

Ministry Update - 2nd Quarter, 2004

Weekly Recovery Meetings: Monday and Wednesday meetings continue to be well-attended, and we are seeing growth and fruit in the lives of those who have made a commitment to actually work the Twelve Steps. Also, several people have told us that they saw a real change in their lives, and major changes in their thinking, after just a few weeks of hearing the word of God presented in such a practical way to help them overcome their problems. Those who have worked through their 4th and 5th Steps have experienced even more freedom from bondage, dysfunctional behavior patterns, and wrong thinking from the past. One person shared that it is now easier to take his thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ (II Cor. 10:3-5), and easier to do God's will in his life.

Counseling Ministry: Evenings are open for one-on-one counseling in our home, or for prayer for healing and deliverance (James 5:14-15). We also go out occasionally to someone's house, if they don't have transportation. "Have anointing oil, will travel!" Tom continues to counsel and pray for people during the day, many times for hours with each individual, and most of them express their thanks that he is there to call when they're in trouble, or just for support and prayer. Obviously, it's God that we are supposed to call on when we're in trouble, but it also helps to have a real live person on the other end of the line, maybe to just confirm that you're doing the right thing, or to help you figure out what to do.

Thought for the Week: Many of you get Tom's "Thought for the Week" by e-mail. This Scripture and the "thought" that went with it is for everyone, but it also describes what our ministry is all about. **2 Corinthians 5:18 "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."** We ALL have a ministry that God has given us to do as Christians. To reconcile means to bring together two people or factions that were separated or at war with one another. The "ministry of reconciliation" means we are to help people be reconciled to God through His Son Jesus Christ, but it also means being reconciled and helping other people be reconciled to other human beings in their lives. That means forgiving others and not holding onto resentment and bitterness. "Blessed are the peacemakers." Romans 12:18, "If it is possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men."

Evangelistic Outreach: Some of us from our ministry went to hand out bagels to the homeless and pass out tracts on the Venice Boardwalk, helping out Dwayna of Lighting the Way International. We used mostly Chick tracts this time: "Creator or Liar?" with our ministry information printed on the back, and some new ones, in case people said, "Oh! I've already read that one." Foreign language tracts that were used were Tamil, Hebrew, French and Korean, and of course many in Spanish. People seemed to be pretty open to receiving the tracts, but a few passed on the tracts or the bagels or both. For the homeless people who are there every week, we hope, as Dwayna does too, that our kindness and consistency in giving out food will show the love of Christ to them. As we headed back to the parking lot, I left a few in various spots, including a witchcraft one on the steps of a psychic's house. The sign said, "Ring bell for psychic", so I tossed it on her stairs for the next prospective customer to find. Some of the vendors are down there every weekend, so they know what we are giving out, and they don't want it. Others were coaxed into taking one of the new ones, as we said, "Here! This one is new, so I know you haven't read it!" Some hearts are hardened, but others are being softened by the Holy Spirit, and the Father is drawing them to Jesus. We just don't know which ones, but we may meet some when we get to heaven. I'm so looking forward to that day, when many people (I hope) will come up to me and say, "Remember when you gave me that little tract?" Or, "Remember the little booklet you left in that phone booth, or park bench, or whatever? I picked it up, and it got me thinking about God, and eventually I accepted Jesus as my Savior."

We continue to go out in the neighborhood passing out our LLMR fliers and some little booklets. We had the Billy Graham book, "The Key to Personal Peace" and also a Max Lucado

book "Give It All to Him". We folded the fliers and stuck them into each book. The fliers contain a condensed gospel message, lots of Scripture, and a prayer to receive Jesus as Savior. Some weren't home, so we left them on the doorsteps, and some took them, and others refused them. One guy got rather agitated when he saw what it was, and not only refused a book, but said, "I don't want you to be doing this!" How very like the people mentioned in Romans 1:28 who "**did not LIKE to RETAIN God** in their knowledge" so that "God gave them over to a debased (reprobate) mind, to do those things which are not fitting." He didn't even want to be reminded that there is a God who will judge him some day. We pray that some of our "seed" will have fallen on good ground (Matt. 13:8), though, and that some of Jesus' sheep, who don't know yet that they ARE His sheep, will receive the message and be saved. We were just the messengers, like UPS men delivering the packages, and the Holy Spirit has to take over from here on.

Prison Ministry Update: We continue to get new prisoners from Soledad and Susanville prisons, but our biggest influx has been from the Calif. Substance Abuse Treatment Facility in Corcoran, California, with over 30 new Bibles sent out to Corcoran alone. One of our guys, William, was transferred there, and he shared our name and address with some inmates, and it has just snowballed with requests for the "Serenity" Bibles and for 12-Step and Bible study materials. Most of these men are already Christians, but we always send gospel tracts, so that if there is some doubt, they will have the necessary information to accept Christ and be saved. We have discovered over the last few months, that some of these men continue to correspond with us and do the 12-Step materials, and others seem to drop out, and maybe only wanted the free Bible. Either way, we know God's word does not return void, and it will accomplish that which God purposes (Isaiah 55:11). Several of the new men have requested that we send Bibles to their wives or other loved ones, and one man asked if we could call his father, because he was worried that he hadn't heard from him in a long time. We did all this, and at Mother's Day, we sent cards to two of the unsaved mothers that we've been sending materials to, and Tom has called and talked to one of the mothers.

From a letter dated 4/13/04: "Hello, Tom & Dottie, I got your letter. It was really cool. Kinda sounds like me, all open when it counts. Your friendliness can be heard all the way to heaven. For some reason I feel God is with you more than other ministries. I get this overwhelming feeling of "help is here" when I receive your letters. I really enjoy your letters and letting a little of your life known to a stranger - it is really comforting. Those letters are like friend letters which I haven't got until now. Not because I'm a loser or don't know how to have or make friends, it's just that no one but your family takes time to share simple things that make it easier to live in any stage of life. Well, except for a few people like yourselves. I feel like I know you and I haven't even seen you guys. That's love. Thank you." Love, your friend in Christ, Everardo Rosales", Susanville

From a letter dated 4/26/04: "I desire a place in your "Love Lifted Me Recovery" ministry, along with help in my spiritual needs also. I think that I'm just a lost soul in need of someone to help me put my life back on track. There have been other opportunities for me to talk to people, but the Lord was calling me from deep inside my heart when your address was being given out. So, the Lord gave me the call and I hope that you can feel the Lord talk to you about me. I truly hope that you like the poetry I send to you. I am a very expressive type of individual, who enjoys expressing what I see and feel on paper."

A Heartbeat Away

*Why in life do we look so far in search of hidden treasure,
When deep inside your heart and soul is eternal peace and pleasure.
For well within the "realm of life" is the center of God's love,
Brought to you in the spirit form from the heavens high above.
The Bible can bring you wisdom through the written word,
The church is open for all to come and the prayers that can be heard.
The Lord, He knows your problems, and the pain you feel within,
He died for you on Calvary to eliminate all your sin.*

*So, take the Lord into your life, He's waiting for you today,
Accept the peace you'll feel inside, that's just a heartbeat away.*

Pray With Me

*In a moment's notice, much to your surprise,
The Spirit lays but blueprints only for your eyes.
For through His grace you're granted the Spirit of God's love,
In the form of mercy from the heaven skies above.
The blueprint is the Bible of His written word.
Church is where you gather, where communication's heard.
You need to learn in Jesus Christ exactly where you fit,
To save yourself the misery of the fire pit.
So, if you walk is shallow, and you need some help this day,
Open your heart, bow your head, and together, let us pray.*

Insurance

*What is your destination when your life is done?
Will you die in darkness, or will you have the "Son"?
The choice is yours forever, how you spend eternity,
Be it a lake of fire, or in heaven, as a spirit free.
For in a moment's notice, your life on earth may end.
Your insurance is the love of Jesus, it's so nice to have a friend!*

The Grace That Saves

*There is a grace that saves us all, when our feelings begin to fall.
In the Spirit from high above, comes to us a special love.
The Lord our Savior walks within, so we may rebuke the ways of sin.
So, at any time when you feel blue, seek the Holy Spirit to enter you.
And through His love, grace and power
Feel the mercy of the Spirit every hour.*

Wayne Green, Soledad, May, 2004

Giving of Thanks: From a letter of May 19, 2004 - "I was informed thru a fellow Brother Christian about receiving a Serenity Bible, 12 Step materials and Bible study materials. Yes, I am very interested in getting started. If possible, please thank the faithful Christians that support "Love Lifted Me Recovery" and your various ministries. Thank you again, Pastor Tom & Dottie Hooper" Richard Sainz, Calif. Substance Abuse Treatment Facility at Corcoran

Want a PenPal? Several of our guys have asked if we know of anyone else who would like to write to them. Just write and share what's going on in your life, and share the love of Jesus with them.

Wayne Michael Green #	Gerald Beldon #V	William Buce # K-
T- 93152	04517	73167
P.O. Box 689	B-2 136 up	F-1 229 low
Soledad, CA 93960	P.O. Box 8502	P.O. Box 5244
	Coalinga, CA 93210	Corcoran, CA 93212-5244

From Pleasant Valley State Prison: Gerald was first witnessed to by Jay Kantola, one of our recovery group members, while in Los Angeles County Jail. Through a series of events, Jay led Gerald to Christ, and gave him some materials to get him started in the Christian life, such as "The Purpose Driven Life" and a few other books, and some of our Bible study papers. Gerald has been writing to us for about a year now. Here's what he wrote in one of his letters as he began to work the 12-Steps with our materials: "Man, my life in the fast lane sure was wild! I

did not realize how screwed up I am until I started doing the 12-Steps. It's taken me two days to answer these questions, and I am still in denial. I didn't think there was anything wrong with the way I was living. I have been in denial, anger, frustration, resentment. Everything 12-Step recovery talks about, I am guilty! I have never taken a seems-like-a-test like this before. Sure is a wake up! I never cared what anybody said or thought because all my friends, with few exceptions, were "loadies" and they did the same things that I did - drinking and drugs. Well, it finally got me and I am in prison because I wouldn't stop, because there was a terrible accident that almost killed my wife, because of my drunkenness. What a wake up that was! Thank God she is okay and still loves me - I could have accidentally killed her. It took something that bad to put me in prison to look at my crazy lifestyle of guns, drugs, drinking, never really caring. I never wanted to hurt anybody, but was out of control of my life. Drinking and guns don't mix! I knew that, but I was way too lost. The questions in Steps 1-2-3 I didn't even like reading, that's how bad it was. What a struggle just getting through that - honestly, I am screwed up! But I will make it. It sure opens your eyes, and that's why it was hard. I never cared about much of anything as long as I was in control, and I don't think I ever was (in control) in the past 30 years. Well, I just finished Step 2 of the 12 Step recovery. I sure have a hard time writing the answers, because in my life, none of these things ever mattered to me. I do think that what I'm learning is right, and I know it is after I answer questions and read them back later and ask myself, "Is that really me writing these things that I seem to know?" Why do I seem to have such a hard time with this? I know, it's like having a fight going on inside. Satan's way of life came easy for me. Before, looking at the way I lived wasn't so bad, even though it did put me in prison, because I thought there was nothing wrong with it. You know, maybe it wasn't Satan that put me in prison. I do believe God did not want me to die without knowing Him or His Son, and He gave me the chance to know Him. I must be loved to be given this chance. Sometimes a hardheaded person like me needs to realize I'm not being punished, I'm being saved and given a second chance. You know, prison and God both teach people how to live if you give it a chance. I would still be living the same way I was, but prison shows and teaches a lesson on what I was doing and the way I was living. God wants people to see their mistakes, so if prison is what it takes, He has a way to open people's eyes, but some people never learn. I am struggling every day, I do know that. Satan wants me to throw all these papers in the trash - believe me, he does not let go easy! I'm fighting while I write this."