

# Overcomers Outreach

*"Bridging the Gap Between 12 Step Recovery Groups and Churches"*  
**December 2011 Newsletter**

## From the Director ...

The past year has really been a blessing, though a challenge, just as life becomes when we seek to serve such an amazing God!

*"Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture."*

Psalms 100:1-3

New groups have started this year in St. Helens, OR, Monroe, MI, Overland Park, KS, Bakersfield, CA, Carson City, NV, San Diego, CA, Baton Rouge, LA, Concord, NC, and Gatesville, TX, and a few not yet listed in our directory. Some groups that had closed have re-opened, including Reno, NV, showing the continuing need for Christ centered recovery and support. Other groups have, for now, stopped meeting due to a lack of attendance, and we pray for help for those communities, as we know the need still exists.

Overall, our groups have grown in number and energy, as we strive to carry the message of hope, healing, and salvation in Christ's power. Some of our groups are getting together, forming "Carry the Message" committees to spread the word more effectively in communities and to reach those who cannot otherwise attend, whether they are incarcerated or hospitalized.

As we celebrate Christmas this year, let us rejoice with others in the pure, simple, and absolute love of God. Merry Christmas.

*"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."* - Luke 2:11

## Events ...

### 2011 Office pot-luck

November brought our third annual pot-luck and meeting at the Central Office in Whittier, CA.



*"When do we eat?"*

We had 14 members from the San Fernando and Whittier groups in attendance, with plentiful food (seems to be our trademark!) and good fellowship, followed by a great meeting on Step 11.



*Office meeting after the meal*

### Porter Ranch Gratitude Dinner

Overcomers from Simi Valley, San Fernando, Whittier, and Porter Ranch groups gathered for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Gratitude Dinner hosted by the Shepherd of the Hills group. Food, sharing, and worship abounded as members of different groups gathered to give thanks to God and to enjoy fellowship in the Spirit. A donation to the Central Office was made by those present in an expression of gratitude and support.

## The Mailbox ...

### Engadine, Australia writes:

In June last year Penny gave a talk on addiction and the twelve steps, at Engadine Anglican.

There were lots of great comments on the night, like 'your story is my story'. We felt there was a great need to start an Overcomers group in our church. After much prayer and consultation with our parish council it was decided to commence the group in October 2010.

I personally had not had any exposure to the 12 steps program before. Over the past twelve months I have learned how God can work through the steps to bring about great healing & dependence on Him. For me it's been a process of surrendering further to His will for my life and trusting Him to bring about the changes necessary to make this possible.

I Can't... God Can... and I Need to Let Him – the first 3 steps have been just the beginning.

OO is built on relationships. Primarily a personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, coupled with supportive relationships within the body of Christ. Because of the sensitivity to and lack of knowledge of addiction in our church communities, the safety and ability for honest sharing in OO has been a real blessing. It is encouraging to see the healing God is bringing about in our group at Engadine.

We continue to have new people come along each month and trust that this ministry will grow as we seek to reach out to those in our community who struggle with addiction.

Sue T.  
Engadine OO

### **Africa writes:**

Most Worry is unnecessary. Most of us worry about too much. It's almost as though we search for problems to give us stress. The amazing news is that much of what we worry about doesn't matter at all! Take a look at these statistics about worry:

- 40% of all things that we worry about never come to pass.
- 30% of all our worries involve past decisions that cannot be changed.
- 12% focus on criticism from others who spoke because they felt inferior.
- 10% are related to our health. (that gets worse when we worry)
- 8% of our worries could be described as "legitimate" causes for concern.

Isn't that remarkable? Less than 1 "problem" in every 10 is real. All the others are things that we can learn to see differently or eliminate. Henry M. Chikafa

### **Yorba Linda writes:**

Thanks Jeff. We have a new member from Corona. He said that he went on the internet under recovery and found OO. He said he liked it because it did specify a particular addiction. He went to another group but they had just closed. He called me and asked about the size of the group and I told him there were two of us. He said he'd be there and he was. He has come 3 times in a row and says he likes the drive. He is a young guy named Dave C. Another guy, Dave C, just moved to Texas. We are grateful for God's timing.

Linda C.

### **La Grange, IL writes:**

Always enjoy the newsletters. The meetings are going well. We are all looking forward to a Christmas Dinner event on Friday, Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>. Blessings

Becky B.

### **From County Jail (Olathe, KS)**

I am awaiting trial in jail. I am an addict and a child of God. It is through my faith in Jesus Christ that I have kept my sanity. Once about every 6 weeks, Tony T comes up from Overcomers. That is all the church and "fellowship" I get. I plead for your help! Is there any way I can be set up with a sponsor to correspond with? I am scared. My 1<sup>st</sup> child is due in Dec. I'm 37 and never been a father. It appears that being incarcerated makes one exempt from outreach. Please help me!

Steven H

### **Posted on Face Book:**



From Jeff P

Each minute, hour, or day we do not surrender to a compulsion or addiction, testifies that we trust God who can and will deliver us from all temptation. Trust is the foundation of our faith.

Kathy S

### **TRUST & OBEY**

#### **By Pauline Bartosch**

I had another article all set to go here, but when I awoke this morning God said, "Trust & Obey!" That ancient hymn began to play in my head. Then immediately I flashed upon an incident that occurred years ago, at Huntington Beach, CA.

On a lovely summer day, I packed up our 3 sons in our station wagon (remember those?) and headed for the beach. With the boys all settled

on the sand, I couldn't wait to immerse myself in the glorious surf, and then began to swim out a little farther. I was so mesmerized in the seemingly silent water that I flipped over on my back to float and gaze at the sky. So beautiful!

But then as I glanced back at the shoreline I realized I had floated too far out! I'm a pretty good swimmer, so I headed for the beach, but suddenly realized I was getting nowhere! Whew, now what? I had exhausted myself fighting the riptide that enveloped me. My first thought was, "I wonder how the boys are going to get home?"

Just as I had completely run out of air and given up, a handsome face gradually came toward me. The lifeguard! "Do you need help?" I was too weak to reply. By the time he reached me I was anxious to just grab onto him and clutch him with all my strength! Yet, from a couple of feet away he threw me an orange life preserver and calmly but firmly said, "Grab onto this, TRUST ME, and I'll get you back to shore!"

By the time this 7-foot lifeguard towed me to the water's edge, I utterly collapsed. Rather than fighting the current, I could have gone with the direction of the riptide and probably been fine. I wonder how many times in my life I have mistakenly taken wrong paths, thinking that I knew what was best, and forgot to trust God?

My boys asked me what I was DOING out there in the water. I replied, "Drowning!" (Doing things MY way.) The lifeguard had said, "here's a life preserver--trust me, hang on, and I'll get you back to shore." Lord, I know I am powerless over people, places and things. I pray that I may learn to TRUST YOU, and be willing to OBEY your plan for my life—one day at a time!

## **“Addiction”—Philip Yancey From *Rumors of Another World*:**

Ironically, the most successful modern treatment of human failures—twelve-step groups for those who admit to alcoholism or other addictions—takes a rather old-fashioned approach.

Psychiatrists, pharmacologists, and scientific reducers cannot improve on a spiritual program devised by a couple of Christian alcoholics sixty years ago.

Professionals may use the phrase “addictive behavior” as a euphemism for sin, but not the addicts themselves. They combat denial by insisting on naked honesty about transgressions.

The alcoholic must first recognize his or her own helplessness and then fall back in the arms of an unseen Higher Power. “First of all we had to quit playing God,” concluded the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA): and next, allow God himself to work in their lives. Every time addicts repeat the twelve steps, they reject a reductionist view of life. Addiction tempts the addict to reduce life down to the longing for alcohol or narcotics that seems more real and more urgent than everything else combined. With the support of fellow alcoholics, the addict learns to face the lie.

Using the AA model, addicts must weave together the torn fabric of life, making restitution to people they have harmed. They admit themselves incapable of seeing the whole picture and living accordingly. They must accept at face value their own incompetence, and humbly seek to rebuild relationships with others and with God.

Bill Wilson, the cofounder of Alcoholics Anonymous, reached the unshakable conviction, now a canon of twelve-step groups, that

an alcoholic must “hit bottom” in order to climb upward. Wilson wrote his fellow strugglers, “how privileged we are to understand so well the divine paradox that strength rises from weakness, that humiliation goes before resurrection, that pain is not only the price but the very touchstone of spiritual rebirth.” The apostle Paul could not have phrased it better.

A broken relationship with God, accepting moral responsibility, admitting the need for outside help, a commitment to make restitution to all who have been harmed—the formula for twelve-step groups comes straight from the pages of the Bible. As an alcoholic once told me, “I have to publicly declare ‘I am an alcoholic’ whenever I introduce myself at group. It is a statement of failure, of helplessness, and surrender. Take a room of a dozen or so people, all of whom admit helplessness and failure, and it's pretty easy to see how God then presents himself in that group.”

The same alcoholic said that he has heard this comment repeatedly in AA meetings and has made it himself: “I know I have another drunk left in me. I have a real doozey of another drunk left in me. The problem is that I am afraid I don't have another 'sobering up' left in me.”



OO Office “workers”

### **Office News**

If your group is not listed online, but would like to be, just call the office or email the Information to us and we will post it as soon as

we can. It is free, and we can then direct people calling from your area to your group.

We hope you will visit the new website soon to let us know how we may better serve your group. Click [overcomersoutreach.org](http://overcomersoutreach.org) Please “like” our [Overcomers US](https://www.facebook.com/OvercomersUS) page on Face Book if you visit, too!

### **Literature**

The next revision to the FREED booklet is almost finished. We are adding an “appendix” of new topics and also some new scriptures for existing topics to the back of the FREED booklet, where the pages for “Notes” are. This should be in print and available by the first of the year. We will also have the four page “appendix” available separately. Contact the Central office for details.



*“Bridging the Gap Between  
12 Step Groups and Churches”*

### **Dear One:**

If you look for Me at Christmas,  
you won't need a special star.  
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,  
I'm right there where you are.

You may not be aware of Me,  
amid the celebrations,  
You'll have to look beyond the stores  
and all the decorations.

But if you take a moment  
from you list of things to do,  
And listen to your heart, you'll find  
I'm waiting there for you!

You're the one I want to be with,  
You're the reason that I came,

And you'll find Me in the stillness  
As I'm whispering your name.

Love, Jesus

Immanuel

“God among us”

## Rejoice!

A love so pure, so powerful, and so complete can only be His. The Creator of all, Maker of heaven and earth actually loves each one of us so very much that He took our sin and conquered death so we could be with Him forever. That love is so very hard to comprehend when the world tells us we are so insignificant, so unimportant, and even meaningless to the point of despair. But we are His workmanship and He delights in us! He made us for the path we are to follow, and He makes the path for us to travel in His joy and peace. Let's thank Him in prayer now for the joy and delight we receive through our personal relationship with Him:

**Father God, You give us creation, You give us life, You give us salvation through Christ as You call us to Him. Your comfort, strength, and joy are endless, and we ask now that we may glorify You as we share with those around us all praise and thanksgiving to honor You, Lord. May the love of Jesus continue to lead us to You with joy and peace in our hearts. All honor and glory is to You now and forever. In Jesus name we pray. 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 . 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](mailto: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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