

Overcomers for Christ

September 2019



Glory Meeting of the Overcomers for Christ


October 2018



Are YOU an OVERCOMER?

By Wade Anderson

Let's pray, "Heavenly Father I thank You for Your promised Holy Spirit that lives on the inside of each and every one of us that believes and receives Your Son Jesus Christ, our Rescuer, our Redeemer as our Lord and Savior. Holy Spirit I give You permission to rise up on the inside of me, to guide us all to the message that God has sent You with. Use me as a messenger with these words here today and they not be OF me but THROUGH me and all for Your glory LORD. I thank You now, and always in Jesus name. And let His church say, AMEN!"

WOW! I want to start off by welcoming all of you new people to our  family! For the rest of our 'family' that have been with us for awhile now, 'short and tall', we love you and thank each and every one of you for listening and OBEYING the voice of God over these last 12 years! This ministry would NOT have accomplished all that it has if it weren't for God touching each and every one of our hearts. I mean that from deep in my heart. HALLELUJAY! Now give the Lord a LOUD praise of thanksgiving!!

YES, Praise Jesus! It has now been 12 years since we heard His voice and seen a glimpse of the vision, "Send hope, love and encouragement." Pretty simple huh? Well, believe me I was as MUCH of a rag tag individual to fulfill this vision as many of you might consider yourselves to be, another thing, God would be unjust to give us a vision and not anoint us for that vision. Besides GOD sees ALL of His children with a MUCH different vision than we generally see ourselves. God sees His children THROUGH the Blood of His Son Jesus Christ which is the express image (**Colossians 1:15, Hebrews 1:3**) and foundation of His LOVE! But yet many of us still carry such a low self image of ourselves. YOU HAVE GOT TO STOP THAT! If God calls you His child and has seated you at His right hand when you received Jesus, and you see yourselves as less than anything other than what He says about you, then you are pretty much calling God a liar and declaring that Jesus didn't pay enough to redeem you! STOP IT! STOP IT! STOP IT! If that is you STOP listening to the lies of a guilty conscience, that's the voice of a stranger.

Let's look at this in the **Message Translation**. Jesus says it like this, *"Let me set this before you as plainly as I can. If a person climbs over or through the fence of a sheep pen instead of going through the gate, you know he's up to no good—a sheep rustler! The shepherd walks right up to the gate. The gatekeeper opens the gate to him and the sheep recognize his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he gets them all out, he leads them and they follow because they are familiar with his voice. They won't follow a stranger's voice but will scatter because they aren't used to the sound of it."* (**John 10:1-5**) There's no reason to beat yourselves up when you miss it. Heck even with that explanation the very people in His physical presence didn't understand Him. Our advantage over theirs is that we have Holy Spirit NOW living on the inside of us. He continually keeps nudging and encouraging us to do, say and be the right thing. So let's clear this up, who's the one climbing over the fence and screaming in your ear? It's the sheep rustler! You are God's sheep! Jesus again says, *"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life."* (**John 10:10**)

Let me say this and I pray that you all will receive it with the love that is intended. It IS possible to hear the voice of the stranger and it's important to point out that Jesus said His sheep won't obey or follow the voice of a stranger. We all know firsthand that the liar, the sheep rustler, is the one who screams in our ears about our past. We MUST learn and BELIEVE that who God says we are WE ARE! It's when we REALLY understand His truth about us, who our new identity is in, that it becomes easier and easier to discern the devil's lies! So now let me ask you, whose voice are you listening too and following?

Paul once considered himself to be wise in the understanding of Scripture. But after Jesus (Grace) spoke to him and specifically called him (**Acts 9**) the scales of religion/Law fell from his eyes and he soon realized how foolish he had been. So what better Biblical example to use than the Apostle Paul's very own words. Listen. **"But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ IS the power of God and the wisdom of God. This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength. Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And He chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important."** (**1 Corinthians 1:24-28**) Paul was speaking these words about himself. And he finishes with, **"As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God."** (**1 Corinthians 1:29**)

When I gave myself, 100%, to the Lord 12 1/2 years ago I really didn't have a clue what God had in store for me. I had very little understanding of the Bible but the one thing I did have was the DEEP desire to KNOW God in a REAL and personal way. As I read the Bible I used several different devotionals and translations to help me find an even greater understanding of His Word. I visited many churches in the valley. Some I was comfortable being in and, well, others it

seemed I was out of place. Lots of these churches we went to at least a couple times each. I know that the Word was being taught in these other churches but felt Holy Spirit nudge me on to somewhere new. In this I am NOT endorsing 'church hoping', until we 'feel' just right or the people make us 'feel' good. Notice that I said Holy Spirit nudged me on. In my seeking to KNOW God, I love how He so strategically directed me, within a few months, to Living Word Bible Church, in Mesa, Arizona. This was over 40 miles from our home, but He knew where His Word was being taught, and where He wanted us.

From the beginning Living Word has always taught me that the Word of God was and IS the only real truth and I take it to be my final authority. Holy Spirit witnessed to my spirit and I believed it, every bit of it, from cover to cover. I just couldn't get enough of the Word. All the while I sucked up many different true Bible teachers books of information. I felt like I was always praying, not for things, but for an even deeper understanding of what I was reading and how it applies to my life. And oh my gosh, you would crack up if you could see my first Bible. It is highlighted and color penciled in about every color in the rainbow. I was blessed to be the 'stay at home' grandpa so when Anthony was little he was with me most of the time. As he watched and observed me I couldn't tell him that he shouldn't color in the books because I was doing it too. Underlined, circled and the margins full of comments and whole Books falling out of it. As I was nearing the second year with that Bible I noticed something crazy. In many places one color was overlapping another color. What I then realized was that after reading it one time, the next time Holy Spirit was expanding the revelation in what I had already read by pulling in a few words from the previous highlighted or un-highlighted area. I still get that ole Bible out and read it from time to time and when I do I'm amazed at some of the things Holy Spirit laid on my heart that I wrote all over the pages.

I read Scriptures telling me, **"I, yes I alone, will blot out your sins for My own sake and will never think of them again." (Isaiah 43:25) And "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 8:12) "The LORD gives righteousness and justice to all who are treated unfairly ... The LORD is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He does not punish us for all our sins; He does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For His unfailing love toward those who fear Him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. (Psalm 103:6, 8-12)**

Being truly committed to following Jesus I remember reading those verses and with tears running down my face I looked up and said, "Lord, I'm ALL in! If You've done all of this for me I want to be right here, close to You, all the days of my life! Thank You Sir!" I took God at His Word. I believed that He was who He said He was and that He would do what His Word said He would do. I'm not saying that I understood all of what I was reading then but I realized that what I didn't understand was simply that, I just didn't understand it, yet.

I saw, in His Word, Jesus telling me, **"I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)** I was encouraged and felt inside that He would continue and always be here for me. David wrote, **"But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high." (Psalm 3:3)** Then the author of Hebrews (I personally believe it is Paul) wrote, **"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." (Hebrews 12:1)** WOW! How powerful is that? Just throw off, like an ole dirty piece of clothing, EVERYTHING that entangled and caused us problems in the past **"And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." HALLELUJAH!**

"For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." (1 John 5:4-5)
"You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." (1 John 4:4) "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5) It was when I read and listened to the Holy Spirit speak to me through these words that John wrote that I soon realized we too, those who believe, are Overcomers for Christ! Why? Because He first overcame EVERYTHING for us to show us the way! **"But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:57)**

I'm completely convinced that one of the major reasons some of us have such a hard time taking God at His Word is because we truly don't believe we are who He says we are, in Him. That means that we have an identity problem. Believe me, the devil, our enemy, loves it when he finds us in this position! We have to STOP running around with that old worldly ID card, the one that says "You can't do this because you've done this or that. You'll never amount to anything! Look who your parents were, you'll end up just like them!" BUT GUESS WHAT? Paul clearly tells us, in **2 Corinthians 5:17**, that when we have asked Jesus to be the Lord of our life, **"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"** So you are NOT who you used to be! You have a brand new Spirit on the inside of you that knows exactly who He is and all He needs from you is to invite Him to rise up on the inside of you, show you what

you need to get rid of and then thank Him for helping you accomplish it all! Now that's something to get excited about right there. There should be a loud, "AMEN!" right there.

Let's continue on in **2 Corinthians 5:18-19**, from the *Message Translation*, "**Look at it! All this comes from the God who settled the relationship between us and Him, and then called us to settle our relationships with each other. God put the world square with Himself through the Messiah, giving the world a fresh start by offering forgiveness of sins.**" Do you see that? In Christ you are NOW in right relationship with God, you're square and you NOW have a fresh start! Nowhere here does it say this takes place when you get to heaven. NO! It started the second you received Jesus, right here on earth! We have got to start not just acting like we know who we are but start being who He says we are!

It has been because of the many of you 'there', the ones that have written to us 'here' that God has used to help me gain an even greater revelation of His Word. I remembered reading how Solomon had prayed to God, in **1 Kings 3:7-9**, (*Message*) "**GOD, my God, You have made me, Your servant, ... I'm too young for this, a mere child! I don't know the ropes, hardly know the 'ins' and 'outs' of this job. And here I am, set down in the middle of the people You've chosen, a great people-far too many to ever count. Here's what I want: Give me a God-listening heart so I can lead Your people well, discerning the difference between good and evil. For who on their own is capable of leading Your glorious people?**" For probably the first 6 years nearly every night about 7 or 8 pm I would get myself something to drink and then get alone in my office where I always began in prayer, like Solomon, for His wisdom to be able to answer all of your mail.

Many days there would be a minimum of 15 to 20 pieces of mail sitting in front of me, and in the beginning I personally would answer every one that came in, in the order in which we received them. The reason for that was because that's what God placed on my heart. (Believe me, there is no pride or arrogance in that last sentence. Only glory to God.) Listening to Holy Spirit many a night I would sit there praying and writing return mail into the wee early mornings. During this mail discipling/mentoring process God spoke to me one night and said, "You'll never be lonely again." Not understanding what He meant I continued to read your mail and pray about every single one of them. Many times I'd be crying while reading testimonies and prayer requests. Then other times, being filled with His Spirit I would cry and laugh at the same time. I THEN began to realize what He meant about "never being lonely again," You see, that's why I always say that WE NEED ALL OF YOU maybe more than you need us. I'd like to think and believe I would be on this same path had God not assigned this vision to us BUT, I know for sure that ALL OF YOU have played a tremendous part in building and lifting me up while we all continue to learn and grow together. AMEN!?

Over the years, probably the first 6 1/2 to 7 years for sure, opposition came at this newsletter from what seemed like every direction. Some of the people that were with us in the beginning slowly began to filter away to do other things. In my ignorance, in those new beginnings, I believed that God had placed us all together and that we would stay together. Since then God has shown me "Seasons change and so do people, don't lose heart, keep coming." There were a few different prisons where mail and property personnel were rejecting the newsletters and seemingly coming against us. Then there was the cost, from our own pockets, and where we were in our finances, then, it was tremendous. I'm not saying that Michelle and I were doing it all alone because we were getting some offerings from a few people to help with the printing and the postage cost and even at that it was wearing out home printers left and right and sucking the ink cartridges dry like a new born baby does a bottle.

At one point a couple of different people I'd known from the past came along and offered to print it for us and slip it out the back door of where they were working. Even though this was getting the message sent out, the second month that this happened God opened my eyes to "If it has to go out the back door it's wrong for you." This was about integrity, from the beginning, for both me and for this ministry. And it's been this way from there forward. Every single penny, stamp or resource that has either been mailed to us or handed to us has gone directly into producing and mailing this newsletter. God has shown us over the years how to be better stewards of all the resources He provides. What once cost us \$5.57 a complete newsletter, at FedEx, now costs us under \$1 to print and mail in the LWBC print shop. That equals 5 people each month that now receive the newsletter instead of 1 person. The congregation at LWBC loves all of you and operates according to **Hebrews 13:3 (NKJV)**, "**Remember the prisoners as if chained with them-those who are mistreated-since you yourselves are in the body also.**" This may sound a little bios but this is a body of believers that LOVE to give! And to that I will say, "God knew very specifically what He was doing as He kept nudging us on to where He wanted us to be planted. Now let's look here to **Psalms 1:1-3 (Message)**, for a second, "**How well God must like you-you don't hang out at Sin Saloon, you don't slink along Dead-End Road, you don't go to Smart-Mouth College. Instead you thrill to GOD's Word, you chew on Scripture day and night. You're a tree replanted in Eden, bearing fresh fruit every month, Never dropping a leaf, always in blossom.**"

I love how the Message Bible translates these Scriptures. "**You don't hang out at Sin-Saloon, you don't slink along Dead-End Road and you don't go to Smart-Mouth College.**" It's so important that we don't frequent the same places

...continued on page 8

Overcomers for Christ

From the Inside

Tribute to My Sister, Kay

By W.R.

Editor's Note: This poem is special to me as both the writer and his sister are special people in my life. A letter came to us from W.R. with this message in it. And we're grateful for God's promise of a forever life with Him.

I want you to know that I was going to have that church sent to you and Michelle back in April for Easter. But I know now that God wanted you to pick it up in person so that you could pray with my sister. She went home to be with the Lord four days after you were there. And I know that church has found a good home there with you and Michelle. Would you please print this poem in the newsletter. I know Kay would love that.

Tribute to My Sister, Kay

She can meet you face to face or eye to eye,
She'll tell you the truth when others lie

She's always there to share your burdens, when life seems all up hill
Always there to comfort you and sooth the pain you feel.

And when the burden gets too heavy and you stumble along,
She stands beside you right or wrong.

She's always there to lean upon when no other is around
And there to pick you up when you stumble to the ground

She's always there to comfort you in times of strife,
For she's your rainbow, your star in life.

And she stands beside you and never once complains,
She shares in your burdens, joy and pain.

And she could be a magician in her own way,
Your sunshine throughout the day.

And she's so beautiful as only sisters can be,
She's your eyes when you cannot see.

And when you've lost your riches, your power and your fame,
She's still your sister just the same.

O Death Where Is Your Sting (I hear Kay answer with this)

And Jesus will greet me with a warm embrace,
As I enter into heaven with a smile on my face

And NO ONE can pluck me from my Father's hand,
For His angels will escort me into the promise land

Oh death where is thy sting,
Today, I walked through your doors to be with me King!

I Thought I Really Wanted To Go To Hell

By S.B.

First of all I thank you for writing back to me so fast. What started the conversation between me and the other brother in here was that I saw you in the warehouse one day dropping off some books and you looked familiar. I don't forget faces and I know at some point our paths have crossed. As we were talking this brother handed me a copy of one of the **Over-**

Overcomers for Christ

From the Inside

overcomers for Christ newsletters, and I was excited to read it.

I wasn't always a satanist, in fact I have been to Teen Challenge several times but never completing the program. In that time I did experience the Word and His Holy Spirit. Also my grandpa on my mother's side was a Pentecostal preacher and I went to church with them as a young boy. In 2003 I started playing with the devil, mostly in my mind. Then later I got acquainted with some more ways of satan and his legion. In this I noticed that a lot of people in this world don't really realize how REAL the spirit world is.

Anyways, I was hooked on Meth since I was 17 years old. I ended up becoming a junkie, an all round loser. The only thing that made me feel good was Meth, and satan. I had accepted him as my father, and the legion as my family. Also during this time I had a growing desire to be a 'biker' so badly, and it kept growing in me. I was being such a loser and a junkie that I couldn't even put one foot in front of the other. All I was doing was hanging around with tweaker's and becoming more and more delusional.

Long story short there were some things that took place with my family and I was in prison at the time. Getting out I found out and went off the deep end and ended up getting arrested. I remember being in the interview room with the police and I was so tired, wondering why I was still alive and what good am I to anyone. Not only that, but when I was being interviewed I told the police that "I was God", and I was satan. And today, I'm still not real happy with myself about all of that. I was so messed up that all I wanted to do at that point was to die.

I knew that I screwed up in many ways when I was out there. So when I came back to prison this time I knew I needed to change or I would end up dyeing. I so wanted to be a better person, son, brother and most importantly, a good dad. That's all I've wanted to be. Like my dad who I never met and was never there for me, I was turning out just like him. Although I had vowed to myself to make changes while I was in prison this time it never occurred to me that I needed to walk away from satan. In fact in this time my love for him seemed to grow. I even felt like my beliefs grew stronger, and myself indulgence was to better my life. Here in prison, except for twice, any stuff I've done concerning satan was in private, just like it was for me when I was out there. The only reason people here even knew I was a satanist is because a lot of my tattoos are satanic. So it was obvious. I wasn't being that way to scare people, I thought I really wanted to go to hell.

I also thought, I'd rather live in hell than be a slave. The Bible even says that not everyone is going to heaven. Besides, I figured that God didn't love me, and I didn't know how to stop being the way that I was for Him to love and accept me. I haven't liked myself for a very long time, if ever. Since I couldn't like myself, I surely have never loved myself. I don't think that I ever showed real love to other people either and certainly my actions haven't. The longer I've been in prison, and the longer I've been riding on the devil's highway the more lonely, sad and angry I have gotten. Those are the only feelings I've had for years now. I do know that Jesus has never let go of me though, because I was always in a spiritual battle.

One night, about a month ago, I was standing on the basketball court just looking at the sky and I felt the presence of God tell me I could come back to Him, and that it's okay to just be me. I always felt that I had to be perfect if I was going to be a Christian. I'm not perfect but felt God was telling me to stop trying to be something I'm not, that He loves me, that He was cool with me being the imperfect me and He would help me with those things.

So, I denounced satan, and asked Jesus to forgive me and the Holy Spirit to come back into my life! Since then I have went a couple of times to church here with this brother in Christ I spoke of earlier. I even asked my mom and stepdad, who are Christians, to send me a Bible. Of course they were more than willing as you can imagine.

I'll admit that I have been struggling with some guilt feelings because even though I did walk away from satan I felt loyalty to him, even though I know he never loved me, I felt I loved him and sometimes feel like I had abandoned him. I also feel guilty because I know that JESUS REALLY DOES LOVE ME and all the things I've said and done against God makes me feel unworthy. So that's where I'm at and I'm going to keep pressing on.

I want you to know, I really do believe that God wanted for me to see you that day in the warehouse when you dropped off those books for these prisons here. That's what really got me to thinking a lot, seeing you and trying to place where our paths had crossed.

we were delivered out of or the same crowd we ran with! Now that our lives have begun the change by Holy Spirit's guidance we shouldn't act like we are better than our old friends. But on the other hand, how are we going to have this new side of the fence look good to them if we keep going over there and playing those same old games? The longer we stay where God has placed us the better our lives will not only become, but as well will become more appealing to them.

As my new life began and I started seeing things from a much different perspective, I knew that I in a sense had to be selfish. In other words if I didn't protect this new understanding and grow in the knowledge of who God was, who I am in Him and what He wanted for me to be and do, how could I ever accomplish what He had set before me? The world might call this a selfish act, separating ourselves from the people we once ran with. But I'm here to tell you all, it has to be that way if we ever want to climb out of the mess we were in. We have to truly understand that there is no way we can help anyone else if we chose to swim in the same cesspool. We have to get our own feet planted on solid ground before we reach out and help pull someone else out.

Early on I heard a song by Tim McGraw and some of the lyrics were, "How bad do you really want it? Are you eating, sleeping, and dreaming with that one thought on your mind?" I wanted out of that old life so bad that these lyrics became a greater part of my days. That was how bad I didn't want those old ways AND how badly I did want to experience ALL that God had planned for my life. I had to change my old habits in order to reach the vision God had placed in my heart. By changing my focus my habits began to change. Slowly the people and the habits began to fade away. Some people will fade away out of respect for what you are now attempting to accomplish. Then others fall away because you are not the same, spending less and less time with you they begin to feel that you're not as fun anymore. As sad as that may sound to some of you, it proves to be a blessing in disguise. And besides, as long as we stay on the path with God somewhere down the road God may cause our lives to cross again and THEN we may be able to witness to them when their hearts are right and ready for the truth we have in us. **SO STAY ON YOUR SIDE OF THE FENCE!**

The old saying, 'Birds of a feather flock together' has so much truth in it. I can almost guarantee you, because I've tried it for myself, that you could go back to nearly every one of the places you used to frequent and guess what you will find? Many of the same people doing exactly the same things! Of course they will welcome you in, why? Another old saying with truth, "Misery loves company." Being children of God we are NOT suppose to blend in. Jesus now says, and warns us, *"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden."* (Matthew 5:13-14) Then **1 Peter 2:9** also tells us, **"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light."** Since God has called us to be the salt of the earth that would mean that hanging out in those old places with those old familiar people we **could** lose our saltiness and no longer be good for the things He has picked out for us. So don't allow the worlds definition of selfishness to draw you back in. And don't fall for the trap of 'false loneliness'. As an old pal of mine used to say, "We can't save them with or without a cape" and I've since learned, "It's Holy Spirit's job to touch and change their hearts and direction not ours." Remember what Paul told us in **Romans 10:16-17**, **"But not everyone welcomes the Good News, ... So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ."** Things never change around us until we begin to allow change within us! Or as the title of one of Joseph Prince's books that I've read states, Right Believing Leads to Right Living, not the other way around. It may seem like I've gotten off track but I haven't. Let's continue.

We ALL should be grateful and thankful that God still loves us EVEN in our ignorance, AMEN?! Not knowing what to do or who to turn to, I went to God in prayer about the newsletter. (Going to God should always be our first reaction, not people.) Working to print and send the newsletter to everyone each month was my main focus for every day. I fell on my knees in front of the couch and literally cried out to God the only way I understood at that time, in desperation. "God, it seems like someone would be willing to take a chance on us!" Sounds pitiful huh? This prayer was at a little over 14 months into the vision God gave us. See why I said that God loves us even in our ignorance? Come on now; don't look at me like that. I thought that 14 months was a long time and we should have proven our faithfulness to someone by then, right? There you all go again, looking at me like I'm the only weird one.

I'm confident that many of you too have experienced issues early on in your own walk where you have felt the same way! "Someone would be willing to take a chance on us" feeling, maybe with a spouse, your children or simply society at large. Fourteen months of living this new life with Christ as the center seems like a LONG time for people like we once were. How many times in the past had we made confession to God and our loved ones, "I've changed, I'll never go back to that lifestyle again"? I'm not saying that we didn't mean it at the time, but more times than not we weren't totally all in. We soon came to experience that it was only until we got out of 'that' jam and then we reverted right back to that same old vomit?

Let's look at these words here in **2 Peter 2:20-22** and then tell me that this was not us. **"If they have escaped the cor-**

ruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud."

Many of us have been set free from alcohol, drugs, food, anger, porn or whatever else was holding us hostage and thought that was the last of 'it'. Thinking that we are now in the clear we decide that 'I've got this God'. We don't keep up with the relationship we had with Him like we did while we were locked up. People, when you hit these streets 'time' truly seems to evaporate. We know we have to work to pay restitution, child support, rent, food and just general life's expenses. We are working harder, and with longer days time gets away from us. We come home, fall asleep and before we know it it's time to get up and start the same routine all over again. The weekend rolls around and some friends are meeting for something to eat and a couple drinks. You don't drink but you agree to come along for the food and conversation. "Come on" someone says, "It's just one drink, and besides you've been doing great and we're proud of you." Now you agree to have just one and then you have to get home. A few weeks have come and gone and the 'want' to fit in has kept you in the mix more than you planned? Maybe your heart's desire is for a good man or woman to spend your time with and settle down? You meet that person in the wrong place and next thing we know you're right back in the world more messed up than we ever were and wonder, "HOW DID I GET HERE?"

Now listen to how the **Message** translates Jesus saying about the "HOW DID I GET HERE". *"When a defiling evil spirit is expelled from someone, it drifts along through the desert looking for an oasis, some unsuspecting soul it can bedevil. When it doesn't find anyone, it says, 'I'll go back to my old haunt.' On return it finds the person spotlessly clean, but vacant. It then runs out and rounds up seven other spirits more evil than itself and they all move in, whooping it up. That person ends up far worse off than if he'd never gotten cleaned up in the first place. That's what this generation is like: You may think you have cleaned out the junk from your lives and gotten ready for God, but you weren't hospitable to My kingdom message, and now all the devils are moving back in."* (**Matthew 12:43-45**) Now again I ask us all to be honest, isn't this exactly what we all have done at some point or another? Jesus' words here explain exactly why we would find ourselves in deeper ruts than before, because we didn't fill ourselves with MORE of Him! Folks we cannot keep embracing sin and expecting God's blessings to continue flooding our lives. God loves you but He will NOT get involved with sin in our lives!

Even in those times of ignorance to His Word God knows our hearts desires. I'll admit, when God spoke softly to me that day there in front of our couch, "Why are you asking Me? Go ask the church.", and as I was wiping the slobber and tears from my face I felt sort of like ... well foolish. Why? Because His gentle but subtle words brought to my remembrance, "(I've) already supplied ALL of your needs according to My riches and glory through Christ Jesus. The provision is at the church." (**Philippians 4:19**) Had I not been tuning myself to listen intently, even with some ignorance, and following Holy Spirit's lead I would have missed this correction and redirection while I was down there in front of the couch. I got up from the slobbery mess I was kneeling in and called Living Word Bible Church for a meeting with Pastor Jason Anderson, my brother, my friend and someone God has placed in my life to disciple me. Remember this was the place God directed us to within the first couple of months of our 'church search', over 40 miles from home for a meeting with Pastor Jason Anderson, and yes we are related, through the greatest bloodline ever, the Blood of Jesus. It was while we were in the middle of our meeting that the presence of God FILLED the room. As he turned to look at me he asked, "Did you just feel that?" I was in tears as we looked at each other and I answered, "YES!" It was right then that Pastor Jason told me, "Living Word has had prison ministry on our hearts for some time now. We've had our eyes and hearts open for that someone that God has anointed for this particular ministry. If you are willing we would love to take the **Overcomers for Christ** on as a ministry of LWBC, under our umbrella of covering. Would you become the director of prison ministry for Living Word Bible Church?" I could barely believe it. I walked in to his office as a backyard, ragtag small group of people and NOW we are considered a ministry!?! That's what God had in mind when He sent us there! PRAISE JESUS! And here we are today, celebrating the 12th year anniversary of the **Overcomers for Christ** newsletter!

Even as I write this my eyes are attempting to leak. That experience is as real inside of me today as it was that day over 11 years ago. There are many of you that have been on this adventure with us from day one and can witness that 'obedience and timing' has caused us ALL to flourish and grow from what was once 35 people. In the first 14 months God grew us from 35 to 100 people. There were 100 brothers and sisters on the mailing list when we went to LWBC for help. Today God has grown us close to 900 people on the **Overcomers for Christ** mailing list today! Praise and Glory only to God! The **Overcomers for Christ** ministry has NEVER been about 'how many' there are on the mailing list. If there were 50, 35 or even 10 people on the mailing list I would be just as committed to God as I was when there were 1200. Our primary vision mission of "Sending hope, love and encouragement", I pray, is that of the one Jesus speaks about here in **Luke 15:3-7**, *"Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls*

his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

Brothers and sisters so many times we operate out of our feelings. Not all feelings can be trusted as truth. I encourage us all to test 'feelings' against the Word of God before we react. "Do these feelings line up with what God's Word says about me?" Feelings can turn into a runaway train and before we catch ourselves we've run off track and wake up in a field somewhere. We've got to stop giving in to feelings and allowing them to hijack our future! Believe me please, I'm learning these same things right along with every one of you. In these past 12 years I've had MANY different thoughts and feelings I never thought I would have once I came to live for Jesus. I've asked God, "How long am I going to be doing this? I sure hope this is You leading 'us' 75 miles one way to start a new church in Florence, Arizona! Sometimes I just want to quit God." These are feelings that have run through my head. But in a second, I remember where I was and see today where God has brought my whole family too and I refuse to allow those feelings anymore time in my head! The few times I have felt that way I grin real big and tell satan, "There must be something really big about to jump off here in the near future or you wouldn't be trying so hard to get me to quit! Let me remind you of Who's I am and I know my identity and in Him I can't fail IF I don't give up! So beat it! In the name of Jesus!" Even with our eyes fixed on Jesus, none of us are prone to the liar's temptations, NONE OF US! Let me encourage you all with this. The saying, "Rome wasn't built in a day" means exactly that. None of this just happens overnight, it has happened over TIME. And when I look at what God has done and continues to do through each and every one of us it excites me! Things that I considered tough back in the beginning now seem a lot easier to walk through. I'm in no way saying I believe I've mastered this adventure, but it is easier, today, to discern God's voice and direction.

Okay I'll close with this. In **Deuteronomy 11:24** God promised Moses that He would give him every place he set the sole of his foot. After Moses had died God came to Joshua, in **Joshua 1:3**, and extended the same promise to him. **"I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses."** Now, you wonder why this Scripture excites me? It's because Joshua is a picture of Jesus and as children of God and joint heirs with Christ Jesus these same promises made available to them are NOW ours as well! In spite of what we do God has brought us all a very long way and He will NOT drop us on our proverbial butts now. Just think for a second about the many things God has brought you out of. And every time you find yourself standing in front of and about to embark into new territory remember His promise to you, "Every place where you set your foot, I WILL give you that territory" and step forward! As our brother 'Foot' says, We love you ALL, short and tall! ;) Remember, following Jesus is not always easy BUT IT IS ALWAYS WORTH THE EFFORT!!

Praise Reports

Hello **Overcomers for Christ**. First and foremost, thank you all for your support to stay in the Word and the newsletters. God bless you all. This is J.G. from down here at the Maricopa County 4th Avenue jail. I am extremely thankful for Brother Wade that takes the time to come down and visit with us here. It's nice to know that even in our solitary confinement we are not forgotten about by all in the outside world. I am still fairly new to the teachings of the Bible and new to the love of God our Father. But I have found it to be very true that there is a God who loves me, you and ALL that will take the time to get to know Him. After 34 years of living wild and without a care I have finally asked God for His forgiveness for all of my wrong doing. I now feel content with, if I die tomorrow I will be saved and go to heaven. I will be on my journey to DOC and I just wanted to write a quick letter to let you all know my new commitment and to thank you and encourage you to keep up the great work. God loves you all and all that you do ... **J.G**

I have a praise report ... I finally got a copy of my degree. Graduation ceremonies were on May 10th, but I didn't bother asking DOC to drive me out to Louisiana ... hahaha!!! My mom got my legit copy sent to her, I guess it's in a leather case. Another praise report is that my buddy C does not have cancer. Yet another praise report is that I got my esophagus dilated and I can eat bread again. I actually had a sandwich the other day, it was the first in a long time. Thank you Jesus! Choking on food is miserable. It's something that I will not take for granted again. I guess when they scoped me they didn't find any polyps or cancer in there either, so that's really awesome ... **B.M.**

Dear beloved family in Christ, I'm so very grateful for the inspirational (**Romans 8:28**) birthday card. I usually start my letters to all of you with the following salutation "Dear beloved associates in Christ", but with all of your names and gregarious greetings, you truly feel like family. Due to several relocations, I just received it yesterday. It couldn't have arrived at a better time. A C/O here confiscated my only pair of shorts. Naturally, this prison is in the desert and it gets extremely hot. The devil is always trying to steal my joy, via his henchmen. Going out on the yard was more than that old serpent of old could tolerate. Needless to say, I'm very distraught over losing the best shorts I ever owned. Nevertheless, your card brought joy. Hey, at least I'm on the devil's radar, so I must be considered a threat. Praise the Lord! You all forever will be in my prayers and dear to my heart ... **H.M.**

What Others Are Saying...

"Dear Overcomers for Christ, hey OC4C, thanks for corresponding back, very much appreciated. Thanks, family for staying in contact, I thought I was forgotten about. Well, time has passed and time is coming to a close, in Jesus Christ's name. Amen. My release date is in 2020, only 11 months away. I'm so happy and preparing for my release. I'm getting into this program called "The Second Chance" here at Manzanita. It's a good program which helps with uniting me with my family. I'm so happy. OC4C, thanks for keeping me in your thoughts, prayers and heart, and not forgetting me as one of the church members and your friend. Thanks for everything, very much appreciated, God bless each of you at OC4C and take care." - M.A.

"The other night after a long day I got down on my knees to pray and thank God for my day and after I was done, as God is my witness, I turned the light out and laid down when not even 5 minutes goes by and a letter comes from under my cell door. It was from you. I smiled so hard my celli says, 'Man you haven't even read what she has to say.' I laughed out loud and told him it was God speaking to me. He just looked at me." - R.W.

"Hello brothers and sisters in Christ, I wish you all blessings from God Almighty. You are all a blessing to me and my Mexican-American community. Thanks very much for publishing my prayer in your wonderful newsletter. And it was published just before an important mid-term election! I often pray that my community stops supporting and voting for ungodly politicians. I been praying, interceding and fasting for my community in Jesus name, there's going to be a revival! Thank you brothers and sisters, I am very grateful for publishing my text in your newsletter. May the God of Israel bless everything you do for the Lord of Lords and King of Kings ... Shalom!" - A.J.

"I was reading a lot of testimonies in your newsletter with Santa riding a motor bike on the front cover. Your newsletter is very interesting, I love Jesus, even though I've been singing "Jesus loves me yes I know, for the Bible tells me so." I want to be put on your mailing list if you are willing, if God is willing. Jesus loves you, your ministry, family, and I do too, hallelujah. Love you all with all my heart. I do a lot of artwork, a lot of beautiful pictures. I liked that picture of Santa on the motorcycle." - B.T.

What is the biblical meaning of the number 12?



The number 12 features prominently in the Bible. The Old Testament Book of Genesis states there were 12 sons of Jacob and those 12 sons formed the 12 tribes of Israel. The New Testament tells us that Jesus had 12 apostles. According to the Book of Revelation, the kingdom of God has 12 gates guarded by 12 angels. The number 12 is displayed in many other contexts, such as the 12 months of the year and the 12 constellations of the zodiac.

The number 12 is a symbol of faith.

Quote Worthy

"You cannot honor your family without nurturing your own sense of personal value and honor."
- Stephen Covey (1932 - 2012) an American educator, author, businessman, and keynote speaker.

Living Word Bible Church Locations

Mesa - 3520 E. Brown Rd. Mesa, AZ 85213 Ahwatukee - 14647 S. 50th St. #165 Phoenix, AZ 85044
Scottsdale - 8551 E. Anderson Dr. #105 Scottsdale, AZ 85255 Gilbert - 202 S. Gilbert Rd. Gilbert, AZ 85296
Florence - Florence High School 1000 S. Main St. Florence, AZ 85132

Ministry Tithes & Offerings

Here 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

Your giving does qualify as a charitable contribution on your taxes. For donations of less than \$250, your cancelled check is sufficient proof for taxes. For donations of \$250 or more, you will receive a contribution statement from the organization. If you have any questions, please call or write Wade Anderson.

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Thank You God, For Overcomers for Christ
By A.W.

*First, I would like to give all honor and glory to our Father God Who gave us life,
And to His Son Jesus, through Whom everything was created and made for our Salvation and
light.*

*Second, I would like to pray and ask God to help all the volunteers at Overcomers for Christ,
For taking their time with the newsletter and helping those who made the wrong turn, turn
right.*

*Time is the most precious and valuable thing anyone human can give,
Most believe that our time is ours alone to use however we wish while we live.
It's also true that God gave us all, "free will", although some know, with life there's a price to pay,
Those at Overcomers for Christ seem to understand what Christ did on Calvary that day.*

*It was Christ's sacrifice that lets us live, It was Christ Who paid our debt,
We are the sinners, NOT Christ, we owe our life and time to Him for a 'Promise' kept.
This life on earth is short, let's invest in heaven which is forever and eternal,
Let's not make things too complicated, believing in Christ like the Bible says, it's just that simple.*

*If God gave His Son for us, just believe, have faith, be patient, pray and live
Also, share, care, love, and give your time to others, for me, that's what Overcomers for Christ
did!*

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

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