

2010 Mercy Ministries Conference Workshops:

Heaven and Hell: An Insider's Look at Daily Life in Prison - Mark Casson and Dion Marshall : This 60-90 minute seminar will be an examination of what prison life is like. We'll talk about the "Toss-N-Trash" cell search and what it is like to have your home torn apart. Mail Call: Why correspondence is so important. Overcoming racism as a Christian Prisoner. The Glories of having Spurgeon for lunch every day. The blessings of a Christian cell-mate, fellowship and daily Bible Study.

All I Ever Needed to Know About Mentoring a Prisoner I Learned While on Parole! Mark Casson and Dion Marshall This 60 minute seminar will look at suggestions, guidelines and advice for mentoring prisoners in preparation for parole and beyond. This will include preparing a church to accept a prisoner and how to assess and plan for their special needs. We'll look at visiting a prisoner. Teaching Biblical Husbandry, Parenting and the Titus 2 model for women.

A Christian Prisoner's Double Life. - Mark Casson and Dion Marshall This 45 minute seminar will look at the prisoner who is professing Christ, yet has no connection to the local church. What is his place in the body of Christ? What are the differences between Chapel and Church and how do those differences shape the prisoner's view of the Kingdom?

Introduction to Metanoia Ministries: What does a Reformed Model for Prison Ministry look like? Mark Casson and Dion Marshall Discipling, Mentoring and reintegrating the prisoner. This is our standard 50 minute presentation of MM and what we do.

When Helping Hurts: Implications for the Local Church and Ministries – Steve Corbett: This workshop will look at creating and applying diaconal and or mercy ministry policies that do more than provide turkeys at Thanksgiving, toys at Christmas and access to a clothes closet. While these interventions can have a place the local church can do other things as well. This workshop will walk through a variety of principles and decision making steps involved in having “transformational” diaconal/mercy ministry policies. Participants will get more out of this workshop if they bring a copy of their churches diaconal/mercy ministry policies.

Boundary Ambiguities in Mercy Ministry - Maria Garriott: How do you establish healthy boundaries for yourself and your family in the midst of the demands of urban/mercy/multiethnic ministry? When you live or minister in a context of constant crisis, how do you manage the needs of your family, your ministry, and your own soul? Examine the root issues that may complicate this issue, and learn strategies to understand and set healthy boundaries.

God of Wonders, Jars of Clay: Thirty Years of Incarnational Ministry - Craig Garriott: The dynamics of pastoring, community development, multiethnicity, and personal/family health bring tremendous layers of challenge to the community development pastorate. Yet this setting also provides an opportunity to see God's amazing provision at critical junctures. How do you sense God's call and vision for your church, establish balance and boundaries, and navigate seasons of development? The Garriotts will speak from three decades of community development/pastoral experience.

Kingdom Principles for Justice vs. the American Dream – Barry Henning: When Jesus announced the good news of the kingdom, and told his detractors, “the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Mt 12:28), there was no such thing as electricity, paved roads, air conditioning or modern medical technology. The people he preached to were by and large poor subsistence farmers, fishermen, tradesmen, slaves and government workers, and for the most part lacked any formal, academic training. And yet, the power of the Gospel and the presence of the kingdom changed the world. People were taught to love one another, care for the poor, implement God's kingdom agenda of justice and mercy and see countless thousands redeemed, while the Apostolic leaders of the movement had to admit, “silver and gold have I none.” Are there principal means God has built into the nature of advancing the kingdom that we have stumbled over and replaced with cultural values? This seminar is focused on re-directing our attention to the practical, kingdom principles of acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with God: Holy Spirit Power vs. The Tools of Empire; Mustard Seed vs. Community Development; Humble Circumstances vs. Prosperity Gospel; Gift Righteousness vs. Strategic Systems.

Kingdom Ministry to the Fatherless and Refugee – Barry Henning: This will be a presentation of two community focused ministries that have worked, for fifteen years, to bring God's justice to the fatherless and the refugee in St Louis through a jobs training program called Harambee, and an after school tutoring program called Firm Foundations. Both ministries have grown and developed over the years but have remained faithful to core kingdom values of boasting in weakness, mustard seed faithfulness, reconciliation, unleashing the body for ministry and the promise of the Spirit's power through the grace of Christ.

Disability or Ability? Eugenics, Postmodernism, and the Gospel - Steph Hubach: People tend to come to the subject of disability with a wide variety of unexamined ideas. Recognizing and questioning these ideas is an important part of developing a biblically based special needs ministry. This multi-media seminar discusses and demonstrates the role that culture plays in forming our perceptions of disability- and how those ideas affect our relationships with people who have disabilities. After contrasting the modern view of disability with the postmodern one- the biblical, gospel-oriented perspective is presented.

Translating Perspective into Practice: Getting Disability Ministry Started in Your Local Congregation – Stephanie Hubach: How do you actually begin a disability ministry in your church? What is the ministry's purpose and role in congregational life? What are the biblical principles on which it needs to be founded? What are the probable obstacles? What are the potential opportunities? What process do you need to follow? Who needs to be involved? how do you secure support of you Session? How does congregational "buy-in" occur? What organizational structure typically works best in Presbyterian settings and why? how much can you do- and how fast? have you ever asked questions like these? This seminar will provide you with practical ways to address them!

Wrestling Righteously with Responsibility, Resources, and the Right-to-Life in a Hybrid World – Stephanie Hubach and Martie Kwasny: We live in a "hybrid" society where families affected by disability receive a patchwork of assistance from the government, the church and their extended families. This often creates a game of "hot potato" when it comes to accepting responsibility for the needs of individuals with disabilities. What biblical principles can guide us through this maze? What challenging cultural issues does the Church need to "wake up to" with regard to the vulnerability of the lives of people touched by disability? How can we respond righteously?

Mobilizing Your Church for Mercy Ministries – Gene Johnson: There are many ways for our churches to reach out to a community, usually only limited by our imagination and faith; and only to some degree by our resources. One person with faith and an idea can still be used by God to be a light and a witness to a community, and be used by God to draw people into a congregation. How can your church show mercy in your neighborhood? What if your neighborhood doesn't appear to be needy? What is your neighborhood is so needy you don't know where to begin? Why do we want to reach out to our community? What does our church have to offer to the people in our community? Resources might limit us, but they do not prevent us in trying something, or some things, at some times. If there is a will to reach out to the community within a congregation there will be some resources available, and maybe more than you hoped or knew.

Mobilizing Deacons for Mercy Ministries– Gene Johnson: If the purpose of the Diaconate is, "To minister to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless and to nay who may be in distress," How can we develop plans to help people in the most productive and effective ways? Where do we begin? How can we develop a workable strategy and plan? This workshop will discuss the basics of developing a diaconal mercy ministry in the local church.

Encouraging Individuals Struggling with Chronic Sorrow – Martie Kwasny: Special needs ministry can involve a wide spectrum of different types of disabilities. But one common thread, in any disability ministry, is that you will encounter families who are struggling with chronic sorrow. How do we as believers encourage people living in chronic sorrow? How do we think through sorrow in general? Learn how to understand loss and chronic sorrow Biblically. There is strength to be found in weakness! This workshop will help you to guide others into the strength that is found in the application of God's Word, and the redemptive purpose in ALL of our sufferings.

The integration of middle class Christians and Christians living at lower socioeconomic levels in one congregation for Kingdom ministry: (realities, radicalization, and reconciliation – Randy Nabors: What do the poor need, and how best to help them? Do we send urban or poverty professionals to live among them, do we relocate compassionate missionaries to organize them? Is it OK for middle class Christians to simply send people of exceptional faith to bring the Gospel to the poor, while they stay separated from inner city communities or pockets of poverty? This seminar will discuss the need of the poor for middle class people and families as models and as resources, and what the dynamics of integrating people from socio/economic, educational, and ethnic groups might be. We will discuss the great need to simply radicalize middle class Christians so that they stop running away from the poor, but embrace them with wisdom and dignity.

Community Transformation/ issues and Planning – Randy Nabors: This seminar will call on leaders to work for Kingdom transformation in targeted (poor) communities, to assess what that would look like, what the process would be to achieve it, what cross cultural obstacles might have to be overcome, and what resources they need to pursue it.

I Need a Job! - David Spickard: What do you do when someone says those words? What if they are an ex-offender, have a poor work history, little education, or few skills? How despite these barriers might it be relatively easy for your church or ministry to address their need to find and keep meaningful employment? This workshop explores Jobs for Life's (JfL) proven, biblically-based strategy used by churches and community organizations across the country to go beyond temporary hand out assistance and prepare unemployed and underemployed individuals for success at work. You will learn how the Church is transforming lives for God's glory through JfL and how your congregation or ministry can use JfL as a powerful tool to offer mercy to those in your community.

Meaningful Business Partnerships - David Spickard: What are the best ways for your church or organization to connect with companies and let them know the benefits of being involved with your ministry? Why connect with companies? What do businesses need? What do you have to offer? How do you secure their involvement? We will answer these and other questions together as we look at building healthy business relationships for your ministry.

The Poor and their Money: Helping People Move Forward – Lance Wescher: This workshop will look at two ministry options that aim at helping economically poor people get more out of the money they have. One ministry option is Financial Literacy. This goes well beyond teaching someone the basics of budgeting! A second option is Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). This is a matched savings program for the working poor that can help people improve their assets through such things as buying a home, advancing their education, starting a small business, getting reliable transportation and more.

The Sandtown Story: 20+ Years of Loving God, Loving our Neighbors – Thurman Williams: This seminar will tell the story of the founding and growth of New Song Community Church (PCA) and its community development ministries: New Song Urban Ministries, Sandtown Habitat for Humanity, New Song Community Learning Center, EDEN Jobs, New Song Family Health Center, New Song Arts, New Song Economic Development, and New Song’s neighborhood partner organization, Newborn Holistic Ministries. The time will explore the reformed theological beliefs that led the founding group to plant the church, the core ministry values that have shaped the ministry for the past 20+ years, how the Sandtown community itself has been a partner and leader in the entire process, and a few lessons learned that can be applied to any ministry context.

The Gospel Story and Urban Ministry – Thurman Williams: This seminar will explore how the four parts of the gospel story (Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation) can be applied to the urban, inner-city context, with all of its blessings and challenges. The work of God in and through New Song Community Church in the inner-city community of Sandtown in West Baltimore will be the case study.
