

July 21, 2020

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

It is hard to know where to begin in all this craziness. As followers of Jesus, I hope and pray that you are spending more time in your Bibles and less time reading social media and watching the news. I honestly believe that God is going to do a mighty work in these days. My prayer is that the Church would become the vessel for change that He created it to be. If we look at the Sermon on the Mount, He tells us how to become the salt and light that will change this culture.

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Through these crazy times God has given us many opportunities to engage kids and stay connected. When they shut down the detention center, we were meeting kids daily by Zoom and Google Meet. We would do a devotional with a different pod every day. Believe it or not we really established some deep relationships through that. Now that we are back in there, we are following up with one-on-one times with the kids. Many of these kids have no friends or family and are struggling with being alone. It is so awesome to see a kid's face light up when they realize we want to spend time with them. It is an honor and a privilege to love on these kids, pray for them, and tell them about Jesus. I know that God has created me specifically for this.



*Letters from the kids at the detention center during quarantine.*

We are back to doing bible studies twice a week and church services on Wednesday evenings. I believe the kids and the staff are glad to have us back. There are a lot of new faces since we were in the facility last, and one of our challenges has been building relationships with all these new kids. It is great to be back in the facility and have face to face time with the kids.

Gods has reminded us of the power of prayer and to never give up praying for these kids. We saw God answer prayer in a mighty way in two young ladies' lives and ours as well.

Early this summer we had a homeless pregnant teen that we were trying to find housing for. She went into labor before she could solidify she had a home to bring her newborn home to. We had exhausted all our resources to the point that this young lady and her new preemie baby girl were staying in the home of one of our staff. After praying for weeks, God opened some doors and provided her, and her new baby girl housing and they moved in in a matter of two days. She has since gotten her drivers permit and is applying for jobs.

Over this last year, I have told you about a young lady that Patty and I have been loving on. I met her about 2 years ago at the alternative school and in the detention center. We have remained in contact, visited her throughout many facilities in Minnesota, and have tried to bring her into our home. We have legally gone through every hoop that they have asked us to go through. To say it has been challenging would be an understatement. This young lady got herself into a legal





predicament and was sitting in an emergency room and no one would take her. They called Patty and I and asked if we would take her. Of course, we said absolutely. After trying to get her into our home for over a year they called us! Since then she has been staying with us almost every other weekend.

After countless prayers, God answered prayers for both of these girls in a matter of a week. We thank and praise God for his faithfulness.

Another major answer to prayer happened this summer as well. For years now I have told you about our faith-based power lifting program called the Daniel Project. God laid this on Nate Safe and my heart at least 4 years ago. We have run this summer program a couple seasons using the weight room at Park Christian School, but we have always been looking for a space of our own. God has shown up in a big way and has given us use of a 21"x21" garage that we have put all our equipment in and it is working out great. We have 2 full stations that we can squat, bench, and deadlift at. Being able to control the schedule and environment, we can run two full programs. One program with kids from the alternative school Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, and the other with some of the kids from the detention Monday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons. We always start with prayer, and finish with devotions. This program has been an awesome tool to build and deepen relationships with these young men and women. When God laid this dream on my heart, the hope was that eventually we would get kids from the detention center. God is so faithful in His timing.

I want to close by saying thank you for all the love and support you have shown us over these past 17+ years. God is doing a mighty work through us and we can't do what we do without you.

Thank You & God bless,

Mike, Patty, & Family

