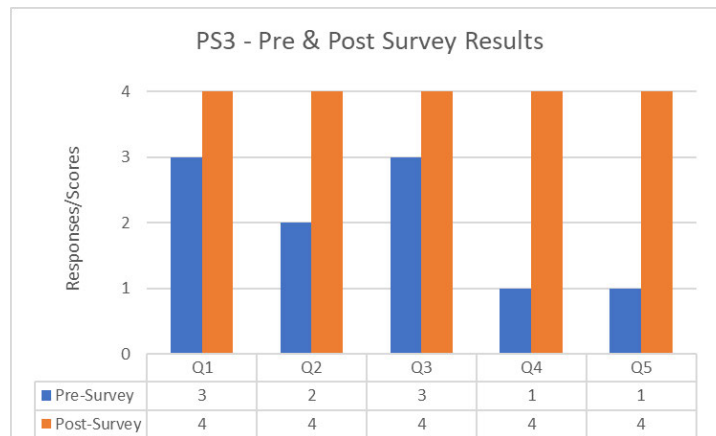
Project Subject 2

The investigator’s professional interpretations of PS2’s responses to the weekly questions were that he was someone who already had a strong knowledge of God and believed in Him but felt that he had let God down by his actions and by the way in which he lived his life. And he was already familiar with Dr. Evans by listening to him on the radio. It is not surprising that his pre-survey responses showed that he only somewhat believed in God and thought that God was only there for you some of the time and stated that he did not have a strong personal relationship with God. By the fourth week his attitude changed, and the investigator noticed that he appeared to be more joyful. His post-survey responses showed the shift in his beliefs about God. He stated that he had a strong belief in God and that God loves you no matter what, indicating a strong personal relationship and acknowledging that prayer changes things.



Project Subject 3

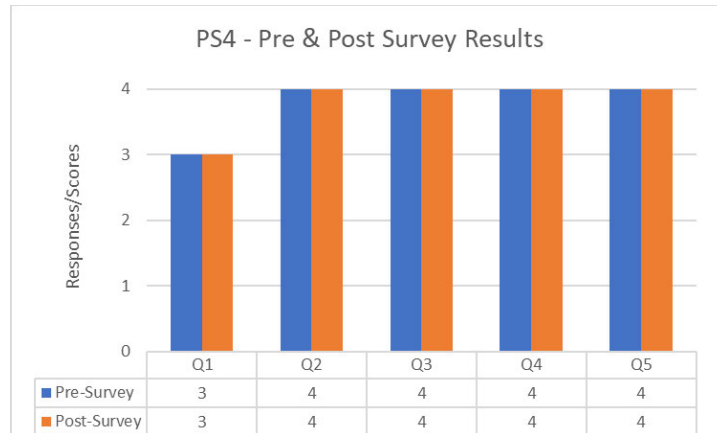
PS3 also knew God prior to participating in the intervention because his parents were believers and raised him in the church which he felt he always seems to be at growing up. However, when he got older, he rebelled against his parents and rebelled against God. He held a resentment for God because of his feelings towards his parents and did not want to have any connection to God in his life. He later shared that he wanted to have a stronger relationship with his fiancé and his family, and he saw this as a way to accomplish that. His responses to the pre-survey showed that he also somewhat disbelieved God and that God was only there for you some of the time. His post-survey responses showed that he was ready to accept Jesus Christ in his life, stating that he had believed prayer changes things and he now had a strong relationship with God. He desires to get baptized at the end of the intervention proved his spiritual growth.



Project Subject 4

PS4 is a very quiet and reserved man who has a strong faith system and belief in God and had the same positive responses to both the pre and post survey. He responded that he had a strong belief in God and that he believed God loved you no matter what you did and that prayer changes things. He told the chaplain that he wanted to take part in the study and wanted to get something out of it and asked the chaplain if he could help him to help himself. He is working to

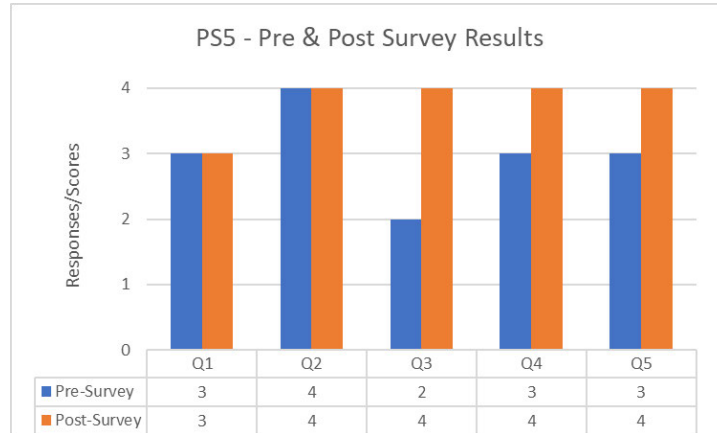
obtain his GED and taking part in this study is part of his process of bettering himself. The chaplain responded by reassuring the study participant that he was there to help and that they will travel this journey together. His responses to the weekly questions were also all the same and affirmed his strong faith in God, and by the eight week he proclaimed that he was very satisfied with his relationship with God and that he knew without Him he could not do anything.



Project Subject 5

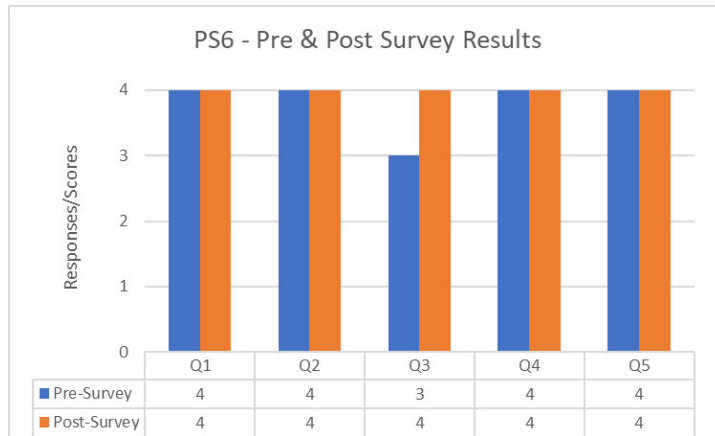
PS5 although he was ill during study, wanted to participate anyway which seemed to help him feel better to learn more about God. He has a positive attitude, takes pride in his appearance, spoke with authority and confidence, and appeared to be educated. His pre-survey responses were actually positive and were even more so in the post-survey, stating on each that he strongly believed in God. He indicated in the pre-survey that he thought God was only there for you sometimes and he only had a somewhat strong relationship with God. In the first week he said he heard that God loved him but that sometimes he did not think so and did not think he had a relationship with God. His first experience with God was when we went to church with his mother as a teenager and he recalled that someone prophesized over him, and he also spent time in a Christian rehab home as a teenager. By week five he was showing progress stating that he had been thinking of God more and by week eight he said he was beginning to understand God and getting to know him and stating believing that God

loved him because He corrected him like a Father. The post-survey response showed his spiritual growth in that he described his relationship with God as strong and that he strongly believed prayer changes things.



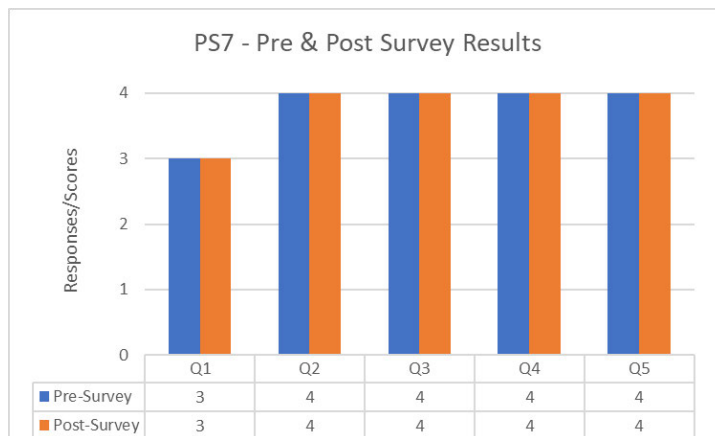
Project Subject 6

PS6 was closed off initially and gave very terse responses to the weekly questions and the investigator’s initial impression was that he was angry with God. His father was addicted to crack and abused his mother, and he basically grew up on the streets of his midwestern city and he harbored a lot of anger, but as he continued through the program, he began to open up more and began to learn more about Jesus. As he progressed through the study, he was able to release some of the hurt that had built up throughout the years and shared that now he knows that he has someone that he can talk to and that will listen to him. He is a visionary and said that he wanted to have prayer walks with others and wanted to walk around to teach people the gospel. He had positive responses in both the pre and post surveys saying that he never felt depressed and that he had a strong belief in God. He initially responded that he felt God was forgiving and that he rewards you for doing good, but his post survey response was that God loves you no matter what. He responded both times that he had a strong relationship with God.



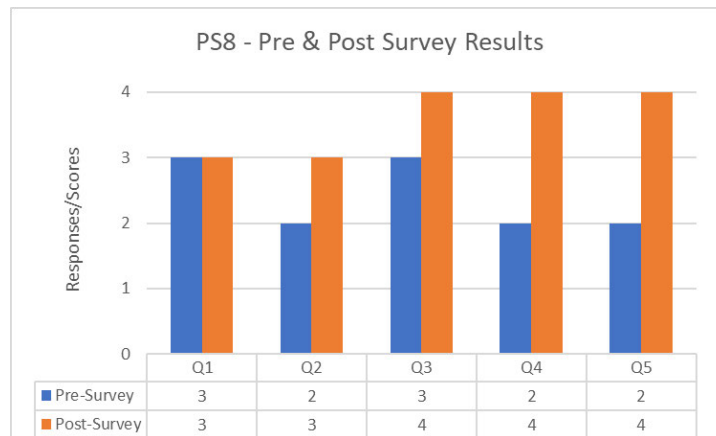
Project Subject 7

PS7 was a true believer in Christ when he came to the study. His gave the same positive responses to the pre and post survey questions and indicated that he had a strong believe in God and knew that God was a loving God. He was serving a long sentence, approximately ten years, and the length of his incarceration caused problems in his marriage. His wife was considering leaving him; however, he applied the lessons learned in the Kingdom Man videos about the importance family and that strengthen his faith and gave him the tools to handle this difficult life situation. He was determined to reconcile with his wife and wanted to try to be there more for her. During the eight weeks his faith grew stronger, and he changed the frequency for when he prayed and prayed more consistently as he understood that was a way to talk to God.



Project Subject 8

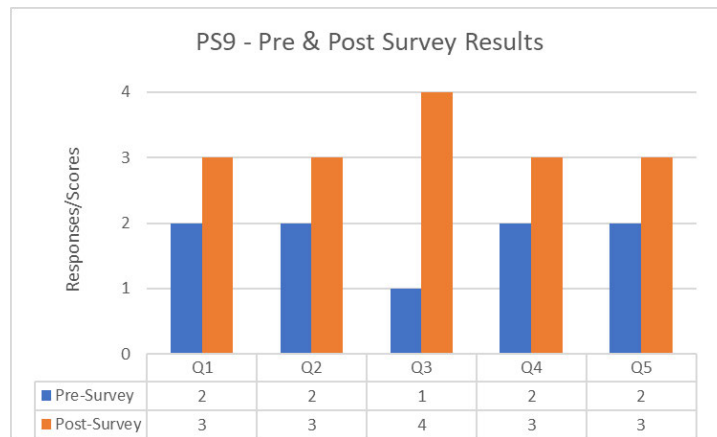
PS8 is a small in stature, quiet, polite, and respectful man who is rather studious, and has been incarcerated over twenty years and did not have a strong relationship with God when he began the intervention even though he said he was raised in the church and was saved in 1994. His opinions showed his indifference to the importance of having a relationship with God and he had little faith in the power of prayer. Somewhere over time he had become spiritually broken although he never shared what had occurred to bring him to the point in his life. He did tell the investigator that he was frustrated because he thinks that God is not always there for him. Around the fifth week he said that he would not be fully satisfied until he is praising God face to face and realized the benefits of spiritual fulfillment that having a close personal relationship with God could give him. By the end of the study, he was able to quote scripture and said he wanted to rededicate himself to God and decided to be baptized at the end of the intervention.



Project Subject 9

PS9 stated in the pre-survey that he very often felt depressed and that he only somewhat believed in God and did not have a strong relationship with God. During his first session, he said that he did not think God loves or dislikes him and he thought that God was simply busy with others. He felt that he was a disappointment to God. By the end of the

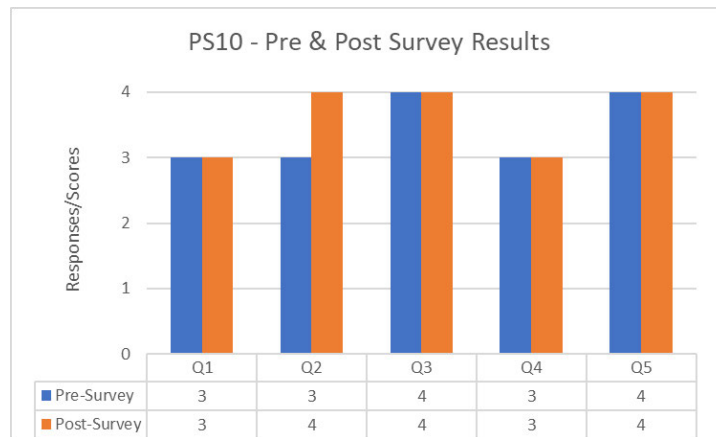
study, he began to feel a sense of self-worth and came to recognize that even though he would have problems his faith in God could help him to deal with things better. His responses to the post survey were more positive stating that he rarely felt depressed and now stated that, to some extent, he believed in God and affirmed that to some degree, he now considered himself to have a relationship with God and even believed that prayer changes things, to a certain extent.



Project Subject 10

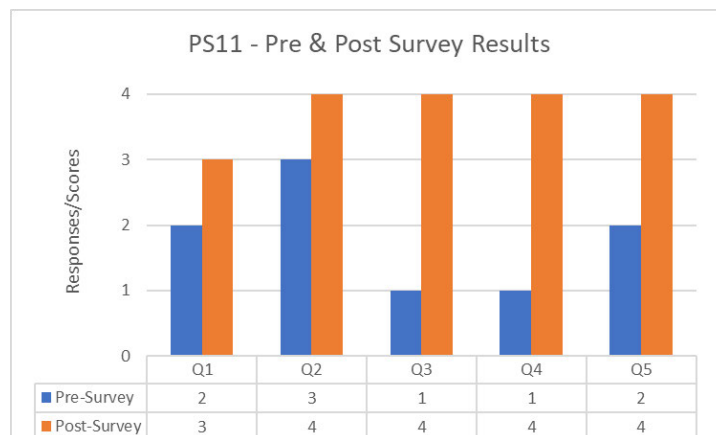
PS10 like most of the men in the study, showed remarkable changes in his impressions of God and more importantly, his relationship with God. His pre-survey responses showed that he did not have a deep relationship with God and strongly disagreed that prayer could change things; however, by the end the study he still felt that he did not have a solid relationship with God but that seemed to be evolving. He stated that God had proven his support and was there to help him but now it was up to him to increase the relationship. He also stated that God was there to help him, and that prison helped to save his life. As he went through the program, he recognized that God could do more for him. He realized that God does love him and therefore has redeemed

himself and given himself to God. Additionally, he now strongly agreed that prayer does change things.



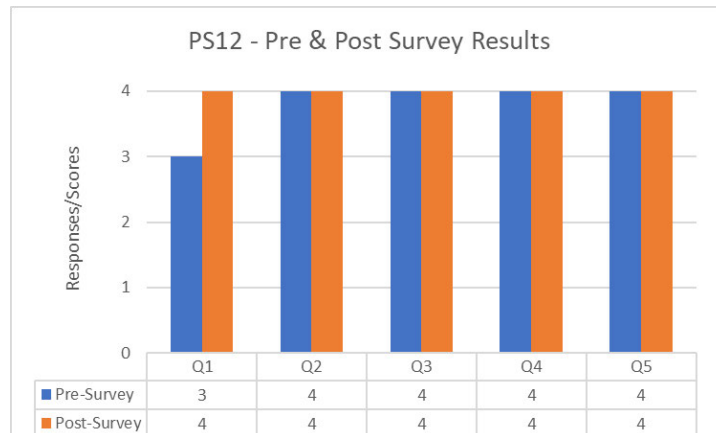
Project Subject 11

PS11 initially indicated in his pre-survey responses that he very often felt depressed, and he had only a tentative belief in God and thought God to be harsh and punishing, and also answered that he did not have a personal relationship with God and was unsure if prayer changes anything. This participant made a concerted effort to get something out of the study and he did experience a spiritual transformation and now has a better relationship with God. His post-survey responses also show that strong belief in God and that he also strongly agreed that prayer changes things, particularly since he says he prays up to ten to fifteen times a day.



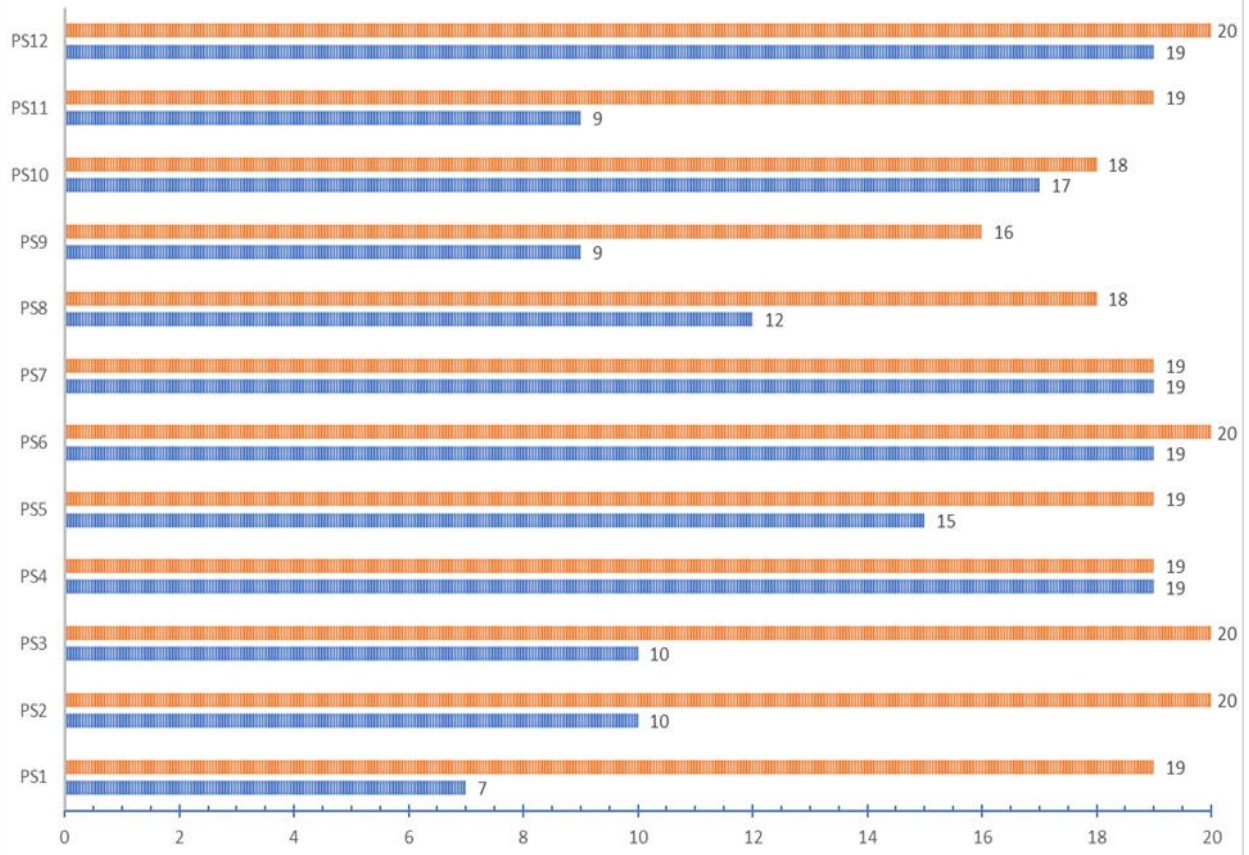
Project Subject 12

PS12 provided the same positive responses to both the pre and post survey and indicated his strong Christian beliefs and that he held a strong belief in God, a feeling that God is a loving God, and had a strong personal relationship with Him. He spent more time in pray as he went through the study, and by week five he saw he relationship with God growing into a trusting relationship which continued to get stronger as he learned more about Him. By week seven he saw the relationship as a “father and son” relationship which was a vast change over the distant relationship that he felt he had at the beginning of the study. Although this individual believed in God before participating in the study, he would never freely vocalize his thoughts about his faith but now having completed the study, he freely shares that he is a child of God.



COMPILED PRE & POST SURVEYS

Post-Survey Pre-Survey



Compiled Pre & Post Surveys



	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
PS1	7	19
PS2	10	20
PS3	10	20
PS4	19	19
PS5	15	19
PS6	19	20
PS7	19	19
PS8	12	18
PS9	9	16
PS10	17	18
PS11	9	19
PS12	19	20

Analysis

The interviewer used an analysis of the responses to the pre- and post-questionnaire, as well as his professional observations, to determine if the participants made any quantifiable progress during the testing period. Any increase in the participants responses from the initial survey to those given in the final survey indicated a measurable evidence of success. An increase of even one point demonstrated success because it indicated a positive shift in the individual's self-perception. In any research study there will always be outliers on either end of the spectrum. However, the optimal results sought was for eight out the twelve men to have shown a significant improvement of at least a couple points or more. This was achieved.

Another measurement of success began to manifest itself in changes in the men's behaviors that became evident through their enlightened and transformed sense of self. Even though they are incarcerated they slowly began to let go of past negative feelings of self-hatred, self-doubt, and low self -esteem and related self-defeating behaviors once they became transformed due to having a personal relationship with God.

Metaphorically speaking, prisons are a city within a city, town, or whatever locale it happens to be situated in. It has its own class structure that includes affiliations by gang or the types of crimes that was committed or by the individual's sexual orientation, amongst other ways the prisoners associate themselves with others. Prisoners use postage stamps as currency to barter for food that is not commonly served and even to buy protection. To survive in prison, this new and unknown environment, men must change their demeanor coming through the door. Therefore, the chaplain, through his professional experience, knew that he would be able to get through to the inmates by providing a safe place for them to lower their guards and to share their innermost thoughts, fears, and concerns, man to man. Providing for these one on one

conversations with him in a quiet serene place gave them a sense of security that allowed each of the study participants to become receptive to the messages from the videos, Bible lessons, and pastoral counseling.

All the participants remained fully engaged and committed throughout the study and continued to keep their appointments and, more importantly, stayed for the entirety of the weekly hour-long sessions. His initial impression was that the men believed in God before they became incarcerated, but some became disenfranchised and thought that God was disappointed in them and abandoned them because of their circumstances. This manifested in their responses to the weekly survey questions which were short in the beginning but as the sessions progressed over time their responses became more thoughtful and detailed revealing more of their true feelings about God and His role in their lives. The interviewer saw much progress when the men started coming to church services and showed an interest in wanting to participate in church related programs and activities and wanting to take part in faith-based classes.

It is important to note that the purpose of the study was not merely to collect data but was to make a measurable impact in the participants' lives by increasing their sense of spiritual fulfillment as evidenced by any noticeable changes or patterns in their sense of faith-based traits such as self-love, self-worth, self-confidence, honesty, and service. God's presence in their lives filled these men with an understanding that allowed them to break free of whatever chains or issues that might have previously bound them. The transformation that took place occurred through the Holy Spirit. At the end the study, four men choose to be baptized on Easter Sunday, three of these men had previously been baptized earlier in their lives and were rededicating their lives to Christ. While this was not a requirement it demonstrated their commitment to having a relationship with God. Five more of the project subjects also rededicated their lives to God.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The Apostle Paul teaches in 2 Corinthians, "... where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Corinthians 3:17) Some translations state there is freedom. Just as a man can be physically free yet mentally in bondage, a man who knows and trusts God he can be physically bound, yet mentally free. This study sought to introduce the men incarcerated at FCI Safford in Safford, Arizona to a life of inexplicable joy and liberation through a relationship with Christ.

During his tenure as the chaplain in this federal facility, the investigator has witnessed first-hand the toxic fruits that grow rampant in a life of hopelessness and despair. Within the walls of Safford, he has seen men of prestige who had it all and lost it, and he has seen young men who have never had anything at all. A significant part of his position as chaplain is providing spiritual guidance. It was through that role that he conceived the idea of developing and implementing an eight-week program to help FCI Safford inmates boost their levels of hope and self-confidence by developing or improving an intimate relationship with God.

The chaplain also gained inspiration from author and pastor, David Hairabedian, who experienced spiritual growth while serving time, first in the United States Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas, and later when he was transferred to the Federal Correctional Institution located in Englewood, Colorado. He and a friend started off committing lower level crimes, eventually moving to trafficking drugs. They then graduated to stealing a jet plane for a cartel, which landed the rehabilitated evangelist at Leavenworth, living in concrete amongst cockroaches in the 1990s. At that time, the facility was a maximum-security federal prison.

After his transfer to FCI-Englewood, Hairabedian witnessed the scenic beauty of the Colorado foothills from behind the prison fence. However, he knew that he was still in prison and that he would be doing hard time while finishing out his sentence of nearly twenty years. There, he was able to strengthen his faith in God, which grew stronger and allowed him to somehow survive his surroundings. He stated, “He was setting me free on the inside before He opened the actual prison doors to set me free on the outside.”³³

The old or existing approach to promoting self-improvement for the inmates at FCI-Safford has been to focus on extrinsic factors such as acquiring a GED, financial literacy, resume writing and other skills and tools necessary for daily life. While soft skills and technical skills can prove beneficial to preparing inmates for reentry to society, those skills do not address the emotional and psychological issues that render the inmates deficient of hope and self-confidence. Those skills and training opportunities hold little value for the individuals serving life sentences, but those men still deserve hope. FCI-Safford provides mental health services to inmates; however, the prison chaplain came to believe that more spiritual intervention is required to restore hope and self-worth.

In contrast to the current rehabilitation efforts, the investigator’s eight-week study served to cultivate personal development by addressing intrinsic factors such as hope, self-confidence, and spiritual fulfillment. It exists to help men find hope, joy and purpose in their current situation as well as the future. Through training and one-on-one counseling with the chaplain, the stakeholders came to understand and develop spiritual fulfillment, thereby increasing their level of hope and self-confidence and improving their probability of success for the remainder of their incarceration and even after their release.

³³ Hairabedian, *Jet Ride to Hell: Journey to Freedom* (Carol Stream: Virtual Church Publisher, 2018). 104.

By conducting this study, the chaplain learned that individuals who are incarcerated, including the inmates at FCI-Safford, are longing for spiritual fulfillment and growth which enables them to enjoy the benefits of a loving, personal relationship with God. Through this project, the interviewer proved that the inmates at FCI-Safford who participated in the study experienced a measurable improvement in their sense of self-worth. This thesis study project was also attractive to the men. Not only did it require less time commitment than other educational or faith-based programs offered by the BOP, but it also provided them with private, personal counseling and assistance administered by the chaplain.

The study will be useful in the ongoing pastoral counseling of inmates at FCI-Safford by providing an additional resource that will be adopted and used to address some of the prevalent issues that most of the men routinely face. Soon after completing the program, the participants voluntarily shared their experiences with other inmates and testified about their transformation, which has garnered more interest and inquiries from others who would like to participate.

The chaplain was intrigued by the men's enthusiasm about the study and noted that they communicated more openly and more readily shared their thoughts about God and their religious studies. Over time, the participants began to exhibit more positive personality traits and became more socially comfortable. Jim Putman spoke of this manifestation, "Jesus said in Matthew 4:19 that He would make us into something altogether different—that we would experience change at the heart and hands level too."³⁴ After completing the study, the project subjects began to pursue more religious activities such as participating in church-related events, watching faith-based videos, using the resource library, and attending bible studies.

³⁴ Putman, *Real-life Discipleship*, 48.

The study provided an avenue for the chaplain to show the men how God would transform them. By being transparent and approachable, he gained their trust and respect. He continually reassures the men that he would hold all their conversations in the strictest confidence, telling them everything they said would be between them and God. His experience in pastoral care has taught him that by being fully transparent, others will be able to see God through him and recognize that He lives in the hearts of all believers.

The chaplain knew that incarcerated persons often suffer from broken spirits because they lose their freedom and agency over the simplest things in life. Feeling an urgency to address the need, he developed this study to help them feel whole again. He wanted to reach people on a personal level and provide spiritual help and support according to their needs.

The investigator will continue to work with the original stakeholders to keep them engaged, and more importantly, to ensure continued progress with their spiritual education and growth. Due to financial constraints, the original participants were not given any books or materials other than a Bible. However, they will have access to all the resources in the chapel library, including the series of “Kingdom Man” books and videos and other materials, to continue their religious education. The chaplain will confer with the men at intervals of six months, one year, and eighteen months post-intervention to conduct a one-hour follow-up session to assess their progress relative to their sense of self and level of spiritual fulfillment.

For most people, this process of self-improvement is ongoing throughout one’s life, and as Francis Chan tells us, “If life were stable, I’d never need God’s help. Since it’s not, I reach out for Him regularly. I am thankful for the unknowns and that I don’t have control, because it makes me run to God.”³⁵ The chaplain will determine if additional follow up sessions are

³⁵ Francis Chan, *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook Distribution Canada, 2008

warranted and will provide the necessary faith-based guidance to assist the men on their path to spiritual and religious development.

The investigator's next steps will be to formally integrate the program into the core curriculum of faith-based programs currently offered at FCI-Safford and offer it on a permanent basis. The chaplain, as the pastoral services department head, has the sole authority to institute any courses into the chaplaincy program that he deems necessary or helpful. Going forward, the investigator will administer this program utilizing much of the same format as the intervention, which will consist of one-on-one private counseling sessions and will include using a pre- and post-surveys to evaluate the individual's connection to God and their sense of spirituality. He will also use religious materials and videos such as those from Dr. Tony Evans's Kingdom Man videos and will rely on teachings from scriptures and Bible verses. The only modifications will be the frequency of the eight-week program and the length of the individual sessions. The program will be offered once, every four months, to reach more individuals. He would also extend the individual sessions to ninety minutes each.

Through the BOP's "First Step Act" (FSA) program, future iterations of the program will offer incentives to inmates. Participate in programs such as this can count toward credits used for education or reduction in sentencing. The BOP instituted the incentive program to reduce recidivism amongst inmates. The First Step Act allows inmates to receive "good time credits" that will be used to take time off their sentence by participating in programs that provide them with skills gained from educational training, drug treatment, and faith-based programs.

The chaplain assisted all the participants in discovering their own sense of self-worth and was able to increase their spiritual transformation even though some of them initially thought

God was too busy to be bothered by them, or that they were a disappointment to Him. However, they ultimately realized just the opposite was true. Blackaby said it best:

God created you for a love relationship with Him. He yearns for you to love Him and respond to His immeasurable love for you. God's nature is perfect, holy, total love. He will never relate to you in any other way, although you may not always understand His actions. There will be times when you do not comprehend why He allows certain things to occur, and that is to be expected.³⁶

The interviewer performed a post-analysis of the study and determined that he achieved the desired outcome. He also conducted an informal oral survey of the project subjects. Based on the feedback they provided, they enjoyed the study and were happy to have been involved. The only change they suggested was to conduct the study over a longer period. The interviewer also consulted with a colleague who holds a Doctor of Ministry to review the pre- and post-survey results, interview questions and sessions, as well as his journal notes. The colleague agreed the survey needed no significant changes since the study produced the desired results.

The investigator designed this intervention to assist any adult in developing and improving their level of spiritual fulfillment. He could possibly offer this intervention in other correctional facilities, whether co-ed or unisex. However, one would have to obtain IRB approval for any new study outside of FCI-Safford. The investigator could also adapt the intervention to offer it virtually via video conferencing to accommodate for social distancing due to the Coronavirus or any other infectious condition, as well individuals in the infirmary or otherwise confined.

While he limited the initial study by gender, location, and time, the investigator could easily adapt the project for use with any demographic population, regardless of race, gender, religious affiliation, or other personal attribute. It could work well in a church setting with

³⁶ Blackaby, et al, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 20.

minimal alterations. The cost would be approximately \$500 and would cover materials such as paperback copies of *Kingdom Man* or *Kingdom Woman* books, and related videos, pens, writing paper, folders, and Bibles for participants.

Offering this program to persons in a group setting could be beneficial but would require additional research to determine the potential impact that a group setting may have on an individual's change in spiritual fulfillment. The investigator did not study how individuals would feel about sharing such personal and intimate feelings in a group setting and how that dynamic might change or alter their experience. IRB approval would also have to be obtained before this research could commence.

The investigator found a significant amount of research on topics related to the subject addressed in this study. Most studies focused on re-entry, recidivism, mental health, and crime prevention; however, he found nothing that directly correlated to this subject matter. For that reason and based on the positive results of this study, the possibilities for expanding and advancing this work is virtually limitless.

Appendix A

IRB Determination

From: irb@liberty.edu <irb@liberty.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 7:08 AM

To: Anthony, H. Clay (School of Divinity Instruction) <[REDACTED]>; Powell, Walter L <[REDACTED]>

Subject: IRB-FY20-21-191 - Initial: Initial - Non-Human Subjects Research

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

2020-10-27

Walter Powell
H. Anthony

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY20-21-191 Prison Behind the Urban Walls of Church

Dear Walter Powell and H. Anthony,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study does not classify as human subjects research. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your IRB application.

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Explanation: Your study is not considered human subjects research because it consists of quality improvement activities, which are not "designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge" according to 45 CFR 46.102(l).

Please note that this decision only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued non-human subjects research status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

Also, although you are welcome to use our recruitment and consent templates, you are not required to do so. If you choose to use our documents, please replace the word *research* with the word *project* throughout both documents.

If you have any questions about this determination or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your application's status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research

Research Ethics Office

Appendix B

Recruitment Letter

Title of the Project: Prison Behind the Urban Walls of Church

Principal Investigator: Walter L. Powell, Sr. DMIN Candidate, Liberty University – Rawlings School of Divinity

Dear _____,

As a Doctoral Candidate in the Rawling School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry. The purpose of my research is to address the problem concerning men who are incarcerated at the Federal Correctional Institution located in Safford, Arizona (FCI-Safford) who are lacking in spiritual fulfillment in God which causes them to live with inner pain and to suffer from low self-esteem which often leads to feeling disconnected from others. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

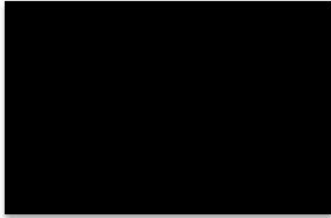
Participants must be 18 years of age or older and will be selected from men who are currently incarcerated at FCI-Safford and who will not be eligible for release during the time allocated for the study which is eight weeks. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in private one on one weekly interviews with the chaplain, to be conducted over the eight-week test and data collection period during which the chaplain will use the private discussions to assess the level of spiritual fulfillment for each particular participant, and will document any changes in their personal perspective of their spiritual fulfillment. A schedule will be developed to allow for a one-hour long session to be held separately with everyone throughout the eight-weeks of research study. Each week, each participant will be shown a series of videos from the Dr. Tony Evans' "Kingdom Man" series and will be given the corresponding book from the Kingdom Man series as well as Bible verse assignments. There will be discussion to understand the men's impressions and lessons learned from the videos and reading assignments. It should take approximately eight weeks to complete the procedure[s] listed. The only record of the sessions and discussions will be the chaplain's notes. No audio or video recordings will be taken, in accordance with FCI-Safford protocol. The inmate will review and sign the notes to confirm accuracy and weekly participation. Names and other identifying information of the study participants will be known only to the chaplain, but the information will remain confidential. Any identifying information will not be made public or generally known to anyone other than the chaplain. All notes and information pertaining to the study will be kept in a locked file cabinet located in the chaplain's office, which will also be locked. The chaplain is the only individual who has access to the keys to his office.

The chaplain will approach inmates who do not regularly attend religious services and will tell them about the research study. He will speak to as many men as needed until he has gotten the required number of participants, which is twelve (12). To participate, the men simply need to verbally express interest and willingness directly and privately to the chaplain. The inmates do not have access to private personal emails outside of the BOP prison email system for which they have no control, therefore all communication for the purpose of this research, and to maintain

their privacy and to ensure confidentiality, must be verbal and in person. Please return the completed consent form and survey questions directly to the chaplain who will maintain them in his office.

A consent document will be given to you at the time that you agree to participate in the research study. The consent document contains additional information about my research. Please sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the first interview session. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and voluntarily and willingly agree to take part in the research study at which time the survey questionnaire will be taken.

Sincerely,



Appendix C

Consent to Participate in Project Study

Title of the Project: Prison Behind the Urban Walls of Church

Principal Investigator: Walter L. Powell, Sr. DMIN Candidate, Liberty University -Rawlings School of Divinity

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be at least 18 years of age and currently incarcerated at FCI-Safford. The study will involve 12 men who will be randomly selected from the general population and who are currently incarcerated at FCI-Safford, but will not be eligible for release for the duration of the study. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

The purpose of the study is to address the problem of the men at FCI-Safford who are lacking in spiritual fulfillment in God which causes them to live with inner pain and to suffer from low self-esteem which often leads to feelings of being disconnected from others.

It is being done to help the individual to become whole again by helping them to increase their sense of inner peace, self-esteem and to get rid of the feelings of hopelessness thus helping you to improve your personal relationship with God.

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete a brief questionnaire to determine your level of self-esteem and self-confidence and your current personal relationship with God. It should take approximately five (5) minutes to complete the questionnaire.
2. After agreeing to participate you will meet with the chaplain in private weekly one-hour sessions over the next eight weeks. You will be shown short videos (20-25 minutes each) each week and given the Kingdom Man book and various Bible verses to read that will give you an understanding of God's promise. The chaplain will take written notes of what is discussed during the weekly interview sessions but will not record nor video any of the private sessions. The time involved will be a minimum of eight hours over an eight-week period plus additional time required to read two chapters a week from the Kingdom Man book and to read the Bible verses. There will not be any tests done each week, however, the participant must be prepared to discuss their thoughts with the chaplain during the weekly sessions.
3. The same questionnaire that was taken at the beginning of the study will be given at the end so that a comparison of the individual's self-assessment can be made regarding their level of spiritual fulfillment.

The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study are that they will notice an increased level of spiritual fulfillment as shown through changes in their

sense of faith-based traits such as self-love, self-worth, self-confidence, honesty and service to others. God's presence in one's life will give you an understanding that will allow you to break free of whatever has been bothering you or holding you back.

The facility is currently on modified lockdown due to the COVID pandemic and all the inmates are confined to their units for approximately 22 hours a day. Participating in this study will provide the benefit of additional time outside of the confined space.

Benefits to society include providing the participants with the tools to become better individuals in their communities (upon being released) by going through the transformation of having a personal relationship with God.

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life. However as mandatory reporter I am obligated to report any knowledge of potential self-harm or harm to other individuals.

The records of this study will be kept private and will be maintained in a secured, locked file cabinet located in the chaplain's private office. Any data or results published in the final thesis will not include any information that will make it possible to identify any of the subjects. Research records will be stored securely in the chaplain's office and only the chaplain, who is the sole researcher, will have access to the records.

The chaplain/researcher may use data collected from you in his own future post-doctorate research studies in which case, any information that could identify you if applicable, will be removed before the data is used.

- Participant responses will not be anonymous and will be known only to the chaplain. However participant responses will be kept confidential using pseudonyms/codes that will not disclose their identity. Interviews will be conducted in the chaplain's private office where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- All data collected will be the survey questionnaires and the researcher's handwritten notes taken during the weekly interview sessions. All data will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the chaplain's private office. He is the only person who has access to keys for both the file cabinet and his office. Any data to be used by the researcher will continue to be secured in a locked file cabinet under the control of the chaplain. [**Note:** Data should be retained for three years upon completion of the study.]
- Each participant will be required to maintain confidentiality and discouraged from discussing the study with anyone other than the researcher.

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

There is no cost or expenses required to participate in the research. Any materials required to participate will be provided to you and they will become your property for you to keep once the research study is complete.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

The only researcher conducting this study is the Supervisory Chaplain at FCI-Safford, Walter L. Powell, Sr. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED]. The chaplain has an open-door policy and is available to meet with you in his office anytime you choose to do so. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Clay Anthony at [REDACTED].

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

Appendix D

Pre- and Post-Project Questionnaire

Title of the Project: Prison Behind the Urban Walls of Church

Principal Investigator: Walter L. Powell, Sr. DMIN Candidate, Liberty University - Rawlings School of Divinity

1. How often do you feel lonely or depressed and disconnected from others?
 - a. Always
 - b. Very often
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Rarely
 - e. Never

2. Please indicate your level of belief in God.
 - a. Strongly believe
 - b. Somewhat believe
 - c. Not sure
 - d. Somewhat disbelieve
 - e. Do not believe at all

3. Select the statement below that best describes your feelings about God:
 - a. He is a loving God no matter what you do
 - b. He is only there for you some of the time
 - c. Not sure
 - d. He is forgiving and rewards you for the good things you do
 - e. He is harsh and always punishes you for the bad things you do

4. Do you currently have a personal relationship with God?
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Neutral or not sure
 - d. Somewhat disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

5. Do you think prayer changes things?
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Neutral or do not know
 - d. somewhat disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

Appendix E

Weekly Project Subject Private Session Discussion Questions

1. Do you believe in God?
2. Describe your relationship with God.
3. How satisfied are you with your relationship with God?
4. Do you think God loves you? Why?
5. Do you think having a personal relationship with God will make a difference in your life?
6. Do you think God is a jealous God? Why?
7. What was your first experience with God?
8. How often do you pray?

Appendix F

Weekly Scriptures

Week 1:

teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. *Matthew 28:20 (NKJV)*

Week 2:

My son give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; for they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh. *Proverbs 4:20-22 (NKJV)*

Week 3:

Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. *1 Peter 5:6-7 (NKJV)*

Week 4:

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you[a] will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. *John 15:7 (NKJV)*

Week 5:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. *John 3:16 (NKJV)*

Week 6:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall [a]direct your paths. *Proverbs 3:5-6 (NKJV)*

Week 7:

(for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God)
Exodus 34:14 (NKJV)

Week 8:

In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. *Matthew 6:9-13 (NKJV)*

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