Perfect Love Casts Out All Fear: Mental Health, the Criminal Justice System and the Church

Presented by:
NBA Prison & Jail Ministries and
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In a 2006 Special Report, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) estimated that 705,600 mentally ill adults were incarcerated in state prisons; 78,800 in federal prisons; and 479,900 in local jails.
How We Got Here

Northern Hospital for the Insane
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Mental Health Act of 1963

Early Community Mental Health Clinic
Trans-Institutionalized Beings

“Even more than other areas of health and medicine, the mental health field is plagued by disparities in the availability of and access to its services.” Consequently, many of the individuals released into the community without support ended up incarcerated; it is fair to say that, instead of being “deinstitutionalized,” a great number of individuals suffering with mental illness were, in fact, “trans-institutionalized” into America’s jails and prisons.

Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General, 1999
The three largest mental health providers in the nation today are jails: Cook County in Illinois, Los Angeles County, and Riker’s Island in New York.
Incarcerated Mental Health

Diagnosable substance use disorders

Serious mental illnesses in jails

- 14.5% men
- 31% women
- 3.2% general population
- 4.9% fewer than 15% receive appropriate treatment

In state prisons, prevalence of serious mental illness is 2 to 4 times higher than in the community. 9% general population.
What We Now Find

Prisoners' mental health issues

- Depressive Disorder: 21%
- Manic-Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Mania: 12%
- Schizophrenia or Another Psychotic Disorder: 5%
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: 7%
- Another Anxiety Disorder: 8%
- Personality Disorder: 6%

**SUICIDE** is the leading cause of death among inmates in local jails, and in the top five for state prisons.
A Strained System

• About 1 out of 3 state prisoners with mental health problems, 1 out of 4 federal prisoners, and 1 out of 6 jail inmates had received mental health treatment since admission.

• Taking a prescribed medication was the most common type of treatment.

• People with mental illnesses are overrepresented in probation and parole populations, at estimated rates ranging from two to four times the general population.
WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?
Healing of:
The Gerasene Demoniac
The Legion
The Mob
The Possessed One

“Don’t Punish Me”

“Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you.”
Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you…"

Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!”…

Acts 3:1-10: Peter Heals a Lame Beggar

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Breaking Stigmas: How Can the Body of Christ Respond?

Education
Mercy
Compassion
Love
Understanding
Care
Advocacy
Practical Suggestions

• Educate Yourself & Your Leaders
  • [http://www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

• Awareness Events (ie: Book Study)

• Family / Children of Incarcerated Support Group
  • [https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/supporting/support-services/prisoners/](https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/supporting/support-services/prisoners/)
  • [https://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu](https://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu)

• Justice and Advocacy Work
  • [who.int/mental_health/policy/mh_in_prison.pdf](http://who.int/mental_health/policy/mh_in_prison.pdf)
Closing – Sharing Perfect Love

Questions / Comments?