

**“Love Lifted Me Recovery” - April, 2018**  
**Newsletter for January, February, March, 2018**  
**Pastors/Chaplains Tom & Dottie Hooper**  
**Web Site: [www.Loveliftedmerecovery.com](http://www.Loveliftedmerecovery.com)**

**What is the “High Calling” or the “Victorious Christian Life”?** It is fulfilling God’s purpose for your life, which He planned even before you were born, but many Christians **never reach that goal of walking in and fulfilling the plan God has for them.** It is the same as the Israelites in Moses’ time - God lead them out of bondage in Egypt, but what **should have been a two-week journey** turned into a lifetime of wandering in the wilderness, and a whole generation never entered the Promised Land! **God’s Promised Land for you is the “Victorious Christian Life,”** and He wants you to enter it and enjoy it. There will be battles along the way, just as there were nations for the Israelites to drive out of Canaan, but God has promised you the victory. The victorious life in Christ is what is meant in Philippians 3:8, “That I may gain Christ.” Obviously, Paul already had Jesus Christ in his life, so what is he referring to? He means **having Christ become the dominating power in your life!** When he talks about not having already attained or arrived at, or not already being perfect, he is talking about becoming LIKE Jesus Christ in everything you do. This is our goal - to become Christ-like in all that we do and say. Have any of us totally and completely reached or attained that goal yet? No, of course not, but it is God’s desire and plan for our lives (Romans 8:29).

• **Philippians 3:7-14** “But what things were GAIN to me, these I have counted LOSS for Christ. But indeed I also count all things LOSS in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, **that I may gain Christ** and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law (keeping religious rules), but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.....if by any means I may attain to the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were **already perfect**; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brothers, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, **forgetting those things which are behind,** and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark (goal) for the prize of the **high calling** of God in Christ Jesus.”

• **II Timothy 1:9** “Who has saved us and called us with a **HOLY CALLING**, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.”

• **Ephesians 2:10** “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has before ordained (prepared beforehand) that we should walk in them.”

• **I John 5:4-5** “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And **this is the VICTORY** that has overcome the world - our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”

If you would like to read this complete five-page study, see our website [Loveliftedmerecovery.com](http://Loveliftedmerecovery.com) under the title of “Keys to the Victorious Christian Life”.

### **Monthly Evangelistic Outreach to Venice Beach**

**Saturday, January 6, 2018** - The day for our outreach, the original weather report said “no rain”, but we did get a few sprinkles. That did not keep us from handing out 181 lunches, lots of socks, toiletry/hygiene packets, several pairs of shoes, lots of knit hats and headbands (made “with love” by Debbie in Phoenix), some rain ponchos, used clothing, and a few backpacks. Also, we decided to provide some dog food for the homeless, as a few of them do have canine companions. They shouldn’t have to give up their own food to feed their dogs, so we bought some dry dog food and put it in quart-size Baggies, and gave those out along with the people food. Our ministry team consisted of Tom, me, Johnny, A.J., Shami, Apple, Suchart, Tony and Bob. Johnny and A.J. said they gave out every lunch and item of clothing and dog food. People were so happy to get all the things God provided for their physical needs. Tony prayed for

a lot of the homeless people, and also handed out information for the Bible Tabernacle, if they decide they want to get off the streets. Shami, Apple and Suchart prayed for people, including Steve, who asked for prayer for healing of cancer. They prayed for Carol, who had something wrong with her feet, and they hurt her when she walked, so they prayed for healing for her. Bob, Tony and I took the north end of the parking lot and the Boardwalk, and we found everyone very grateful and thankful for what they received. The knit hats and headbands were a big hit! One lady named Seren still had her knit hat from several months ago, but said the headband covered her ears better, so she would wear them together. Johnny and A.J. met two men who said they were "vegan" so they didn't want the lunches, but they were very happy to get some dog food for their dogs. Tom stays at home to pray for us, and he always prays that people would come to us, and they did. We had some people "come out of nowhere" as soon as they saw us giving out food and stuff, and they were thrilled to get some food and clothing. Everyone got a gospel tract in their lunch, and we handed out some tracts to other people, also - not as many as usual, because there weren't as many people down at the beach in the cold weather.

**Saturday, February 3, 2018** - Saturday, for our beach outreach, we knew of several people who could not come, but the good news was that the guys from the Bible Tabernacle in Canyon Country said they would be able to come. Praise the Lord! They had not been able to come for the last few months due to vehicle problems. So, our ministry group for today consisted of Tom and me, then Frank, Mitch, Brian, Carlos and Eduardo ("Lalo") from the BT in Canyon Country, and Keith, Sheldon and Tony. Carlos and Lalo were first-timers, but they both said they enjoyed it, and that it made them feel good to be able to give food and clothing and things to the homeless people we met down at the Boardwalk. We had 166 lunches, lots of socks, toiletry/hygiene packets, used clothing, shoes, and about 26 blankets. We also gave out dog food to those homeless people who had dogs, and they were very appreciative. One man was sitting on the sidewalk with his dog, and the dog had a water dish there, but no food, so he was very thankful to get the dog food for "Odie" and some people food for himself. He also got some clean underwear and a pair of jeans. Tony and Lalo came with me, and Lalo gave the size eleven shoes to a man who said they were just his size. I saw a young woman who had asked me last time if we had "wipes", and we had some this time, so she was very happy to get them. She told me her name was "Gorgeous". Everyone loved getting the blankets, because it still has been pretty cold out at night. Tony was touched by one young man who was looking out for the others in his group, making sure they all got food and the other things. Brian talked to a couple of guys who were out here from Arizona, and he also prayed for them. Mitch and Frank were just happy to be back, and they prayed for quite a few people, too. Mitch said it was a real blessing to be able to go out to the Boardwalk again. Sheldon and Keith met a group of four people, and gave them four lunches, toiletries, and some clothes. One older man asked for "drawers" and Sheldon said he hadn't heard that expression for a while, so it made him chuckle.

So he gave him a few pair of underwear, and they were all very appreciative. Sheldon had a long conversation with a homeless woman named Cynthia, and she was really curious about why we were down there, so he told her about LLMR, and Sunrise Church. She told him that she had been raised in the LDS (Mormon) church, but she seemed genuinely interested in the gospel tract that was in her lunch, and she asked a lot of questions. Then they met Tom, an older man with a beard, and he said that he had been homeless in the Venice area for 30 years, some of those in various shelters, and he used to do roller skating tricks on the Boardwalk, like jumping over trash cans. Sheldon offered to pray for him and he graciously accepted. After giving out the food and other items to the homeless, we continued to hand out gospel tracts up and down on the Venice Boardwalk.

**Saturday, March 10, 2018** - Well, even though we had been praying for no rain, God allowed it to be pouring down rain right at 8:30-9:00 in the morning on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, so we decided that was His way of saying we shouldn't go out that day. The sun was shining earlier, so why have it rain right before we were supposed to go, unless He was trying to tell us something? There probably wouldn't have been many homeless people out if it was raining hard - they would have tried to find shelter somewhere, and

wouldn't be out in their usual places, so we decided to go on the next Saturday, the 10<sup>th</sup>. There was rain forecast for that day also, so it still took a lot of prayer, but the Lord held back the rain until after we got back from the outreach. We left around 9:00, and got back a little before 11:00, and it was pouring down rain by 11:30. Praise the Lord! So, we had a very good outreach, but just not as many people out as usual, because of the impending rain. There were not as many homeless, so we even gave some of them two lunches each (we started out with 171 lunches). We gave out a lot of socks, but not as much of the toiletries and clothing, so they will be given out next month. We did have several heavy jackets we gave out, and they were much appreciated. In our ministry team, we had Tom, me, Johnny, Sheldon, Tony and Keith. Because some of the homeless people had already tried to find shelter, we went down the alleys, as well as on the Boardwalk. Sheldon saw a man in the alley, and gave him two lunches, because he looked hungry. The man quoted a Scripture to him, and asked if he could pray for Sheldon. The Scripture he gave was James 5:16, "The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." Keith saw some people in tents, gave them lunches, and one man offered to play the flute for him, so Keith got serenaded. Johnny went out on the beach to a man who was lying out on the sand, and he got a big smile on his face when Johnny gave him a lunch and a knit hat. Everyone was very thankful and grateful for the food and other items, and we found some of them huddling under awnings to get out of the rain (it hadn't started yet, though - thank the Lord!). We had a few lunches left over, so Johnny and I found a group of homeless people along Grand Ave. near the traffic circle in Venice. We gave those people two lunches each, also, since we had so many left. We still had a few left when we got home, but they can either last until next time, or Tom and I will find homeless people out and about during the month and give them out. We did hand out gospel tracts, also, but not as many as usual, because fewer people were out on the Boardwalk.

## Prison Ministry

**Robert Chavez, Avenal State Prison, Avenal, CA** - "I just wanted to reach out and convey how grateful I am for the two of you! It never fails to amaze me how giving you guys are to complete strangers. This has given me insight that there are people who genuinely care. I myself plan to give back whenever I regain my physical freedom, yet I have found many different ways to give back within these prison walls. Today, I work alongside a counselor in a substance abuse program as a mentor. I utilize any opportunity to give back to society that I took so much from in my past. Every day is making living amends, as the 12-Steps has taught me to do. Tom and Dottie, I can never express my gratitude for the two of you, but I can make a promise to one day help out the less fortunate out on the beach alongside you guys. Sincerely, Robert"

**Alfredo Casillas, Calipatria State Prison, Calipatria, CA** - "Thank you both for being vessels of God to make it possible to have Bible studies and 12-Steps lessons here in prison. It makes a difference in a lot of guys' lives, even if some don't realize it. I know I don't write much, and we get busy and sometimes forget to say thank you. With love and respect, Alfredo Casillas"

**Quincy Jefferson, Los Angeles County Jail** - "I'm doing your Ephesians Bible study, and I had a big conviction in this latest lesson. I learned a lot and I don't want to be involved in "lawlessness" anymore. I am a new man in Christ, and I want to live that way. Don't get me wrong, it's hard every day being in this place (both in this world, and in jail), but I will do it through Christ who is within me. Thank you for everything that you do. You have really been great pen pals, but also great teachers/apostles. Love, always, a true disciple, Quincy"

**Jose Ocasio, Substance Abuse Treatment Facility, Corcoran, CA** - "I want to thank you so much for the opportunity to really learn through the "Love Lifted Me Recovery" program, not only the 12-Step program, but the beautiful and amazing word of God. I'm sending my homework along with this short

letter. I appreciate everything, and I look forward to the next lessons. May God bless you and all the brothers and sisters who help make a big difference in my life, and many other lives. Sincerely, Jose Ocasio, Sr.”

**Aaron Guardado, Calipatria State Prison, Calipatria, CA** - “I am very blessed and thankful to have received my Serenity Bible and Bible studies. This is my first time ever doing Bible studies, and I was surprised to know these mysteries from our God through our Lord Jesus Christ. I learned that in our Lord Jesus Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. I now know that the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross gained God’s good will and favor for us, so that we can enter into relationship with Him. I want to thank you both for helping us prisoners in need. I will be looking forward to receiving my next Bible study lessons. In our Savior’s love, Aaron Guardado”

**Jerry Gallo, Avenal State Prison, Avenal, CA** - “I am writing to thank you for your support letter for my parole hearing. The Parole Board commissioner read your support letter into the record and said he knew your ministry and had respect for what you guys do. Well, I was found suitable for parole, and I should be reunited with my family in August, after 26½ years of incarceration. Thank you for what you guys do for so many of us, and I give God the glory for all of it. I prayed during my hearing and said that if I get found suitable or not, He gets the glory! Thank you, Jerry”

**Donna Anderson, Central California Women’s Facility, Chowchilla** - “Thanks for the new Bible study. The Holy Spirit led you to exactly where I need to be. The book of James has always been my favorite book of the New Testament, other than the synoptic gospels. What a joy to really study it, for it is both familiar and brand new – now that I’ve grown in the Holy Spirit’s guidance in my life. Thank you for sending a Bible study I am so excited about. I do a great Bible study with five others at lunchtime at work, but I am thankful for your guidance in doing this study on my own. Love in Christ, Donna”

**Donald Edge, San Quentin State Prison, San Quentin, CA** - “Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your help and assistance. I have just about completed reading all of the Step 12 information that you both sent to me. I promise to do my best in applying the 12-Steps into my everyday life. To date, I have noticed a big transformation within my character alone just from the Steps. To answer your question concerning the Bible study, yes, I would like to start doing one of your Bible studies. Thank you for such a great offer and opportunity to learn more about our Lord. Praise God! Donald Edge”

**Anthony Hart, Calipatria State Prison, Calipatria, CA** - “Thank you for the Bible studies. It’s a blessing to stay in the word of God, and I really had a good time looking up the words in my Bible that were needed to fill in the blanks. I can’t get enough of God’s word. On Monday, I’m involved in an apologetics class, on Tuesday, the brothers get together and watch a Christian video, and on Wednesday, we have a service called Koinonia. Thursday, I’m involved in a theology class, and on Saturday, I go to service and worship God. I’m actively involved and enjoy being a positive impact in the lives of others. I was speaking in one of the services, and another inmate came up to me with tears in his eyes, and said that when I was speaking, God really touched his heart. God is good, and I love serving Him. I want you to know that Love Lifted Me Recovery is in my prayers. With love, Anthony”

**Martin Marsh, Calif. Men’s Colony, San Luis Obispo, CA** - “I wanted to write and thank you for all that you do in providing hope and faith through Christ. I imagine at times it’s a struggle and a burden to keep up with everything, but what a great work you are doing serving Christ’s ministry, touching hearts, and affecting change one person at a time! As a recipient of that work, I appreciate you and your willingness to do the things you do. Sincerely, Martin”