



October 2023 Loaves & Fishes Report

Too Small to Matter?

If you are like me, there are times you wonder if what you do each day makes any difference in this world.

For example, I can do a great job mowing the lawn, but the grass just keeps growing. If I paid all the bills this morning, by tonight more will have

arrived. And if I was the best parent in the world today, I will still need to take care of my child tomorrow! Do the things I do make any difference?

People have struggled with feeling insignificant for all of earth's history. In Zechariah 4:10, God asked the question, "Who has despised the day of small things?" Can small things make an eternal difference?

Jesus says, "Yes!" In Matthew 10:42, Jesus promises an eternal reward to anyone who gives a child a cup of cold water to drink if they do it because of a desire to serve and obey God.

What is a cup of cold water? I would like to think of giving a cup of cold water as doing a little more than is required of us. As a parent, I need to give my child something to drink. However, I can choose to take the time to put an ice cube in their water rather than give them the lukewarm water that was on the table all day. Jesus promises us a reward if we do more than we need to because we want to obey Him.

The ministry of Lighthouse Publishing is only possible because of many people who give. Some people give funds, some pray for the work, some write articles, some process mail, and some distribute magazines. Thank you to each one that contributes! Even if you feel your part is small, we need you. As we work together many souls are encouraged to continue walking with Jesus, and this makes a difference for eternity!

—Stephen Lauver, Treasurer

Issue 50 Update

In the next issue of Loaves & Fishes, the theme will be the Church. In prison, church takes on a different shape from what it is on the outside, and yet the principles remain the same. The Church is the body of Christ, and wherever even a few believers gather together, Jesus promised to be present. This includes the cells, dorm rooms, and gathering places of the prisons and jails of our nation.

The Church in prison has an identity and a mission. Our goal is to stir our readers to become enthusiastic participants in the Church of Jesus Christ. Our "Persevering in Prison" column for this issue attempts to do this by describing one of the blessings of the body of Christ in Prison: diversity.

One thing is certainly true of prison: There are all different types of people in here, from all walks of life. This can make living in prison difficult because we have to learn to always respectfully and sometimes delicately coexist with people we would have never interacted with on the outside.

This diversity, however, can be a positive. In 1 Corinthians 12:12-30, Paul gives us the illustration of the Church as the body of Christ. Because of the diversity within such a close proximity, prison is perhaps the best place for us to see the entire body in action.

On the street, Christians tend to cluster. If you walk into a church, you will usually see a group composed of mostly the same race and very similar doctrinal positions, all separated by geographic lines. In prison, we are all thrown into the same place. In this way, we go from a very small mirror with which we can try to see the body of Christ on the outside to a full-length mirror in prison.

What do we see when we look into that mirror? Believers of all sorts of differing personalities, races, denominations, crimes, talents, and spiritual gifts. But even though we see the individual parts, we recognize them as all belonging to the same body. Being part of the same body, we have to learn to interact and take care of one another. The question is, how do we do this in the prison setting?

The writer, a Christian believer currently in prison, goes on to advise our readers about practical ways to build the Church while incarcerated. If believing inmates can envision themselves as being part of the body of Christ, imagine how this can energize their Christian walk!

We expect to be able to ship issue 50 out to our readers and distributors by December, which will meet our current schedule of 3 issues per year. The cost of printing and shipping our last magazine issue was \$32,500. We have a current bank account balance of around \$21,000, which means we have about 65% of the funding needed to publish the next issue.

It is humbling to see the support of our donors for yet another magazine project. With your continued support, we will continue to work to bring the teachings of the Christian faith to believers in prison. Thank you so much for your generosity.

-Michael Fisher, Manager of Operations

Reader Feedback

Hello Loaves & Fishes magazine, I am currently serving my first term in prison. I am waiting to be shipped out to my next destination. A brother of mine here in reception got me and brought me back to Jesus Christ. I was going down the wrong path, but I've been saved. I have a son and a family that loves me waiting at home. So I'm reaching out to please ask if you guys have a Bible you can send me. I'm also asking to take part in free Bible correspondence courses for inmates. Please, and thank you.

-Rafael Soto, HDSP, Susanville, CA

Distributor Feedback

We have a weekly Bible study, and Loaves & Fishes magazine helps engage inmates in the Word until the next Bible study. It is good to see that growth happening.

-Mr. Will Clark, Oakley, KS

Men and women have told me that the articles are very inspirational, and they like the puzzles.

-Chaplain Rev. Duane Stanton, Stanton, MI

The Bible studies have helped the men to know their Bibles more. The testimonies have let them see they are not the only ones to have gone through things.

—Chaplain's Office, CCF, Collins, NY

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