

# Memo

**To: Friends of the Bible College**  
**From: Bruce Leary, Director**  
**Date: October 31, 2001**  
**Re: Bible College Update**

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## **Personal Greetings**

**A special hello to all of you out there. Yes, we are still very active in the prisons. Since we last talked: I have been to Portland for three weeks of courses in the pursuit of my doctorate in Missiology; classes have begun at Lancaster State Prison (on Saturdays); our son, Dave, married Tiffany Herbert; our other son, Bobby, moved to Diamond Bar to attend college; Liz's mom left us & went into God's presence on October 6, 2001; Liz's Aunt Orpha (who lives with us) just turned 94 years old.**

## **Courses in Progress**

### **At Donovan Correctional Facility:**

- 1. Bible Study Methods in James – This course covers 16 Bible study methods utilized in all five chapters. Obviously, the book deals with putting your faith to work in the daily life.**
- 2. Bible Study Methods Facilitator Skills – This course is a training course to prepare these men to be leaders, and to allow them to teach Bible study methods to the new students.**

**At California State Prison, Lancaster:**

- 1. Bible Study Methods in Philippians – There are two classes being conducted – one Saturday morning – one Saturday afternoon (twenty students total)**

**At other prisons in the state: We have 25-30 students scattered around the state correctional system taking these courses.**

### **Proposed Courses**

**Preparation to Leadership will begin at Donovan at the end of November. This course will cover temperaments, spiritual gifts, personal testimony development, and doctrinal statement development.**

**Bible Study Methods in 1 Timothy will begin at Lancaster on November 17, 2001.**

### **Financial Needs**

**We need folks who will give \$25 to sponsor one student for one course. Most of the men pay when they can; some have no funds – we turn no one away.**

**My personal support needs to increase. I do this Bible college ministry full time. We need monthly partners to stand with us as we teach prisoners the Word of God & how to study it accurately.**

### **Book Needs**

**We use the following books: Spiritual Leadership by Oswald Sanders, 30 Days to Understanding What Christians Believe by Max Anders, and The Moody Handbook of Theology by Paul Enns. We try to provide textbooks for the men while the class is in session; they cannot purchase their own copies for the most part so we loan them a copy. If you would like to help in the securing of these books, we welcome your involvement.**

## **Personal Observations**

- 1. There is an eagerness to study the Bible like I have not seen in a long time. I watch inmates come to the course orientation meeting, look interested and express some cautious plans to take the course. Signing up for a course exposes them to potential failure, something most inmates have had enough of. If we can get them to take a course and stick with it for three weeks, we can usually convince them that they are capable.**
- 2. I love it when an inmate says things like: "I've never been good in school until now", "I never knew that was in the Biblical text", "I have read this book many times & have never seen that", "My mother would be proud of me; I wish I had taken this coursework years ago", "Since taking these courses, I have gained a love for God's word".**
- 3. Inmate Steve shared that he had wasted the last 16 years of his life in prison doing very little & being mad. Recently, he asked the Lord to direct him to that which would give his life purpose, and which would honor God in the process. That very week I (Bruce) showed up at the prison to start a course. You should hear the class work that he does; the quality of his homework is a sight to behold. This is an inmate who may never get out of prison; however, he may stay in a long time to reach other inmates who need character, integrity, and academic skills.**
- 4. My life has been encouraged by the courses being taught – watching the men dig into the truths of God's word – listening to them present their findings during class – watching them teach other men.**
- 5. Might I say unashamedly that I love these men (prisoners) and I am willing to teach them, hug them, demonstrate vulnerability to them, cry with them, pray with them, or just sit and listen to them. Pray for Liz and I as we travel into enemy territory every week,**