

# WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS STEPS OF FAITH

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Living in response to the good news is the call to all believers. Because we have received the gospel of Christ, we are to fully embrace a life that offers this glorious gift to others.

While the Gospel message is singular and clear, the display of this Christian life is a colorful kaleidoscope, a multi-faceted diamond reflecting the light of Christ for all to see. (Colossians 3:17).

We are united in obedience to the Greatest Commandments and Great Commission, but the way we live this out is as different and unique as God has created each of us to be.

In 2017, God softened my heart to see how I could be of use in sharing the Gospel in a new and,

admittedly, unexpected way. Because of my experiences as a Bible teacher and collegiate athlete, I was invited to be part of a ministry team that went to women's prisons to share the love of Christ. This organization, Sports Reach, was connected to my local church, and my mentor, Tina, was to lead the week-long trip. The plan was that our team—composed of women aged 18–48 with varying backgrounds ranging from music ministry to a volleyball team captain—would go into a maximum security women's prison, share the good news of the Gospel with the inmates, and then play a sports game or two.

We quickly found that what the prisoners wanted was not a competitive softball tournament or even a sermon. What they desired was to be heard and to be received with grace. Those hot days spent out on the yard were much less about anyone's athletic ability and much more about the love of Jesus. Through the means of sport, we connected with people who we found to be much more like us than different. We met believer and unbeliever alike in these moments, being used by God and being sharpened by God in the most unlikely of places.

I served as team member or team

leader for these types of trips for a few years. And I would do it on an annual basis if I could! It was in those prison chapels—not on a church platform or behind a proper pulpit—where I practiced my Bible teaching, which served me greatly when I later took on the role of Women's Minister and Children's Minister at Porter Memorial Baptist Church. From these experiences, I was connected with my seminary to teach in local jails. And through those opportunities I was later connected to a prison educational program where I have served most recently.

These programs can be found all over the country, from Kentucky to Florida to Texas. This sort of ministry was never one that I would have identified with or found on my own, but it is what God placed in my path. Serving with them has stretched my comfort zone and my abilities. During these times, I have been made to rely on the Lord and to trust Him in each next step. He used an ordinary individual, with an ordinary makeup of gifts (and flaws) for His glory in this way. When God places opportunities, even ones maybe as foreign to you as serving those in prison, will you step out in faith?



"Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body." Hebrews 13:3 (ESV)

My experiences in these places have drawn me closer to Christ. These times have caused me to see more clearly the great grace that the Lord extends to each of us. In all places are people in darkness, with our sin and need. And to all places, including the seemingly hopeless and often forgotten prison cell, the light of the Gospel can reach. The light of Christ extends to these places as our Savior is sufficient to meet our great need. Will you remember that truth as God calls you? Will you step out, with the light of Christ, to even the darkest places?

In response to the Gospel, may we go with the compassion of Christ to anywhere and everywhere Christ calls.

For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

*Ephesians 5:8*

Sports Reach - <https://sportsreach.org>

Heart of Texas Foundation - <https://heartoftexasfoundation.org>



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