

New TBN Program Takes Gospel to Prisoners

With more than 2 million adults serving time in America's prison system, there is a great need for programs that bring hope and encouragement to men, women and youth behind bars. The world's largest religious broadcaster is meeting that need through a new program.

Trinity Broadcasting Network will offer its most popular inspirational networks to prisons across the nation through its program, TBN Second Chance.

Working closely with state correctional officials and partnering with cable and satellite companies like Glorystar Satellite Systems, TBN Second Chance is bringing 24-hour inspirational programming to prison facilities in 31 states, including California, Florida, Ohio, Louisiana, Texas, Kentucky, Michigan, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Colorado, Mississippi, Alabama and Missouri.

"With shrinking budgets and the exponential growth of prison populations, many states are finding it difficult to fund the resources needed to provide crucial rehabilitation for those behind bars," says Mark Reynolds, national director for TBN Second Chance. "The letters and endorsements we've received from correctional officials and prison chaplains tell us that TBN's prison initiative is making a huge difference in the lives of thousands of men and women looking for that second chance in life."

TBN covers the cost of equipment and installation, providing inmates with its four top faith networks: TBN's flagship channel; JCTV network for teens and young adults; the Church Channel, featuring worship services and ministry programs from across the nation; and TBN Enlace USA, TBN's exclusive

Spanish-language Christian network.

Chaplains and corrections officers confirm that the programming inmates are exposed to through TBN Second Chance provides an important catalyst for such a change.

Chaplain Lois Woodard, from the California Institution for Women in Corona, said that TBN's Christian networks provide a positive influence to inmates that helps them overcome destructive attitudes and behaviors. "It is a tool in taking them to the next level emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually, and ultimately preparing them for a successful re-entry into society," she explains.

Alex Taylor, Chaplaincy Services Administrator for the Florida Department of Corrections, said that with budgetary limitations leaving fewer opportunities for helping inmates, the "messages of hope" that TBN's networks provide to inmates are an encouragement to all who work in corrections. "The generous support of TBN in offering its programming via satellite is a statement to every inmate that there are thousands of good people outside of prison who care about the inmates," Taylor comments.

Richard Moran, a noted criminologist and sociology professor at Holyoke College in Massachusetts, explained that numerous academic studies have confirmed the close relationship between viewing TV violence and aggressive behavior. Conversely, he said, inspirational programming has a positive effect. "Offenders need a fundamental shift in how they perceive the world, transitioning from a vengeful mindset to one of grace, forgiveness, and self control," he explains.

TBN founder Paul Crouch notes that the hope and encouragement TBN Second Chance provides for those behind bars is at the heart of what Christian broadcasting is all about. "It's about lives and hearts changed for all eternity by the hope of the gospel," he says. "That is why TBN exists."