



**MASTERLIFE
MINISTRY,
INC
NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER 2022
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MASTERING LIFE IN CHRIST

Mastering Life with the Veterans!

Hello brothers & sisters, we pray that you are being "strengthened with strength in your soul" (psalms 138:3). For Thanksgiving we are dedicating this issue of the Master life Newsletter to being thankful for our Incarcerated Veterans.

On November 10th, birthday of the U. S. Marine Corps, thirty Incarcerated Veteran's filed into the 'old chapel' area of Lumberton Correctional (LCI) for what proved to be a special evening-----a Honorary Veterans Day Banquet! LCI's programs Mr. Powers, Incarcerated Veteran Remi Rodriguez, and Master Life Ministry collaborated to organize a evening of pizza, sodas, speeches, and stories from Incarcerated Veterans.

The banquet began as a burden in the heart of Veteran Rodriguez.. Like the prophet Nehemiah, Rodriguez took his burden to the Lord. After much prayer, God granted him favor with Mr. Powers who heartily volunteered his time and efforts to oversee the idea of a Veterans Day Banquet. Rodriguez had faith that God had heard his prayers; but, this was only the first step, he needed provisions --- Rodriguez's recent completion of our eight-month ML-Discipleship Program placed him in a position to request assistance from MLM, Inc. partners

--- So, he contacted Dr. Becky Keeter-Lee with MLM, Inc.. Becky immediately went into action. She contacted Mr. Powers and offered all provisions for the event. Praise God, step two was completed with little effort. Of course, everything must be approved by Warden Mary Locklear. So, once again, just as Nehemiah prayed before his request to the king, Rodriguez & MLM prayed Proverbs 21:1 "the kings heart is in the hands of the Lord, and He turns it wherever He wishes." Lord, we ask You to turn the warden's heart to favor us in this work...amen. The next day Mr. Powers gave Rodriguez the thumbs-up! From that point on, it was preparing presentations, putting up posters, and ordering Pappa Johns Pizza!!! 😊 Mr. Powers, a veteran himself, opened up the banquet with sincere words to the men, followed by a message from MLM's James Benoy (see: "Who Cares" article). Then, Rodriguez and Captain Timothy Autry 'set-it-off' with testimonies & stories from their military experiences. Soon, there were veterans taking turns at the podium sharing a memory, a word of encouragement, or taking a jab at each other's branch of service. The evening was filled with laughter, tears, hugs, and genuine camaraderie as stories were told from basic training to Baghdad; from WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. But, what everyone in the room felt was a common theme: every veteran who spoke said, "*if any one of you ever need me, I GOT YOUR BACK!*" Benoy, who respectfully declined offers to sit in on the festivities, sitting in the back

observing the events, commented, "*when they came in, they seemed to be so withdrawn, cold hard, and bitter; but when they left, they were smiling, encouraged, honored, and cared for...now that's what it's all about!*" One veteran said, "*It was a magical evening; and, for a moment in time, I wasn't in prison.*"

Even Lt. Moody, who is a veteran herself, was moved by the experiences and stories she heard, saying, "*they really needed this.*" By the end of the evening, everyone who attended was in agreement, this banquet was a much-needed blessing at LCI. Hopefully...prayerfully, the warden at LCI will approve more positive activities to be held, activities that will 'build up' the incarcerated persons sense of self-esteem and self-worth. Until then, we at MLM will be thankful for God allowing us to honor our incarcerated veterans at LCI. Thank you LCI administration!



WHO CARES?

BY Janes Benoy, MLM Senior Partner

Who cares? who cares? WHO CARES?!?!?



Does anybody reeeeeeally care that you sacrificed for their safety and freedom?

Sacrificed your time, your life, your family, your body, your

mental stability? MasterLife Ministry wants you, Veteran, to know that we care about you. And we thank you for your service!

True story: John Griffin, who controlled a railroad drawbridge over the Mississippi river, took his young son to work with him one day. After putting up the massive drawbridge, Griffin sat down to eat his lunch when suddenly he heard the whistle of the Memphis Express roaring towards the crossing. Leaping from the observation deck, he ran to throw the control switch. Glancing down, his heart stopped! His son had fallen into the gear cranks of the bridge, trapping his leg in the cogs. Griffin tried to think, but there was no time----his son was down there, but four hundred passengers were on that train! Griffin knew what he had to do. So, burying his face into his arm, he pushed the master switch just in time to lower the bridge into place. As the train thundered by, Griffin lifted his head, and with tear-filled eyes he looked into the windows. There were businessmen reading the paper, women sipping coffee, and children eating ice cream. Nobody even looked up at the control house, or down at the gear box. In agony, Griffin cried out, "I sacrifice my son.....DON'T YOU CARE?!?!"

Every incarcerated veteran is familiar with sacrifice, sacrifice that comes from service. And every incarcerated veteran is familiar with the service of defending and protecting the freedoms enjoyed here in the United States. But, most of all, every incarcerated veteran is familiar with the heart cry of John Griffin: "I SACRIFICED FOR YOU...DON'T YOU CARE?!?!". It seems like nobody understands or cares about the plight of the incarcerated veteran, doesn't it? And it is easy to fall into an attitude of hopelessness, despair, and depression; or, even worse, anger, hate, and bitterness. Here at MLM, we want you to know that we care about you....that's why we reached in to help. But we also want you to know that there is someone else who is familiar with

sacrifice...suffering...and the heart cry of John Griffin... "I SACRIFICED MY SON FOR YOU...DON'T YOU CARE GOD THE FATHER, SITS IN THE HEAVENS WHILE PEOPLE PASS THROUGH LIFE NEVER GIVING HIM, OR HIS SACRIFICE, A GLANCE OR THOUGHT?!?!". Not only is he familiar with these things but is familiar with all points of suffering. And He is there to help you not to grow bitter, but to grow better. Turn to Him. ...HE CARES!

From the Front Lines of Ministry

"FORGOTTEN" by Remi Rodriguez



Hello brothers and sisters in Christ. I hope & pray that everyone is in good health and prospering even as your soul prospers (Ill John

2). On November 10th, 2022, the UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS is 247 years old! With that said, I want to wish all my Marine brothers a Happy Birthday!!! (smiley-face) On that same evening, something amazing took place at Lumberton Correctional Institution (LCI). LCI had their first annual Veterans Day Banquet which was sponsored by Master life Ministry, inc.. Below is the speech that I gave to the Veterans: "Good evening gentlemen...before I start my speech, I want to say happy birthday to all my fellow Marines. I want to thank God for blessing us with this awesome banquet. And to all you veterans for serving your country. In this room we have a very wide range of veterans; we have veterans from the "Bay of Pigs" in Cuba, to Afghanistan! I also want to thank Mr. Powers, who is also a veteran, for donating his time tonight; and, for all the work he put into this evening. Also, thanks to MLM's Dr. Becky Keeter-Lee who took steps to communicate & orchestrate the banquet form the outside, as well as providing the funds for the food & drinks. Finally, personal thanks to James Benoy for guiding me through the proposal process, mentoring me through Master life, and genuinely caring enough to reach outside of yourself to make positive things happen in this prison.



My name is Remi Rodriguez (aka: Rico). I am a retired Marine Veteran. I discharged on October 31, 2017, after serving 24 years. My family and I were stationed in Quantico, Virginia at the basic school, (TBS) for officers. My family and I decided to take a tour, so we drove to Union Station in Washington D.C. to buy our tickets to tour all of the historical monuments. While waiting for the tour, we decided to walk around Union Station and find a place to eat, when an Army veteran in a wheelchair approached us and asked for some spare change. I asked him if he would like a meal instead. He said yes. So, I bought my family and his meal as well. As I was giving him his meal and thanking him for his service, my family was looking for a table to eat. As I sat down, to pray and eat, I looked up and he was there looking at me. So, I asked Jim if he would like to join us. He talked about his basic training, his experience in Vietnam, his struggles with PTSD, and being a homeless veteran. While he talked to my family, I went to buy him another meal a to get some cash from the ATM. Before we parted ways, I gave him the meal and some cash. It felt good to help out a fellow serviceman, but as I went on the tour with my family, I could not stop thinking about him... yes, he was happy about the meal, money, and the time he spent with us, but you could look into his eyes and see the pain, sorrow, and sadness. As we walked around Arlington National Cemetery, looking at the gravestones, and watching the changing of the guard ceremony for the "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier" it hit me, he felt forgotten and tossed away. As an incarcerated person, we already feel forgotten, tossed away, rejected by society. BUT, as an Incarcerated Veteran, the feeling is even worse. On top of all of this, we cannot celebrate our individual branches birthdays, or mourn our fallen brothers & sisters who sacrificed for this country.

With that said, GOD knew it was so important for MLM, Mr. Powers, and me to put this banquet together. Because, after we prayed, God's hand caused everything fall right into place. It was amazing! And on this night, we are all together from every branch, to celebrate. This is not only a great veterans day, but a great Thanksgiving season as well. Once again, thank you for your service & sacrifice to make this country free and safe---and remember, you are NOT FORGOTTEN!

Remi Rodriguez, Lumberton

USMC Jeremy Wohlers



Hello! My name is Jeremy Wohlers. I want to first start off by saying thank you to Master life ministry for donating and contributing for the veterans day here at LCI. And

to the administration for allowing us to have a banquet. Now, I started my journey in the United States Marine Corp on December 14th, 2004 at sunny An Diego MCRD.

After boot camp and MCT training, I set foot at camp Johnson/Mount Fort Point for MOS training as a motor transport mechanic. After completing that, I set out to the fleet in August 2005 to my first unit. From there, in 2007 I was attached to CLB-6 for my first deployed to Iraq. In Iraq, I went from mechanic to driver, contributing to many missions outside of the wire (off base). This new duty kept us in harm's way on a daily basis. After six months, I extended there to help the next unit at came in, (CLB-8). My duties were still the same, but this time, we lost three marines to snipers on a mission while resupplying a FOB (forward operations base). Upon returning in 2008, I reenlisted and transferred to a unit in Beaufort, S.C. and went back to turning wrenches, something I really enjoyed doing. But, in 2011 I was transferred to 6th Marine Regiment for my third tour. This time I deployed to Afghanistan. While there on this year tour, we only had one big accident where we had three marines get hurt, but they made it back to the States with us. After that, I transferred to 8th ESB where I finished out my career successfully and honorably on January 1, 2015. Since then, I have fought many battles; battles with the VA, battles to get my issues that have been accommodated, and battles within myself. It is an uphill battle as fellow vets know...and it's easy to fall prey to hopelessness. But special moments like that banquet really encourage me----- just knowing that my service matters to someone. Thank you!

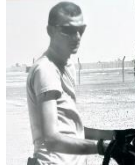


Jeremy Wohlers, Lumberton

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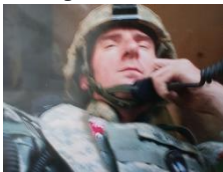


My name is Lewis Berlin HILPERT. Spc. A co. 407 BSB, 2nd Brigade 82nd Airborne Division. My MOS was an 88 M which is a Transport Truck Operator. I loved the Army. My whole family was either military or married into the military. I spent fifteen



months in Camp Tajik, Iraq before receiving a medical discharge under honorable conditions. My AO was Sadr

City, and we did all of the barriers, resupply, and catastrophic recoveries convoy inside and around Sadr City and Attamea. I am Thankful for the Veterans Day Banquet. It was great to see who all of the fellow



servicemen are at LCI, and celebrate Veterans Day together...not just as inmates....but as veterans. I really appreciated the ministry that helped make this happen.

Lewis Hilpert, Lumberton

USMC Joseph Corbett



My name is Joseph Corbett... I am a United States Marine!!! Wilmington North Carolina is my hometown. In 1997, at the age of seventeen, I went to bootcamp at Paris Island, South Carolina. My MOS

was 3051 Supply Clerk. While at Paris Island, I was 3rd Battalion Might Company, Platoon 3083. After bootcamp I served as a recruiter. Many of my friends joined because they saw the change in me. In my own eyes, graduating high school and joining the



Marines was the greatest moments of my life besides becoming a father to my three daughters and one son. One of the proudest moments was when one of my daughters told me that she wanted to serve her country and leave the streets just like I did. Just hearing that she wanted to follow my footsteps made me proud to be a Marine. I went to camp Johnson for training to learn how to drive a forklift; then, to Camp Giger for infantry training; finally, I was stationed at Camp Lejeune where I worked in or at Repair Issuing Point (R.I.P.). Shortly after, I became an E-3 Lance Corporal. My service was short; however, the Units States Marine Corps made a huge impact on the man I am today. I would like to say, THANK YOU, to all of you who made this Veterans day Banquet possible-----MasterLife, Mr. Powers, Lt. Moody, and LCI. I was in a really bad place mentally when all of this came about. But things are better now. Shout out to all my DEVIL DOGS "Semper Fidelis"----- OOHRAH!!!!!!

JOSEPH CORBETT, Lumberton

US ARMY Robert McGlohon

My name is Robert. I served from 1995 to 1997. I did basic training at Fort Jackson S.C. I did AIT at Fort Gordon, Georgia. I was stationed at White Sands Missile Range, NM. I do not have a lot to say,



but wanted to show my appreciation for the Veteran Banquet. I really enjoyed it. I hope this will become a tradition at LCI. Special thanks to the staff who approved this and took out time to be here.



Robert McGlohon, Lumberton

NC National Guard Matthew Moore



My name is Matthew Moore, and I served in the NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD as a 19-delta, Calvary Scout. With the 210th military police

armory out of Sylva, North Carolina, and active duty at the HQ 46th AG HLD DET TC at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Although my military career was brief, serving in the Armed Forces was the single crowning achievement of my life. It was my honor and privilege to serve country. Being at the Veterans Day



Observation Banquet, hosted by Mr. Powers, reminded me of a time when I had made better decisions with my life, to have been a part of something bigger and better than myself. It also showed me that even though I have made poor decisions, that I am not Alone in here or out there in the world; People still appreciate my service...and for that I am grateful.

Matthew Moore, Lumberton

USN Edward Peck



I am Edward Peck. I'm a retired Navy veteran, retired from twenty years of service. I joined in 1988. I served on many

commands including my very first command I will never forget, USS Iowa BB-61 from 1989-1990. I am a survivor of a horrific peace time accident on the ship. Without going into all of the details, there was an explosion that almost took my life. But what was worse was I lost my best friend, and I was so close that there was



literally a body that fell into my arms. This really messed me up. I continued on in the Navy for many years till I retired as Personnel Specialist. There are many stories I could tell, but I want to extend my thanks to all the servicemen who served in any branch of the military, for their sacrifice for this country and their family and friends, God bless you all. I Also want to thank everyone who gave us the pizza and special night. Even the staff who came. It was a refreshing break from prison. Thanks, Ed Peck, Lumberton

USN Rick McGee

Hello, my name is Rick McGee. Happy Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and Merry Christmas! I joined the NAVY right after high school. Went to Engine man (A) school and bootcamp in Great Lakes, Illinois. From there I went on to



Little Creek, VA on LSD-41 Whidbey Island. I went on 2 Med Cruises and to May point, Florida on CG-55 Ley ta gulf guided middle cruiser. My deployment was Desert Storm, then to Pensacola, Florida. For shore duty (SAR) school in Jacksonville, Florida. I was a Search a Rescue Swimmer. Later, I went t school for air-conditioning & refrigeration. Then to Ingleside, Texas on a mine sweep MCM-20 and to masien diesel inspection school.

My 11 years of military service allowed me to gain a great education, and I was able to travel around the world. O experienced the Wailing Wall on Israel, the Jordan River, Olive trees, Stone Hedges, Eiffel Tower, Leaning Tower of Pisa, Big Ben, London, Dungan, Changing of Guards at Arlington. I loved the time I spent serving my country. This year, I was happy to see something place here at LCI that we have been trying to get done for years; a Veterans Day event. I am hopeful that this is the beginning of positive changes at LCI, and future Veterans events. Thank you to LCI admin, MLM, Rico, Powers, Moody, and Strickland for facilitating this special event...and to my military comrades, thanks for serving.



Rick McGee, Lumberton

USN Timothy Autry

Veterans Club, Lumberton Corr. Inst. Dear Sirs and Madams, It is an honor to serve as Captain for the Veterans Club here at Lumberton Correctional Institution.



Goals and objectives short & log terms: To address the community reentry needs of identified veterans who are Incarcerated and

within six months of their release from state and federal correctional facilities. Assist them by providing outreach, assessments, referrals, and linkage to services as they transition from incarceration to the community. The number one issue this year were the challenges in communicating with members, surviving spouses, and their families. Unfortunately, we saw this play out during the pandemic. However, for our Veterans Appreciation Day 2022, dinner was served thanks to this ministry and Lumberton



Correctional Staff. WE HAD A BLAST! Thank you! Thank you dry much for your cooperation, with best wishes, I remain. Sincerely,

Timothy Autry 0013199 Captain, USA, USN, Retired & Lumberton Correctional Veterans Club. US Army

US ARMY James Brown



Rank: E-7 Sergeant First Class Branch: United States Army Total years' service: 29 years including inactive reserves, Retired I would like to thank the administration at Lumberton Correctional

Institution for allowing the Veterans to meet together in sincere brotherly camaraderie. Secondly, I would like to thank the ministry whom generously donated dinner and refreshments to participant veterans. And most importantly, I thank our God who allowed us to serve and come home to live out our lives from the perils service life sometimes renders. GOD BLESS AMERICA! SFC, USA, RETIRED



JAMES BROWN, Lumberton



PTSD by REMI RODRIGUEZ (Rico)



Good day my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. I hope and pray that everyone is in good health and abiding in Christ! Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD is

defined as "a psychological reaction occurring after experiencing a highly stressing event (as wartime combat, physical violence, or a natural disaster)." That is usually characterized by depression, anxiety, flashback, recurrent nightmares, and avoidance of reminders of the event.

During my 24 years serving in the United States Marine Corps, I deployed to some of the most hostile areas in the world. During these deployments I dealt with so many different emotions that at times I would come back and have to put up a front in front of my family. Don't get me wrong, I loved coming home to my family, but every time I deployed and came home, it seemed like a part of me was missing. Sometimes, in a way, I would bring home my work. For example, I remember refusing to go get the mail at our community mailbox because there was a brown box and I fought it was an IED. There were other times when I would wake up sweating, heart pounding, as I frantically searched for my M4 w/M203 grenade launcher attachment and my Mg sidearm. My family was very supportive of my condition, understanding that I couldn't deal well with crowds or loud noises. But, it was frustrating not being able to go enjoy one of their basketball, football, or softball games. Why am I sharing this with you? because if you are suffering from PTSD due to combat, physical violence or some other traumatic disaster, YOU ARE NOT ALONE!!!

I have been diagnosed with PTSD, depression, anxiety, ADHD (squirrel lol!), and alcoholism. I have been battling these demons for the past fifteen years. As a Marine Master Sergeant, and natural comedian, I kept my condition well hidden from my command, my Marines, and especially my family. Until a number of events destroyed my life; or I should say, until I ALLOWED it to destroy my life (see: my testimony). During that time, I asked God to remove all that pain from my life. I didn't understand why He

wouldn't until I went through the Master life program with J. Benoy here at LCI. As I completed book one, I realized that Jesus Christ MUST be at the center of my life; He was not! I also learned that I must not just live in His Word, but I must LIVE His Word. ML taught me that prayer is not a ritual, but a conversation with God; that I was not participating in! Furthermore, I needed the fellowship of other believers, strengthening my relationship with them because they are my family. Finally, I don't just witness, but I AM a witness in all that I say & do!

ML workbook two: The Disciples Personality, helped me really start dealing with my condition. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I learned how to change my thinking process, master my emotions, and surrender my will to the will of God. Workbook three: The Disciples Victory was amazing to me because I had read Ephesians 6:10-20 previous to taking ML class, but through book three, I learned to use the armor of God to gain victory against spiritual battles. I've learned by praying and relying on God, He will help me through any situation that comes my way. Now I pray every morning that His Word is like a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (PS. 119:103&105). Just as a Marine goes outside the wire (off camp into enemy territory) he must have his personal protective equipment (PPE), likewise, I must be protected spiritually by being clothed with the Armor of God: the helmet of salvation reminds me of who I am in Christ, and helps me from having impure thoughts. The Breastplate of Righteousness cleanses me from harboring any ill-will or bitterness towards anyone in my heart. The Belt of Truth around my waist keeps me reminded to hold onto the truth in any situation; and not be deceived by the lies, propaganda, and narratives that Satan spins in this world. The Gospel Shoes of Peace keeps me firmly planted on the right path, living at peace with all men, and sharing the gospel with the lost

world wherever He leads me. In one hand I hold the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, which helps me rebuke Satan and resist temptation by reciting scripture that I have memorized and hidden in my heart. The shield of faith helps me move forward as I deflect the things that the enemy tries to throw at me. Book four: The Disciples Mission has helped guide me through the process of making disciples at every stage of spiritual growth. I love what Master life has taught me; in that it has helped me not only in my Christian faith, by also with my PTSD. I had no idea that the Bible has the answers to even these kinds of life issues. In discovering my spiritual gifts and life ministry, I have found that God wants me to help the Incarcerated Veterans. This has been confirmed in that He has opened the door allowing me to facilitate my first ever veterans day banquet with the help of Mr. Powers, MLM, and LCI staff. This experience has really built up my faith and my confidence that "if we/I ask anything according to His will we know that He hears us, and if we know that hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petition we desire of Him" (1 John 5:14-15). In the Disciples Mission material, we are asked to pray and experiment with different spiritual gifts & ministries. I asked Him for guidance in discovering my ministry, and He opened this door for The Veterans Day Banquet. God is leading me, direction my steps, and answering my prayers!!! And, though I still have bad days, God is healing me and giving me a new life & purpose.



Remi "RICO" Rodriguez, USMC Retired ,
Lumberton

