

**“He delivered me behind the walls”**

You helped Derrick break the chains of his past and become a “healed son of God.”

## INSIDE

**PG 2** Thanks to you, Derrick learned to see himself through God’s eyes

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On September 5, 2007, the gavel fell, and Derrick’s life was changed forever.

A first-time offender involved in drug trafficking, Derrick had just been sentenced to life without parole. But the most painful moment wasn’t the judge’s pronouncement. It was the sound of a cry from the courtroom.

It was his son, just 10 years old . . . the exact age Derrick had been when his own father died.

In that instant, Derrick realized the weight of his choices and how deeply they affected those he loved. Later,

alone in his jail cell, he confronted the truth that change *had* to begin with him.

## THE ROOTS OF BROKENNESS

Derrick’s journey to prison began long before his arrest. Although raised in a loving home in Birmingham, Alabama, Derrick was devastated by the sudden death of his father.

He remembers how the pain overcame him. “I was mad at God. I was mad at the world. I was mad at any individual who crossed my path,” he admits.

To mask his pain and define his manhood, Derrick turned to the streets. “I thought that was the way that you provide for your

family," he explains.

He viewed himself as "untouchable," but internally, he was carrying a "thousand-pound weight" of trauma.

## A NEW IDENTITY IN THE ACADEMY

Prison became an unexpected place of healing for Derrick. Through the Prison Fellowship Academy, he was challenged to rethink what it truly means to be a man.

In the Academy, Derrick learned that true manhood flows from being a healed son of God and that unresolved childhood wounds must be addressed before lasting transformation can occur.

He realized that even after giving his life to Christ, he was still trapped by unforgiveness and a broken sense of identity. He had to stop defining himself by his past and learn to see himself through God's eyes.

"I began to realize that in our identity, we are righteous," he says. "And the only reason I'm righteous is because of Christ's shed blood."

As he embraced these lessons, his behavior changed too. His wife, Shemelia, watched him transform from being unapproachable to being a teacher who sowed into the lives of the men around him.

## A MIRACLE OF RESTORATION

After graduating from the program, Derrick found a job in the prison hospice and also worked in the chapel, cleaning floors on his hands and knees.

Then, after 13 years, Derrick experienced a miracle. Guided by Proverbs 28:13, he wrote letters to a judge confessing his misdeeds. By God's grace, Derrick's sentence was reduced to time served.

However, coming home brought new challenges. He nearly had a panic attack just stepping into a Walmart, and he had to relearn how to be a husband and father after more than a decade away. The humility Derrick learned in prison helped him adapt and trust God with this new chapter.



"The grace of God saw me through it all," Derrick says of his journey that led him to find freedom in Christ.

## PAYING GRACE FORWARD

Today, Derrick and Shemelia run a thriving business, which they view as a ministry. They intentionally hire formerly incarcerated individuals, providing the mentorship and community support Derrick found so vital during his time in the Academy.

"My mission is simple," Derrick shares. "Give others the chance I was given and help them discover who they were always meant to be."

Right now, you have a powerful opportunity to reach more prisoners with the Prison Fellowship Academy.

**Thanks to a special Matching Grant, your gift of any amount will be DOUBLED to change more lives and restore more families like Derrick's. Please give a generous gift today!**



"I knew something in me had to be broken and put back together again," Derrick says. "Christ was my only hope. I tried everything else. It just didn't work."

## HOW YOU CAN PRAY

*Derrick was diagnosed with and continues to battle a serious health condition. Please join us in praying for his complete healing and for comfort and peace for his family.*

# LIVES ARE BEING TRANSFORMED BEHIND PRISON WALLS, THANKS TO YOU!



Heather Rice-Minus  
President and CEO

**Your partnership is changing the lives of incarcerated men and women through the Prison Fellowship Academy.**

Inside prison, Academy students receive daily mentoring, learn accountability, and engage in discipleship and spiritual formation. The Christ-centered curriculum teaches them how to live out their faith while incarcerated and prepares them to carry it forward after release.

Because of you, God's love, grace, and truth shine inside prison walls, making it possible for prisoners to grow in Christ and build new futures grounded in His truth.

Here's what three Academy graduates recently shared about their experience and the impact you made:

*"I had a broken heart, and the only antidote for that is Christ. And I learned that through the Prison Fellowship Academy. Prison Fellowship broke the barriers of my brokenness. There's nothing on this earth that could kill what I have now."*

—Richard, Academy graduate, Florida

*"The Prison Fellowship Academy has given us tools, and it has given us the opportunity to change ourselves inside out. It gives us a self-growth mindset. It shows us what a true healthy community looks like, and it transforms our minds."*

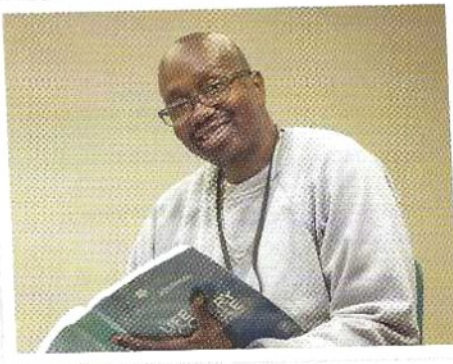
—Christina, Academy graduate, Oklahoma

*"Not having good role models or people who believe in me, I wasn't really able to feel comfortable or be myself. But in the Prison Fellowship Academy, the type of genuine love and support that we find there gives me the courage to be who God made me to be."*

—Jesse, Academy graduate, California

These voices are the direct result of your faithfulness! You're helping transform lives from the inside out, and futures are being written before men and women step outside prison doors.

**Your generous gift today will bring the Academy to more prisons across America. Thanks to a special Matching Grant, any amount you give—up to \$50,000—will DOUBLE to reach twice as many prisoners with hope, discipleship, and real transformation inside and outside prison walls.**



# YOUR GIFT TODAY WILL HELP CHANGE MORE LIVES THROUGH IN-PRISON MINISTRY

YOU CAN DONATE YOUR REAL ESTATE

GIVE TODAY TO MAKE TWICE THE IMPACT!

YOUR GIFT DOUBLES!

Because of you, hope is found inside prison walls. Right now, your gift will be DOUBLED through a \$50,000 Matching Grant to help provide life-changing programs, including the Prison Fellowship Academy, to more men and women behind bars.

**When God changes hearts on the inside, lives change on the outside.**

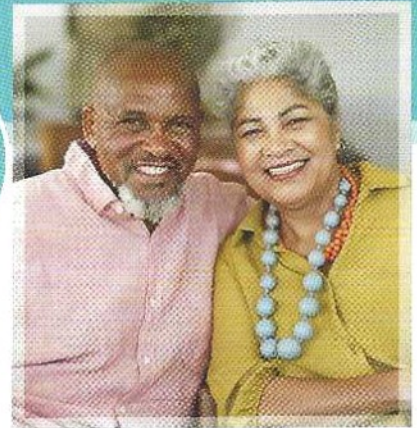
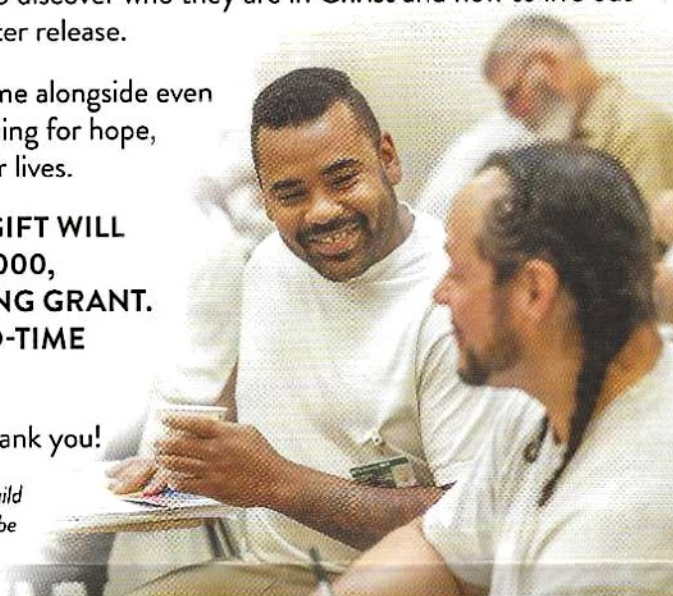
Through the Academy, you help surround participants with mentors who walk with them daily and offer discipleship, accountability, and encouragement rooted in God's truth. Students begin to discover who they are in Christ and how to live out their faith inside prison and after release.

This is your opportunity to come alongside even more prisoners who are searching for hope, meaning, and purpose for their lives.

**GIVE TODAY AND YOUR GIFT WILL BE DOUBLED, UP TO \$50,000, THANKS TO THE MATCHING GRANT. DON'T MISS THIS LIMITED-TIME OPPORTUNITY!**

Please respond right away. Thank you!

*Through the Academy, prisoners learn to build their lives on the truths of God's Word and be ambassadors of peace and hope for others.*



**Do you have a second home, land, or an investment property you want to donate?**

By donating your real estate, you can get a tax deduction for the fair market value and bypass capital gains.

Donate all or just a percentage, and sale proceeds will be used immediately for ministry!

To request your free information packet on gifts of real estate, please contact Planned Giving at **877.PFM.GIVE** or [give@pfm.org](mailto:give@pfm.org)

YOUR GIFT DOUBLES WITH THE MATCHING GRANT!



**GIVE BY MAIL:**

Prison Fellowship  
P.O. Box 1550  
Merrifield, VA 22116-1550



**GIVE BY TELEPHONE:**

If you would prefer to donate by phone, please call 877.478.0100 (M-F, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. ET) toll-free.



**GIVE ONLINE:**

Just visit our website at [prisonfellowship.org/may](http://prisonfellowship.org/may) to put your gift to work right away!

Planned Giving is administered by the Prison Fellowship Ministries Foundation through its offices in Lansdowne, Virginia. Please consult your tax or legal adviser.

**Thank you for your consideration!**



# IF YOU ONLY HAVE A MOMENT, PLEASE READ THIS

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The Prison Fellowship Academy works—and the results are real. Through daily mentoring, discipleship, and spiritual formation, men and women behind prison walls are discovering who they are in Christ, growing in faith, and building new futures once they leave prison behind.

You can help make this transformation possible for even more prisoners. Right now, a **Matching Grant** will **DOUBLE** your gift, up to \$50,000, so your generosity goes twice as far to open new Academy sites and support participants in existing in-prison programs.

Please do all you can to help today while your generosity can go twice as far. Thank you for renewing hope and restoring lives!

—HEATHER RICE-MINUS, PRESIDENT AND CEO • PRISON FELLOWSHIP



Scan this QR code with your camera app to go to the donation page right away.