western michigan teen challenge

440 pontaluna road muskegon michigan 49444 231-798-7927

february 2006

dear friends,

Paul the apostle wrote to the church at Philippi from a prison cell and said, **"Rejoice in the Lord always:** (double emphasis) **and again I say, rejoice."** In this world there will be trouble and tribulation, but there is always something in the Lord that we can rejoice about. Then Paul said, **"Let your moderation** (mildness, kindness, meekness, gentleness, sweet reasonableness) **be known unto all men:** (May our attitude and disposition always reflect the kindness of Jesus) **the Lord is at hand. Be careful** (anxious) for nothing; (do not tolerate anxiety or worry) **but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.** (In other words don't worry about anything, but pray about everything. And don't forget to thank God.) **And the peace** (absence of worry and fear, quiet rest) **of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep** (guard) **your hearts** (thoughts, feelings, mind, the middle) **and minds** (intellect) **through Christ Jesus.** (Phil. 4:4-7)

Paul did not instruct them to do what he himself did not do. He practiced what he preached. From a prison cell he wrote, **"...for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me."** (Phil. 4:11-13)

Paul learned in all his circumstances to rejoice in the Lord, to be kind, sweet, gentle and mild, not to worry or be anxious, but to pray about everything. And then, he maintained a thankful heart. Even in prison and facing death, God's peace kept his heart and mind. He learned contentedness and that he could do all things through Christ who strengthened him. He wanted the Christians at Philippi to practice and experience the same.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we can know and experience it, too. We can do all things through Christ which strengthens us. We always triumph in Christ. He always gives us the victory. In Him, we are more than conquerors. You will not be overcome, you are an overcomer. Praise God!

GRADUATES

CARL WINKELMAN

ANTHONY LOCKWOOD

MATTHEW EHN

VALERIE WILLIAMS

ELIJAH BLAIN

DEBORAH JONES

CRYSTAL HOUSER

All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.

ALUMNI FELLOWSHIP

Friday, February 17, 2006 at 6:30 pm
RSVP Cindy at 231.798.7927
cindyh@wm-tc.com

3RD ANNUAL BOWL-A-THON

Saturday, February 18, 2006 at 12:00 pm
Northway Bowling Center, Muskegon. Call Shawn at 231.798.7927 for more information.

UPCOMING BANQUETS

Muskegon Banquet
March 30th at 7:00 pm
Maranatha Bible Conference Grounds
4759 Lake Harbor Road

Grand Rapids Banquet
April 20th at 7:00 pm
First Assembly of God
2100 Forty Fourth Street

Would you please attend one of these Banquets and perhaps host a table of eight or more. Contact Cindy at 231.798.7927

A STUDENT MOMENT

I want to share with you a very touching letter that was given to me by Erica, one of the new students in the program. It reads as follows: . . . . . .

Dear Pastor McClain,

A week or two ago we were in church, it was when I first came here. You asked me how I liked the program. I put on a smile and said it was wonderful. When actually at that time I was battling with myself and I didn't want to give God everything. I was fake, I lied, and I am very sorry.

I have been in and out of quite a few facilities and always knew how to put on a front. I was a very good manipulator, but never admitted it. Anyways, a few days after that I was having a rough time. I was having serious thoughts about leaving but I knew I had no where else to go. God really laid everything on me really hard until I gave it all to Him. I promised to take it one day at a time, to be honest with myself and the people around me. I'll be honest. I don't know lots of scriptures. I only know as much as I've been taught here about the Bible. I can't sing well to the songs and I have to work really hard to pay attention, to comprehend and study. But since that night I have never felt so safe and so stable ever. I wake up every morning and say thank you instead of waking up in fear. I'm not far along at all. I haven't even begun to learn anything except that I believe and I want to be obedient. I love people that I don't even know and I'm now thankful for stuff I didn't even know I had. Something has been really on my heart about making things right even when no one is around or it's already over. I just wanted you to know that I am sorry for lying to you before. But I love where I'm headed now.

Love,
Erica

After reading Erica's letter I was touched, humbled, in awe and thought how God works so beautifully in each life here at Teen Challenge. I want to thank each of you on our mailing list for being a part of Erica's testimony. Your prayers and giving make you a part of her new life. Thank you!

Keep in mind who are in Christ. That He loves you with an everlasting love. He will never leave you or forsake you. Keep your mind stayed on Him. His precious thoughts toward you are more in number than the sand. You are secure in Him. His compassions fail not, they are new every morning. Great is His faithfulness.

Until next time keep rejoicing, keep sweet, don't worry, pray, be thankful and God will keep you.

Thank you so much for your prayers for us and your faithful financial support. May God bless you richly.

Phil & Michelle Miller

Phil and Michelle