

From the King's Table

So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes and for the rest of his life ate regularly at the king's table.
2 Kings 25:29



From the Director

DR. BRUCE PERKINS

**God is awesome in this place
We sense His presence as we sing His praise
There is power here for miracles
Set the captives free, make the broken whole**
(© 1999 Hillsong Music Publishing)

I reflect on what we are seeing God do in this place and my mind goes to this worship song. I am so humbled. We continue to see God's fingerprints on all that is happening around us each and everyday. We held our first Convocation of the Prison Divinity Program in early September. Convocation is the assembling of the university community to inaugurate the beginning of a new academic year. This year we had the unique opportunity to inaugurate this new program as well. It was a marvelous morning. Governor Kevin Stitt and Dr. Heath Thomas, OBU President, delivered challenging and uplifting words to our students. It was a beautiful worship experience.

Students are taking *Introduction to Evangelism* this semester. They are challenged to share their faith on a regular basis and required to turn in a Gospel Conversation report every two weeks. I am excited and proud to tell you the Gospel is being shared on the yard! Six men have come to faith in Christ this semester. . . thus far!

We rejoice in the movement of God among us but we yearn to see greater manifestations of His glory and power. Join with us as we plead for God to do what only He can do. Boldly ask God for big things!

The Prison Divinity Program transforms the lives of incarcerated individuals to redeem both the self and the system through the resurrection power of Jesus Christ by providing a learning environment and program of study that leads to a reformed perspective on life which results in a redirected purpose for life.



Penned from Prison

This section of our newsletter features comments written by our students shared with their permission from their journals and writing assignments.

It's another beautiful day and I get to wake up in Your beautiful presence. I am so grateful for the gift of life and the gift of salvation. I am honored to be Your child. Your Word has proved invalid all those thoughts and labels I've wrestled with over the years. I was in utter despair and thought life was over for me. But You came along, spoke to me, and stepped down to rescue me. - Jered H.

There is a peace behind these doors. Your world slows to a stop when you are confined in 6' by 10' walls. Thoughts from years passed come flooding back as your reality crawls by. Some go crazy not knowing how to deal with the cold isolation of late. However, the men of God build their faith and drink life from His Word. - Cody D.

For my entire life, as long as I can remember, I've had a rebellious nature. I really don't know why but that's just how it is. After reading today's devotional, I came up with a crazy thought. What better way to rebel in today's society than by being a Christian? It goes against all earthly tendencies. I'm going to rebel for Christ! What an awesome way to go against the grain! - Paul S.

This is a pretty night, Lord. I love the rain and the storm. Your power shows through all of this. May Your power give us all the strength to succeed. Forgive us our sins and keep washing us with the blood of Jesus. - Jim K.

Lord, thank You for seeing me through this program. Thank You for using it to help draw me closer to You. Thank You for allowing me to see You working in all of our lives. Lord, we have talked about answered prayers and we have seen relationships restored. We have seen loved ones and friends turn to Christ for salvation. Lord, we know You are moving on this yard. I am so thankful, Lord, because I know only You can make a way. - Javier W.

Father God, I love You so very much. Today has been a good day. We are still on lockdown but You are still with us so I have no need to be stressed or worried which, for me, leads to anger. Rather, I give all my problems to You since I know I cannot do it on my own. I need Your Holy Spirit to keep me on track. - Chad L.

I spent hours reading and doing school work. It is not easy staying caught up with all there is to do. But patient perseverance will result in getting all the reading and assignments done with God's help and Christ strengthening me. - Edsel H.

"If you love me, you will keep my commands. . ." Christ repeats this sentiment many times. All obedience is established in truth as the direct consequence of love. The Spirit continually reminds me that all men are already obedient. We are all obedient to something, indeed, to what we love. - David C.



***Remember the prisoners, as though you were in prison with them ...
Hebrews 13:3***

Rejoice with us!

- Five men have trusted Jesus as their Savior and Lord in the last two weeks!
- We have been given permission to conduct a Christmas Chapel for our students in the visitation room on December 3. Each student can invite one guest from their visitation list!
- Lt. Colonel (retired) and former Congressman, Steve Russell, was a guest lecturer in our Old Testament class and challenged students with his testimony and lessons on godly leadership!
- Students are becoming bold and consistently sharing the Gospel!

Petition the Lord with us . . .

- for our students to be granted access to minister among other inmate populations such as those arriving from county jails and those in isolation.
- for some of our students to be included in new inmate orientation so they can minister to these men before they are transferred to other facilities.
- for COVID physical distancing requirements to be relaxed next semester so all of our students can attend class together.
- for Gospel impact among inmates, administration, staff, and correction officers.
- for our students to finish strong as the fall semester moves forward.

Father, thank You for the opportunity to share Jesus with my daughters. I pray that You will bust down any barriers they may try to put up in order to know Christ and You. I know that You value them and You want them to be saved. You can do it, so do it, please! Reveal Yourself to them in everyone and everything around them. Chase down their hearts and be relentless. Use Your Spirit to create opportunities to witness to them and shatter their hearts upon the Rock of Jesus Christ! Thank You for the absolute blessings they continue to be in my life. Thank You for watching over them. Thank You for their salvation in Christ! Amen. - Jason C.

God, I thank You for answering prayer concerning my sister. It was only a few weeks ago that I was moved to reach out to her. I asked You to soften her heart towards me and she has. Now, I ask You, Lord, to prepare her heart for the witnessing I will do. Prepare my heart as well, Lord. Give me the knowledge and the right way to present the Gospel to her. Thank You, God, for allowing me to experience You and the work You are doing. Thank you for making the things I'm learning in class come to life for me.- Brett J.



Are you blessed by the comments from our students?

Send an email to bruce.perkins@okbu.edu and tell us how God is using their words to impact your life. I will read your email to them (anonymously) and let them know how their ministry is being extended beyond the prison walls.

You can view a video of Convocation by visiting www.okbu.edu/pdp.

Convocation

September 7, 2021

