



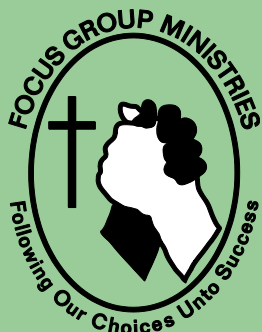
FOCUS Group Ministries / 865-694-3837

## F.O.C.U.S. Following Our Choices Unto Success

Morgan County Correctional  
Complex, Wartburg – home  
of the Roy D. Wyatt Seminary  
Extension Program



Seminary student Jeremy  
Ingram



## THE IMPACT OF SEMINARY EXTENSION

BY GARY HALL

The Roy D. Wyatt Seminary Extension program had its first class here in the new annex at Morgan County this past semester. I was a part of the inception of the seminary extension that began with FOCUS in 2010 on the main compound. Our first class in the annex had ten people participating. I had already told these guys of the impact it had on my life and how it challenged me in my studies.

This semester we took "Survey of the New Testament." I must admit, I was thinking this wouldn't be much of a challenge, because I had been studying the Word for twenty years and preaching the Gospel in here for the last eleven. But after my first reading assignment and classroom discussion, I had learned so many things concerning the history and times of the New Testament. A better understanding of the history and culture opened my eyes to a greater understanding. Also, we learned about the many different philosophies that tried to compete with the Gospel.

Something else that had an impact on me was the study of the four Gospels. The lessons revealed whom the audience of each of the Gospels was written. For one example, Matthew leaned more towards a Jewish audience, while the others were written to either a specific person or a more diverse audience. And the second thing was the different characteristics of Christ that were accentuated by the writers. As we looked at Mark, we find that he repeatedly expresses Christ as the "Son of God," that he was a man of action and had great compassion for His people. Finally, we learned of the authors' purpose for each of the Gospel writings. Like John's Gospel proclaims in 20:31 "but these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have eternal life in His name."

These were just some of the things I learned with having this opportunity to be a part of seminary extension. Not only was my life impacted through this class, but also were the others who participated.

Something that I don't think any of us had considered when taking this class was how it drew each of us closer together in unity as we discussed daily, findings from our studies. You might ask how this impacts us in our world (prison). For we live in a world that is diverse with many different religions and beliefs. A world where people cause division just for the entertainment and where fear can be a factor because there is a code to live by in order to fit and survive. But, as we learn of the obstacles and opposition that the disciples and early church experienced, yet they walked by faith, we too can stand with courage being built up in most Holy of Faith, walking together in unity and loves, one for another. As we learn of the characteristics and faithfulness of God, through the authority of scripture, we are able to recognize the subtly of the enemy and power that is given us, by the Holy Spirit, to become the sons of God.



I am very thankful for this opportunity to continue my education in biblical studies that I may be equipped for the furtherance of the Gospel, not only in here, but even after I get out. Thank you very much for your time and support, for we don't have many opportunities in here, nor the money to pay for any kind of education like this. We are very grateful for your ministry and partners. God Bless!

*Gary Hall was part of the inaugural class of Seminary Extension at Morgan County, an accredited program through the Southern Baptist Convention.*

## ~SAVE THE DATE~

**FOCUS Group Ministries  
Annual Awareness Banquet  
will be at 6pm, Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup>  
in the fellowship hall at  
Central Baptist Bearden  
6300 Deane Hill Drive, across from  
Krispy Kreme on Kingston Pike**

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FOCUS GROUP MINISTRIES

### Eagle Rock Camp & Retreat Center - Maryville, TN



#### Ministry Needs:

1. Donated vehicles for 'Wheels For Success' – a program for FCA graduates
2. A seven passenger vehicle to transport FCA students
3. Employment Partners for our back-to-work jobs program
4. Funds for literature to be used at the prisons and jails
5. Capital Funding for the Men's Residential Facility and Ministry Training Center at 826 Broadway

# "I NEVER TRIED IT WITH GOD"

BY AMANDA BREAZEALE

FOCUS women have been going into the women's jail for a couple of years. In the past month the Lord has been calling more volunteers into the ministry and He has tripled our influence with two more time slots open to us. I have experienced more of the presence of the Holy Spirit in that tiny 10 x 10 cement block room that we meet in than any place I have ever been. When the Word tells us not to forget our brothers and sisters in prison, it actually means not to forget our brothers and sisters in prison.

Recently, one of the women asked if she could share something before class began. Ten times she has been through recovery programs and it has never stuck. She said, "I never tried it with God". She shared that she has stopped cursing, that many of her sinful tendencies are gone without her even realizing it. However, she felt like she didn't feel the Lord "speaking" to her and with tears running down her face, felt like she was onto something incredible but felt that something was missing. IMMEDIATELY, the woman to my right said that she is experiencing the same thing. She is changing, she is growing, she sees the possibility of something new for herself but feels

like something is missing. I am thinking... 'what could be missing' and I shoot up a short prayer to the Lord to guide me. I am sitting around a table and one girl is on my left and one on my right. I am close enough to reach out and touch both of them and the Lord speaks through me. I said "Have you ladies actually prayed the prayer of salvation? Well both of them said "Well, I don't think I have"?! In unison both women and two others said, "I WANT to do that...RIGHT NOW."

So, with all of us in tears, Elizabeth Day blessed me in an incredible way and asked me to lead the women in the prayer of salvation. We prayed and four women asked the Lord to come into their lives and show them how to live for Him, they accepted Jesus as their Savior, they asked for His gift of salvation, they asked for him to make them anew for His glory and purposes. It was amazing. I have never had the opportunity to lead anyone in the prayer of salvation and it was the most incredible moment of my life in Christ. It is a time I know I will never forget and I am hooked. Our tears turned to smiles that never went away during the entire afternoon. After we prayed it out every arm and face in that room raised up to the Lord and we were all calling out His name. What a GREAT GOD we serve!!!

## EAGLE ROCK 2012

BY FCA STUDENT TODD GOOD

FOCUS has been a huge part of my recovery process by helping to show me "through Christ I can do all things." As I near the end of my stay at FOCUS Christian Academy, I can't help but look back at the last several months and see how God has been working in me and my brother's lives. One such memory that immediately rises to the surface is an early January trip atop the Smoky Mountains to what has become a home away from home for the ministry at Eagle Rock. "It was a needed rest that I needed with God," says FCA student Michael Bunting. I concur with my roommate of three months. As I have been blessed with gainful employment and given the opportunity to work as many hours as I can handle, the weekend spent with God was a much needed step back to be reminded of what's most important.

"It was like God opened up the window of love, pouring His love on me, asking me 'how much could I take?'. It was one of the best weekends of my life," says Michael Baker. God's love was palpable that weekend and the Holy Spirit was surely at work during Elizabeth's Day's personal testimony of forgiveness. Many, including myself, was brought to tears as she shared her soul to the

FOCUS family and her words I will not soon forget.

Along with Elizabeth, David Elkins, Steve Humphries and Tim Stallings also led groups that left everyone looking deep inside ourselves and reaching out to God in an attempt to realign our focus from earth to the Kingdom. With music lifted up to praise our Lord and Savior, I believe all present received a rejuvenated soul as each song ended. "I felt the Holy Spirit was there with us, and the energy brought us all close together," said Richard Passmore.

"Eagle Rock was a blessing, It was a time to reflect on the last 9 months of my journey with Jesus and FOCUS Ministries. Also, to talk with Jesus about where and what He wants me to do. It was a life-changing experience to see God's family there at Eagle Rock. Thank you Lord," says Kevin Jones.

A special thanks to everyone who attended the weekend retreat, especially those who made it all come together with planning and hard work. I am so grateful God has allowed my path to cross with such wonderful people, completely dedicated to allowing God's love to shine through them. I look forward to a lifetime of friendships with many of you who have played a major part in not only my transition back into society, but also my spiritual walk with our Father. God bless all of you!!!

### ABOUT US

FOCUS Group Ministries is a nonprofit, 501c(3) organization founded in 1992 to help build a bridge to the community for a segment of society that is often forgotten. We seek to help inmates and their families to know Jesus as their Savior, to mature in their faith, and to help ex-offenders to transition back into society as good citizens through Focus Christian Academy. Our efforts at providing support, hope and encouragement have been recognized by the Tennessee Department of Corrections, twice naming Focus Group Prison Ministries the 'Best Non-Profit of East Tennessee.'