

Freeing People

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www.abebrown.org

The Crusader

“Each Day People Are Set Free from the Prison Surrounding Their Hearts, Minds and Souls”

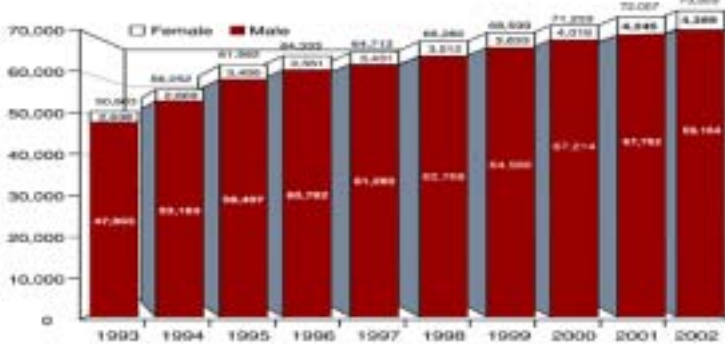
From the Desk of the Founder

“Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint.”
Prov. 29:18

Revelation here means vision. Without restraint, there is chaos. In layman's terms, this scriptural text says to us that without vision or forward thinking, we have chaos or no direction.

At the time of Abe Brown Ministries' inception in 1976, there were 17 State Prisons in Florida, only two for women. Today there are 121 prison facilities in Florida's Department of Corrections, and seven are for women. The penal system is the 4th largest industry in the state.

Inmate Population on June 30, 1993-2002



According to the Florida DOC Bureau of Transition Services, 95% of the 73,553 currently incarcerated felons in Florida will be released to Florida communities. 62.5% will return to prison; and most will return within three years of release. This number escalates when ex-offenders can't attain employment within three months.

We live in an operating society where there is no room for someone with a criminal history, little job experience and practically no money. These individuals are more likely to adopt an attitude that says, "I'm gonna make some money by any means necessary, even if it could land me in jail." This attitude is provoked even more when ex-offenders are transitioning back into the community and are faced with answering tough questions about their past setbacks. Often times, ex-offenders find themselves stuck in an entry-level position indefinitely and with minimum pay. Or, he can join or re-join the drug trade and make \$500 per week as a lookout or \$1,000 a week as a seller. Given these options, one can imagine why recidivism in our penal system is so high.

Studies show that ex-offenders who obtain employment are three times more likely to stay out of prison than one who remains unemployed or under-employed. It is almost impossible to convince a natural man to give up illegal ways of making a living and learn a legal trade simply because it's wrong. However, a man who has been spiritually transformed, learned the value of hard work, and has hope for his occupational and financial future can provide adequately for his family in a healthy way, feeling at ease, while contributing to the community.

Breaking this vicious cycle requires one to be transformed from the inside out. Holistic programs dedicated to meeting people right in their own predicament and situation, helping them establish goals and objectives, and empowering them to achieve those goals and objectives are the answer.

Our vision is to assist ex-offenders transitioning back to the community, equipping and empowering them, while building relationships with employers in the community to provide gainful employment opportunities that may not be otherwise afforded to them. Abe Brown Ministries will pursue this vision to the extent of establishing enterprises within the Ministry to employ men and women coming out of prison. We are identifying and researching successful markets and business models in which to pursue.

The need is apparent and God has given us this vision to focus our efforts for the future. Men and women learning the value of gainful employment and having hope for their occupational and financial future make for productive contributors to society and the community. Not to mention, this will reduce recidivism in Florida's prison system. Can you imagine the Department of Corrections downsizing, not because of budget restraints, but because they have fewer people to lock up? GOD CAN! What a visionary He is!

Finding His Vision and Making it Plain,

Something's Happenin'

In the Men's Transition Home



The Abe Brown Ministries Men's Transition Residence has a new kitchen floor and a new bathroom floor thanks to the skill and servant heart of Daniel Woods.

Daniel was recently released from Polk Correctional Institute after a four year stay. He said, "It's only right that I give back to Abe Brown Ministries. While I was incarcerated, the ABM crusade teams greatly encouraged my walk with the Lord. The testimonies of formerly incarcerated team members gave me great hope that a new life after prison was possible. They made it; therefore, I could make it."

Daniel then spoke about how God has been faithful to him following his release. "I have really been so fortunate that God has provided me with a strong support system during this vulnerable and difficult time of transition. My wife, who stood by me and waited for me, along with my church and Abe Brown Ministries, through their support of New Hearts Outreach, have been there for me. Also, where some have difficulty finding employment, I have worked almost constantly since my release. When the Lord gives us a promise like the one found in Joel 2:25 that says, "So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locusts have eaten", we know because of our knowledge of God's character, that He will keep His promise. God is good."

Daniel Woods – it's obvious that God is working in your life.

From all of us in the Abe Brown Ministries Family, please accept our sincere. "Thanks".

-Mark Culligan, New Hearts Outreach

Volunteer Profile

Service with a Smile.....

Yes, that is the way *Martin Silas* performs his duties as a volunteer for Abe Brown Ministries. Martin has traveled with and served the Ministry for years. His humble service includes serving in the jail ministry, being a bus driver for the Family Trips that take families to the prisons, driving 95% of the crusades, bus charters, serving as a counselor for the crusades, and volunteering for the Reading Family Ties Face-to-Face program, which hosts visits for incarcerated mothers and their children live via the Internet at the Ministry's facility.

Martin was a school teacher in the Hillsborough County School System for 34 years. He was and is exemplary as a model for servitude. No matter what the task, no matter how much he has served, Martin rarely turns down an opportunity to serve "to the glory of God."

Martin highly exalts Christ as his Lord and serves others knowing that he is truly serving his Savior. Whatever he does, he does *for the Savior!*

Thank You!

Martin!



Operation Iraqi Freedom- AMERICA, We love You!

Excerpts from the State of the Union Address

"Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures and we will accept no outcome but victory."

- President George W. Bush

"The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. *The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military.*"



"Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent."

Intercession is a Way of Life for the Believer

REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR:

FAMILIES OF ARMED FORCES

Pray for unsaved souls!

PRAY

Confusion & Disorientation of Enemy Leaders

Enemies' Damascus Road Experience

"...if My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land"
II Chron. 7:14)

Pray for our children!

MINISTRY FINANCES

Innocent In War

..For Our Nation All Leaders



"To all of the men and women of the United States armed forces now in the Middle East, *the peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you.*"



"For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people and you can know that our forces *will be coming home* as soon as their work is done."



A MODEL OF CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE (II PETER 1:1-9)



Are you, like me, a list maker--grocery list, shopping list, laundry list, guest list, and so on? If so, this lesson from II Peter 1:1-9 has a message of great importance to you and to all Christians. The Bible contains many lists, some of which are just that --lists; others have wonderful direction for the seeking Christian. Peter gives us such a list.

Before we look at the list, we need to realize that this is Peter's final letter to the men and women whom he has loved and served over the years. In verses 14 (not part of the list), he says....."knowing shortly I must put off this tabernacle (body), even as our Lord Jesus Christ\ has shown me." In other words, Peter knows that death is very near; those he leaves behind, to stir up their memories, that they may not forget his teaching about the Lord. His last thoughts are not for himself but to reach out in love to those he is leaving. And what does he tell them? Verse 1 mentions faith: God's gift, the foundation to which all else is added. Practically, this faith means trusting in God in all situations --as is Peter at this time. See Phil. 4:6-7.

Next, he mentions virtue. In this Greek, this word means strength, valor and manliness. Goodness is an anemic translation, for virtue here is the strength which is a primary requisite for the Christian walk.

To faith and virtue add knowledge--personal Bible study. No amount of being taught replaces moments spent with the Great Teacher, the Holy Spirit.

Faith, virtue, and knowledge lead to self-control. Most social ills can be attributed to weakness in self control. Abuse, alcoholism, drug addiction, and crime, as well as petty everyday upsets, result from lack of self control.

Patience follows, perhaps as an aspect of self control. It means endurance without complaining; maintaining a hopeful, trusting attitude in the face of hardship and disaster.

Having developed these graces, the Christian is increasing in godliness. This is not just outward behavior, but a respect for Him, love for His work, and concern for His creation--all of it!

Finally, the journey ends with love--brotherly kindness and agape love: love that loves to love! Such a person has arrived at peace with mankind, whether people are lovable or not; and an enduring peace with the Heavenly Father--the peace that passes all understanding.

The rewards are great, too. At such a point we are "vaccinated" against Christian barrenness and blindness (verses 8-9). WE shall never fall: our lives will be useful to others, rewarding to ourselves. Finally, we shall have great entrance into the Kingdom of God. WE SHALL NEVER FALL!

Scholarship Opportunities

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10)

It is with great pleasure that Abe Brown Ministries, Inc. promotes Christian education for the young adults of the Tampa Bay communities. The Ministry will provide scholarships to those who qualify and are chosen by its selection committee.

Scholarships will be given for Trinity College of Florida which provides a safe and secure learning environment, assists the men and women in discovering truth and developing moral character for the present and the future. The instructors are highly trained and certified, love to teach, and encourage students to live as the "salt of the earth," ministering and discipling others into the Kingdom of God.

Anyone interested may contact the office at (813) 247-3285.



Wanted!!

Volunteering was envisioned and began as a movement dedicated to "reaching and uplifting" the people. This means going wherever needed and doing whatever was at hand. Today, volunteers are "touching lives" showing that there are no limits to caring!

At Abe Brown Ministries, we need volunteers--we need YOU! One person CAN make a difference!

We are seeking volunteers for the following:

- A. Crusaders
- B. Bus Drivers (Class B with P Designation)
- C. Receptionist
- D. Environmental Technician/Handyman
- E. Mentors

The jobs don't pay--but there is GREAT REWARD!

If you are interested, contact our office at (813) 247-3285.

"And now here is my secret, a very simple secret; it is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye."

-- Antoine de Saint-Exupery



freeing people from the
prison, surrounding their
hearts, minds and souls.

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (Eph. 5:16)

2003 PRISON MINISTRY SCHEDULE

DATE	INSTITUTION/CHURCH LOCATION	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	SERVICE	NOTES
APRIL					
SAT. 12	MARION C.I. ^ (LOWELL, FL) MAIN UNIT & WORK CAMP	6:00 AM	8:00 AM	9:00-11:00 AM, 1:00-3:00PM	MINI-CRUSDE/REC
SAT. 26	MOORE HAVEN C.I. (MOORE HAVEN)^ SOUTHBAY C.I. (SOUTHBAY) ^	4:00 AM	8:00 AM	9:00-11:00 AM, 1:00-3:00 PM	CHAPEL SERVICE MINI-CRUS/REC
MAY					
SAT. 10	COLEMAN FED. CORR. FACILITY ^+ MEN & WOMEN'S UNITS	10:45 AM	12:30 PM	1:00-3:00 PM (M), 5:30-8:00 PM (W)	CHAPEL SVC.
SAT. 24	POLK C.I. (POLK CITY)^ MAIN UNIT AND WORK CAMP	11:00 AM	12:30 PM	9:00-11:00 AM, 1:30-3:30 PM	CHAPEL SVC.
JUNE					
SAT. 14	BAKER C.I. ^ (SANDERSON)	4:30 AM	8:00 AM	9:00-11:00 AM (W), 1:00-3:00 PM (M)	MINI-CRUSADE
SAT. 28	LOWELL C.I. (LOWELL, FL)+ LEVY FORESTRY CAMP (BRONSON) +	5:30 AM	8:00 AM	9:00-11:00 AM, 1:00-3:00 PM 1:00-3:00 PM	CHAPEL SVCS.

^Men's Facility

+Women's Facility