

FIT helps Former Crips Gang Member Find a Better Life



Tony Williams has benefited from the FIT program in many of the ways we had hoped. Our association with him started with the Anger course taught by Don Batterman in the Sarasota County Jail. He had the right attitude and a thirst for the true and the right. After he got out of jail early this month, he immediately came to our community-based program where he continued his studies with lesson 8 – Anger in marriage. We spent some time going over his chart in the book in Lesson 7 where he showed us his big gains in attitude about anger. Lesson 8 could not be any more appropriate since he is also working hard on his own marriage issues. If his he and his wife need it, we will start him over in the Dating and Marriage unit.

Tony has had a rough past. He is a nephew of Los Angeles Crips co-founder Stanley “Tookey” Williams and was, like his uncle, a Crips gang member. “Tookey” Williams was executed by state of California in December, 2005. He now takes pride in explaining that the C4L tattoo on his arm no longer means “Crips For Life”. It now means Christ for Life. Tony agreed to an interview for this Newsletter. Here are parts of it:

FIT: What influenced you to want to change your life?

Tony: I needed to overcome my drug and drinking problems. I was influenced [to change] by my grandmother and also by Uncle Tookey. He asked me to visit him the day before he was executed and told me to get out of the gang life and turn to God.

FIT: How has FIT helped you?

Tony: The anger course has helped me with my problems and I hope to use the graduation certificate [to help with child custody].

FIT Salutes James Paulk

An Interview with FIT Leader James Paulk

FIT: What are you currently doing with the FIT ministry?

James: I am working with the Glades Work Camp [state prison] at Belle Glade. [Belle Glade is 160 miles from James’ home Sarasota, a 3-hour drive. He stays at ministries or in motels at his own expense.]

FIT: How long have you been doing it?

James: 1 ½ years at Glades and also at Sago Palm Work Camp in Pahokee.

FIT: Why do you do it?

James: God has changed my life.

FIT: Why do you use/like our materials?

James: They give guidelines as to decisions that I make personally. They help guide [my teaching] and [I] share how the material has personally helped me to grow.

FIT: What would you like to say to the FIT donors whose contributions made it possible to have materials for your work?

James: Thank you. It is not in vain. I know a difference is being made. Comments have been made.



Nine New Volunteers Trained in Palmetto, FL



As a result of the efforts of Geneva Presha, FIT leaders Don Pratt and Don Batterman were able to conduct a very successful training session at Geneva's church, the Greater St. Luke Primitive Baptist Church of Palmetto. Ms. Presha had been trained in a January 15 session in Bradenton and felt that FIT was a good candidate for the church's community outreach program. Also attending were McArthur and Sabrina Sellars of New Life General Baptist Church, where McArthur is the pastor. Traveling all the way from Naples was Charlie Bagley, Chaplain of the Collier County Jail.

After completing the one-day training, several in the group have plans to start attending FIT's ongoing community-based program in Bradenton on Thursday nights. There they will get apprentice-like experience with facilitating small groups with our materials. They hope this will give them confidence so that some day they, too, can facilitate groups. They want to take action so that members of their community stay out of trouble and lead productive lives.

Pictured in the photo at the top (on the steps of the church) are, from left to right in the back row, Sabrina Sellars, Ophelia Bailey, organizer Geneva Presha, and Angela Washington. In the middle row are Donna Mays, Pastor McArthur Sellars, and Evelyn Murray. The front row features FIT trainer Don Batterman, Francena Richardson, and Chaplain Charlie Bagley.



to receive future fit newsletters, send message "opt in" to info@100hour.org