



Joining an In-Prison Ministry

In John 4:35, Jesus commands us, *“Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest.”*

When wheat is ready for harvest, it looks almost white. But Jesus wasn’t speaking of fields of grain; He was speaking of a mission field that is “white for harvest.”

Prison ministry is a mission field you can be involved in without having to go half-way around the world. There are opportunities for outreach to prisoners in every state.

Ministry Opportunities

People in prison are at the lowest point of their lives. They have lost everything. Many want to change but they don’t know how, and this is the time when they are most open to receiving the Gospel message.

You don’t have to be a super-talented teacher, singer, or preacher. You just need to be willing to be used by God. These are a few ways you might choose to volunteer for in-prison ministry:

- Lead or co-lead a Bible study
- Lead worship services
- Be part of a music ministry
- Help facilitate seminars/workshops
- Teach life skills and/or job preparation skills

Most in-prison volunteer work is done weekly, but there are many things you can do monthly or bi-monthly. The important thing is to be consistent in your ministry.

In-prison ministries are best led by a team of volunteers who share the responsibilities for the ministry. This is especially true for ongoing, long-term ministries that operate year round.

Steps for finding and joining an in-prison ministry team:

- 1. Pray about your decision.** Ask God to lead you into the place of ministry He has prepared for you.
- 2. Talk to your pastor.** Your church may already have an active prison ministry or plans to start one. Discuss the skills you can share and enlist the support of your church.
- 3. Contact Prison Fellowship.** PF staff can help you and/or your church connect with other PF volunteers and/or ministry teams that may be active in your state.
- 4. Get some training.** PF offers training courses for in-prison volunteers that will help prepare you for the ministry God is directing you toward.
- 5. Get approved by your state Department of Corrections.** Most states have a required volunteer orientation class as well as a mandatory background check for new volunteers.

In-prison ministry is challenging as well as exciting. But if God is calling you to this ministry, He will also equip you. As you obey God’s call, your relationship with the Lord will grow and you will find tremendous joy in your service!