

WORDSUNCAGED
Voices from 'A' Yard
Saying Good bye to T. Ramsey
by
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On February 25, 2019, the church of Emmanuel said goodbye to one of its spiritual leaders—T. Salih Ramsey Jr. Born in the hard streets of Oakland, Ca Ramsey found himself involved in the violent drug trade in his 6-5 Village neighborhood.

His criminal behavior earned him the nickname Mad Dog which he followed intently into a prison sentence of 45 years to life plus life. This anti-social behavior led him to the Security Housing Unit for seven years until he received Christ in December of 2000.

When asked about his conversion, he stated, “My chance came when I cashed in my stupidity for His wisdom.” Serving various ministry outreaches over the years, he found his stride in Corcoran State Prison where he founded and facilitated “Holy Ground Ministries” in 2013.

Coming from a background of prejudice and hatred, one of the marks of his transformation was when he began to fellowship and disciple men of all races. One such man was Matthew Bleeker who said of Ramsey, “He preached a sermon about wolves in sheep’s clothing that touched my heart. He took me under his wing by getting me a job, getting me away from drugs and prisons politics, and leading me in the way of Christ. Ramsey is a blessing from God.”

Upon his arrival to the Progressive Programming Facility in 2016, Ramsey continued his fellowship and service until 2018 when he was asked to serve in the leadership by Chaplain S. John who stated: “Ramsey was a clear asset to the ministry of the Church of Emmanuel and was by far the best clerk we’ve had.” From that time until his departure, Ramsey served well in the administrative aspects of the church of Emmanuel by revamping the self-help programs and innovating new outreaches for the men of the yard.

A dynamic speaker, Ramsey was used mightily in his preaching. In his final sermon to a packed house on February 24, 2019, he urged the Church of Emmanuel to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lust thereof.” –Rom 13:14

When asked if he was bitter about his time in prisons, Ramsey said, “Absolutely not! It was here (prison) that God taught me joy.” It is clear that the 48 year-old Ramsey, made an impact on those around him and says that his exit is “not an ending to his work, but a beginning.” To which the church prays his continual success.