



Hope for Prisoners

Overview

Bible Society Australia is working with World Hope Ministries to offer hope with God's powerful word in South African prisons. The objective of this project is for prisoners to engage with the Scriptures, as Bible Society provides Bibles to graduates of the Bible Discipleship course.

The Need

South Africa has the world's twelfth highest number of prisoners, outranking countries with nearly five times its population. There are a total of 235 operationally active prisons in South Africa, with over 164,000 prisoners. The prison population remains overwhelmingly overcrowded, with more than 45,000 inmates without proper accommodation.

Most of the prisoners have never owned a Bible and have a great need to hear the transformative message of God's love.

In addition to this, there's an opportunity to reach out to Department of Correctional Services (DCS) Officials, who experience many challenges and among whom there is a high suicide rate.



235

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45,000+

prison inmates without proper accommodation in South Africa

"When the oppressed see this, they will be glad; those who worship God will be encouraged. The LORD listens to those in need and does not forget his people in prison."

Psalm 69:32-33, GNT

Goals

The goal of this project is to impart the word of God in these prisoners' lives, contributing to their rehabilitation process, and encouraging them to live crime-free lives after serving their sentences. For this project, World Hope Ministries partners with the Directorate of Spiritual Care from the Department of Correctional Services and other organisations. Bible Society supplies Bibles free of charge to distribute to prisoners, as World Hope Ministries carry out programs contributing to the rehabilitative care of the prisoners.

The goal is to distribute a minimum of 12,500 Bibles into correctional facilities in South Africa reaching men, women and juveniles.

Impact

Lives are changed through this program, as prisoners receive the opportunity to understand the forgiveness and mercy of Christ. For many, their hope has been restored in God, in man, and in themselves. Many also begin to seek restoration with their families and ask forgiveness from those they have affected by their actions.

Testimonies

"My comfort was only like King David's, when he says, 'I become comforted only through the word of God.' If I can see only one soul change and be like what I am today, then I can praise God for that." — Charlie, who received a Bible while he was in prison. Now a free man, Charlie willingly goes back to prison to give hundreds of other inmates what he freely received. He has become a facilitator for the Bible Discipleship Course, and visits some of South Africa's most notorious prisons several times a week.

Prayer Needs

- Praise God for the opportunity to enter South African prisons and preach God's word. Thank him that prisons are open to their inmates receiving the Bible and learning from it.
- Pray for course facilitators, that they may be wise in leading prisoners to the Lord.
- Pray that lives will be changed in South Africa's prisons, that eyes and ears will be opened to the word of God.
- Please pray that the ministries involved will succeed in their work with those who have fallen along the way.