

## Meet Erika

Three years ago I met Erika who was attending the EXCEL program in Dallas, Texas, where I was speaking. (EXCEL is for young women ages 16-20+ designed to equip them for life skills in their Christian womanhood). I was moved to tears as I read the letter Erika later wrote to me of how the Lord had worked in her life...



Erika and her brothers

“Dear Stacey, I attended EXCEL three years ago when you came and shared your story with my class. Your testimony still rings loudly in my heart. I came to EXCEL that year with secret sins. That night after you spoke, the Holy Spirit convicted me so strongly. I went up to my room and just sobbed. I remember begging God that if He did anything for me at EXCEL, I would ask that He free me from this bondage that was weighing on me so heavily. I knew the only way I would be free was to confess to my parents. Several weeks later, through the help of a friend, mentors and the Lord, I was able to talk with them.

Of course, my parents were very disappointed, but they embraced me with love and forgiveness. Later that day, my dad drove two hours to bring me flowers. That was the beginning of a fresh, healthy relationship with him. Before EXCEL it was almost non-existent. After returning home from EXCEL, we worked on our relationship together, and we started to make small changes. We went on dates, went for walks and talked more often, until eventually, I was “Daddy’s Little Girl” again.

This summer I lost my precious daddy in a drowning accident. He was attempting to rescue my soon-to-be adopted sister out of the water, and he slipped in the current. I had the most amazing past three years with my dad and wouldn’t trade them for anything. **Had I not prayed that prayer, had I not made that phone call, I would be living in regret right now.**

I, too, had the great privilege of sharing my testimony to this past EXCEL class. To my surprise, it brought much healing as I shared. What a blessing! (I’m sure you’ve had this experience many times after you shared your story.)



It’s amazing how God used you as such a vital part of my restoration between the Lord, my mom and my dad. But that’s what life is all about—each of us helping one another. So, thank you, thank you, thank you for allowing God to use you in such an incredible way! You have impacted my life so much!” - *Erika*

*I share this story with you because I believe it so clearly illustrates “a message in a life reaches a life.” The Lord uses every situation to bring Him glory and to minister to another person’s life, just like He did with Erika and with me. When we share our failures from a transparent life, the “fragrance of Christ” can fill the room, as it did when the woman brought the alabaster box to Jesus (Luke 7:36-50). Her transparency before God and others brought her forgiveness and freedom. The only failures in our lives are the ones we are not free to share. - Stacey Smith*



## MCPHERSON CHAPEL FUND

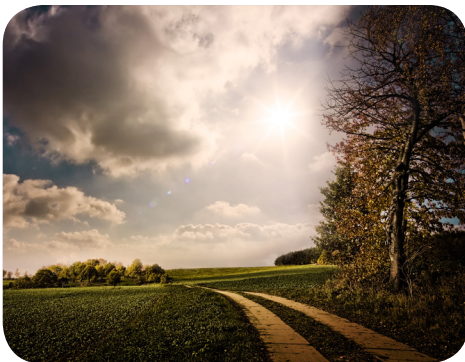
There are 900 inmates currently housed at the McPherson Unit in Newport, Arkansas. An average of 150 inmates attend religious services every Sunday. However, as the average attendance increases, it will require two services, putting a strain on the chaplaincy department and security staff, as well as greatly limiting the allotted time for worship services. Because of this pressing need, a fund has been started for the building of a new chapel. Our goal is to raise \$300,000 in order to begin the construction of a new chapel, classrooms and offices for the McPherson Unit. Currently, we have 36% of the full funding for the chapel. Once all of the funds are received, the construction can begin!

Please pray and watch with us as the Lord provides this facility for ministry to the inmates. All gifts are tax deductible, and 100% of the proceeds will go to the construction of the new chapel. For more information, call 870-512-2259.



## NEW TRAINING IN 2011

P2P continues to hold quarterly training sessions in Springdale, Bryant, Texarkana and Jonesboro, Arkansas. These half-day sessions are created to increase your love and understanding for God's Word. In Bryant, we're developing a new series entitled, "The Institute of Recovery." This training will eventually be produced as a resource for believers who minister to the incarcerated population or for those living in addictive lifestyles. Attendees in Bryant are already sharing how valuable this instruction has been for their personal lives and their ministry with others. For more information, visit [prisonpurpose.com/events](http://prisonpurpose.com/events).



## RUNNING THE RACE

Many have joined us in studying the book of Hebrews with the PAL program and Pleasant Grove Baptist Church via online audio messages. (You can join us at: [prisonpurpose.com/multimedia](http://prisonpurpose.com/multimedia).) Now that we've begun chapter 12, we're seeing that the race that is set before us is not a "flimsy" race, but rather, one that the Christian must endure. It is important that we run with determination and an expected end, fixing our eyes on Jesus; He is the One who creates our faith and our belief system. We cannot endure distractions and "the sin that so easily besets us" if we do not look to the author and finisher of our faith. So, let us run strong and look to Him with confidence for what He will accomplish in us!

## PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for receptive hearts for the inmates of the PAL program who are hearing the truth of God's Word everyday.
- Pray for PAL alumni to be trained as missionaries wherever they are planted after their release.
- Pray for churches to adopt the newly released PAL inmates into their church families with joy.
- Another barracks in the McPherson unit is being designated as a "Character Pod." Inmates in this pod will serve their authorities through jobs on the compound. Pray for the inmates and for those providing structure to this new pod.
- Pray that God gives us wisdom as we develop resources in writing.
- Pray for wardens, correctional officers and state employed correctional personnel throughout the country.