

“Love Lifted Me Recovery” - April, 2015
Newsletter for January, February, March, 2015
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Web Site: www.Loveliftedmerecovery.com

Twelve Step Program

STEP 3 **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God.** The AA Third Step finishes with “God as we understood Him.” Secular AA groups even more often just refer to a “Higher Power”, and don’t even call Him God. We believe that the only “Higher Power” that can truly heal us and rid us of our addictions and destructive behaviors is the God of the Bible, the True and Living God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For those of us who are Christians, we have already turned our lives and wills over to God and Jesus Christ for salvation and eternal life. However, we may not have completely **turned our wills over to Him in regards to our addictions, compulsions, destructive behaviors, anger and bitterness, etc.** When we hold onto these things, or RESERVE certain areas of our lives to ourselves, we have NOT made Jesus Lord of our life. He needs to be LORD of your entire life, and you must SURRENDER to Him and give Him permission to TAKE CONTROL of every area of your life.

Monthly Evangelistic Outreach to Venice Beach

Saturday, January 3, 2015 - It was a cold, crisp, sunny day, and our team for our Venice Beach outreach consisted of Tom, me, Keith, Bob, Shami, Catharine, Charles and Vicki Turner, and Frank, Mitch and Ararat from the Bible Tabernacle in Canyon Country. We had 136 lunches, lots of socks and toiletries, some clothing, and lots of blankets to give to the homeless. We gave out twenty-six blankets, and they were all very much appreciated in the cold weather. I had one nice, warm jacket, and found a man sitting on the grass wearing only a short-sleeved T-shirt. We gave him a lunch, socks, toiletries and the jacket, and he was overwhelmed and very thankful. Frank saw a lady sleeping all curled up in a fetal position, and he offered her a lunch. She took the lunch, and when she saw they had blankets, she asked for one, and just hugged it to her for warmth. Charles and Mitch saw a guy sitting on the ground with several bowls spread out in front of him, labeled with the names of different religions, with a sign saying, “Which religion cares the most?” I’m sure this was just his gimmick for getting people to give him money out of guilt or whatever. Charles gave him a lunch and said, “Christianity cares the most.” Charles and Frank were praying for some men, and a woman was walking by, and Charles was quite surprised to see her stop to wait until they finished their prayer. Catharine, Shami and Ararat prayed for a lot of people, including Arthur, who asked for prayer for his health. Vicki, Bob, Keith and I started up at Rose Ave. and worked our way down the Boardwalk. Bob was back with us after several months away, and said it felt good to be down there telling people about Jesus. Everyone was very thankful to get the food and other items, and the blankets were a big hit, as I said. A homeless man named André said we looked familiar, and another man said he hadn’t seen us around for a while. We told them last month there was a marathon at the Boardwalk, and that upset our normal routine, so we may not have been up at their part of the Boardwalk. Vicki was down to her last little Baggie of toiletries when a man asked if she had any toothpaste. She was able to give him her last toothpaste and tooth brush, along with a bar of soap. After giving out all the goodies to the homeless, we continued to hand out gospel tracts. We probably gave out several hundred tracts in English and Spanish. As we were passing the Phoenix House, a rehab/transitional program, we saw all the men coming out in their yard for a break, so we went up and offered them tracts. Every single man took a gospel tract and seemed very open and friendly.

Saturday, February 7, 2015 - The weatherman on the news said it was supposed to rain on Saturday morning, but we prayed for good weather, and did not get any rain. It's not that we don't want to get wet, but it's just that there wouldn't be very many people down at the Boardwalk on a rainy day, and we are trying to reach as many people as possible for the kingdom of God, so we're thankful it didn't rain. Tom stayed home to pray for us, but he also had a cold and didn't feel well. Those that went down to the beach were Dottie, Shami, Bob, Keith, Mitch, Frank, Ararat and Brian. We gave out 137 lunches to the homeless, and every lunch we give always contains a gospel tract. We gave out fifteen heavy blankets and about eight or so lighter-weight blankets, some pillows, some jackets and other clothing, lots of socks, and the usual little bags of hygiene/toiletry items. We had so much stuff this time, we actually couldn't carry it all, so will give it out next month. We gave a really nice, heavy jacket to a man named Moe, and he also got a lunch, socks and everything. Brian saw a woman named Carol, and she had nothing. He prayed for her and gave her a blanket, a lunch, socks, toiletries and everything, but when she thanked him she held up the little gospel tract and said, "This is the most important thing." Shami and Ararat prayed for a lot of people, and they are recognized by the "regulars" down there. A lady named Mary, one of the vendors, came up to them and asked Shami for prayer for healing, as she had a growth on her neck. They also had a long conversation with Carlos, who said he is already a believer, and with a man named Richard, who needed prayer for his diabetes. Bob, Keith and I saw a young woman sitting on the ground with several bowls spread out in front of her, labeled with the names of different religions, with a sign saying, "Which religion cares the most?" We saw a guy last month with this same "gimmick" for getting people to give him money. The woman saw Bob and asked, "Could I please, please have a lunch?" We were already out of lunches, but then we saw Mitch, and he had some left, so we took one over to her and said, "Jesus gives you this lunch" and plopped it in the "Christianity" bowl. Bob also gave her two more tracts. Later, we saw the guy who had the same thing going on down the Boardwalk, but we told him we gave our last lunch to his girlfriend. After we gave all the stuff to the homeless people we found, we continued to hand out gospel tracts to people who were just down at the Boardwalk for a Saturday morning. We handed out several hundred tracts in English and Spanish. As we were walking back to the car, I saw several people reading the tracts that Bob was giving out ahead of me. One young man, wearing athletic apparel and carrying a gym bag, was reading his "Creator or Liar?" tract, and I offered him a different one, and he took it. A vendor was reading the tract I had given him earlier, and said he liked it because it was about a soccer player, and he himself played soccer. He would soon find out it was about more than soccer - it was about receiving eternal life through Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord!

Saturday, March 7, 2015 - We had a beautiful day today for our outreach to Venice Beach and the Boardwalk. We had a good team of people who came to help with everything, and they were: Tom, me, Shami, Desiree, Bob, Sarah, Johnny, Cody, Frank, Mitch and Ararat. We had made up 139 lunches, and had lots of socks, toiletries, jackets and sweatshirts, T-shirts, hats, and other clothing for the homeless. We also gave out ten blankets and some pillows, all of which were very much appreciated. One homeless man who received a jacket from us last month recognized us and thanked us again for the jacket. His name was Moe, and he also got a lunch, socks and toiletries this time. Shami, Desiree and Ararat prayed for Crystal, "Lone Wolf", Rick and "Sidewinder", and also gave them lunches and clothing items. All the homeless people who received food and clothing from our team were very grateful and happy to get them. We had many people waving and thanking us as we were on our way back down the Boardwalk. For Sarah, Johnny, Cody and Desiree, it was their first time going on our outreach, and they all enjoyed it. Cody said he saw one homeless man walking along, ranting and raving about something, but when he offered him a lunch, the man said, "Oh, thank you very much" in a normal tone of voice, and then went right back to his ranting and raving. Cody gave lunches to two men who were asleep in blankets on the grass, and when Johnny came by, one man woke up and thanked him. Bob and Mitch were handing out tracts and lunches, and one lady saw them and said she was a Christian, and wanted

to tell her church what we were doing, so that they could do something similar. She said it was very encouraging to see other Christians out there giving out the gospel and food to people. She started to say “good-bye” and leave, but Mitch said, “Let us pray for you before you go.” She was very surprised that someone would pray for her right then and there, but was grateful. After we gave out all the lunches and most of the other stuff, we continued to hand out gospel tracts. One young man was selling bunches of sage and other “New Age” things, and he said he wouldn’t take a tract, but would talk with me about it. I was able to give him a little bit of my testimony, and when he said he didn’t need anyone or anything to get to God, I told him that Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father except through Me.” He didn’t accept that as true right then, but I left him, hoping I had at least planted a few seeds. His name is Alexander, so we will pray for him, that the Lord will cause that seed to grow and bring him to Christ.

Prison Ministry

Nang Sam, Ironwood State Prison, Blythe, CA - “Thank you for everything you’ve done for me. The Serenity Bible is really helpful. For years I’ve never gotten a letter that expresses such love and kindness, but reading your letter got me really thinking about what I can do in this life. Thank you for all the things you are doing for other people. Oh, yes, I had a surprise visit from my mom, step-father and grandma. It was beautiful. My grandma is also a Christian, and she tells me to always keep my focus on the Lord and do good. Sincerely, Sam”

Nancy Manuel, Central California Women’s Facility, Chowchilla, CA - “I’m writing to let you know that I really enjoy your letters a lot. I feel like I’m out of this place for a while. It is really very refreshing reading them. Also, I am having a great time doing the Steps. It is something I’ve needed to do but have feared it for some reason. I figured digging up my past would cause me to fall apart, so I’ve just stuffed everything. I think I’m stronger now and ready to face it, get it out and put it all behind me so that I can move on. I know it’s gonna be tough, but so were many of the other things I’ve been through. Thank you for your kindness. Love, Nancy”

Leonard Martinez, Substance Abuse Treatment Facility, Corcoran, CA - “The purpose of this letter is to request enrollment in any additional courses you may have to offer. I was really grateful to participate in your Love Lifted Me Recovery 12-Step program. How awesome is it that God was incorporated into a recovery program? I experienced most of the 12-Steps and worked them before ever seeing them, so to later read God is involved in this process back to sobriety, it really took me by surprise. It also made me a believer, because I experienced them. I found Scripture that applied to me in Exodus 21:13, that even in prison, He provided a place of refuge. At first, I was disturbed by all the “religious” stuff in the 12-Step course, because I wanted to learn more about alcohol abuse prevention, but my mind was changed as I continued forward. Thank you for working with me. This change I’ve made has been the biggest thing I’ve done that is good in my life. Respectfully, Leonard Martinez”

Tong Xiong, California Men’s Colony, San Luis Obispo, CA - “I’ve been reading the Serenity Bible you sent me, and I like it. It’s pretty easy to follow. Thank you guys for the Serenity Bible and everything you do to help us in here to understand our behavior and defects, so that we can heal our pain and build a relationship with God. I grew up not believing in God because my family practiced shamanism. It’s like doing magic to heal people. I am Hmong nationality, but I was born here in the United States. I was believing in shamanism my whole life, and when introduced to the word of God, I was very defensive. I had a lot of pride and that came from my family background - we are not supposed to believe in God. Today, I tell you that I believe in God and Jesus Christ my Savior, because they both changed my way of living. I put my trust and my faith in them, and my life has been different ever since. I am happy, and

able to smile, and I do not get defensive anymore. I understand myself better, and I understand what God wants me to do - what His purpose for me is. He has given me the chance to heal and know myself better so that murdering another human being will never happen again. May God bless you. Sincerely, Tong Xiong”

Marvin Salinas, Substance Abuse Treatment Facility, Corcoran, CA - “I love getting your letters - they make me feel like part of a family. Thank you. Also, I’ve completed Steps 8 & 9, making amends. Actually, I sent out letters a few years ago to everyone I could, asking for their forgiveness for the pain that I may have caused them. I wasn’t in a 12-Step program, it was reading my Bible that led me to do it. I got quite a few letters back, and none were hateful or negative. They were more surprised at the change taking place in me, I guess. I’m continuing to review Steps 8 & 9 from the Serenity Bible that you sent me. Your brother in Christ, Marvin”

Chris Matthews, Folsom State Prison, Represa, CA - “It has been a great blessing to be able to receive your 12-Step program. I have been able to gain a better understanding of myself through it. I had stopped attending the AA meetings available here, because I never really got anything out of it other than frustration. I’m not big on telling “war stories” over and over. I have completed my Steps 8 & 9, and am ready for Step 10. Also, whenever possible, please send me “Overcoming Difficulties: Dealing with Difficult People” and “Forgiveness”. At this time, I feel the need to gain more insight in these areas. Again, thank you for the blessing of your ministry. You have been a great help to me personally. It shows how much God’s love is present in our lives. Sincerely in Christ, Chris”

Mitch Savolt, Ironwood State Prison, Blythe, CA - “I want to take this time to let you know that our group is continuing to press forward, allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us in our recovery from our addictions. There are about six to eight steady men attending each week. There are others that drop in, but our biggest problem is that there is a big turnover here at this prison, due to out-of-state transfers, or dropping points and going to a lower level. However, we are not discouraged, and we continue to share with the Lost, and be good ambassadors for Christ each and every day, no matter our situation or circumstances. We all would like to thank you both for your thoughts, prayers and support. Personally, I have experienced the benefits that your materials have given me: deep insights into my addictions, and the biblical teachings on how to overcome them through the grace of God. Sincerely, Mitch”

Yolanda Peña, Central California Women’s Facility, Chowchilla, CA - “Thank you for the picture - now I can put a face to your letters. I like to hear what you do, and do for others. It allows my mind to think out of this place, and it gives me more hope to stay close to God. He puts His people at work, and I’m very passionate when I hear what others do for my brothers and sisters in Christ. It brings happiness to my heart and tears to my eyes. How easy it is to follow the Lord’s walk when we allow Him to put His love in our hearts! Yolanda”

LaMount Dunlap, Avenal State Prison, Avenal, CA - “Please forgive me for taking so many months to return my last lessons, but I was moved to a new prison, and they lost most of my property in the transfer (including my New Testament you sent me). I’ve been dealing with the issue of tracking down my property. Truthfully, it has been an ordeal, and I’ve been very discouraged. The devil sure has an arsenal of tricks and ploys to try and keep us from succeeding in our walk. But Paul encourages us to “not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint” (Galatians 6:9). I am standing on this verse as well as standing on God’s grace. I look forward to continuing my Bible studies with you. Love, LaMount