

Ministry Update - 4th Quarter, 2003

We studied Steps 10, 11 and 12 during this quarter in the Monday group. One night, we read a paper we wrote entitled, "**Keys to the Victorious Christian Life**". It fits in with Step 10, and from the comments we got during and after the meeting, it was an excellent choice. Thank You, Lord! Some of the people who've been really struggling lately said it helped open their eyes, and helped them understand better who they are in Christ. Tom and I are always saying that the goal of our ministry is not just "sobriety" but a closer walk with Jesus Christ, and to get people to understand (not just with their minds, but with their hearts) who they are in Christ, and how God sees them. Here's one point that got a lot of discussion: "Satan is the "Tempter" (Matt. 4:3, I Thess. 3:5), and he will try to deceive you and trick you, and "push all your buttons." He knows that **what you BELIEVE about who you ARE determines your BEHAVIOR**, so he wants you to think that you're still just a rotten old sinner, because then **you will think it is NATURAL to still sin!** But it is NOT "natural" anymore for you to sin, because you have a NEW NATURE! You are **a new creation in Christ in your SPIRIT**, and the POWER of sin has been broken over you." Also, there is a part about forgiving yourself, and at least three people in the meeting that night said they have a real problem with that. We have other papers we've written that have similar Bible teaching in them, so people who stay in the group will get it again further on down the line, or when we start over again in January. It makes it all worthwhile when we see people really "get it" - when the "light comes on" and you see it in their eyes. Satan can't make them believe his lies anymore, once they know the truth, and that's what sets them free from whatever addiction or bondage they're struggling with. This paper/Bible study is on our website, www.LoveLiftedMeRecovery.com, under Themed Studies as "Living the Christian Life".

**"And you shall know the TRUTH, and the TRUTH shall make you FREE."
John 8:32**

At the end of the year, we gave out certificates for those who finished the whole 12-Step program, including some for the second or third time around. We are thrilled to see the growth and freedom to serve God in peoples' lives, and to see how God blesses His children when they are obedient to Him, and when they get the garbage and baggage of their past out of the way through the principles from God's word that we use in our 12-Step program.

Evangelistic Outreach: In October, we went down to the Venice Boardwalk to help Dwayna of Light the Way International in her ministry to the homeless at the beach. We helped hand out bagels to the homeless and hungry, and gave out tracts and fliers along with the food. Food for the body and also for the soul. We gave out our "Creator or Liar?" gospel tracts, and also the fliers we made up, which give the times and locations of our meetings, and also our church's Sunday services. More of the Billy Graham books, "The Key to Personal Peace" have been handed out, and more of the "Creator or Liar?" tracts, and we're planning more outreach at the Venice Boardwalk.

Prison Ministry Update: We have been corresponding with inmates at: Soledad Prison, Mule Creek Men's Prison, Tehachapi, Chino and Lancaster State Prisons, Susanville (both minimum and maximum security prisons), and Pleasant Valley, California. Tom got a call from the warden's office of the Mule Creek Prison, because we had written them about the problems we were having getting our materials in there. We had tried three different times to send our "Serenity" Bibles in to some of the inmates there who are doing our 12-Step materials, and each time, the Bible would be returned. They were returned to us marked "Not Approved Religious Correspondence." There had been some problems at that particular prison regarding pornographic materials sent in under the guise of religious materials, so they had some new rules. I guess it turned out to be more trouble than it was worth, because I'm sure they didn't change their rules just because of us, but I have had to write the warden there twice about this problem. Praise God! For whatever reason, they changed their rules, and told us there would be no more problems with us sending in our materials. Tom is also working on doing

the Fourth Step Inventories of two of the prisoners there. It's coming along, but it's rather difficult doing a Fifth Step by correspondence.

Testimonies from Love Lifted Me Recovery: Here are two of the testimonies that will soon be on our website.

Lisa's Testimony

I have been coming to Love Lifted Me Recovery meetings for almost three years now. What keeps me coming back over and over again is the solid Bible teaching. LLMR teaches the Bible and how to apply the word of God to our lives and have victory. LLMR teaches us how to practically apply God's word to our problems and struggles in order to overcome them. It doesn't matter what types of problems people are struggling with, it could be drug and alcohol addictions, worry, co-dependency, family problems, marriage problems, health problems, demonic problems from being involved in occult and false religions, or even someone who doesn't have any problems and just wants to learn God's word and grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus. It is not enough to be able to quote Bible verses and have a lot of Bible knowledge in your head, that alone will not help you live a victorious Christian life. It is through reading, understanding and applying God's word to our lives and situations that really shows us that God's word teaches us "life skills" for the life God intended us to have. Love Lifted Me Recovery Ministries teaches people God's word and how to live it out in order to overcome life's struggles and trials, and in order to grow in a deeper relationship with Jesus by understanding who He is and why he came. I came to Love Lifted Me Recovery Ministries with lots of fears, worries, heartache and unresolved issues from my past that were hindering me from moving forward with the Lord and living and enjoying life. Through counseling and prayer with Tom and Dottie and consistent attendance at the Love Lifted Me Recovery meetings, and putting what I have learned into practice, the Lord has used Tom and Dottie and the meetings mightily to help me overcome the past and move forward into my future with Jesus one day at a time. Sometimes healing of issues is immediate, and for other issues it takes time, but either way, Jesus is the one who heals and restores us and makes us whole and productive for Him. I am not yet what I want to be, but I am not what I used to be. I thank God for Tom and Dottie who are devoted and committed to serving the Lord by helping His people through effective prayer, counseling and Bible study in order to equip God's people to become all that they can be for Jesus. PRAISE THE LORD!!!

Joe's Testimony

I guess I'd have to say I'd been a rebel all my life. From infancy, I've been subject to fits of rage that were truly awesome. At eight years of age, it took eight adults to hold me down to get an injection at the doctor's office. After I'd wrecked the office - breaking jars, knocking everything off the shelf, etc. This went on every time I had to go to the doctor. I also had dentists that refused to work on me because I would bite and fight. I had to go to an oral surgeon, who would put me to sleep (anesthesia) before doing any dental work. These are only a couple of examples to give you a picture of what I've been like. Many people are wearing scars because of me. I never respected any authority at all. I ran away from home at 15, and went to San Francisco in 1967. I did the whole "hippie" thing - drugs, free love, and rock 'n' roll. I panhandled to survive, and later found my way into selling drugs (acid, PCP, pills, cocaine), which was to stick with me as my only source of income to date. In the years in between, I've done three prison terms for assault with a deadly weapon, attempted murder/assault with a deadly weapon, and drugs. I'm now doing my fourth term for possession of drugs for sale (meth). I had four strikes going against me at my trial, and the DA was pushing for a "strike-out." With everything looking dark, I cried out to God for help. Somehow, for some reason, the judge handed me down seven years at 80%, which tallies up to me doing about six years straight. And, y'know? I'm thankful! God has given me a miracle. I've asked Him to take over my life. I was blessed to come into acquaintance with Pastor Tom and Dottie, through a cell mate I had. Today, they are the only real friends I have. Everyone else I know is illegal, to be brief about it! I was doomed to be going back to my old

neighborhood and drugs, or back to the motorcycle club I used to belong to that kicked me out because of my drug use. Yes, can you believe that? I got kicked out of an outlaw motorcycle club because of my drug use! Think I've been bad? But thanks to Tom and Dottie of "Love Lifted Me" and other things I've been doing (studying the Bible, etc.) I have a ray of hope. I don't get out until November, 2005, but when I do, I'm hoping to parole to the Bible Tabernacle in Canyon Country, and meet new friends, and start a new life, this time with God leading the way. Love Lifted Me Recovery ministries, I don't think I could ever really explain what help you've been. The letters, tracts, studies, and just knowing real Christian love and fellowship have been a lifesaver, likely in the most literal sense. When I got your address I was in the midst of a year's "isolating/mental evaluation." Basically, they had me on "suicide watch" to really be honest. Today, I'm on medication, sure, but God's healing has also found me. Maybe someday, I'll be able to stop the medication. I feel close to that now. Thank you all so much. And again I say so much. The grace and peace of our Savior Jesus Christ always be with you all. Love, your brother.