

PRISON EVANGELISM

Prison Evangelism: FAQs

What does Prison Evangelism do?

Prison Evangelism was founded to reach prisoners with the life-changing message of the gospel of Jesus. Helping incarcerated men and women find purpose and power for a new life through faith in Christ can reduce the recidivism rate and cut crime, with its untold personal and social cost on victims, offenders' families, and the rest of society whose taxes help pay for incarceration.

How big is the mission field?

More than two million men and women are in some 2,100 prisons and jails across the United States, which has one of the highest incarceration rates in the world, at an annual cost of around \$80 billion. Twenty percent of all incarcerated men and women in the world are in US prisons. Seventy percent of inmates will return to prison, many of them within three years of their release. At the same time, prisoners have a high response rate to the good news of the gospel when it is presented clearly and effectively.



How does Prison Evangelism work?

Prison Evangelism sends *How to Be a Child of God* free to prison chaplains for distribution in chapel services and to individuals. The 52-page publication is written at a sixth-grade level, with striking illustrations. The book is perfect-bound with no staples, allowing its distribution in isolation cells where men are alone up to 23 hours a day. It has been translated into more than a dozen languages, and also been turned into a 20-minute online video at www.howtobechildofgod.com. There are also two follow-up publications in similar style to *How to Be a Child of God: Seeking God Through Prayer & Meditation* and *Fully Alive and Finally Free*. All three titles are available for free download at the Prison Evangelism website (www.prison evangelism.com).

What results does Prison Evangelism see?

How to Be a Child of God has proved to be an immensely powerful tool. Research has found that one in 10 prisoners who reads the book makes a personal decision to receive Christ as their savior and seeks to start a new life. Since 2010, some 110,000 copies of the book have been distributed, with thousands of recipients contacting Prison Evangelism to tell of their conversion—many asking for extra copies of the book to pass on to fellow inmates and family.

What kind of impact is being made?

Each person who makes a new start in life through faith in Christ and does not return to prison saves taxpayers around \$31,000 a year, the cost of housing and feeding a repeat offender. Harder to calculate are the wider social savings as a result of families being restored, and former prisoners leading others to Christ and new lives.

What makes Prison Evangelism's ministry so effective?

The plain language and striking illustrations of *How to Be a Child of God* communicate biblical truth clearly and compellingly. Because it is deliberately short, it can easily be read in one sitting. Many prisoners tell of reading it on multiple occasions, as other reading materials can be in short supply. Additionally, God's hand seems to be on the project. As one prisoner wrote, "This is an anointed book."

How much does the program cost?

Prison Evangelism distributes *How to Be a Child of God* for just 54 cents a copy, including all production and mailing costs. A new campaign to distribute 600,000 copies of the book will cost \$325,000.

Is this a one-off project?

No, Prison Evangelism hopes to reach every prisoner in the United States, in due course.

How did Prison Evangelism begin?

David Howell originally created *How to Be a Child of God* to use in personal evangelism, to give to people he spoke with about faith in Christ. He planned to print 100 or so copies, but was asked to provide 15,000 copies for distribution to prisoners in Texas by someone who found out about the project. He agreed, and realized from the overwhelming response that God was opening a door for his book to be used effectively in prisons.

What is David Howell's background?

After starting work as a 14-year-old oil field roughneck, he went on to a successful career as a pipeline appraiser and consultant for the oil and gas industry. He became a Christian in 1984 at the age of 44, since when he has been involved in a wide range of evangelistic ministries. Now a great-grandfather, he says of Prison Evangelism, "This is what God has called me to do. I believe he is keeping me alive, healthy and prospering for this ministry."

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Prison Evangelism (www.prisonsevangalism.com) is a faith-based nonprofit committed to transforming and rehabilitating offenders through the distribution of "How to Be a Child of God" and other evangelistic and discipleship materials designed to help prisoners find new purpose and power in life through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

To schedule an interview with David Howell, contact:

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