

“Love Lifted Me Recovery” - April, 2016
Newsletter for January, February, March, 2016
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Web Site: www.Loveliftedmerecovery.com

Some people have asked us why a born-again Christian would need to do a recovery program such as the 12-Steps, because we already have become a new creation in Christ and are forgiven from our sins.

Here are some words from the Apostle Paul in the word of God which may help to explain our purpose:
II Timothy 2:15 & 19-26 “Be diligent (study) to present yourself approved unto God, a worker who **does not need to be ashamed**, rightly dividing the word of truth.” “Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ **depart from iniquity.**’”

This message from Second Timothy was written to Christians - “those who are His,” and “who name the name of Christ.” If **we belong to Jesus Christ**, there are some instructions here for our complete healing from the wreckage of the past. Many of us have SHAME issues, and some of us have spent most of our lives **looking for APPROVAL or LOVE** from someone, whether parents, teachers, husband or wife, “significant others” or whoever, and never finding it. The idea of being **“APPROVED unto God, a worker who does NOT need to be ASHAMED”** is almost more than we can understand or receive! But it is possible; it just takes some diligence on our part in two areas: 1.) Studying God’s word, in order to rightly (correctly) understand it; and 2.) Departing from (leaving behind) iniquities (sins) and getting rid of the entanglements of the past.

What does it mean to **“depart from Iniquity”**? Iniquity is **“any violation of God’s order or laws.”** If you have personally violated some of God’s laws, you must repent (depart, turn away from them), but you may also need **DELIVERANCE and CLEANSING from the EFFECTS or consequences** of having broken His laws. When God’s laws are violated over a long period of time, **it produces BONDAGE or STRONGHOLDS in your life.** Maybe you were an innocent VICTIM, and someone else **BROKE GOD’S LAWS** and sinned against YOU in some way in your upbringing and childhood, or at any time in your past. If that is the case, you must **DEPART from the iniquity done TO you by FORGIVING the offender**, and giving them up to God. This is the only way to **NOT keep dragging all that old pain and garbage** with you through the rest of your Christian life here on earth. The iniquity done to you could be any number of things: physical or sexual abuse, verbal abuse (harsh words, condemnation), a parent you were never able to please, rejection or ridicule, or just lack of love. The resentment, bitterness and low self esteem resulting from these actions against you can and will **hold you back from being all that God wants you to be**, until you deal with them, and once and for all **DEPART** from them.

Monthly Evangelistic Outreach to Venice Beach

Saturday, January 2, 2016 - Today, we had no idea who would be showing up to go on the outreach with us, but the Lord brought us Frank, Mitch, Justin, Moses, Keith, Tony and Nancy. Shami and Desiree were not able to come, so Justin and Moses took their usual route, and Frank and Mitch went on their usual route, and Nancy, Tony and Keith came with me. Tom stays at home to cover us in prayer the whole time we are down at the beach. My group went up to Rose Ave., and this time we checked out the north end of the parking lot and found 15-20 homeless people up that way. They took most of our blankets before we even got down on the rest of the Boardwalk, but altogether, our three groups handed out 22 blankets and 151 lunches. We also had socks, little bags of toiletries, and some clothing and shoes. One man named Travis said he didn’t have a jacket, so I told him to walk back to the car with me,

and he tried on the nice, warm jacket we had there, and it fit him perfectly. He was so happy! Mitch said they gave a women's heavy, warm jacket to a lady who was lying down, and also gave her a blanket, and she was very grateful. Moses and Frank prayed for quite a few people, and they both said people were very thankful, and they got lots of "God bless you"s from people. One man who remembered Moses from another time, ran up to him and hugged him. They also said a man was singing "Jesus on the Mainline" as they went by. Tony brought extra goodies (pastries, doughnuts and cupcakes) that were donated by Smart & Final, and most of those we just gave out along with the lunches. All in all, we had a great time, and the Lord really blessed us as we were able to bless other people and minister the gospel of Jesus Christ to them. For the homeless people, we gave gospel tracts as well as things to help meet their physical needs. To the other people just enjoying a day at the beach, we gave out the gospel tracts in both English and Spanish.

Saturday, February 6, 2016 - Saturday, the day of our Venice Beach outreach, the weather was great! We were having a little warm spell in the middle of winter. The people who showed up for our team to go down to the Boardwalk besides Tom and me were: Shami, Desiree, Darla, Nancy, Frank, Mitch, Ararat, Justin, and A.J. We had made up 160 lunches, more than usual, because we thought some extra people would be coming. They couldn't make it, but we didn't have any trouble giving away all 160 lunches. We also gave out toiletries, socks, underwear, T-shirts and other clothing items, and 25 blankets to the homeless. Mitch saw a guy named Kevin on his bike in an alley, and gave him a lunch and information for the Bible Tabernacle. He also saw a lady he'd seen before, who is on a rolling bed of some sort, and she said she had been in the hospital for a while, but was back out on the Boardwalk now. Desiree saw a large bunch of young people camping out on the grass, and gave them all lunches and everything. Nancy, Ararat and I started up at the Rose Ave. end of the Boardwalk, and as we did last month, we went up to the north end of the parking lot where a lot of homeless people hang out. We gave out about a third of the lunches, clothing and everything that we had before we even started down the Boardwalk. Ararat prayed with a man named Mark, and also gave him food and everything. Nancy and I saw a woman, and we found out her name is Arlene. She first took a lunch, then we gave her socks, underwear, two T-shirts, and some toiletries. She was overwhelmed with thankfulness. Many of the people we met gave thanks to the Lord, and some asked where we went to church. We gave information on our church, and also the Bible Tabernacle for people who wanted to go there to have a place to live. Along with the clothing we had, there were two pairs of men's shoes in size 13, and one pair of women's shoes in a size 7 1/2. Praise the Lord! We found people who needed those exact sizes, and they were so happy to get some shoes that fit them. Nancy and I were giving out lunches to a small group, when we heard someone hollering, "Socks! Socks! I need socks!" Nancy had one last pair, and we gave them to him, along with a lunch. Nancy, Ararat and I prayed for a man named Daniel, and for his wife who was in a convalescent home and needed healing. I don't think he was homeless, but he was a Christian, and he asked for prayer. Shami, Desiree and Darla saw a young man in the parking lot (also not homeless), and he asked how he could join our ministry to help feed the homeless. Shami gave him our information, and we'll see if he contacts us. The rest of the time we were at the Boardwalk, we continued to hand out gospel tracts in English and Spanish.

Saturday, March 5, 2016 - Today, for our beach outreach, we had some of our regulars, plus a group of people from Mt. Sinal Baptist Church in Los Angeles. We had Tom, Dottie, Keith, Shami, and Desiree, as well as Frank, Mitch, Justin, Moses, Ararat, Michael and A. J. from the Bible Tabernacle in Canyon Country - all of these pretty much our regulars (Michael being the only new one with the BT guys). Then, from the new church we had Jason and his ten-year-old son Justice, Jeremy, Chanel, Jackie, Monica, Shannon and Gwen. Because we knew there would be a bigger group going out, we made up extra lunches, and together with some lunches made up by our church's Sunday school kids, we had a total of 200 lunches. We also gave out 28 blankets, lots of socks, toiletries, and some clothing, including some nice jackets. We also had three pairs of almost new shoes in size 12. Chanel, Shannon and Jackie

found a man who needed shoes, and he was a size 12 - he was so happy and grateful! Michael found a man who said he was size 12, but only had one foot. He had a prosthetic leg, and said he would put the other shoe on it when he put it on. Ararat gave the last pair of shoes to another man who was very happy to get them. As for the lunches we give out, in case you missed it before, here's what we put in our lunches: a can of Vienna sausages, a fruit cup, a bottle of water, cookies, a napkin and plastic fork, three packets of peanut butter or cheese crackers, and a gospel tract/booklet. This time, we also added an individual-sized box of cereal, as these had been donated to us. It's not a whole lot, but it's enough for one meal, or they can save some of the crackers for later. Everything is canned or packaged and will keep fresh. All the new people said they really enjoyed going out and ministering to the homeless, and were very encouraged and uplifted by the experience. Mitch gave out his last blanket to one man, and a woman nearby asked for one, too. Mitch walked all the way back to the Venice Bible Tabernacle to get a few more blankets, and found the woman, and gave her one. Ararat gave his last lunch to a man, and a woman next to him started cursing and swearing at Ararat when he said he didn't have one for her. He promised to get some more, and found Shami and her group, and got a lunch for that woman. Unfortunately, she didn't even apologize to him for cursing him out before, but she was happy to get the food. Monica said they met some women who said they were from Dallas, Texas, and they were encouraged to see that there were Christians here in Los Angeles who were doing what we were doing. Justin and AJ gave out information to the Bible Tabernacle to one man, and they also told us that one of the men they'd met on the Boardwalk last month had come out to Canyon Country and was still there, and doing very well. Moses, Jason and Justice gave out lunches and the other items, and also prayed for people. Jason said it was good for his young son to be there and see what it was like to minister to people in this way. We had no trouble giving out the 200 lunches to the homeless, and after they were gone, we continued to go up and down the Boardwalk handing out gospel tracts. We plant the seeds, and trust in the Lord to bring forth the harvest.

Here are some comments from our brothers and sisters who came from Mt. Sinai Baptist Church: "My biggest take away from the day was meeting other saints from different churches and denominations that were willing to come together and serve God's people under the banner of love and example of His Son, Jesus Christ. During that moment our differing practices and ideologies didn't matter, we were ONE church!"

"The interactions with the men and women at Venice Beach was a serious reality check. I'm almost ashamed to admit that my experience in outreach is very limited and the frequency is far and few in between. I will most definitely participate again."

"We were greatly blessed and encouraged to partner with such wonderful people. To witness the generosity and compassionate hearts of the men who drove from Canyon Country give me a benchmark to strive for. I began the morning with a bit of apprehension not having much experience, but the men who were with us made me feel very comfortable. They led the way until my son and I felt confident to engage in conversation with the multitudes of people who were there."

Look on our web site for photos of our of our past beach outreaches: Loveliftedmerecovery.com

Prison Ministry

Randall Lejero, California Institution for Men, Chino, CA - "Thank you both for doing God's work! I can't tell you how much your study course is helping me in my daily walk. I have just started learning about God and His works and will. The more I am reading, the more I am beginning to understand. Your course is really putting things into perspective, and showing me how the Bible applies to everything in my life, not only my addictions. In your letters, I love reading about the beach outreach - it really

touches my heart. I really feel blessed to know and share in your lives. Sincerely, Randall”

Chu Vang, California Men's Colony, San Luis Obispo, CA - “I love to hear that the outreach went well, giving blessing to those who are less fortunate. Believe it or not, that is a Step 12, giving back to others and sharing with others about Christ. I try to do that by sending letters to this place in Carson, to a lady who runs an organization that deals with troubled youths. When I was at Avenal, I was also involved with the youth program there, and try to let others know how my false beliefs and actions had a negative impact on my life. I believe that this is God's plan for me - to carry the message to others and to bring them to Christ. I think that's what the Apostle Paul meant when he said in I Cor. 9:22 that he became weak so that he could win the weak. God bless you and may peace be unto you. Sincerely, Chu Vang”

Steve Clark, Substance Abuse Treatment Facility, Corcoran, CA - “Your Bible study is just the thing I have been looking for in here. This is my first time in prison, and there is a lot of negativity here and distractions, and it is a struggle to stay focused on God and not get caught up in many of Satan's traps in here. Your Bible study is a good positive way to help me keep focused on God and the Bible, so thank you again for that. I come from a strong Christian background, but unfortunately, I got involved with doing meth, and that's how I ended up here. God bless you both, Steve”

Conyal Cody, Jr., Soledad State Prison, Soledad, Calif. - “It was very nice to read of the testimonies of others in your newsletter, as well as the outreach to Venice Beach. I mean, it's truly sad to hear of so many in our society that are up against it and in such need. For though I'm in prison, I have a roof over my head, three square meals a day, and clean clothes to wear. I also have a job which pays me a few dollars, so whenever I'm able, I'll be sure to send a couple of dollars to help in a small way with the outreach program. So, enclosed is a check for \$25 to help those who are suffering such hardships. For again, it means a lot to me to give back to a society that I once often stole from. Making amends in any positive way that I can is now a part of my new way of living. Much respect and love, Conyal Cody, Jr.”

Donald Johnston, Mule Creek State Prison, Ione, CA - “First let me express to you the love and kindness of our Lord, and thank you for all you do, not just for me, but for all of God's children you touch in your days. I gave the card you sent to Mike, and made sure he had your address. I will encourage him to write soon. We all just moved to the new Mule Creek yards, and are living out of boxes. Please forgive us if we are slow to write you back. I'm ready for Step 10 now, having finished my Step Nine amends. If I can't make direct amends to someone, I try to do a “living amends” - to live each day as an example to all others I meet each day. I wish for them to see me as a witness of God and His working in my life. Your friend, Donnie”

Dina Rae Gritz, California Institution for Women, Chino, CA - “I had to add this note to you all on behalf of how blessed I am to have met you and participated in your 12-Step program. I love my Bible studies, and try to see how many of the verses I know by heart - hee, hee! But most of all, I need you to know how grateful I am that you continue to support me and are able to send letters to the Parole Board on my behalf. A very big thank you! Please know that I faithfully pray for you both, and your family and ministry. We certainly need each other's prayers - that's the cement that holds the foundation together. Much love and gratitude, Dina Rae, God's Girl”!

Royce Casey, R. J. Donovan State Prison, San Diego, CA - “I want to thank you two on behalf of those of us who have made some very poor choices and large and irrevocable mistakes in our lives. Your 12-Step program, especially Step 4, has helped me to break through some very old and thick barriers to my own growth. I plan to use what I have learned in formulating my relapse-prevention plan for parole. Thank you also for sending me the information about the Bible Tabernacle. I hope to go there when and if I parole. Sincerely, Royce Casey”