

Spiritual Growth Reentry TIPSHEET

The Spiritual Growth Reentry TIPSHEET is designed to help ministry workers who are serving men and women during the pre-released planning process and during reentry to address their spiritual needs as they transition to the community. The TIPSHEET is an important resource and a reminder of discussions and plans that have been identified by his or her peers for preparation for reentry. This is intended to be used with a ministry worker and not intended to be a handout merely given to men and women on their way out of the jail or prison door. Please add a list of friendly and accepting churches and contact name in the community where they will be returning (page 6).

Preparing to Go Home

Maybe you have experienced a transforming spiritual event and significant spiritual growth while incarcerated. You have had a lot of opportunities and time to spend reading and studying the Bible, praying, worshipping and sharing life with other Christians. Your faith is important to you. Having a supportive faith community has been wonderful. Spending time with God as part of your daily life and continuing to grow in your relationship with Him has changed your identity, life, priorities, and relationships. You desire to stay connected with God, with the faith community and growing in your faith.

Questions to think about:

- How am I going to continue to grow in my faith when I am released?
- What are realistic expectations for my spiritual growth in the free world?
- Am I willing to take responsibility for my own spiritual growth?
- Am I willing to live a Christ-centered life where my relationship with Christ is the most important relationship?
- Will I look to Christ to guide everything I do?
- Who are the spiritual friends I can connect with when I need advice or encouragement?
- Am I interested in being a spiritual guide for my children and others?
- Will I seek out a mentor or accountability partner(s)?

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!
1 Corinthians 5:17, NIV*

Before Your Release

Answering the following questions with your spiritual coach. This will help prepare you for your release and help you stay in relationship with God in the free world.

- **Do I own my faith?** Is your faith “prison religion” where you are only interested in a relationship with Christ while incarcerated or is it your own? Take ownership of your

faith by recognizing you have a new identity in Christ. Your faith goes with you where you go. You are a Christian, a follower of Christ, and a child of God.

- **Is my faith the top priority in my life?** Rate the importance of growing in your faith.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not importantExtremely important

List who or what will interfere or stop you from keeping your spiritual growth a priority.

- **What should I look for when finding a church?**
 - Doctrinally correct.
 - Teaches from the Bible accurately.
 - Leaders and members are honest about living the Christian life, loving, caring, and forgiving.
 - Helps me grow spiritually and encourages accountability.
- **Red Flag Churches** – controlling pastors, legalism, prosperity gospel, leadership that is not Christ-like
- **See the list of welcoming churches and contact person in your area (page 6).**
- **What relationships, places, things, will tempt me to compromise my standards of behavior?**

- **What happens if my family ridicules my faith or not support my changed life?**

- **What is my strategy for spiritual warfare when facing the temptations and pull of the streets?**

- **What are my expectations of Christians on the outside in living the Christian life in regards to alcohol use, music, movies, etc?**

- **Where/how can I meet people who will support me in my spiritual journey of growing in Christ?**

- **What are ways I can guide my children to know Christ and love Him?**

- **What is my plan of spiritual practices in the free world?**

Create a spiritual plan. Identify which spiritual practices help you grow in your relationship with Christ. List which spiritual practices you will use daily, weekly, monthly, yearly. Your mentor is a friend who you can share with about your spiritual life and plan.

Sample Spiritual Plan (while Incarcerated)

DATE: _____ SPIRITUAL COACH: _____

Spiritual Practice/Description	Day/Time	Where	Changes/Communication
Read and Reflect on Scripture	M-Sat 6:30 a.m.	On my bed	Not go back to sleep after breakfast. Get a Bible from the Chaplain. Get a copy of Daily Bread
Pray	M-F 9:00 p.m.		
Attend small group Bible study	M, W	Living unit or classroom	Sign up for it
Spiritual Friends Pray with someone Enjoy life with friends - FUN	Daily	Living unit	
Participate in Worship Service	Sunday 10 am	Chapel	Sign up
Serve Others	Saturday 9:00 am	Table in day room	Write my children
Meet with mentor	First Sunday each month at 2:00 pm	Day room	Find a mentor
Attend Kairos or other event	Saturday - yearly		

My Spiritual Plan (while Incarcerated)

DATE: _____ SPIRITUAL COACH: _____

Spiritual Practice/Description	Day/Time	Where	Changes/Communication

My Spiritual Plan (In the Free World)

DATE: _____ SPIRITUAL COACH: _____

Daily

Spiritual Practice	Day/Time	Where	Changes/Communication

What I'm getting at, friends, is that you should simply keep on doing what you've done from the beginning. When I was living among you, you lived in responsive obedience. Now that I'm separated from you, keep it up. Better yet, redouble your efforts. Be energetic in your life of salvation, reverent and sensitive before God. That energy is God's energy, an energy deep within you, God himself willing and working at what will give him the most pleasure.

Philippians 2:12-13 MSG

After Your Release: So Now What?

Once you go home, there are so many demands of life that compete for your time. Your time with God begins to become less and less. This is normal. You will never have the same amount of time or spiritual opportunities for growth as you may have had while incarcerated. But you will have different opportunities for growth on the outside.

- Put your spiritual plan into action. You will most likely need to adjust your plan based on the realities of time and life demands.
- Stay in contact with spiritual friends and develop new spiritual friendships.
- Connect with a Bible believing church.
- Look for opportunities to serve, volunteer, and give back to others.

Resources

- *Your Spiritual Journey: Growing in Christ*

Welcoming Churches and Contact Person

Name, address, worship times, website, phone number of church and name of person who will help them get assimilated and sit with.