

Into the THIRD MILLENNIUM



THIRD MILLENNIUM
MINISTRIES
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WHO IS THAT ON THE COVER?

Recently, we have been hearing from prison chaplains and inmates within the United States who have been using Third Millennium Ministries' curriculum. For example, former inmate Howie Close (pictured on the cover in the middle with his wife, Susan, and prison chaplain Dan Matsche) was first introduced to Third Millennium's curriculum through Good News Jail and Prison Ministry. He recently stopped by our office to share his testimony and tell us how Third Mill has influenced his life and many others.

Howie's parents had not planned to have more children after the birth of his two older siblings, so they were surprised when they found out they were pregnant with him. His parents loved him very much, but he often felt like he was a mistake. Because he felt unwanted and unimportant, Howie lived his life recklessly. At only 17 years old, Howie and his older brother were incarcerated for their involvement in a fight. During his time in prison, he was involved in a fight with another inmate and was placed in solitary confinement. It was there that he found a hidden Bible and began reading through scripture. "For the four months that I was in [solitary confinement] that's all I had to do," Howie told us. "So I just read it over and over again. I don't remember the day, the time, or the second that I bowed a knee to Christ, I just know I came out of there different and I didn't enjoy hurting people anymore."

At 19 years old, Howie was moved to the most violent prison in Colorado. He had not been walking with the Lord long enough to be sure that Jesus could take care of him, so he neglected his Bible and felt far from Christ. In 1996, the Lord got Howie back on track when a good friend of his encouraged him to go back and read a piece of the Bible. He read Psalm 139:

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from

you, when I was being made in secret intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

In that moment, Howie realized that his life was intentional and that God had a greater purpose for his life. He felt that the Lord had him called to be a discipler of men and that his purpose was to minister to those in the prison with him.

Initially, he struggled to find a curriculum that would truly help him disciple people, but also hold the attention of his fellow inmates. One day, Dan Matsche of Good News Jail and Prison Ministry brought the Third Mill curriculum to the prison and asked Howie if it was something he could use for a Bible study. Howie was immediately blown away by the material and began using it for personal study and to lead Bible study in the chapel.

At the beginning of the study, the men would gather and listen to the lecture of the professors on the DVDs. Then, they would use the workbooks to discuss the material for about an hour.

"We started to grow together, to walk together, and to live this stuff out together," Howie said. "The Third Mill curriculum challenges you to live out your theology and... to actually walk out the Bible in your life. We are so grateful that Third Millennium Ministries produces this great material and gives it away so freely. It is changing lives, including mine."

Howie's personal testimony is extraordinarily powerful and inspirational. We encourage you to listen to his entire testimony at thirdmill.org/howieclose.

FLASH DRIVES IN BELIZE

This summer, Evangel Church in Alabaster, Alabama took flash drives containing Third Millennium Ministries' Spanish curriculum on one of their trips to Belize. In a matter of days, the Evangel mission team, which included Evangel's Director of Missions (Carlton Lemond), Senior Pastor (Jeff Lowman), and one of Evangel's Deacons (Steve Sanders), was able to distribute over a hundred flash drives to pastors of all denominations.

Carlton said, "The goal of the distribution was not only to encourage pastors to study in their home but to encourage enrollment in local classes at Belize Presbyterian Theological Seminary (BPTS) or to enroll online in the Third Millennium certificate in Christian Ministry through Birmingham Theological Seminary."

The Board of Directors at BPTS has already voted to make the Third Mill courses the standard curriculum at their seminary. Evangel hopes to return to Belize next year to distribute flash drives in the central cities of Belmopan and St. Ignatius. This will further their goal of providing the spiritual leaders of Belize with sound, rich, biblical training for themselves and every member of their congregation. For more information, please visit www.evangelchurchpca.org.



Jeff Lowman, Carlton Lemond, Raphael Ku and Steve Sanders

THIRD MILL IN CANADA

Below, Canadian church planter Kevin Rogers shared with us the importance of Third Millennium Ministries in Canada.



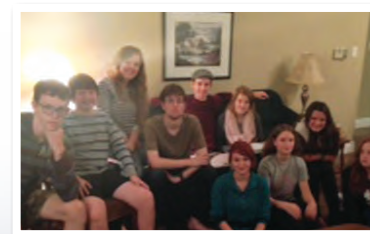
Kevin and his wife, Jessica

You almost certainly do not visualize a middle-class professional in a Starbucks with a tall latte and a MacBook studying the Apostles Creed online; however, this is the kind of student using Third Mill in Canada right now.

As a church planter in Eastern Canada, I have met many students like the one described above. As the number of evangelical seminaries in Eastern Canada is extremely limited, the option of attending a traditional seminary simply does not exist. In addition, the churches in Canada are small (the average Protestant congregation is around 47 people), so funds to subsidize studies in the U.S. are limited or simply non-existent. If they do get the finances to study at a seminary in the United States, a number of the Canadian students stay in the U.S. after graduation to work in a larger, better-funded church.

As a result, many Canadian pastors, including myself, have never attended a traditional seminary and were ordained without a traditional three-year seminary degree. We still have to pass the same set of rigorous exams that the denomination requires of all candidates, but we must do so without the

"When most of us think of the work of Third Millennium Ministries, we picture students around a computer in a small, cement building, watching courses like Building Biblical Theology from a flash drive.



willing heart and a few Bible institute courses taken while on the job.

Third Millennium is filling a need for me and several other pastors in Canada by allowing church leaders to prepare themselves for future service and helping them improve their knowledge and skills. Third Mill is training the called and the willing to labor more effectively in their current position and is filling the gap that the absence of locally available seminaries have left in this part of God's Kingdom."

benefit of the three years of classes that most students have to prepare. In fact, I have met several Canadian pastors whose sole ministry preparation was a

FROM THE FIELD

"If my testimony helped raise the ministry some more funding, I would be thrilled to have been able to take part in returning the priceless blessing (Third Millennium curriculum) that's already been bestowed upon the church in China. I firmly believe that the health of the global church can be measured in our faithfulness to Scripture and without teaching sound doctrine we will only waste away. I believe in the vision of Third Millennium and I am even more convinced that because it CAN be done, it HAS to be done! May our Lord continue to spread the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ through your work!"

China (Name withheld for security reasons)

HE GAVE US SCRIPTURE: FOUNDATIONS OF INTERPRETATION

We are proud to announce the release of the first seven lessons of our series, *He Gave Us Scripture*. This series explores the dynamics of interpreting God's Word and applying it to our own lives. The last four lessons will be released by the end of December. To view this series, please visit thirdmill.org/hgb.

JOIN WITH US TODAY

Third Millennium Ministries' ability to produce and distribute our curriculum is directly tied to the support we receive from our loyal donors. Will you consider joining with us today in the exciting work God is doing through Third Mill?

You may return your donation in the enclosed envelope, or if you prefer the convenience of online giving, visit thirdmill.org and click the "Donate" button.

Thank You!

