

“Love Lifted Me Recovery” - January, 2020
Newsletter for October, November, December, 2019
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Web Site: www.Loveliftedmerecovery.com

Fear Not, Little Flock

Is it really possible to live without fear, worry and anxiety in today's world? God's word tells us that it not only is possible, but we are commanded to “be not afraid” and to “not be anxious for anything.” There may be wars, calamities and terrors of all kinds out in the world, but the Lord is our Shepherd, and He will protect His flock. Not only will the Lord take care of us in the here and now, but He has also promised that we shall eventually triumph and be the inheritors of the whole earth.

- **Luke 12:30-32** “For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knows that you have need of these things. But rather seek the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added to you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”
- **Matthew 5:3 & 5** “Blessed are the poor in spirit (humble), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” “Blessed are the gentle (meek), for they shall inherit the earth.”
- **Psalms 27:1 & 3** “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” “Though an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though WAR should rise up against me, in this will I be confident.”
- **Psalms 23:1** “The Lord is my shepherd.....even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me, Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies....”
- **Matthew 6:31** “Therefore, DO NOT WORRY...”
- **Philippians 4:6** “Do not be ANXIOUS for anything....”
- **Matthew 14:27** “....Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘Take courage, it is I; do NOT be AFRAID.’”

You can't obey the commands to “fear not” and “be anxious for nothing” unless you really trust God. You must trust that He won't make a mistake, that He has your best interest at heart, that He knows the future outcome of all the events that are happening, and that He has the ability to work everything out for your good. Fear is the opposite of faith, so how do you increase your faith in God and His ability to protect and take care of you? God's word says that our faith is increased as we read and take in His word. Romans 10:17, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

- **Jeremiah 29:11** “‘For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare (your good) and not for calamity, to give you a future and a hope.’”
- **Romans 8:28** “And we know that ALL things WORK together for GOOD to those who LOVE GOD, to those who are the CALLED according to His purpose.”
- **II Timothy 1:7** “For God has NOT given us a spirit of FEAR, but of POWER and of LOVE and of a sound MIND.”

Monthly Evangelistic Outreach to Venice Beach

Saturday, October 5, 2019 - We had heard from several people that they couldn't come, for one reason or another. So, with a smaller ministry group than usual, we had Tom, me, Stephani, Kaela, Felipe, Sheldon, Ricardo and Yasuko. We had 176 lunches, lots of socks and toiletry/hygiene packets, used clothing, including several nice, warm jackets, and some blankets. We also had a fresh batch of knitted hats from Debbie in Phoenix, and another surprise - about 75 or so peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, individually wrapped in aluminum foil. These sandwiches had been donated to the Bible Tabernacle, but

they had more than they could use, so we just handed them out with the lunches, and everyone was happy and grateful for the extra food. All the food, clothing, and even the dog food for people's dogs was given out, and we were happy to provide for a few of the physical needs of those who are homeless and living down at the beach. Kaela and I found a man named Andre, and he was thrilled to get a big heavy jacket that fit him perfectly, and he also got a pair of jeans, a shirt, and food and toiletries. Some others whose names we got were Steve, Chris and Milton, all "happy campers" as one of them described himself, and grateful to get some of our "goodies". Felipe, Ricardo and Stephani found a homeless man who had a scowl on his face and looked like he didn't want to be approached, but they offered him food, a blanket and a nice, warm jacket. He put on the jacket, and his face just lit up with a big smile - what a difference!

Sheldon said, "I was stressed out right before we started, because I had to go to work right after the outreach, but once Pastor Tom prayed before we were sent out, my anxiety disappeared and we had a very peaceful and blessed outreach, and I was blessed by it". Yasuko and Sheldon prayed for Tonato, who had a stroke. His left side was partially paralyzed and he walked with a cane. Johnny usually visits with him, so Sheldon e-mailed Johnny to let him know to pray as well. They gave sweatshirts to Anton and his wife. Anton is the one with whom Sheldon has shared before, and who says that he was facing 25 to life and the judge gave him mercy, so he went and got baptized, or something like that (he mumbles a lot, so we don't always catch all of it). They live down on the beach with their dog, so Sheldon gave them dog food, too. They were very appreciative and praising God for the help. Sheldon gave lunches to "Bear" and his friends, and he called out to him and "Bear" was surprised that he remembered his name, but Sheldon has had long conversations with "Bear" before, and so has Johnny. As always, each lunch for the homeless contains a gospel tract, and we hand out tracts in English and Spanish as we go along the Boardwalk.

Saturday, November 2, 2019 - It was a beautiful day, but definitely getting colder. The volunteers who showed up to help, besides Tom and me, were: Keith, Yasuko, Kaela, Felipe, Ricardo, and Stephani. We had 177 lunches, lots of socks, toiletry/hygiene packets, used clothing, including some nice warm jackets, and some shoes and knit hats. Kaela and I went together, and the first man we saw said his name was Robert, and he took a lunch gladly, and then asked if we had a clean shirt. We found a T-shirt that fit him, and he was really happy, and then gave me a hug. Another man couldn't speak (he lost his voice somehow?), but he was thankful to get a lunch and socks. Then, we offered him a pair of jeans and held them up and asked if he thought they would fit him. He nodded and his face lit up with a big smile. Jacob came up to us and said that he hadn't seen us in a while, but that he was living out of his van now. He used to just be in the open, but maybe he has Social Security or something, and saved up his money for the van. Jean, who lives out of her car, is in the same situation - she has some money from Social Security, but it's not enough to pay rent anywhere around here. There was another lady who was living in a van, and she asked for another lunch for her daughter. She spoke with an accent, so I asked if she spoke Spanish, and she said she did, so we gave her several gospel tracts in Spanish, some toiletries, and a bunch of stuff. Felipe and Ricardo gave out everything they had in the way of food and clothing, and also gave out tracts in English and Spanish. I saw an older man sitting, and he wasn't homeless, but I offered him a tract in English. He hesitated, so I asked if he spoke another language, and he said, "Mandarin". I rustled around in my bag and found him one in Chinese, and he got a big smile on his face and said, "Thanks, that's good." A young man and woman saw us giving out food and clothing to the homeless, and he was so excited, and she took pictures of us with her phone. He said his name was Vladimir, and he was just so happy to see us out there on a Saturday morning doing this, so we gave him the tracts with our ministry information on the back, and told him to look up our website. Keith, Yasuko and Stephani went in a group together, and Stephani took photos of them. We went to Costco and got prints made up, because our prison ministry people really like to get photos of the outreach from us.

Saturday, December 14, 2019 - Our outreach team today consisted of Tom, me, Stephani, Keith, Yasuko, Sheldon, Felipe, Ricardo, Johnny, Jacob, and Victor Flores who just got out of prison last month, and was

doing our 12-Step program while in prison. We had 173 lunches, lots of socks, used clothing, knitted hats, baseball caps, blankets and pillows, and toiletry/hygiene packets for the homeless. Everybody was very grateful and happy to receive the food, clothing and other items that we were giving out in the name of Jesus. We saw Jacob, Jean, and Malik, some of the regulars, and lots of new people. We had dog food for the homeless people who had canine companions, and they were all very thankful for that, as well as the human food for themselves. Victor said, "God knew I really wanted to go on the outreach with you, ever since you sent me pictures when I was in prison." We all had a great time, and we handed out gospel tracts to people other than the homeless. Felipe and Ricardo always enjoy giving out the tracts in Spanish, too.

Prison Ministry

God has blessed us with a prison ministry that 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, Oklahoma and Colorado. We have well over 400 people doing our Bible studies and 12-Step program by correspondence. Most of them have found the Lord in prison, some have made rededications since coming to prison, and some have come to know Christ through our ministry. 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:

Jason Comins, Corcoran State Prison, Corcoran, CA - "I want to say this 12-Step recovery program is amazing, and it's giving me a true understanding on how to have a healthy relationship with God. It's already impacting my life in so many ways. I'm doing the 12-Step program and the Ephesians Bible study. I'm not a "lifer", so regardless, I'll make it home one day, so I am not using this recovery process for anything other than finding my way back home with God.. Thank you and God bless, sincerely, Jason"

Aaron Guardado, Ironwood State Prison, Blythe, CA - "I thank God for you guys. These Bible studies and 12-Step lessons have taught me a lot. I honestly believe that your Love Lifted Me Recovery Bible lessons are way more than a program, it's a Christian lifestyle. This life is awesome! Had it not been for Christ, I would have been lost. Praise God! I can't say that my life is perfect, but I guarantee that the quality of my lifestyle is a lot better - no more regrets, no more resentments, and now I am able to acknowledge my wrongs on the spot. I have a testimony/praise report to go with the last lessons I received. The "father of lies" was messing with my head, but this week's lesson taught me about putting up the shield of faith, doing spiritual warfare, and renewing my mind. Satan is defeated in Jesus' name! Thank you again. Blessings, Aaron G."

Kevin Dykes, California State Prison LA County, Lancaster, CA - "I need to thank you for being faithful servants of the Lord. Having you two to teach me the truth and explain it in these lessons has really shown me Christ in a way I can understand. My relationship with our Lord is growing daily. I love Him and who the Holy Spirit is transforming me into. My life will speak of His mercy, grace, kindness, faithfulness, patience, and the peace He's given me. It's my personal prayer to let God control my life by yielding completely to Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It's the only way I can experience God's best for me. God bless you, love, Kevin"

David Partain, Mule Creek State Prison, Lone, CA - "Thank you for your ministry. It is helping me to stay focused and have right thinking. I particularly enjoyed your Step 3 lessons, as they answered some of my nagging questions about my own faith. Your brother in Christ, David"

Loida Cruz, Central California Women's Facility, Chowchilla - "I appreciate greatly the support you've been giving me ever since I began doing Bible study with you back in 2008. All your Bible lessons have contributed to my spiritual growth and strong faith that absolutely helped me with my transformation as a

new creation in Christ. I thank the Lord for both of you. Sincerely, Loida”

Juan R. Montoya, California State Prison LA County, Lancaster, CA - “I would like to extend my utmost gratitude to the both of you. I’ve just begun on this path with our Lord and Savior, and already He has put some unbelievable people on this journey with me. I’ve been asking God to provide me with the tools to help me grow in His knowledge and to understand His word. Next thing you know, this address was given to me with the names of Tom and Dottie, giving me exactly what I’ve been asking the Lord for. Does God work in mysterious ways? I know God is good, and He knew exactly what I needed to be involved with, and He delivered. I did not know what I was getting into taking these studies, but going through the lessons, it’s exactly my cup of tea. The both of you are making it easy for me, and I believe I will learn precisely what the Lord wants me to. Sincerely, Juan R. Montoya”

David Barclay, California Correctional Institution, Tehachapi, CA - “Praise God, because He is opening the door for me to get out of prison. I have been scheduled for a parole hearing next April, and I am so excited, I just want to dance like King David danced. After nearly 17 years of incarceration, God’s grace is making an opportunity to be paroled nine years early. I spent a great deal of time earlier complaining about being unjustly incarcerated for a crime I didn’t commit, but I can honestly say this is the best thing that ever happened to me. Through trials and adversity, I have come to fully depend on God’s strength in every aspect of my life. As David said, ‘Before I was afflicted, I went astray. But now I keep Your word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes.’ (Psalm 119:67 & 71). One thing is for certain, that God can turn any situation around and cause it to work for our good. With love in Christ, David”

Andre Cenicerros, Corcoran State Prison, Corcoran, CA - “I’m sending back my lessons, and also I read the extra study called “Dealing with Anger”. It helped me with forgiving myself, forgiving others, and in asking for God’s forgiveness. I’m regaining the faith I lost, and I’m starting to realize that God’s plan for me was His will and not my own. Thank you for helping me understand this. Sincerely, Andre”

Steven Robert Sloan, Valley State Prison, Chowchilla, CA - “I want to thank you for including me in your Bible study program. I really do love how the lessons have me sifting from chapter and verses and back and forth through the Bible rather than to stay in one chapter. It helps me seek out the specific Scriptures on the subjects and points that our Lord Jesus Christ wants me, as one of His disciples, to know and learn. I also want to thank you for your newsletter, as it is such a great encouragement to hear and read about what your ministry is doing with the homeless and people in general, and those who are incarcerated behind prison walls like myself. You both are such a blessing from the Lord. Love from your brother in Christ, Steven”

Jesse Ochoa, Corcoran State Prison, Corcoran, CA - “Hi, I was given your info by another prisoner, and was told you offer courses such as AA and a Bible study course. I would like to sign up for all of them or whatever is available. I know and see how much my fellow inmate has changed after doing your courses, especially the Bible study, and all in a good and productive way. I await to hear back from you. Jesse Ochoa”

Thank You to our Ministry Supporters!

We want to acknowledge our ministry supporters, as we could not do any of this ministry without you. Those who support us financially, or with prayer, or by going out on the outreach, or by giving us toiletries, socks, or clothing, you are all loved and blessed by God, and we love and appreciate you so much! You will receive rewards in heaven for your part in every soul that is saved, or Christian who is encouraged and restored to fellowship with the Lord.