

Overcomers for Christ

August 2016



Glory Meeting of the Overcomers for Christ

April 2016



God's Love

By T. M.

First, I've got to tell you how I met you all at the *Overcomers for Christ*. It was while I was celled up with Micah for over a month that I was deeply introduced to God and you all there. We got so close, and beyond words he made a difference in my life as well as he taught me strength I never knew I had. This man was a straight shooter and a warrior for God. He never backed down from no one or any battle where God was in the midst. Now I know this may not be scriptural but I watched him tell anyone that got in his way that he will follow no man while serving God and if they tried to come between that relationship, he would baptize them in blood! This brother is a warrior for Christ and is willing to share Christ with anyone who truly wants to hear the truth.

Over the course of my life I have been earning political ink and suffering a terrible pain and confusion of a split heart. For 35 years, I had sold my soul to the pleasing of my flesh, man, my people, my 'family' - at least that's what I believed they were. But at the same time I nursed an inner desire to go to the truth - Christ! This had been such a battle within my mind and my heart, but my soul was sold out for Christ. Even through the years as I was the worst of sinners He never left me ... even when I shoved Him away He has always been there whenever I've called out to Him.

As I receive and read your newsletters I am encouraged and somehow get a feeling that I seldom get when I read other ministry newsletters. As I read I get a sense of understanding and reasoning that only comes through people who have been there; or should I say ... here. This is a place that tries to fill every minute of the day with pain and sorrow while flooding the mind with all that has been loved and lost; daydreams of mistakes made once again that continue to hurt all those we love and cherish. As the days roll on, if we are not careful, our hearts can be filled with regret and disgust at the fact there is no taking it all back now. Inside we begin to see even more clear that the true us is NOT the one we have been portraying to be. It's a terrible feeling, and one that's so hard to describe. Knowing that you have a heart of love and kindness, a fit body capable of anything we put our minds to, and on top of that we have a brain that functions well enough to assure us that WE KNOW BETTER and are so, so, so much smarter than we have allowed to shine through.

I've had such an inner love for God for so long and in no way can I ever deny that. In fact, I have known and carried that thought with me for years. Yet, for some reason I have continually fallen for the lies and tricks of satan. I seemed so strong yet I was so weak as time after time I fell prey to his endless manipulation.

Here's a testimony I was inspired to share with all of you. Those lessons were hard learned so today I learn from God. The things I want to share are only for the reason of glorifying God and the truth in His Word.

Everything was going great for me. I was in the Word making leaps and bounds in the right direction. I was learning all I could from my Christian warrior brother, Micah. For the first time in a long time I felt things growing and glowing within me. *John 15:10-11* tells me, *"When you obey Me, you remain in My love, just as I obey My Father and remain in His love. I have told you this so you will be filled with My joy."* I was feeling a peace, hope and joy where there was not any before.

And then came blessing time, and I mean they were recognizably coming at me daily. I was seeing victory over addictions and negative influence, new felt compassion for those around me that didn't know Jesus, support and trust from my mother after 18 years of silence and tough love. My mother was back on my team and helping me see the blessings, prospects and wonderful times to come. I could see the favor of God in my life as people were showing me a much different type of respect. Old acquaintances were staying away ... even the old political connections I once had were showing me a different side through my new dedication. All of this in turn brought about positive opportunities to start surrounding me. It was truly amazing to watch as God worked one miracle after another.

I sat in awe as I reflected back to the man I was only a few short weeks before this. Myself, like so many of us, have picked up and carried with us so many bad habits throughout the years. I'll admit that sometimes I find it a daily battle of renewing my mind which prepares me to be aware of what to let loose of. *Proverbs 15:30-33* now teaches me, *"Light in the messenger's eyes brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones. Whoever heeds life-giving correction will be at home among the wise. Those who disregard discipline despise themselves, BUT the one who heeds correction gains understanding. Wisdom's instruction is to fear the Lord, and humility comes before honor."* Through all of this, God continues to show me His mighty power, love and support. He also shows me that I was FAR from being in control. Even in all of my past I felt Him with me, watching over me, guiding me and protecting me.

One particular day I was witness to His power as I sat with 35 other guys watching the news of building after building undergoing rioting. Seeing these actions on TV I then turned and witnessed the Christian brothers around me all praying for the situation. As they continued I watched as God brought a stop to the rioting on those runs. I read in *Ephesians 3:20*, *"Now glory to God! By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we*

could ever dare to ask or hope." Then I see, in **James 5:16**, "**Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results.**" And here's what I found in **Mark 11:22, 24**, "**HAVE FAITH IN GOD ... Listen to Me! You can pray for anything, and IF you believe, you WILL have it.**" I later found out that not one Christian brother, in those areas, lifted a finger of violence. I also found out that there were three or four buildings spared in all of this as well. Finding this out I was then lead to **Psalms 33:16, 18-20** (AMP), "**No king is saved by the great size and power of his army; a mighty man is not delivered by (his) much strength ... Behold, the Lord's eye is upon those who fear Him** (who revere Him and worship Him with awe), **who wait for Him and hope in His mercy and loving-kindness. To deliver them from death and keep them alive ... He is our Help and our Shield.**" I seen it with my own eyes, in my own run, and I say to all of you, my brothers and sisters, no matter who gives the order God IS the Protector over His people ... prayer and faith brought forth God's presence and I witnessed it all and He saved many! **Romans 8:31-33** (NLT) tells us that there is NOTHING that can separate us from the love of God. Listen, "**What can we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since God did not spare even His own Son but gave Him up for us all, won't God, who gave us Christ, also give us EVERYTHING else? Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for His own? Will God? NO! He is the one who has given us right standing with Himself.**"

I was so caught up in all of the new ground that had been taken back for the glory of God that well let me see if I can explain.

Just prior to this next movement I had everything going for me. I was even scheduled to land back on a 2 yard where I could get a good job. The only thing I was waiting for was a bed. I felt like I was on top of the world. Then ...

After everything began to calm down they began moving us all to different buildings, back into population. Every single Christian was rolled up and moved. And this is where I let my guard down (**Ephesians 6:10-12**) and because of that I feel like I was, in that sense, set up by satan. Now with open eyes I can see it was so like satan to reach back in to my past and bring forth an old drug friend from many, many years ago. All the while I felt so strong and in control. I thought I had everything under control and did not need to fear so I did NOT call out to Jesus or ever suit up with the full armor of God (**Ephesians 6:10-18**) to ready myself for the battle. Sure enough, I took my eyes off of Christ and sunk almost immediately. One day I woke up and found that a so called 'friend' had taken, well, anyways ... he gave me some and I fell right back in to that old way of thinking. This reminds me of what Paul spoke of in **1 Corinthians 10:12**, "**If you think you are standing strong, BE CAREFUL, for you, too, may fall into the same sin.**" As soon as I realized what I had done I immediately took another piece of satan's bait, hook line and sinker and passed judgment on this guy ... with violence. Not smart I know. Paul says, in **Ephesians 4:26-27**, "**In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry.**" So I once again relied on my SELF to overcome satan; and once again I fell flat on my face. What I should have done was everything that **Proverbs 3:5-8** instructs us all to do, "**Trust in the Lord with ALL your heart and lean NOT on your own understanding; in ALL your ways submit to Him, and He WILL make your paths straight. Do NOT be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.**"

I have to say, in all of this it may seem like it has all gone bad for me. And yes, I am devastated at my temporary loss of faith and have paid dearly for the choices I made to please the flesh instead of following and trusting in the Lord. I know that I didn't have to go through all that I did to see God move the way that He has but once again I have seen God's Word come to pass in my own life. The Word of God, Jesus, warned me, in **Matthew 7:1-2**, "**Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.**" For more years of my life than I want to admit, indeed it did come back at me, and by those I once represented. After all that Jesus just spoke in those verses I know I don't have room or should even say this but, when that did happen I was so hurt and felt so betrayed.

That's when I began to write the *Overcomers for Christ*. It was from our initial correspondence that I picked up and then began to put into practice two important fundamentals that were prescribed to me for growth, guidance and hope. I was told to pray first then meditate on the Word of God ... so you can hear God speak to you. That is what I began doing and you want to know what? It worked! One day I opened my Bible not knowing where to turn to first, and out falls a playing card I had been using the last year or so. Written on it were five verses or passages from the Bible and this is what God had to say to me.

"Not that I have already obtained all of this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do NOT consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. BUT one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward IN CHRIST JESUS." (**Philippians 3:12-14**)

continued on page 9

Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank Him for all He has done **Philippians 4:6 (NLT)**

Prayer Requests

I ask that you pray for my confidence and wisdom in God. I need all the prayers to carry out this task because I know I will be attacked by satan somehow, someday. So please pray **Psalm 91** for my protection ... **A.L.**

I pray my letter finds all of you at **Overcomers for Christ** in the best of health and blessings. Well, as for myself, I am blessed to see another day. Can you please add my name to the prayer list at your church? I am really, really struggling in here. I have not been to the store in almost two months now. Both of my sisters are really struggling also so keep both of them in prayer as well as the rest of my small family. My older sister Gwen is a child of God and she is looking for another part time job, please pray that she finds one. My other sister is in the streets getting high on drugs; please keep her in prayer also. The rest of my family members have passed away from cancer, my two sisters is all I have left. I am really, really in need for a money order ... **T.F.**

Without faith in God I would have never gotten this far. I believe in and love Jesus, but somewhere I lost connection with Him. I have been trying everything I can to once again connect with Jesus and to understand and make amends to the Holy Spirit. I could sure use some help and support (prayer) in that area. I got six years because evil people do evil things, and I am serving a sentence for something I'm not even responsible for. Sometimes I pray for the people who put me here unjustly, that God and Jesus would touch their life ... **V.D.**

Please include my friend 'B' to your prayer list. Would you all at the church also add me to your prayers, that my wife and children be re united where we belong, together. I also ask that you pray that the laws be changed to lower the amount of time left on my sentence ... **M.S.**

I would like to ask the **DS&S** family to please put my family and son in your prayers. Please pray for my mother, my brothers, my aunts and uncles and the mother of my son. I ask that the Lord protect them and provide for them in the good and the bad times. I also pray that they write to me so I know how they are doing ... **E.B.**

Please add my name to your prayer list at the church, for God to heal me and pray for my children and to pray for my family. I want to hear from my kids. I want to go home. Please pray to God for me, I need it. I want to know God more ... **K.M.**

I am writing to ask for a prayer request, I've been going through some hard times and I need the strength to get through the rest of my time. I lost my mom a few years back while I have been incarcerated and it has been hard on me, I really miss her. I just need a prayer for strength; I would also like you to say a prayer for my family that they have the strength to get through this hard time in our life ... **E.D.**

Praise Reports

Just a note to thank you for all you do. You are a real blessing! A couple of months ago in the Testimony portion of the newsletter I was reading along and noticed a certain set of initials. Then it hit me like a ton of bricks. This was the guy that the folks at Eagle's Nest asked us to pray for. What do you know, God DID ANOTHER MIRACLE! I ran around the pod showing it to several of the brothers saying, "Who's in charge? He is! Who is He? The One and only God of this universe and yet He has His hand on every tiny grain (us)!" Just wanted the **DS&S** readers know, **GOD IS ALIVE! HE IS GOOD! ... R.W.**

DS&S, God bless you all! I pray for you all every night and as always you guys hit me right on time. God is awesome! He has been working miracles in my daily life **AMEN!** This may sound crazy to some people but God spoke to me the other day for the first time. I was standing in my cell and had my TV on TBN and saw a pastor sharing a sermon and didn't have my earphones in at the time. Anyhow I had recently been praying about God sending me back to a certain yard I had begun my time at. I was recently re classed and now I'm down to a few years so my prayers have been for Him to let me finish where I started. Standing in my cell I looked over at my TV and all of a sudden a voice came to me and said, 'He's talking to you!' So I put in my earphones and the pastor said, 'We're going to finish what we started **AMEN!**' I thank the Lord I have found my way back to our Father, the Most High God! **ALL** praise be to God! The Good News is Great! ... **R.Q.**

Blessings to you all. I just got back from the 'outside' hospital Thursday night. I fell out ... I had a heart attack, it was very bad. I guess I had a lot of blockage so they put 3 stints in my heart and now the doctor says he wants to go back in and do a bypass. All I've got to say is I know God was with me and I remember Him telling me, 'You will be fine.' After I came around from them putting the stints in I was laying there, and I'm not crazy okay but, I asked God to please not let this take me. Then I heard God say to me, 'Keep your faith son, remain in Me and **NO** harm will come to you.' Let me tell you, this was a real wake up. I know even more, my strength and faith are in the Lord and I will **NEVER** step away from our Father! ... **G.B.B.**

Please find my tithe I joyfully and lovingly enclose with this praise report. God has been making wonderful changes in my heart and mind and has healed more wounds than I even realized existed. This incarcerated experience has deepened my love for Jesus and taught me what surrender, trust and faith are really all about. They are **MORE** than just words in a song and in the Bible to me. God is good and has given me new life, a joy, a peace, a belonging and acceptance the world **NEVER** has. It is so beautiful and I am thankful and grateful for **ALL** He does in me and my life! ... **K.W.**

Overcomers for Christ

From the Inside

Strength
By J.D.L.

I got to tell you that prison is a hard place to serve Christ. Something so simple filled with love, peace and encouragement, and a good design for life seems like that wouldn't be too hard. But it really is a complete struggle sometimes. I don't know if it's due to the way I was living or my surroundings, then I hear your words and realize it's not just here it's everywhere.

In Proverbs 29:22-23, "An angry man stirs up strife and a furious man abounds in transgression. A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in Spirit will retain honor."

I live in the world too much. Exactly what you encourage me not to do, yet unfortunately I live in this world. I struggle with giving up my old ways and my old heart. I find hate and madness in the things I need to give to God. What's even worse is my old cellie had the right idea (God) and I was trying to pollute him with my madness; makes me wonder sometimes if I'll ever get it right. I still have a ways to go. But I do believe in the encouraging words you sent, you were on target. I just pray God gets me there.

I miss my old cellie, he was one individual I could fellowship with. I had a lot of negative influence in his life as a younger man, turned out he had a lot of positive in mine as we grew older. He was right and I was wrong, God bless him. God blessed me with another great cellie, another person I can actually fellowship with.

Please pray God keeps my head above the temptations. I feel strong but it's never a great thing to be surrounded by temptation. My weaknesses have not served me well in the past. I pray God gives me the strength to serve Him well.

Foundation of Our Spiritual Growth
By M.D.

I thank God for all of you. In every prayer of mine because of your partnership in the gospel through the years and into the future I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion. I feel this way because I hold you in my heart, as we are all partners of grace.

The foundation for our spiritual growth is recognizing that it is God who began a good work in you. Genuine spiritual progress is rooted in what God has done, is doing, and will do in our lives. His faithfulness endures that He will be with us until Jesus returns. We can have confidence that the God who saved us will never let us go, and that we will inherit our eternal reward. We must forget what lies behind us and push forward to what lies ahead. **"Press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 3:14**

I cannot help but believe that there are many of us overcomers who want to be more efficient for the Lord's service. It is from the Holy Spirit that we can expect this power. The Holy Spirit is the one who leads us into God's will. The work of God is not by might or power of men but by His Spirit.

Our Lord is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, but He has sent the promised Spirit so that, through His power we can fulfill all of God's will, defeat every device of satan, and extend the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

No matter what difficulties confront us as believers, remember we are overcomers! God is calling us to receive today this great promise of power as a living reality. Then in victory we will praise God alongside those believers (overcomers) down through the ages who have experienced for themselves the truth that ... **"Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." 1 John 4:4**

Words from a Grateful Heart
By S.J.

I want to first thank you for the birthday wishes that you send to me every year and for the monthly newsletter that I receive faithfully every month. Over the past two years, I have had some major changes in my life. First, I was moved to a minimum yard that houses over 1,250 women in a dorm style setting. To say that this is a major change is an understatement.

Overcomers for Christ P.O. Box 42023 Phoenix, Arizona 85080
(602)472-8741 • OC4Cphx@gmail.com

Overcomers for Christ

From the Inside

ment. If any of you have ever read *Slumber Party from H**L*, it is about 10 times worse. They say that it is supposed to help those of us that have been down for a while get ready to integrate back into society. That being said I should be able to stand in any type of line for at least 3-4 hours no problem.

I read in a newsletter about someone mentioning a book called *The Key to Your Expected End*. I, too, encourage those on the inside of these walls to get your hands on this publication. It is a true eye opener. Since I was given this I have a new understanding to why I was incarcerated and what I need to do with this experience. I now know that the reason is because I am loved by our heavenly Father more than I could have ever imagined and that I have a mission to fulfill. I also understand that this would not have been able to take place had I stayed on the path that I was on. I started this journey in 2007 with a flat 10 years. I am so excited to say that I am now 17 months to the gate.

I have no desire to use or be involved in anything that will pull me back on the wrong path. I truly believe that your prayers and testimonials are what got me through. You are a gift from God and I hope to come and be a part of your congregation when I get outside these gates. Since my incarceration, I have had several deaths occur, both with people on the outside and behind the razor wire, it is hard at times to remain positive. Having your publication is what got me through these times and enabled me to move forward one day at a time.

I have hope and peace in my life, I have reconnected with all of my children and even my ex-husband who is also my best friend. These are relationships that I thought were gone forever. Our God is a God of forgiveness and understanding and any trials that we go through are not meant to destroy us, they are to make us stronger warriors for our heavenly Father in order for us to fulfill our purpose.

I have been writing this letter in my head over the last few months and felt an overwhelming desire to send this letter to you. Though I am not sure why, I am following what my heart tells me to do. In closing, I just want to say to those of us behind these walls, do not lose hope or faith in yourself or those around you, your past does not define who you are and if you are a child of God you are already forgiven, so it is time to forgive yourself.

Let Go of Fear By C.R.

I'm 35 days to the gate, 17 years I've been here ... I need your prayers.

I've told you my crime was when I was 26 against a 14 year old former student. It disgusts me to admit and how I wish I'd done a "respectable" crime. People want to hear the redemption story of a gangster or addict or murderer but not a sex offender. My only hope is with all the porn addictions and sexual depravity in the world, God can use me to reach someone an addict or gangster couldn't. It doesn't make it any easier to be a leper though. I thank God for people like you, who aren't afraid to give the leper what he wants most - simple human contact.

Anyway, I have lifetime probation upon my release and they came to meet with me. They had me sign a bunch of stuff and one is a form for no contact with minors. They said it absolutely includes the kids of mine that I call daily (from prison) and have seen every weekend of my incarceration. It broke my heart. They said my wife is not even allowed to tell me they love me or tell them I love them because that's 3rd party contact. We have an attorney filing a motion to modify my terms to not include my kids and for that I need prayers.

For 17 years, I've been counting on making my family's life better and this will be horrible. Frankly, I'd rather do 10 more years in prison to kill the probation and be able to see the family while I do it. Yet even as I write that I feel my spirit say, "Where is your peace and trust in the Almighty?" I battle fear and I shouldn't. He battled it for me, still it's scary. I just want to be part of my family. Freedom is nothing without them.

I remember in 8th grade, a 9th grader cornered me and called me the "P" word for not wanting to fight and then the whole school laughed at my tears. It was then that I decided I'd never be called that again. I began to fight and try to destroy anyone who said I was a wimp. I don't fight people anymore, but I've been sitting here while the devil calls me the "P" word. Why do I fear? Do I forget the size of my God? The size of His love, compassion and power to work miracles?

continued on page 9

1 Chronicles 7:1-10:14

Continuing to read through Chronicles, we learn how many men from each tribe/clan were available for military service. In reading the list of the descendents of Ephraim we come to Joshua. This is the Joshua who was the great leader of Israel who led God's people into the promised land. His story is told in the book of Joshua. (7:27)

Divorce and polygamy are sometimes recorded in the Old Testament without critical comments. This does not mean that God takes divorce lightly. **Malachi 2:15-16** says to, "**Remain loyal to the wife of your youth. For I hate divorce,' says the Lord, the God of Israel.**" Don't assume that God approves of an act because it isn't vigorously condemned in every related Bible reference. (8:8-10)

Although not every person in Judah was unfaithful, the entire nation was carried away into captivity. Everyone was affected by the sin of a few. Even if we don't participate in a certain widespread wrong doing, we will still be affected by those who do. It is not enough to say, "I didn't do it." We must speak out against the sins of our society. (9:1)

How easy it is to be critical of those in authority over us, focusing only on their weaknesses. We cannot excuse sin, but we should respect the position of those in authority, whether at work, at church, or in government. (10:11-12)

Acts 27:1-21:44

Julius, a hardened Roman officer, was assigned to guard Paul. Obviously, he remained close to Paul at all times. Through this contact, Julius developed a respect for Paul. He gave Paul a certain amount of freedom. (27:3) And later spared his life. How would your character look, up close and personal? (27:1-3)

An angel told Paul that they would be shipwrecked near an island but would all survive. So Paul reminded his captors that with God's guidance they would be okay. Paul had predicted this very problem. (27:10) In the future, they listened to him and their lives were spared because of it. (27:21)

Psalms 7:1-17

When allowed to run its course, evil destroys itself. Violent people become victims of violence, and liars become victims of other's deceit. But in the process innocent people are hurt. Sometimes God intervenes and stops evildoers in their tracks in order to protect his followers. At other times, for reasons known only to Him, God allows evil to continue even though innocent people are hurt. It is during these times that we must ask God to protect us. Remember that God will execute final justice, although it may not be during our lifetime. (7:14-16)

Proverbs 18:22

This verse states that it is good to be married. Today's emphasis on individual freedom is misguided. Strong individuals are important but so are strong marriages. God created marriage for our enjoyment, and He pronounced it good. This is one of many passages in the Bible that show marriage as a joyful and good creation of God. (Genesis 2:21-25; Proverbs 5:15-19; John 2:1-11)

"Foot" Notes

During my studies, I recently read some interesting information about spirit. Look at **2 Timothy 1:7**, "**For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**" So we could say that the gift of the Spirit would be a gift with personality that possesses man's spirit. Well, we all hear of the devil possessing man's spirit, but have we truly realized that as Christians we are possessed by God? Don't we most often think of possession as concerning or being of the devil? Well, we should also accept possession by God into the conversation, for whatever possesses man's spirit, conforms man to the image of itself. When it is a spirit of the devil or darkness that is what we conform to.

So, likewise, when the Holy Spirit possesses us/man's spirit, it will conform man/woman to Christ. Christ's Spirit will sanctify man/woman's power, and shall empower said man/woman to the will of God. Just some food for thought that I found enlightening and thought ya'll might find it interesting.

Love to ya'll short and tall ... Vaya con Dios!

"Do NOT be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character. Come back to your senses as you ought, and STOP sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God - I say this to your shame." (1 Corinthians 15:33-34)

The next place I was directed to was **Romans 7:15 -25** where Paul is saying, **"I do not understand what I do. For what I do want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me ... For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it."** I am encouraged by Paul's words here because what I'm seeing is; I am the righteousness of God IN Christ Jesus! (**2 Corinthians 5:21**) I NOW HAVE a new nature, not the same old sin nature. What I'm now understanding is that in order to see the fruit of that new righteous nature that's ALREADY inside me I have to continually be renewing my mind with the Word of God (God's mirror, **James 1:22-25**) until my soul begins to open the valve to release what is ALREADY in my new spirit. After my soul begins to get in line with my new spirit what's in my new spirit begins to flow outwardly like an open valve to manifest the fruit inside of my new spirit.

"Now that we are saved, we eagerly look forward to this freedom. For if you already have something, you don't need to hope for it. But if we look forward to something we don't have yet, we must wait patiently and confidently. And the Holy Spirit helps us in our distress. For we don't even know what we should pray for, nor how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us in groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father that knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will." (**Romans 8:24-28**)

All of these Scriptures really did touch my heart in a powerful way, truly a message to me and directly making it clear that God DOES know my heart. God does mean what He has inspired to be written and obeyed in His Word. This next Scripture drilled it in even deeper as Jesus said, in **Matthew 6:24**, **"No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."** So from that day and forever more, I will do my part in NOT following the flesh. It is clear to me that now that I am a warrior for Christ I know I will be even more so held accountable for ALL my actions.

This is the last place God led me to and I will leave you all with it as well. **"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is Christ Jesus our Lord."**(**Romans 8:38-39**)

I know this was put on my heart to share with you all, to glorify God's love AND His mercy. I hope you can see the proof of His mighty power as He gave me this wake up call. Make no doubt about it brothers and sisters, we as Christians are and will always be accountable for our actions. But through daily prayer and meditation on His Word, God WILL make it plain for you to see His mercies and feel His LOVE.

Let Go of Fear By C.R.

continued from page 7

Those papers I signed are contrary to the Word of God, so why fear them? God's going to do a miracle to get me to my kids and then it'll be **2 Corinthians 1:9-11**, **"In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety."** Many will give thanks on our behalf. Okay, I feel better, sometimes it helps to just write my heart and feel the love of another believer reminding me to knock off my whining and get ready to see something cool.

Probation said it'll be several months before I can go to church, so I'll play guitar and read to myself and have my own church service. There is a lot that makes me nervous - internet, driving, having people despise me and trying to set me up because I'm a sex offender and they want me dead. I just appreciate your prayers. I will trust that God has a ram in the bush as well as a few more people unafraid to touch lepers. Again, thank you for all your support over the years.

Quote Worthy

"In those desperate times when we feel like we don't have an ounce of strength, He will gently pick up our heads so that our eyes can behold something, something that will keep His hope alive in us."
- Kathy Troccoli - a contemporary Christian music singer, author, and speaker

Charlie's Turn
(John 4:1-30)
By Charles Robson

The painting on the front cover and the text it represents pulled a lot of emotion and thoughts out of me, which makes sense. Most of my paintings are out of my life and my walk with God. They say the best 'red' to paint with is blood, which means to pour yourself onto the canvas and let yourself live in the painting. So here it is ...

This painting incorporates so much that I'm not sure where to begin. It's not that there are a bunch of hidden symbols, it's just that my brain and heart were so active as I painted.

I set out to do the woman at the well, with Jesus as the source of her water because I feel connected to the story. Then as I got to the water dripping through the fingers I simply stopped painting stepped back and contemplated. I thought of the cup we are given daily and how it is filled with so many things, good and bad, that have all slipped through His hands before them getting to us.

I thought of when Jesus didn't want to drink the cup that His Father set before Him, how even though He knew firsthand the fingers through which it passed. He also knew the pain it would bring ... and He didn't want it. Just like us. Eventually Jesus drank the cup given to Him, but we also find it's okay to not want the cup; it's okay for me to say, "Please God, I've had enough" as long as in the end I remember His love, and take the cup.

So, in the story, here is a woman making yet another trip to her watering well, and in doing so meets The Fountain! She thinks her body is thirsty, but He knows her soul is parched. So, He gives the invitation, and she gives a bunch of excuses and attempted distractions. He's too good, she's too bad. It's her race, her gender, her culture, her tradition, but our persistent Savior keeps it up. And when she's out of excuses and faces her checkered past, she takes the plunge. And not only is she saved, but her whole village. All because Jesus had to go through Samaria (see **verse 4**). My Bible notes say that Jews despised the Samaritans and went out of their way to go around Samaria. But Jesus isn't known for doing what most people do.

I think this is the part of the story that hits so close to home. Few people know what it's like to really be hated and despised. I've had to accept that because I am a con. I will be hated by some - most of whom don't even know me. It's just the way the world works. This Samaritan woman may have grown up being hated, but I'm sure she wasn't necessarily used to it. It seems no one gets used to being hated - especially for something that you can't change or take back and fix. But again, Jesus doesn't do what most people do. Jesus goes out of His way to find us where we need Him. Maybe it's in a meth lab or abortion clinic, maybe it's a marriage broken by adultery, maybe it's in a bar. He'll come to us if we're in a room lit only by shameful images on the computer, or in a cemetery where our tears flow unending. He'll come to a prison. He may not necessarily like the journey there but He has to go because we are worth it, and that Samaritan woman and me and you and all of us are worth it ... to Him anyway. The leper's touch was worth the risk. The potential shame of defending an adulterer was worth the humiliation. And saving a dead world was worth His own death. We are worth it.

I think the world has too much self-esteem and needs more God-esteem.

Before I came to prison, I was like the woman at the well. So thirsty, and so I drank. Just one more fight and the anger will be gone. Just one more theft and the world won't owe me anymore. Just one more new shirt in the closet or a bigger TV and the neighbors won't laugh. Just one more video and the lust will be gone. And so I kept drinking cup after cup of water, not tasting how full of salt it was and how it only increased my thirst.

Anyway, I finally went to the well which happened to be in a jail cell in 1998, and guess who had gone out of His way and was waiting for me? And what should've been a look of disgust on His face wasn't, He was smiling and said, "At last!" However, the cup that finally satisfied also burned as I drank it because it enlivened a dead heart and gave me new eyes for a dying world. And suddenly there were things I had to do too. So begins part 2.

I need to daily remind myself that our God is an active God, and watches over my every step and therefore could save me from all my tears and pains. If this is true and yet pain still comes then I have to know it because He somehow let it. He allowed it to pass through His nail-scarred hands before I saw a single drop of it. It may even be, contrary to popular cliché, more than I can bear. **But never more than He and I can bear together.** He has good plans for me no matter what my cup tastes like. In God's Kingdom, sacrifice is an honor, and an honor that we're never the only beneficiaries of. Jesus was abandoned by God so that I never will be. He listened to God's silence so I could hear heaven's song. He held my sin in His body so my body would one day be held by a sinless Savior. And He let Himself be pierced so by the out-flowing I could fill my cup and finally be satisfied. I suppose if you asked Him why, He'd say, like in **John 4, "I had to."**

So, now to my picture. There are three main components: the hands, the water, and the cup. The hands are not a weak man's hands. They are thick and strong and more than able to fight off any foe, spare us any pain, even ward off death itself, but even if they don't do those things, I can be reminded that it's not accident. Love allowed it because love has a purpose.

Under the nails I added a bit of dirt. I wanted to convey that He's in the habit of rescuing people who see themselves as dirty from dirty places. We can't shock Him and He's not to pristine to stoop down and lift us out of the muck.

The water dripping through His fingers is more than a thirst quencher. It is a soul quencher. Our souls need joy and sorrow to make it whole. And so the water in the picture is mingled with the darkest blacks and the brightest whites, all of which passed through nail-scarred hands before it reaches us, and will satisfy us eternally in the deepest reaches of our heart.

Finally, the cup. The idea of a thimble for the cup works because our cup may seem big, but it's never as large as we imagine. We extend to Jesus what we think is a bucket because that's what we need, but in our hand we actually hold a thimble. Still He fills it gladly.

Then on the flip side when He offers us a cup and it is seems He is pouring Niagara Falls on us, in reality it's barely a drop, and the drop puts us in good company with the suffering saints before us.

The water hasn't hit the cup yet because the invitation to Jesus is open and if we want to we can withdraw and try it our way again. However, if you choose, bring your cup, whatever the size, and set it on the splinter and stained wood of the Cross and let Him fill it.

When Jesus did what most people would not and had to go through Samaria to meet a damaged woman no one else cared for, He changed a whole town. When He walked the road of pain and hung on the Cross for people who hated Him, He saved a whole world. Jesus does what no man can do.

What Others Are Saying...

"HELLO, *Overcomers for Christ!* I'm currently serving a 5 year sentence in prison that I am a little more than half way through. Over time I have gotten a few of your *Overcomers for Christ* magazines from a couple different inmates. I really enjoy them a lot and I would really appreciate it if you guys would send them to me personally every month. I think you guys are AWESOME and have the best magazine/newsletter I've ever seen here in prison. I don't get mail from anyone so getting your magazine/newsletter would be a blessing. I would also welcome any correspondence from any of my brothers and sisters IN CHRIST." - J.Y.

"I hope you all are doing well and God bless you ALL. You guys have helped me and shown a lot of love and respect that I truly do appreciate. Thanks. I will never forget you all, you're like my family. I do have a serious question. Is there a way that I may join your church and become one of the *OC* members in 2020? I want to continue to grow with you all! - M.A.

"I've been wanting to write all of you for over 6 months now, but wasn't sure what to say, of course thank you is a must. Without you I wouldn't be receiving your monthly newsletter or the wonderful birthday wishes. I remember the day I had mail. It was a turquoise envelope and it was from ... *Overcomers for Christ* and full of birthday wishes from a number of brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank you so much. I never expected this beautiful treatment from simply putting my name and DOC number on a piece of paper along with many others. I really enjoy reading the newsletter. I am truly blessed because I have had my families support out there and in here. With that I have to say that your actions have had such an impact on me and I can only imagine how great those inmates feel that have no one. You touch the hearts of many and expect nothing in return. I know it is God that lives through you and as His children we are to bless others. But the service the *Overcomers for Christ* does for all of us incarcerated, with no money from us because of our situation, does not go unnoticed. Thank you again for being a true blessing to all of us. God's blessings are many in my life. Praise God! Thank you Jesus, my Lord and Savior!" - M.S.

Ministry Tithes & Offerings

Ministry Tithes & Offerings It takes the body of Christ working together to create, print, and mail this newsletter. None of this would be possible without the faithful support of many people who believe in this ministry. The vision of this ministry is to offer hope, love, and encouragement to those who are incarcerated. You are investing in spreading the Word of God to lost souls, and encouraging and mentoring believers.

This is how you can give to the *Overcomers for Christ* ministry: By **CHECK** or **MONEY ORDER** – Make checks payable to Living Word Bible Church and in the memo section put "For Overcomers for Christ". Mail your check or money order to PO Box 42023, Phoenix, Arizona 85080

We thank everyone who sows into this ministry. We pray that all that your hands touch will be richly blessed, and that you will have abundance in every area of your life. Your giving does qualify as a charitable contribution on your taxes. If you have any questions, please call or write Wade Anderson.

Overcomers for Christ P.O. Box 42023 Phoenix, Arizona 85080
(602)472-8741 • OC4Cphx@gmail.com

Rejected Stone

By J.H.

**Rejected stone, used to roll alone
The streets had me feeling like; home alone**

**Through His creation, His love is shown,
His love's for sure, planted in living water
Scriptures feed my spirit I grow,
On hills I stand, through His love I glow
Illuminating paths for those lost below,**

**Peace and forgiveness was expensive,
I was once a foe
Drowning in sin, covered from head to toe
Blood dripped not sweat,
If it's Your will I'll go!**

My Faith

By G.B.B.

**Because my faith in Christ is strong, my life is filled with hope
When problems arise and threaten me, He gives me strength**

**I don't lose heart when things go wrong, for Christ will always make it right
I know He always understands, and protects me in my plight**

**He sees all and truly cares, He knows my every need
If I keep faith and hope in Him, I know He'll intercede**

**He calms my troubled spirit, He smooth's my wrinkled brow
He fills my heart with peace and joy, His love is over all**

**I won't lose heart or be depressed, Christ's love is constant and true
He'll help me find success, in everything I do.**

Help us be better stewards by sending your change of address when you move to help reduce unnecessary waste and expense

EDITORIAL Wade "Duck" Anderson, Michelle Anderson **ART & DESIGN** John Dobbins **PRINTING** Living Word Bible Church

Overcomers for Christ a Ministry of Living Word Bible Church

www.livingwordonline.org jasonlivingword@gmail.com

Overcomers for Christ P.O. Box 42023 Phoenix, Arizona 85080

(602)472-8741 • OC4Cphx@gmail.com