



Urban Christian Outreach (Ottawa)

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Update #72

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Dear Friends of Jesus,

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

I awoke early this morning, called to pray for a young woman, lost, addicted to drugs, homeless and pregnant. I cried out to God, fearing that she too might die without knowing Jesus, remembering a UCO friend who was murdered in downtown Ottawa awhile back. Their stories are sadly similar. I prayed for God's protection over her, and asked him to make a way for her.

“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?”

Romans 10:14

Sometimes, circumstances seem so dire, the only thing we can do is to pray – and this is always the best thing! We pray that God would give the lost, 'ears to hear', and 'a heart to receive'. It is so heart-wrenching to see someone's potential in Christ, and to watch our words fall upon seemingly deaf ears. We pray that God will impress his love upon their hearts. We have witnessed amazing things happen while we are in prayer. Lives can be transformed during a time of prayer, as we experience the power of the Holy Spirit. When it seems that there is no solution, we are reminded that Jesus is the solution.

Rob, (not his real name) struggles with the disease of schizophrenia. In addition, he has a personality disorder that causes him to enter into fight after after. Chronically incarcerated, he calls upon us to visit him in prison. When released, we help him in his time of need.

Unable to stay in shelters due to relationship problems, Rob sleeps outside, even in the winter; we help with sleeping bags, warm blankets and fellowship. Rob is open to prayer, and so we persevere, praying with him and for him, trusting that our Lord is at work. When Rob call us, we know that in his heart he is really calling upon Jesus; he just doesn't know this yet.

There was a time in my life when out of fear, I wouldn't have stepped foot in a jail. Only by God's grace, and by your support, am I able to go there. As a wise person once told me, 'God does not call the equipped; he equips the called.

"I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Matthew 25:36



We are called to “share the Gospel”, “heal the sick”, and to “set the captives free”: healing and deliverance. They go hand in hand. In our Lord's prayer, as Jesus has taught us, we pray, “Give us this day our daily bread, and deliver us from the evil one.” Jesus said, “I am the bread of life”, and so while we ask for our daily provision of food, we can also ask the Father for Jesus, 'give us Jesus this day: Jesus, our daily bread', for we need him. Without him, we can do nothing; with him, “all things are possible.” ***I can do all things through him who strengthens me.***

Philippians 4:13

We are blessed, by grace, to be able to go where God leads us. Each day is an adventure, and we are frequently in awe of the power of the Holy Spirit to impact lives. Sarah, (not her real name) has just begun to study the Bible with us. I met her in a downtown coffee shop, and she appeared to be at peace. However, the Holy Spirit revealed otherwise. Sarah was in great distress. As she began to talk, she revealed a lifetime of abuse and rejection, which lead her into prostitution and drugs. We read a brief passage of Scripture, about Mary Magdalene, and about God's forgiveness and love for the lost. We read and talked about God's promises to her. We have just begun this relationship, but already Sarah is being encouraged. She has heard that Jesus loves her no matter what, that he was born on Christmas Day for her, and that he died so that she might live.

What a joy and a privilege it is to shine Christ's light on those who need him so desperately, and to share the hope that we have found in him. With so much hope ourselves, how could we possibly keep this to ourselves? It is the very nature of Christ to share, and while we are poor in terms of finances, we are rich beyond all measure in terms of faith, by God's grace.

Urban Christian Outreach – Jesus, you and I – together, are a community, called to share God's love with all those rejected by society. It is a brave and wonderful mission, and God gives us the courage to go. I say 'brave', not because we sometimes deal with weapons, violence, anger, evil, and confrontation, which we do, but because we are often faced with rejection. Is it not the fear of rejection that often keeps us from sharing the Gospel with family and friends? And does God not continue to call us to be set apart, to live out the Gospel message, to face our fears, and in turn be delivered from them?

Equipped with the full armour of God, we go with God's protection, and with the knowledge that you 'have our backs' in prayer; you stand firmly behind us. Through your kind and generous financial support, you enable us and encourage us, and through your life-giving notes and messages, you lift us up. Thank you!

As we celebrate the most beautiful gift ever given to us: Jesus, we give thanks for you, dear friends in Christ. In our sweet hour of prayer, may God put upon our hearts how we might respond to the beautiful gift of his Son, Jesus. Remembering our Baptismal vows, and the dying of ourselves to become Christ's own, we take on the form of Christ, including his experience of rejection and sacrifice. By grace, we pray that we may continue to reflect Jesus to the lost.

I recently came across a CD which poignantly expresses the pain of poverty, addiction and life on the streets. I have printed the lyrics to one of the tracks on the last page.

On behalf of all of us at UCO, thank you for your love for the poor. May our Lord bless you and your loved ones with a joyful, peaceful Christmas, and a healthy, prosperous New Year.

In Christ,
Jill

<u>UCO's Quarterly Update:</u>	
2015 Year to Date:	
Actual Income:	\$26,382.06
Actual Expenses:	\$33,776.85
Deficit:	\$ 7,394.79
<i>'Give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.'</i>	

WALKING THE STREETS

A song, co-written by Tara Coon and Jen Genereux. Titled by Leanne Duff.

I've been walking the streets, trying to find a place to sleep tonight.

I'm cold, I'm lonely and I'm high
I learned early about the dark side of the streets.

People stare as they walk by. I just wish they would see me. Someone answer me.

(Chorus)

Am I worth it? Do I matter? What's my purpose?

Does God know who I am?

Will I always feel alone? Will I ever have a home?

And would the world even miss me if I was gone? Someone answer me.

I've been mistreated and abused,
And done things you wouldn't even wanna know.

Rejected by my family. Is there somewhere I belong?

I've been in and out of jail.

Sometimes it's the safest place to be.

I miss my kids. I just hope they'll remember me. Someone answer me.

I don't care but I do. I'm tough but I'm weak. I'm happy here but I'm desperate to be free.

I can feel the downward pull and I don't wanna know all that I've lost. I want to change, but I don't know where to start. Someone answer me.

I met the One who created me. I met the Father that I never had.

I met the One who says He has great plans for me.

I met my Saviour and my friend, the One who gave His life for me. He told me it was time I knew the truth. He answered me.

(Chorus 2)

I am worth it. Yeh, I matter. I have a purpose and God knows who I am. I will never be alone. In Him I always have a home.

And the world would miss me if I was gone.

He answered me. He answered me. Jesus answered me.

