

Overcomers Outreach

*“Bridging the Gap Between 12 Step Recovery and Churches”
June 2009 Newsletter*



Visitors at the Open House

From the Director ...

Summer is here and as we look forward to vacations and activities, let's remember to thank God for the freedom we have through Jesus Christ. New meetings have started in Pennsylvania, Texas, and California since our last newsletter, as well as in Austria and New Zealand – Welcome all!

Our campout is coming up and is filling up fast. Overcomers will be at the Freedom Festival (a recovery musical event) this month, camping in Los Osos, CA next month, and present at a city-wide conference in Tulsa, OK in August. These opportunities to carry our message continue to come up, and the word is spreading. The greatest blessing is to share our lives with others, one on one. This is where we grow, as the Gospel is advanced, and I ask each of you to reach out in love for others, so that we may be of comfort to them as we have been comforted. Here's the latest.

**A New Way Out
Conference**

**Mail from Around
the World**

Upcoming Events

New Literature

HIM Advances

New Way Out Conference

May 15-16th, a conference was held at Mariner's Church in Newport Beach, CA, and Overcomers was well represented. The conference theme was “A New Way Out – Christians are not alone in the arena of Recovery”. Indeed, this was made apparent by the attendance of the several “methods” of faith based recovery programs. The conference was hosted by Dick B., noted AA historian and author.



Jeff, Dick B., and Pauline at the conference

The primary focus of the conference was on the historical roots of the AA Twelve Steps in the Bible. Before there was a “Big Book” there was the “Biggest Book”, and the Holy Bible is what the founders of AA used to draft the steps, to recover and to help others. Yet the Bible is not “approved” AA literature, though it certainly is not “prohibited” either. AA and other 12 step groups are viewed as “non-Christian” and all too often shunned by the church community, even though the 12 steps of recovery are based on Biblical teaching.

Other presenters included “The Church Approach”, “The Treatment Approach”, Alcoholics Victorious, Urban Ministry, Christ Centered Recovery Fellowship Programs, Twelve Step Christian Recovery and, of course, Overcomers Outreach as “The Bridge Group”. Overall acknowledgement of the bridge concept was very good. Our

primary purpose, to serve as a bridge, was presented as a logical and viable avenue of sharing the Gospel.

Overcomers in attendance included members of the Board of Directors as well as local and out of state group members, and a display of our literature and meeting schedules was available. Thanks to all who helped represent us.

OO Open House

On June 7th we opened the office to interested locals and we were blessed with a good turnout. Visitors were given a tour of the office and many were introduced to what we do here and how we do it. Attendees were from the recovery community as well as the church community.

Demonstrations of the website were given and received a lot of praise. Revised and new literature was displayed. Many people were surprised to discover the depth and scope of our ministry as well as how many meetings we have around the world.

Group leaders in attendance were introduced to some of the recent updates made to the HIM program and our newest publications. The cover to the new edition of “A Bridge to Recovery” was introduced and well received.

Overall, the event went well, as we made some new contacts and generated new interest in the current direction of Overcomers Outreach.



More visitors

The Mailbox ...

Australia Writes:

I am interested in either attending a meeting or opening one in Melbourne can you please advise if one is available nearby? and/or contact details of fellow Aussies.

I am a recovering Alcoholic - 6 years sober and a Christian 2 years who stopped going to AA in January this year after my 6th AA birthday who has felt confused, abandoned and misunderstood by the church who knows of at least 10 in my church and 100's in my AA groups who would benefit from this program.

Canada Writes:

Great to get the newsletter. I'm still in the process of planning to begin an OO group here in Saskatoon. I still attend my regular AA 12 Steps group as has been the case for the last 35 years. My move has been to Saskatchewan from Manitoba has been fraught with many difficulties and obstacles which I am waiting on the Lord to move or right, including worthwhile employment, having been caught in a layoff spinning off of the current recession, at least in part.

Hope we can stay in touch from time to time.

Austria Writes:

Thank you so much for your answer. I would really appreciate your support and I will keep you informed as soon as I have the material and how everything is going.

Germany Writes:

There are some encouraging and comforting words enclosed someone may need today... as days grow longer and warmer and brighter our world is looking somehow better (on the surface) and Uta and me hope and pray that you are well and trustful in the Lord...so try we to do.

At Pentecost we had with our small church an open air meeting.

Greetings and blessings to you!

Birmingham, AL Writes:

We have started a meeting here in Birmingham, Alabama. What is the next step we need to take as far as selecting or electing officers? Also can we get OO books such as Bridging the Gap to have book studies with until we can get financially stable to buy them? The meetings are in high demand here in Birmingham. Also we would like to see can you help us to visit another meeting place to see how the format is done properly.

San Jose, CA Writes:

My husband and I lead an OO group in San Jose Calif. We were very honored when we were asked by our Pastors to take over. Anyway the reason I am sending you this e-mail is to ask if you and others would pray for this ministry to grow for God's glory. See, some people are very unsure about attending, well you know how it could sometimes be when you are at your home church. Do you have any suggestions? We are letting people know it's not just for drugs and alcohol, but sharing any life controlling addictions.

Lexington, OK Writes:

My husband and I have a meeting in Lexington, OK. We had one in Norman, but no one would come. After we closed, the Lord called my husband to Lexington, and because of his faithfulness we have grown. We started out with 4 and are now 8. Praise God!!

However, we are all women except for my husband. Most are codependents along with alcohol and one gambler, but we aren't seeing any men who are alcoholics. My husband has been so faithful in this ministry. He has 27 years sobriety and years of experience with AA and other Christian 12 Step groups. He comes to the meetings every week with 7 women and shares his experience, strength and hope. Please pray for the Lord to bring men into our group. I know they're out there and my husband has so much to give them. I would

appreciate it if you would faithfully pray for our meeting.



New Literature

We are currently revising, updating, and translating and our information pamphlets and booklets as well as adding new ones. As existing stock runs low, it is being replaced with updated material. The introduction pamphlet has been redesigned and is being translated into Spanish. The translation efforts are being headed by Jesse and Josie, members of our newest group in the Phoenix, AZ area. Their spirit of service is deeply appreciated and a true blessing to us all.

Meanwhile, Ralph M., from Elizabeth, NJ, drew up and sent in a wonderful new pamphlet addressing heroin use, a project long overdue. His work is at the printer at the time of this writing and will be available to all very soon.

Jim R., from Peckville, PA, is offering a booklet for helping parents secure the home from prescription drugs with local OO contact information. This exemplifies OO "in action" – his group sees a need for education for parents of teens, as prescription drug abuse is now second only to marijuana use among teenagers nationwide. This is an important and effective outreach to the community.

Also under revision are the gambling pamphlet and the HIM guide. We have finished a "Group Traditions" study guide which explains the OO traditions and the personal application of the principles behind them. A pamphlet for methamphetamine addiction is also under construction

It is truly encouraging to see individual Overcomers as well as

groups “stepping up to the plate” and giving of their precious time to help others.

By the way, the 3rd edition of “*Overcomers Outreach – A Bridge to Recovery*” is at the publishers! It will be available late this fall and pre-sales orders will be starting soon.

Where 2 or More Gather

During the years of ministering in Overcomers Outreach, my husband Bob and I had the privilege of being invited to appear on “Focus on the Family” a couple of times. The last time we were interviewed was during Dec. of 1999 and it was aired in the spring of 2000. During the show we pointed out to Dr. Dobson that there was a thriving Overcomers group meeting in existence right there on their campus in Colorado! He was amazed!

During the lunch hour that very day, I was invited to lead that particular OO meeting, held in a room adjacent to the cafeteria. It is always an honor to lead a meeting, and incidentally, it never, ever gets old. But this particular meeting was a mind-blower!

It had been snowing all that day, so only about 7-8 people braved the elements and made it to the noontime meeting. One of Focus on the Family’s staff members had invited a newcomer to attend this particular meeting, so he came and brought his father with him. I asked this young man if he would like to share. We all sat riveted to our seats as he described his drug and alcohol addiction—the wretched toll it had taken on his life, his horrific struggles to stay sober. The good news was that he had just been a patient in a Christian treatment facility and he was discovering HOPE for the very first time! His story was very moving, but what kept us reaching for the Kleenex box were the huge sobs erupting from the next seat. His father was finally finding hope as well! The young man had been through the fiery furnace with his addiction, but so had his dad! That’s why the whole

family can benefit by attending an OO group! The family that gets sick together can get well together!

Besides linking the 12 Steps with their Biblical roots, perhaps one of the most important ingredients in an Overcomers meeting is that of anonymity. The young man in Colorado found it to be a safe place to share. But our “higher power” doesn’t remain anonymous—He’s called by His full name, Jesus Christ! Whenever an Overcomers group meets, whether it is two people or twenty people, He is present in a very powerful way. “Where two or three have gathered together in My Name, there I am in their midst!” (Matt. 18:20) *Pauline B.*

HIM Advances

With the revision and expansion of our HIM Ministries Guidebooks, we hope to encourage and equip those willing to “carry the message” to jails, treatment centers and rescue missions, or anywhere people are unable to attend other meetings. The new Leader’s Guide has formats, readings, and guidelines to establish and conduct meetings and panels in various institutions. HIM Step Study Guides are also available. These have a meeting format, readings, and steps with study scriptures for passing out to clients or inmates. We ask, if ordered online, a \$5 donation for the Leaders guide and \$2 donation for the step guides, but we want to get them in use, so call the Central Office to let us know what you need to get into this most rewarding and vital field. We also have some NT Bibles available for the cost of postage.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Matt. 25:35-36

News from the Office ...

Interest in Overcomers groups continues to grow, and even more new groups have started all over the world, as evidenced by our “Mailbox” article. In addition to the Freedom Festival (June 28th) and the campout (July 17-19th), we will be attending a city-wide, faith-based conference on Methamphetamine abuse in Tulsa, OK (August 7-8th).

In between events, we hope to update our national meeting directory. If you get a chance, please visit our website and click on “groups”, then check the information for your listing. If there are any changes needed, please drop us an e-mail (you can do that right from the website under “contact us”). We are also going to be approaching groups to consider forming districts, or at least getting local meeting schedules put together.

Maybe yours and a neighboring group can have a bowling night, movie night, or just get together to break bread. We would be happy to post your event on the website, just email it in a few days in advance.

Inquiries continue from all over as to how to start a group. Look for the new “Quick Links” feature on the upper left corner of the website, where a few handy “shortcuts” are now available, including a “what’s new” link for the latest changes and updates.

Please consider visiting us at www.overcomersoutreach.org to see all the new features, including our online meeting.



“The Office”

Unity ...

More and more, groups are starting to work together, and members are contributing to our efforts to carry the message of freedom in Christ. *“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”* (1 Cor. 12:4-7)
Welcoming newcomers, gathering together in fellowship and sharing our experience and hope with others serves the “common good”. Ask for the Spirit to lead you and you will accomplish all that God calls you to do. Working together toward a common goal is what is meant by unity, and we learn to practice this in church, at meetings, at home and at work. Our newest publication “Group Traditions – A Study Guide” is a discussion of the OO Traditions and the booklet is available online. Now let’s pray

Father God, we come in thanks for all you have done for us, our families, our neighbors, and we ask for guidance and direction to serve Your good purpose. We seek to use the gifts You have given us to help one another in service to Your Glory. May others be blessed with the unity with Your Son that you have given us. In Jesus’ precious name we pray for this, Amen.

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

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

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

God Bless

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