

# Mighty to Save ministries

*Offering hope and new beginnings to young adults who want to be free from addictions by providing mentoring, discipling and transition assistance.*

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## Hittin' the Gate

Kevin is a young man we met at the Island County Correctional Facility. Kevin is a 30 year old father of two young girls. We only did a couple of visits with Kevin before he left for prison, but he has been good at keeping in touch while he was incarcerated.

Kevin enjoys reading our Newsletters. He took some journalism classes in school and offered to write about his experiences in prison and his transitioning out back into life. I loved this idea.

Kevin is getting ready to be released and by the time this paper goes to print, he will be out. This is about the emotions as he prepares to "hit the gate."

Thank you Kevin for being open and vulnerable and willing to share your journey with us.

~ Christina

From Kevin:

As I take a moment to evaluate my surroundings, my fellow inmates, and the feelings toward it all, I am stricken by fear. Not the same fear I felt when I first arrived. First, it was the fear of what was within, now it is the fear of what is out.

I was once given a release date and it was a happy thought, something to look forward to. "There is a day," I would think, "that I will return to what I've always known." The days passed by, I was sure of less and less, and now it is backwards. It is here that I know, and out there that I fear. Crazy as it sounds, a part of me doesn't want to leave. Crazy indeed! Who would ever desire prison over freedom?

Despite the television drama, there is one thing about prison in America everyone seems to ignore: everything is given to us and we have it better than most. But outside of here, I have absolutely nothing. Where will I go? Where will I find clothes? Where will my next meal come from? How am I going to pay for these things? What about hygiene; showers; housing; bedding; a job? Who will hire me? What will I do? What should be my first priority? Is there anyone to help? Am I all alone? Fear. Worry. Confusion. Loneliness. Frustration. Anxiety. Depression. Hopelessness.

It's no longer a wonder why my fellow inmates come back again and again. Even a short time here introduces the comfort behind institutionalization.

Of course, we all want to be free, at least, it seems, that's all we reminisce over and look forward to. The question is, how do we find the comforts we need in life past our uncomfortable emotions?

For me, it meant accepting that I didn't have an answer suitable to success. It meant looking to God for direction. This direction I found in Matthew 6:25-34 - "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow... if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?... Therefore do not worry... but seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

As the worry subsides, my eyes awoken to the work of His hand in my life. Doors began to open through prayer and many of my needs have begun to be met.

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Already, I have a place to go and a bed to sleep in. People I don't even know have offered help and resources. Of course, I'm still afraid of the unknown; but there is comfort in knowing that God is with me, as well as His people; and as long as I look to Him, everything will be okay.

~ Kevin

**Participant’s Note**

My good friend, Stephen, stepped out of his comfort zone this week and decided to share with you his change of heart. It truly is amazing. I have known Stephen for a few years, and I am absolutely astonished at the changes in him.

When I would meet with Stephen on the streets, he was very paranoid. He was always looking down, he had one of the saddest hearts I had ever met. When he went to prison, he knew he wanted change and hoped to find it. Well, he did and in a big way.

Stephen encountered Jesus while in isolation. He was given and received a revelation about his identity in Christ and a whole new understanding of his Father God.

It is so fun to see the changes in Stephen as he grows closer to the Lord. Each letter has a new revelation, a new feeling. It is as if someone else is writing these letters, certainly not the person that left Island County Jail for prison. Stephen is transformed.

I want to thank Stephen for being courageous and vulnerable. Thank you for moving past your “fear of man” and coming into agreement with what God has called you to be.

From Stephen:

I have seen and felt so much peace in my mind and heart since I have learned what a true intimate relationship with Jesus and God truly is. Every day, I notice old thinking patterns changing; and for the first time, not reacting in a hostile manner or thinking in the survival manner. I am still working on it, but I believe I'm growing so much. It is so much easier when I just look toward Jesus and remind myself that I am righteous therefore I

have nothing to worry about. I watched a Joseph Prince sermon on TV a couple weeks back, he suggested reading Psalm 32-42. He said it will help to understand how everything is possible through Jesus. I think Psalm 32 really opened my mind and heart further to how special I am and how special Jesus' finished work is.

Psalm 32:1-2; it starts out right away telling you, “Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and whose spirit there no deceit.”

Right away it just grabs your attention telling you that you are blessed because your sins are forgiven through His grace. Every day, when the enemy starts trying to put doubt in my head, I just remember those first words, “Blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven.” There is so much in this one Psalm.

I have always, even when I was strung out and depressed, wanting to end my life and trying, every time I used, I remembered God and wondered why I always felt Him pulling at me; and the second part of this Psalm, I feel really touches on that. “When I kept silent my bones grew old. Through my groaning all the day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.”

Drug addiction can really be related to that second part of this Psalm. When you stay stuck in your addiction, running from the Lord, you will feel the pain and the loneliness so much more. Not until you face Him and realize that you've fallen short, will He bring you back into His race. Then that heavy burden will lift off your heart like you have never felt before.

I remember the day in the county jail when I finally faced Him. I was angry with the world and my life; but once I let go and felt His presence my heart and soul, I felt a relief that I have never felt before.

The third part of this Psalm gives me strength every time I feel like the world is

against me. Every time I think that I'm gonna fail when I get out, or the enemy starts reminding me how many times I have fallen to my addictions, I remember what the Psalm says. “For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to you in a time when you may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they shall not come near him. You are my hiding place; you shall preserve me from trouble; you shall surround me with songs of deliverance.” Remembering that part of the Psalms when thoughts of doubt creep in my head, has allowed me to refocus my mind, reminding myself that as long as I keep my sights on Jesus, no troubles will touch me.

Then, the last two parts just reconfirm everything David says, except the confirmation is coming straight from The Father's mouth.

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you.”

God says He will guide you with His eye. This statement always brings me back into focus; what stronger focus could there be?! As long as I look toward Him, He is going to show me the way. No troubles will touch me, I will overcome all the enemy has to throw my way, because I am righteous through His Grace, just because He loves me and wants to see me happy and in a life I can feel proud of. God is great. I have done nothing but spit in His direction my whole life; but just because I am His son and He is my Father, He has forgiven me and will be my Shelter, my Peace, my Resting Place. I know this because it is exactly what He says.

The final part of Psalm 32:10-11; “Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice you righteous; And shout for joy all you upright in heart.”

It's so awesome how much He truly loves us. For a long time, I didn't truly realize it, but I have found that He truly does

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love us; and as long as we look to Him for guidance, He will show us the way.

What has helped me to see how my relationship should be is by putting myself in His spot and seeing that He wants the same relationship, that as a father, I want with my two boys. I want my sons to look toward me for help in everything that troubles them. I want to know about the things that make them happy, all I want is to be a part of their lives.

And if you look at the words of Jesus and all the prophets, they are all telling you exactly that. God, our Father just wants an intimate relationship with you. He wants to shower you with Love. God is awesome!

For me, understanding what an intimate relationship is has brought me closer to Jesus and our Father. I’m 32 years old and I just learned what it is to be in an intimate relationship, not just with God but with anyone. Here is what I learned.

Intimacy involves sharing yourself with another in a mutual way.

Intimacy involves mutual understanding with the loved one.

Intimacy encourages the positive interpretation of the others motives.

Intimacy means holding the loved one in high regard.

Intimacy means promoting the good of the loved one.

Intimacy means you can depend on each other at all times.

Intimacy involves the mutual sharing of selves.

It includes all those aspects described. It’s the friendship aspect of a full relationship. It contains warmth, positive feelings for the other and a desire to act for the others well-being.

I’ve found reminding myself what an intimate relationship truly is has helped strengthen my relationship with God.

**Pen Pals Needed**

We continue to receive requests from inmates desiring Christian pen-pals. All this really requires is sharing life experiences via letters or email. It’s listening, encouraging and speaking life

with someone that wants and desires a friendship in Christ. The following is another recent request we received.

*Dear Mrs. Bowling,*

*My name is Elliott. A friend told me about the ministry you run, “MtSM”, and what you had done for him. I am a true believer in our Lord and Savior as well. I have never had any sort of correspondence with someone, via pen-pal through a church, but I am very much interested in having somebody to write to about my thoughts concerning my Christian faith. Mrs. Bowling, I know you don’t know me, but I would love to write to you to show you my sincerity in this matter. If nothing else please put my name in your newsletter as you did for my friend Michael and let our Father in Heaven find me a pen-pal.*

*Sincerely,  
Elliott*

If you are willing to write a letter once or twice a month, please contact me. This really doesn’t require a lot of time but the investment could have many heavenly returns. Thank you for prayerfully considering this very meaningful outreach.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Night of Hope



**Details below...**



**Impacted by Addiction?**  
 join us for a  
**NIGHT of HOPE**  
 An evening of Connection,  
 stories of Transformation and  
 Hope for the future.  
 7:00pm Saturday, June 4th  
 Oak Harbor Senior Center  
 51 SE Jerome Street, Oak Harbor, Wa  
 Mighty to Save ministries

## To Support MtSM

### Commit to Pray — Email

prayer@mightytosaveministries.org and request to be

added to the email list.

**Finances —** MtSM is funded solely by private contributions.

Your ongoing support helps in funding the purchase of

Bibles, teaching materials, travel, meetings, volunteer

training, counseling and so much more. Please consider

supporting MtSM on a monthly basis.

### To Donate

Mail checks to the below address or go to

mightytosaveministries.org and donate online via PayPal.

### Contact Us

**Mighty to Save Ministries**

P.O. Box 1738 Oak Harbor, WA 98277

info@mightytosaveministries.org  
(360) 929-2959



ministries  
P.O. Box 1738 | Oak Harbor | WA | 98277

## Join the Team

**Prayer:** Your prayers are powerful and effective! If you would like to join

our team of Mighty to Save Ministries Prayer Warriors, please send an

email to: [prayer@mightytosaveministries.org](mailto:prayer@mightytosaveministries.org)

**Financial Support:** Please consider MtSM in your monthly giving. You can

give a one time donation or schedule monthly giving using PayPal. Go to

[mightytosaveministries.org](http://mightytosaveministries.org) for details.

Mighty to Save Ministries is registered with the Internal Revenue Service as a

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