



April 2016

Dear Supporters, Volunteers, and Friends of Life's Key Ministry,

In any given month, we will receive varying levels of appreciation from those who are taking and enjoying our courses. It could be a simple note written on one of their exam sheets. It could be a letter sent to us as a separate piece of mail. Sometimes we will receive a card or a hand drawn picture. We also will get the occasional monetary donation, which is astounding when you think about it, because the little bit of money that can be earned behind bars does not come easily. So when we receive a \$10 or \$20 gift from someone, it means so much to us.

This past month we were treated to something different, and I felt like it was Christmas in March because we received not one, but two actual gifts from inmates. Things that they took the time to think about and decide that it was something we could put to good use.

The first gift we received was a customized self inking stamp. Certain institutions require that we have wording on the front of our envelopes so that the mailroom knows the contents of the package are allowed. A man named Joseph sent it to us, and before being released, he had been in one of the institutions that require the words "Authorized Reading Material" on the envelope. Instead of writing it, we will now be able to stamp it!

The second gift we received was eight blank letter envelopes with forever stamps included. We will use them to send eight letters and will not have to pay for the envelope or postage! This gift came with the following letter:

"I'll start this letter out telling you why I am writing you (that would be smart). I make \$12.80 a month and I send out 8 stamps, and 8 stamps ain't peanuts to me, but each time knowing I am giving back to the Lord a little of what He has given me. It makes me proud. I sent my tithe to a man of God, but he died and then I started sending to his wife. They were both in their 80s and then she died. So I continued to send, but after those two died their organization went downhill, and that's putting it mildly. Why you people are getting my tithe is because you people deserve it more than anyone. You see, being nice to another has it's rewards. So now you know why." - Charles (Ohio)

God has given us this encouragement from two very different sources. Joseph took every course we had to offer and finished our curriculum in 2008 averaging 96%. He continued to take additional courses through ECS and was released from prison this past December. Charles has been behind bars since 1993 for murder and is serving a life sentence. He completed the first course we sent him back in 2003 and then did not return any others. He reached out to us in 2012 and we sent him two more courses which he did not return. The fact that he thought to reach out to us despite having only completed one course 13 years ago amazes me. I am going to send him two more this week.

This was a nice reminder to me that we are working in God's timetable. I am convinced that the course requests we receive and when we receive them are not by coincidence. God is touching the hearts of these men and women and stirring within their hearts the desire to learn more about Him! When that happens, we are here to provide the materials they need right when they need it. But it goes both ways! God also is using others to provide encouragement to this ministry when we need it, and I'm so thankful for His consistent steady hand.

Tim Priano, Director

"And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" - Philippians 4:19

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