

“Love Lifted Me Recovery” - July, 2018
Newsletter for April, May, June, 2018
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Web Site: www.Loveliftedmerecovery.com

In the fifth chapter of Romans, in describing the wonderful salvation we have in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul uses the expression **“much more”** several times. This expression is used as a contrast to show us how our New Covenant in the blood of Jesus is so much better than any other covenant God had with mankind before. Hebrews 8:6 tells us that Jesus is the **“Mediator of a BETTER covenant, which was established on BETTER promises,”** and Hebrews 11:39-40 says that the Old Testament heroes of the faith never received the fulfilment of the promises, but that **“God has provided something BETTER for us”** in that we are the ones who receive the complete salvation of God.

•**Romans 5:8-9 & 15-17** “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **MUCH MORE then**, having now been JUSTIFIED by His BLOOD, we shall be saved from WRATH through Him. For if when we were enemies we were RECONCILED to God through the death of His Son, **MUCH MORE**, having been reconciled, we shall be SAVED by His life.” “But the FREE GIFT is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, **MUCH MORE** the grace of God and the GIFT by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the FREE GIFT which came from many offenses resulted in JUSTIFICATION. For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, **MUCH MORE** those who receive abundance of GRACE and of the GIFT of RIGHTEOUSNESS will REIGN IN LIFE through the One, Jesus Christ.”

Let’s look at some of the benefits of **our “much more” salvation** that are mentioned in these Scriptures: **(1.)** God’s love for us; **(2.)** Justification by His blood; **(3.)** We are saved from God’s wrath; **(4.)** We are no longer enemies, but are reconciled to God; **(5.)** We are saved by His life; **(6.)** Abundance of grace; **(7.)** Righteousness as a free gift; and **(8.)** We will reign with Christ.

If you would like to read this complete five-page study, see our website Loveliftedmerecovery.com under the title of **“Our Much More Salvation”**.

Monthly Evangelistic Outreach to Venice Beach

Saturday, April 7, 2018 - For today’s outreach, we had a beautiful day (no rain - thank You, Jesus!), and those on our ministry team were: Tom, me, then Frank, Mitch, Brian, Ararat, Robert and Lalo from the Bible Tabernacle in Canyon Country, and Sheldon, Apple and Suchart from Sunrise Church. We had 174 lunches, lots of toiletry/hygiene packets, lots of socks, used clothing, some shoes, and another batch of knit hats and headbands from Debbie in Phoenix - all this to give to the homeless people at Venice Beach. We had dog food for those of the homeless community who have dogs, and there were quite a few. Proverbs 12:10 says, **“A righteous man regards the life of his animal,”** so we’ve been giving out dog food for the last five or six months now (don’t know why it took us so long to think of that, though). This was Robert’s first time, and he really enjoyed it. He said it was great to see the smiles on people’s faces when he gave them a lunch. Frank said he saw a man who was really in bad shape, but when he gave him a lunch, the man thanked him and said, **“God bless you!”** Frank also prayed for him. Ararat and I saw a couple who said this was their first day being homeless on the beach. They had come out here to California, and her sister was supposed to meet them, but didn’t show up, so they were out on the street. We gave them food, clothing and toiletries, and directions to the Bible Tabernacle in Venice. Ararat had a

good conversation with a man named Malik, who said he's originally from Morocco. Ararat is from Iran, so they felt they had a little something in common. We also gave food, clothing and toiletries to Jacob, Daniel and "Yogi", all of whom were very thankful. We had no trouble giving out all the lunches this time. Brian gave lunches to a couple who said they had just gotten married. Seems like a rough way to start a marriage, being homeless. Apple, Suchart and Sheldon took the route closer to the basketball courts and racquetball courts, and found a large group of homeless all living together. They gave them several lunches and toiletries and clothes. They had dogs, so they were given some of the dog food. Everyone was so appreciative and grateful. Later, they found a young man who had no shoes and offered him a pair of boots, and he gladly took them, and didn't mind if they were not quite the right size. They saw him again later, and he kept saying thank you and God bless you. Sheldon offered a lunch to a man who looked awful, his clothes were rags, looked like he hadn't shaved in a long time, and he replied that he "lived indoors" and this was just the "Venice style". Sheldon chuckled, as it seems like you never can tell based on appearances (either that, or the man was too proud to admit he was homeless). All in all, we had a great outreach, and after we gave out everything to the homeless, we continued to give out gospel tracts to other people who were just down at the beach for the day. Every lunch has a gospel tract inside, so we're giving out the good news of Jesus Christ to every homeless person, too, as well as some things for their physical comfort.

Saturday, May 5, 2018 - We had beautiful weather for the Venice Beach outreach today. Our ministry team consisted of Tom, me, Shami, Keith, Tony, Johnny, Cody, Apple and Suchart. We had 168 lunches, lots of socks, toiletry/hygiene packets, knit hats and headbands, used clothing, and a few blankets for the homeless (and some dog food for those homeless people who had dogs). Tom stayed home to cover us with prayer. Shami and her group met a couple who received a pair of jeans, some shirts, lunches, and toiletries. They met a young man named Brian, and he asked for food. They gave him some, and he gave Shami, Apple and Suchart big hugs. Shami prayed for healing for a man named Robert, and he said he was a Christian. They also met a man named Steven who was a veteran, and they gave him a lunch, prayed for him, and also thanked him for his service. Johnny, Cody and Keith went together, and gave out all of their lunches, dog food, and most of the clothing. They also prayed for a man for his healing, as he told them he had two detached retinas. Cody was excited to see we were giving out dog food, and he had fun giving it to the ones who had dogs. Tony and I went together, and we saw some "regulars" that have been down there for a while, and Tony was surprised that I was able to call them by name. We also met some new people, and Tony prayed for many of them. Everyone was very grateful, and most went away with their arms full of a lunch, toiletries, some clothing, socks, and whatever else we could give them. One young woman named Nada was so happy to get everything, and she was already wearing her new shirt when we saw her on our way back to the car. Everyone was very thankful, and we got lots of smiles, hugs, and "God bless you"s from those who received this little bit of comfort for their physical bodies. Every lunch contained a gospel flier, so we provided the word of God for their spiritual welfare, and we also gave out gospel tracts to people who were just down at the Boardwalk for the day. We always pray for the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts and bring many of them to faith in Jesus Christ.

Saturday, June 2, 2018 - The weather was gorgeous today for our beach outreach. We had heard from several people that they couldn't come, but those who did show up besides Tom and me were: Tony, Keith, Sheldon, Johnny, Cody, Jacob, Apple and Suchart. We had 173 lunches, lots of socks and toiletry/hygiene packets, used clothing, some shoes, and dog food for those who had dogs. There were two other church groups down at the Boardwalk giving out food and clothing to the homeless, but we still gave out most of our lunches and stuff. Tony and Sheldon prayed for a homeless woman named Heather, and also for Cindy, who prayed for them, too. There were not as many homeless people in some areas, as they were setting things up for some kind of tournament or festival. The police may have cleared the homeless out of these areas, but Sheldon found a group in the alley, and gave them lunches and everything. Sheldon also saw a woman who had two small dogs in a stroller, so he gave her some of the

dog food. Apple said she thought there were a lot more young people who were homeless this time. Apple, Suchart and I found some homeless people out on the beach, and also at the north end of the parking lot. The first two men we found got lunches, toiletry/hygiene packets, socks, pants, and shirts, and they were so happy. We told them we were giving it out in the name of Jesus, and they both said, "Praise the Lord!" Johnny, Cody and Jacob went together, and it was Jacob's first time to do this, and he said he enjoyed it a lot. We gave lunches to the homeless people who had received food from the other groups, and we told them that all of our stuff was canned or packaged, so it could be saved until later. One young woman asked, "If it's canned, do they have the lift-off lids?", and I said, "Of course!" Everyone got a gospel booklet in their lunch, and we also handed out the gospel tracts to people who were just down at the beach for the day. The few lunches we had left over were given to homeless people we saw during the coming week or so. In fact, we gave two lunches to a homeless man who visited our church on Sunday, and Sheldon gave out several lunches on Monday. There was an elderly woman he saw at a bus stop, and she said she wouldn't take the lunch if it was his own lunch, and that made him smile. Tom and I were sitting at a red light one day, and a homeless guy with a cardboard sign was going up and down between the cars. We rolled down the window and gave him three of the leftover lunches, because we saw that he had two friends back up on the sidewalk. When the light turned green, they all waved to us as we drove by.

Prison Ministry

Our prison ministry reaches men and women in every state prison in California, some federal prisons around the country, and prisons and jails in Oregon, Arizona, Missouri, Texas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Michigan. We have well over 400 people doing our Bible studies and 12-Step program by correspondence. They are growing in their faith, because God's word does not return void, but will accomplish His plan and purpose. Here are a few portions of letters we've received from inmates:

Christopher Gressett, Stephens County Jail, Duncan, Oklahoma - "Thank you so much for accepting me into your Bible studies. I think ya'll do awesome work out there. I'm married and have four kids, and I've been locked up for 2½ years now (for writing bad checks). My release date is coming up soon, and I would like to continue these Bible studies even after going home. Doing them brings joy to my heart. Please keep me and my family in your prayers that I may go home and make a better life for them all. God bless. Christopher"

Gregory Tillis, Solano State Prison, Vacaville - "Thank you for being a positive and supportive part of my life for almost seven years, and for trusting in me. Through your kindness and compassion I have learned the true meaning of being of service. I look forward to meeting you and coming to visit and volunteer when you go to the beach to help the homeless. As for the Bible studies, some of the Scriptures in these latest lessons really spoke to me. I found Galatians 5:22-23 already typed out in my Bible, and am considering putting it in my parole board packet. Also, everything on "patience" was very powerful as well as enlightening. But the part where it says, 'There is no peace to the wicked' was like food for my soul, since I struggle with unforgiveness. So, I needed to read this. Such things as this only confirm what is already known - God is good! Also, I loved the story you used to help understand what God means when He says, 'I have refined you, but not as silver'. Thank you for all the Bible study lessons - they really enlighten me on a deeper level to the understanding of God's word, and just how much He loves us. Sincerely grateful, Gregory"

Edmundo Juarez, California Correctional Institution, Tehachapi, CA - "Your program has truly opened my life to a new way of life. I can't believe it has been almost five years since I started your program. I feel so blessed to have the two of you in my life, not only as my sponsors and mentors, but

also as brother and sister in Christ. I have been incarcerated now for nineteen years, and feel happier and stronger spiritually than I ever have. I feel that I am beyond blessed, even though I am still in prison. I believe God has healed my heart from all the pain, hurt, shame, guilt and resentment I once carried. I know now that I can give all my worries to the Lord. So again, I thank you for your service and for seeing me as a person. May the Lord continue to bless you with happiness, health and prosperity. Sincerely, Edmundo”

Tim Becker, Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, Blythe, CA - “I want to thank you, Tom and Dottie, for everything and all the help you have provided me: the 12-Step program, the Bible studies, letter of support, newsletters, prayers, encouragement and so much more. I appreciate all you guys do, not only for me, but everyone else as well. Working the 12-Steps, especially through your program and utilizing the Serenity Bible, has been completely healing and transforming for me. Best of all, I have a relationship with God today and that in itself is something I’m very grateful for. Here are my lessons, and I’m ready for the next lessons. Take care and God bless, Tim Becker”

Benny Perez, Pleasant Valley State Prison, Coalinga, CA - “Well, Tom and Dottie, I’m almost at the completion mark with the 12-Step recovery program. It’s been quite the challenge as well as so beneficial to me as a whole. The insight and knowledge has been amazing, and I could never thank you enough for all your support and encouragement. You have given me more than I could ever express, but I will carry within my spirit every step forward on my journey through life. I have come away with a sense of clarity and passion on what the Lord wants me to do in my life. Also, I would like to continue on with the Bible study courses, now that I’m finished with the 12-Steps. Alright, my brother and sister in Christ, may the good Lord continue to shine and bless you even more. Yours always, Benny”

Tommie Cullins, California State Prison LA County, Lancaster, CA - “I thank you for your ministry, because I didn’t even know I was hungry for the knowledge of God’s word, until I started your 12-Step recovery program! So I can honestly say I’m hungry, and I’m going to study hard and work the Steps to learn to understand the Bible and use it in my daily life. I am striving for that happiness through our Lord Jesus Christ. I have a lot of work ahead of me, but what I’ve learned so far through your lessons is already more than I’ve learned in my over fifty years on earth, because I was scared to pick up the Bible, and I don’t even know why I was scared. Maybe I was scared to believe in anything beside myself, because I’ve been lied to so many times in life. Thank you for helping me come out of my shell, and for helping me to find God. Thank you for the Serenity Bible. Now I love picking it up, and I didn’t know what I was missing until now. Love, Tommie”

George Ramirez, Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, Blythe, CA - “God is very loving and caring and His blessing is for real. Believing in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and having faith that in His time, He will make all things possible, has made it possible for me to be found suitable for parole. I still have to wait for the governor’s approval, but the Lord will work it all out. God can change the lives of whoever lets Him into their hearts, so I’ll continue to rely on His strength and continue to pray and meditate on His word. Thank you for all your help to me and hundreds of other people. Sincerely, George Ramirez”

Luis Salgado, California Correctional Institution, Tehachapi, CA - “It was a blessing to be able to receive your Bible study, thank you. As I read your letter, I thought, ‘Oh my gosh, they are super busy and still have time to share and care for others. I really felt special that you take the time out of your day to share with me. A little bit about me, I gave my life to the Lord in 2016. I needed a change, and it came through Jesus Christ while I was in solitary confinement. In trouble, I asked God to help me, and I know He heard me, because I haven’t been the same since. My life is dedicated to Christ now, and I’m a mentor for juveniles at risk, and a group leader for Celebrate Recovery. Like you mentioned in your letter,

we are all 'a work in progress', and I thank you, and I can't wait for my next Bible lessons. Sincerely, Luis (Jeremiah 29:11)"