

“Love Lifted Me Recovery” - July, 2019
Newsletter for April, May, June, 2019
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Justified in Christ

Justification or the ACT of being JUSTIFIED means that God by His GRACE **declares** **RIGHTEOUS** the sinner who believes on Jesus Christ. God’s Law brings condemnation, because we, weak as we are in the flesh, cannot keep it perfectly. The penalty for failure to keep the law is death, and the **ULTIMATE** penalty is **ETERNAL DEATH** in **HELL**. **Jesus PAID the penalty FOR US, so we are NOT CONDEMNED or DAMNED to hell.** Jesus also **“FULFILLED the righteous REQUIREMENT of the law” FOR US** (Romans 8:4). The law can’t make a person holy, it can only **DEMAND** that he **BE HOLY**. In order for God to **JUSTIFY** us He **IMPUTES to us** (applies to our account) the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Romans 4:5-8) and since Jesus kept the law perfectly, the requirement has been **FULFILLED** through Him. **Justification is NOT a PROCESS of becoming righteous, it is a ONE-TIME act of GRACE — we are MADE RIGHTEOUS** the moment we accept Jesus as our Savior! It is **NOT** merely **FORGIVENESS** of sins, although forgiveness is **INCLUDED** — God does indeed **FORGIVE** and **FORGET** our **SINS**. However, **JUSTIFICATION means God even FORGETS that we were ever SINNERS!** There is **NO MORE RECORD** of our sins (Hebrews 10:17).

•**Romans 5:1-2** “Therefore, having been **JUSTIFIED by faith**, we have **PEACE** with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have **ACCESS** by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

•**Romans 3:21-25** “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even **the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God which is through FAITH in CHRIST JESUS** to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for **ALL** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (His perfect requirements), being **JUSTIFIED freely by His GRACE** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation (sacrifice) **by His BLOOD**, through faith...”

If you have never received Jesus Christ as your Savior, pray this prayer, and RECEIVE Jesus Christ as your personal Savior today: Almighty God, I realize that I am a sinner, and that I cannot save myself. I am willing to **REPENT** and **TURN AWAY** from my sins, and accept the **WAY** that You have provided for me to be saved - **JESUS!** I believe in my heart that You, Lord **JESUS** are the **CHRIST**, the **SON** of the **LIVING GOD**. I believe that You, **JESUS**, are the sinless Son of God who **PAID** the **PENALTY** on the **CROSS** for **MY SINS** as You shed Your **BLOOD** for me. I believe You were **RAISED** from the **DEAD** - You are **ALIVE** and able to save me. I **RECEIVE** You as my Lord and Savior. Lord Jesus, come into my heart and take **CONTROL** of my life!

If you have prayed this prayer **sincerely from your heart**, then the Bible says you are now a child of God! You have been **born again**, you have eternal life, you have been **JUSTIFIED**, and you have been **SAVED** from your sins (they are forgiven). God is now your Heavenly Father, and His Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, is living in you! (Romans 8:9) It is **the PERSON of Jesus Christ** that saves you, and your faith in Him, **NOT** any religious works or good deeds you may do. God says in His word, “For by **GRACE** you are saved through **FAITH**, and that **NOT** of yourselves, it is the **GIFT OF GOD - NOT of WORKS**, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Monthly Evangelistic Outreach to Venice Beach

Saturday, April 6, 2019 - Our ministry group today consisted of Tom, me, Johnny, Jacob, Sheldon, Keith, Felipe, Ricardo, Apple, Eugene and Frank. We had 176 lunches, lots of socks, toiletry/hygiene packets, used clothing (jeans and T-shirts were especially popular), shoes, knit hats, and some blankets. We also had dog food for those who have dogs. Eugene said they had a lot of fun giving everything out to the homeless, and they met a man named "Bear" who said he feels he is on assignment from God to look out for some of the younger people who are homeless, and help them. There were a lot of homeless people out on the Boardwalk at Venice Beach, and we gave out almost all of the food and clothing we brought. In case you don't remember, our lunches contain a small can of Vienna sausages, a fruit cup, some cookies, peanut butter or cheese crackers, and another "goodie" or dessert item. Also, a bottle of water, a napkin and plastic spoon or fork, and most importantly, a gospel tract. 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. Apple, Ricardo and I met an older woman named Jean, who lives in her car, and we gave her information about the Bible Tabernacle. There were three men nearby who all spoke Spanish, and very little English. They were very happy to receive the food and clothing, because no language is necessary for that, but they were surprised and excited when I offered each one of them a gospel tract in Spanish, as well. We also gave out 20-30 gospel tracts to the men at the Phoenix House, and they were very eager to get them. One man said that they weren't supposed to take anything from outsiders, but they would keep them and read them anyway. Every lunch contained a gospel tract, so we provided the word of God for their spiritual welfare, and we also gave out gospel tracts in English and Spanish 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, May 4, 2019 - Onward, Christian soldiers! We took off for the Venice Boardwalk with a team of Dottie, Shami, Keith, Sheldon, Felipe, Apple, Johnny, Jacob, Kaela, Ricardo, and Justin, and Tom holding down the fort at home and covering us with prayer. We had 170 lunches, lots of socks, used clothing, knit hats, some shoes, and hygiene/toiletry packets to give to the homeless. We also handed out gospel tracts to people who were just down at the beach for the day. The homeless people were very grateful and thankful to receive the food, clothing and everything. One man, Mark, got a brand new pair of sweat pants and a sweat shirt that fit him perfectly. The size 13 shoes went to a very happy man with size 13 feet. A woman named Jean lives in her car up there at the north end of the parking lot, and we see her every month. I had brought a list of places where she could go to live, but she said, "Oh, Dottie, I'm 84 years old (she doesn't look any older than about sixty)! I don't want to go live in a home!" I said, "Well, okay, but your next place of residence will be with Jesus in heaven," and she replied, "And He knows where to find me!" A young man received a pair of long pants, shorts, a lunch, toiletries, and then asked for one more thing. He said, "I don't want to sound greedy, but do you have a beanie?" I looked in my bag, and there was one of our knitted hats, and he was so happy to get his "beanie". Johnny said a German man saw them giving out the lunches, and he said, "I can't believe you're doing this! How can I help?" Johnny gave him our telephone number. Sheldon said he saw a group of homeless men down an alley, but they looked like they were getting into fights. He prayed and kept on going, and they all calmed down and said, "Oh! What have you got there?" He gave each man a lunch. Sheldon also said there was one woman who said she was so hungry, and he gave her two lunches. Felipe gave out tracts in English and Spanish. I recognized an older couple that I had given a Russian tract to before, so I gave them a different one in Russian. They were very surprised that I recognized them. I saw a young couple on a bench, and they asked for a tract in Spanish, and I ended up giving them four different ones in Spanish. Lots of people took the tracts, and I was especially happy to have a group of teenage boys each take one. All in all, we had a great time down at the Boardwalk, ministering the gospel of Jesus Christ and providing for a few of the physical needs of people as well. To God be the glory!

Saturday, June 1, 2019 - It started off sprinkling a little bit, but we prayed, and it stopped by the time we went out to the Boardwalk. Our ministry team today consisted of Tom, me, Shami, Sheldon, Johnny, Jacob, Felipe, Ricardo, Yasuko, and Louie. We had 174 lunches, lots of socks, used clothing, knit hats, some blankets and pillows, and hygiene/toiletry packets to give to the homeless at the Venice Boardwalk and beach. Shami and her group first saw Jameel and Kenny, and they were very grateful for everything they received. They also saw a woman named Cassidy, and she had nothing at all. They gave her a large and small blanket, a pillow, some food and toiletries, and she was very happy. Johnny said they found a man out on the sand who really needed a blanket, but they had just given their last one to someone else. They went back to that person, and she said she didn't really need it after all, so they brought it back to the man, and he just lit up and was so thankful to get it. My group saw 84-year old Jean, who lives in her car, and she was so happy to get some food and a Bible. I asked her if she could read the print, and she said she had a magnifying glass, so it was okay. A lady named Carol asked for a blanket, and we gave her one, and also some food, toiletries and some clothing. She gave me a big hug. There was a young woman sitting near her, and she took clothing, food and toiletries. Then, I noticed she had a shaved head, so I offered her one of the knitted headbands we had, to keep her ears warm at night. She was still wearing it when we came back later, and I told her it looked very nice on her, as it was very bright colors. We also handed out gospel tracts to people who were just down at the beach for the day. I gave a tract in English to a teenage boy, but then noticed his parents were speaking Spanish. Felipe went up to them and gave them a tract in Spanish. I talked to an older woman who spoke Russian, and she said she didn't need one of the lunches, but asked if we had any other "goodies". She wasn't homeless, but was on her way to the truck that hands out day-old bread and food donated by grocery stores. I gave her a gospel tract in Russian, and some sunglasses, and we talked for a few minutes. She said she had come here from Russia when she was sixty-one years old, and didn't speak much English. I spoke to her in my few Russian phrases that I could remember, and we did quite well. Her name is Frieda, and she told me my name Dottie in Russian would be "Dadia" (not sure about the spelling).

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:

Clarence Brown, Avenal State Prison, Avenal, CA - "You are most definitely the type of people I need in my life to inspire me to stay on the right path of God. There are many things I need to work on in my change. I'm aware that things are difficult in conversion, but I'm a man who is always up to a challenge. What I'm battling with now are my mouth and tongue. These two instruments can veer to the opposite of what is good too often. I literally have to pray and ask God to help me not to talk about certain things that are unclean, or to not cuss. I thought it would be easier and I'd just stop doing it when I gave my life to Christ. Unfortunately, it does not work that way. I'm getting a first class lesson on having a willing spirit, but being weak in the flesh. I have some conditioning and training to endure. This Scripture I will tape to my wall where I sleep: Psalm 39:1, "I said I will guard my ways, lest I sin with my tongue. I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, while the wicked are before me." Not everyone in prison is attempting to walk with God or be better people, so the "wicked" are before me all the time. My goal is to be around any surroundings and not be deterred from our Father and the way He means for me to live. Sincerely, Clarence"

Larry Teague, California Medical Facility, Vacaville, CA - "Yes, I want to keep studying with you and Tom and 'Love Lifted Me Recovery'. It is the best biblical Christian ministry I have studied under. I am trying to figure a way I can help with the cost. Praise Jesus! Larry"

David Matlock, Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, Blythe, CA - "I received my own "Serenity" Bible, and praise God for insight as I read the first three Steps as my devotional in the mornings. This is a great tool in my hands for insight into God's word, and for doing His kingdom work, and to bring healing for wounds in our souls. I also received my next lesson, and will be responding speedily. Praise God! David"

Keith Ramsey, Calif. Health Care Facility, Stockton, CA - "I really enjoyed doing this Step Eleven. It made me sit back and think about myself and how to look at things and do a lot of prayer and meditation. I feel myself growing since I started the 12-Step course, along with the Bible studies. I know God has been there for me in prayer. He has answered them for me. Thank you for praying for my mother, she's doing better now, and getting stronger by the day. God bless you, Keith"

Omar Hunter, Centinela State Prison, Imperial, CA - "I so appreciate the pictures you sent me of yourselves, and the beach outreach, and the rest of the brethren helping with the outreach. It feels amazing to be a part of the Body of Christ! My heart is burning! God's love is freeing. There's this indescribable comfort that tingles through my being. I know God loves us. I'd like to be a part of your beach ministry when I get out of here. Until then, I just want to continue to grow in the Lord. Please keep me in your prayers, and also my children. My wife's name is Danielle. Keep her in your prayers also. I love you guys and can't wait to hear from you. Stay blessed and prayed up! Love, Omar"

Narcisco Reyes, Pleasant Valley State Prison, Coalinga, CA - "I just want to thank you for sending me the Bible study correspondence lessons, and most of all your letter. Being a Lifer, I don't get much mail, so when they called my name for mail, I was full of joy. Then when I read the letter, it made me smile. Praise the Lord! I will be waiting for the next lessons and letter. May our Lord Jesus Christ bless and keep you, and I added you all to my prayer list. Your brother in Christ, Narcisco Reyes"

Cedric Otis, Corcoran State Prison, Corcoran, CA - "Here are the lessons you sent me. I really appreciate the lessons, and the Scriptures helped me out a lot. I wrote them all down to study them and use them as a reminder. I am now on my way to recovery the best way possible. I know that the process of doing these Steps will be tough, and the road a little twistie and turnie, but as long as I keep my focus on getting better, I'm sure to conquer my addiction. God bless you both, Cedric Otis"

Guadalupe Maldonado, Centinela State Prison, Imperial, CA - "I'm writing this brief note to say "thank you" from the bottom of my heart. I really appreciate everything you have done for me since we first started corresponding in 2015. Your guidance through the 12-Steps and Bible study courses has been so helpful to my spiritual growth. Especially the book of James, that has really been an eye-opener! Thank you! Also, enclosed is a book of stamps to help with the ministry. With love and respect, Lupe"

William Becker, Ironwood State Prison, Blythe, CA - "Thank you very much for the pictures you sent of your beach outreach. Also, I loved this last Step lesson! It was a pivotal point in my life to turn my will over to God. I completed this 12-Step course a couple of years back, but I was still hanging on to my will without fully surrendering to God. Once I fully surrendered my will, my life began to change. You guys played a big role in that. God bless you and all your helpers. William"

Ernesto Perez, Corcoran State Prison, Corcoran, CA - "I've learned a lot through this journey of the 12-Steps. However, I've grown more spiritually through your teaching of how to apply them into our daily life with the Scriptures. I've learned that I must forgive myself and trust in Jesus our Savior. I started to understand everything more completely through your study of the thief on the cross. I know most of us

are so blinded by living in the dark that we fail to understand and see the light of truth. As Jesus was being crucified, we were so stuck on crucifying Him, and yet right there a thief was being saved and forgiven. Thank you for helping me to climb out of the darkness and into the light. I have been building a relationship with Jesus now, and hope to be baptized soon. Sincerely, Ernie”