

Overcomers Outreach

"Bridging the Gap Between 12 Step Recovery and Churches"
March 2011 Newsletter

From the Director ...

We hope and pray for freedom and peace for all nations. God created us as men and women "in His image", with free will. Freedom, it seems, is a gift from God, to be used both in the natural world and His Kingdom. If we offer back our freedom by turning to Him, we fulfill the purpose we were created for – His eternal glory – and we will become free through Him in Jesus Christ, as eternal beings. We keep only what we freely give to God. *"For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it"* (Matthew 16:25)

If we turn away from Him, we may achieve, at best, the natural results afforded by this world – pale, short lived victories in a world which has been spoiled by centuries of sin, to which we add our own sins. Our freedom then becomes a part of nature, in a world consumed by "moth and rust", and all of nature will one day pass away. Many of us find ourselves in bondage through "natural causes"- the actions generated by our own sinful natures – and we turn to the world for a solution. More money, more power, or more "love" are all what our nature would have us seek. Overcomers Outreach suggests the 12 steps as a way to freedom by giving our "nature" back to God so that we can dwell forever in His Kingdom, transformed in the presence of His glory. Here are examples of where, when, and how we are free.

Jeff MacLeod



Mailbox

Freedom!

Seventh Tradition

Office News

Events ...

Third Annual OO Campout

Overcomers are camping once again in Morro Bay, CA, August 12th-14th, at Morro Bay State Park. Details and registration are on the website "Events" page, so come if you can. Camping spots are limited so reserve one now. If camping out is not for you, there are nearby hotel facilities as well and you are welcome to join us for workshops, speakers, a day at the beach, and of course the BBQ dinner Saturday night.

Perhaps California is a bit too far for you so why not have your own area event? The Central Office can help you plan your own area campout, but most camping spots fill up fast, so act soon. We can post your local events on the website and put people in contact with your group as well. Summer will be here sooner than expected.

The Mailbox ...

Australia Writes:

Wow! God is doing amazing things down under. In the next few week's I'll have an office space in the city of Sydney CBD for nothing with parking. Not only that, I also have two wonderful admin angels coming onboard to help out. It really has been a one man band down here for years but now my heart is just singing!

Pray for me over the next few days – I'm preparing to talk at Men's Katoomba Convention. The topic is temptation and I have a 10 minute speak time with 40mins for questions to 2000 men each weekend over 3 weekends.

I've got some great little bits to send over to you guys as well. I have found lovely bits I work with as I do steps. Just back from a week of bible teaching where Hugh Palmer from UK spoke on 1 Cor 9. I'm hoping to turn it into a training program for OO leaders here – basically this is why you go to AA as a mission field! He did a talk on 1Cor9 – the best I've heard that explains why we do what we do.

Many blessings
Penny W

Stockport, England Writes:

Hi, my name is Jochen A and I live in Stockport, Manchester, England, United Kingdom. I was so blessed finding your website. I have been clean and sober for 16 years and became a follower of Jesus 10 years ago. For the last 3 years the Lord put it on my heart to start a Christian 12 step recovery group. I thought I had to reinvent the wheel until God led me to Overcomers Outreach. My wife (who is an al-anon member) and I started our first meeting on Sunday 9 January with support and prayers from the other UK groups.

Just put in a literature order-and pray for broken people to join us in recovery.

May God bless you all.
Love, Jochen A

Pakistan Writes:



Azhar Kaleem, Qamar Wilson, Nayer David

Peace in Jesus name. How are you and ministry work? I am sending you pictures of myself and two coordinators voluntarily appointed in Districts Kasure and Lahore. I am pleased to announce Mr. Nayer David as coordinator for district Kasure and Mr. Qamar Wilson for district Lahore. The meeting held at the church in district Kasure was awesome and Mr. David (who has been an alcoholic/addict himself) offered his services to coordinate outreach in district Kasure. Mr. David is also working with The Voice Asia Radio as a Country Director in Pakistan.

I am trying to translate some material from your website in Urdu, our national language. I will let you know in another email what contents I extracted from the online studies available. I am looking forward to hear from you.

Many Blessing, In Christ,
Pastor Azhar Kaleem

Louisiana Writes:

Hi, I was so pleased that 15 people showed up for our first meeting. Included in those were 4 church members, 3 of whom admitted problems openly for the first time. God is so great!

The meeting topic was Step 1, 2, and 3 (I can't, God Can and I think I'll let Him) which has helped me with more problems than recovering from alcohol. It seemed to go OK, but of course, we will make some adjustments as we go. "Progress, not Perfection", right?

Thank you so much for being there when we need you. May God richly bless you and your staff until we talk again.

Sincerely,

Jack C

New Jersey Writes:

We are looking forward to starting a group at Mountainview Prison on Thursday evenings. I have added Overcomers Outreach to the sign up sheet that each inmate receives from me when they enter Mountainview. I will also send a flyer out to each of our units to raise awareness. This will be a good addition to the services we offer every evening. God bless you in all you do for those who are in need.

John

FREEDOM! By Pauline Bartosch
"For dear brothers, you have been given freedom; not freedom to do wrong, but freedom to love and serve each other." Galatians 5:13



Jesus wants us to be FREE! He paid the ultimate price on the Cross and through acceptance of this matchless gift, we can be set free! The 12 Steps offer freedom as well – to overcome our addictions. We can truly 'live' if we start with a clean slate every day -- forgiving ourselves for all those yesterdays that tend to haunt us. Then we can 'let live' if we forgive others, just as Christ has forgiven us. Through His grace, He offers us freedom to be our unique selves, free from dark prisons of our own minds and hearts, instead, celebrating life one day at a time!

Suppose I feel like a prisoner, trapped in an irksome way of life, as so many of us do? What am I doing about it? My obvious impulse is to try to manipulate the things and people around me into being more acceptable to me. Do I argue, rage and weep to make others behave in a way that I think will make me happier? Am I then content with the result of manipulating others?

Freedom from despair and frustration can come only from changing, within myself, the attitudes that are maintaining the conditions that cause me grief. Christ can set us free once we turn our personal shortcomings over to Him, admitting our "powerlessness" and letting Him take over our lives.

Personal freedom is mine for the taking. No matter how close are the ties of love and concern that bind me to my family and friends, I must always remember that I am an individual, free to be myself and live my own life in serenity and joy. When I know I am free within myself, I will better experience God's love and be able to give more loving thought to others.

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

John 8:32



The Seventh Tradition

"Every Overcomers Outreach group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

When a group observes this tradition, we are practicing independence. Practice of this tradition indicates that the group is responsible for itself. To be self-supporting is more than monetary in nature. The meeting room needs to be set up, literature may need to be made available, rent and other expenses met, and, most importantly, a commitment to support one another by members consistently showing up and participating. The financial

needs of the group are met by voluntary contributions from the members, thus adding to the group's identity and unity, while also guarding against outside requirements, agendas or motives that may divert the group from its primary purpose. As members unite in sharing the responsibility for the operation of the group, we each become self-supporting spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

Just as the group meets its obligations, the individual learns responsibility. The blessing of service begins to generate new levels of gratitude, and giving in anonymity builds humility. By declining outside contributions, we grow in faith, which glorifies God, and we become self-supporting as we take direction from God. We recognize the contributions of time, energy, and participation by others to be equally important contributions to the benefit of the group and through fulfillment of our personal commitment to the group, our integrity grows. As we see the simple needs of our group being met, our understanding of and cooperation with others will continue to grow.

The Overcomers Outreach Central Office continues to help new groups get started and provides proprietary literature and other meeting supplies to existing groups. We maintain the website, phones, and intergroup communication. The Seventh Tradition contributions from the groups help make this possible.



"The Office"

News from the Office ...

We welcome new meetings in Savannah, Cayman Islands, Stockport, UK, San Fernando, CA, Waynesville, NC, Baton Rouge, LA, and welcome back Reno, NV, too! A new HIM group is starting in a New Jersey prison, a TNT group in Soldotna, AK, and many more groups are hoping to start soon, including more in SW Alaska and Hawaii. Updating our national meeting directory is ongoing, and we thank you for your help.

We have revised and updated the pamphlet "Disease Chart of Alcoholism" to a tri-fold format so it fits in the literature rack with other pamphlets. This is a most informative pamphlet showing the advance of and recovery from the disease of alcoholism (or addiction) both in the individual and the family. These are available through the online shop or by request, as well as the rest of our new and revised pamphlets. We now have 27 new or revised pamphlets. Two copies of each (54 total) are available as a kit to bring your literature rack up to date. Literature sales account for much of our income, and we hope the pamphlets attract new visitors to meetings. Other items, such as "Meeting Here" signs and key tags to celebrate milestones in recovery are available as well. To see all of our current literature, please visit our online shop at our website overcomersoutreach.org.

We are inviting individuals to join our "Birthday Page" by making a modest donation (\$1 for each year of participation in a program) to have their "birthday" posted so we can celebrate the date with the individual, while generating much needed financial support for operation of the ministry as well. Personal anonymity and confidentiality

are maintained, as only first names with last initials and group names or cities are listed. By doing this we hope to show visitors to the site just how much God blesses us with His strength, giving us victory over our trials. A full page of participants will be a great witness to Christ's healing power as we show the combined years over many names. You don't have to wait until your next "birthday" to get started. Please consider making a donation soon.

Any and all donations can be made online, by phone, or by mail. A new option online is to make a regular monthly donation automatically by credit or debit card via Pay Pal online secure services.



A Faithful Home Missionary

A few years ago, there was a beautiful lady named Naomi who faithfully held an OO group in Atascadero, CA. Later, when she moved to Brea, CA, without missing a beat, she started a brand new OO group! Naomi has been in heaven for awhile, but it seems that her personal ministry continues on . . . A recent note from her daughter, Connie, shared that her mom's Life Recovery Bible is now being put to use for her own devotional time. Naomi had written these words next to Romans 3: "Thank you Jesus for birthing OO to find all this for a healthy life in You." Naomi was a selfless woman who loved God and took action in leading others to Him through Overcomers.

A Prayer for Freedom

We can be free of our selfishness, our shame, and our guilt. We don't have to be perfectionists, judges, or controllers. We need only be obedient - but that is easier said than done. Giving up our free will is impossible for us because God made that nature part of us, so we must continually seek His will in place of ours by turning to Jesus. This is our part in the process of becoming a "new creation in Christ". We ask that we may receive His guidance to approach His perfection, to be drawn into Him, on a daily basis. Our glorious journey with Christ begins with our surrender to Him, and continues far beyond overcoming the problems and challenges presented by this natural world, ending finally in the accomplishment of His perfect and sovereign Will. So long as we freely choose to follow Him we will find new joy, peace, and freedom such as neither this world nor our own nature can offer. Let's thank Him now.

Heavenly Father, we come to you in thanksgiving for the freedom you have given us through your precious Son, Jesus Christ. We ask that You would guide us at all times to live in this freedom and grow in the likeness of Christ, that You would be glorified in all that we do. We ask this in Jesus name.

Amen

If you would like to make a donation to Overcomers Outreach, Inc. to help defray the cost of this newsletter as well as other operating expenses, please visit our website or use the enclosed return envelope. All donations are tax deductible.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or removed from it, please so indicate, along with your donation, or call us at (800)310-3001, or email us at info@overcomersoutreach.org and we will be happy to accommodate your request.

We also welcome any news articles or testimonies you would care to submit for future newsletters.

God Bless

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