

Newsletter - July 2013

Christian Praise for Alcoholics Anonymous

Every once in a while I will encounter a Christian leader who raises his eyebrows whenever I mention Alcoholics Anonymous. That leader will then dismiss the 12 Steps because of the dependence on some vague "higher power", rather than relying on the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

My experience also brings me into frequent contact with Christians who have come to know Jesus Christ as a direct result of their involvement with AA. The conversation usually goes something like this:

- 1) "Hey Chris, you probably don't know this about me, however ..." (and then they tell me about their recovery from alcoholism in AA.)
- 2) Next they relate that: "As I found healing from alcoholism, I really began to wonder more about this 'Higher Power', and it was then that I found Jesus Christ!"

In John chapter 9, we also see an example of a man who was healed by Jesus. Here we see a man blind from birth. Although this man was healed by Jesus, and then obeyed Jesus' instructions, we see in verse 36 that he did not know who Jesus was. Only after the man was healed did Jesus find him again and, only then, did he become a follower of Jesus.

Alcoholics Anonymous is filled with countless stories of people who have been healed from alcoholism by a "higher power" and, only after the healing, did they realize that this "higher power" is the Lord Jesus Christ and choose to become one of His disciples. This process has been repeated millions of times with the result that AA has arguably become one of the most successful agents for evangelism.

This is the reason that we use the copyrighted 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (with permission) as the foundation for our recovery ministry.

Chris B.
President
Overcomers Outreach Canada Inc.



Testimony from David

I was a slave to my sin for 27 years. Today, through the restorative power of Jesus Christ, I have been set free. Sexual addiction ruled, and almost destroyed, my life. Lust, fantasy, pornography and masturbation led me deeper into delusion and insanity. It affected my work on a daily basis and this prevented me from advancing in my career. My addiction stole love from my family; my selfishness robbed them of time, intimacy and trust.

A letter in the mail exposed my secret of how sick I had become. I had betrayed the ones who trusted and relied on me to be a man of integrity. I had traded it all for a lie; a self-deluding fabrication of deceit. My entire life was instantly on the brink of collapse. Little choices compounded to have catastrophic consequences.

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My pastor escorted me from my home; he didn't know what to do with me. He let me use a phone and I called for help. I had carried a business card from Ken S in my coat pocket for two and a half years. I had talked to him and Chris B at Promise Keepers on more than one occasion and had even gone to an Overcomers orientation earlier in the year. My stubborn pride, fear of exposure and commitment to my sin had kept me frozen. I called Ken and he passed me on to Chris, who connected me with a professional counselor. He also found a sponsor who would support me and on whom I could call every day. This was the beginning of hope.

I started weekly phone counseling sessions and traveled to some of the Overcomers meetings. It was at those meetings that I first felt I could be real, and honest. The people there could relate and showed genuine care and compassion. They also lived in freedom and victory.

I lived in my truck for weeks and slept in empty parking lots and on country roads. I was alone with nothing but my sin and shame. Fear and guilt ate at me from the inside. Maybe I was finally low enough to admit I could not do it by myself so I called out to God and He provided, beyond belief, everything I needed. When I asked in humility, He provided a basement room in the home of a caring Christian family. He led me to a wise professional counselor and a support network of brothers in recovery. My employer and coworkers treated me with concern and understanding. God led me to another local pastor, who was better equipped to stand beside me and lead me in submission to Christ. My wife and I started rebuilding our relationship and I was allowed to see my children. After two months of recovery, my wife and I went together for a 3-day intensive therapy session with Dr. Douglas Weiss at Heart to Heart Counselling in Colorado Springs. It was a breathtaking mountaintop experience and the turning point in restoring our relationship. Now I am at home with my family again, learning and growing in love. I have maintained contact with Overcomers on a one-on-one basis, as well as phoning in to the group meetings when possible. I am also pursuing other local support and recovery options.

My life would be so much different today if I had obeyed God when He provided a way out years ago. His plan and His purpose are greater than my weakness. What Satan would design for destruction, God will redeem for His purpose. Jesus Christ is LORD. His shed blood, death and resurrection have secured my salvation and my healing from addiction. Every day is a new day and God is not done with me. Obedience isn't just a one-time thing, it has to continue every moment of every day.

"...For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." *Jeremiah 29:11(NLT)*

Treasurer's Note

As we look back to the year just past, we are thankful for the response we have had with new groups started or about to start across Canada. As we look ahead, we are asking ourselves how we can continue to grow and to support all of the Overcomers ministries in their various locations.

Overcomers Outreach is a faith ministry – we move ahead in faith, trusting that God will bring in what is needed. Will you be a part of what God is doing, supporting us with prayer and financial support? In particular, we are looking for regular monthly support for Ken Sundelin so that he can continue ministering on a full-time basis. We are also in need of funds for travel expenses and for general operating expenses.

Donations to Overcomers Outreach Canada can be made by cheque or online through [Paypal](#) – just click on the Donate link on our website. Please add a note to designate the area of ministry you wish to support, and provide us with a mailing address for receipting purposes

Thank you standing with us. May God bless you.

Leo Jansens

Testimony from D'Arcy

Our apologies to D'Arcy that part of his testimony was missed in the April Newsletter – so now – here's the whole story.

My story is probably a lot like yours. My mother and father were Christians, I was brought up in the Lutheran tradition and I had a relationship with God from the time I was a small child. But for me, my curiosity about girls peaked at a young age. It started with a Sports Illustrated Swimsuit issue and soon became an obsession with finding hidden Playboy magazines on the lower shelf at a local bookstore.

I was really living in two worlds: my faith in God and my worship of the god of this world. As I grew up, my curiosity became an addiction and a daily habit.

The turning point for me was a perfect storm of unrelated events. In 2000, I graduated from Queens University in Education. About three weeks before my final exams my stepfather called and said my mother was missing. We never found her and assumed she committed suicide, as her car was found near Niagara Falls and her identification was found in the car. A few weeks later my fiancé told me she was leaving me for another guy. Later that fall, my student loan payments started to come due, and because of an old traffic ticket, my driver's license was suspended. These events forced me to shut down my fledgling business and claim personal bankruptcy. The following year my grandmother passed away. What should have been one of the happiest years of my life turned into a complete nightmare and I was on my own, really on my own, to figure it out.

I turned to an old Friend, Whom I hadn't been really honest with in awhile. The deal was, "show me a way, Lord, and I will make a commitment to follow Your way and abandon my way".

That was a turning point.

To make a long story short, the following year I met my wife Michelle through a chance meeting, which I believe, was divine. We have been married for ten years this fall and have two beautiful children, a thriving business and investments in real estate. Our spiritual journey has been a steady walk with God and we have been part of the Southridge Church community since 2004. Our life team has been together since 2006. It's been a real blessing to be a part of this church and to be participants and eyewitnesses to the growth and transformation of the community.

God has truly blessed me in every way since I made the commitment to follow Him and engage my life for His kingdom. However, there was still one more stronghold in my life that I needed to surrender fully to God. I knew in my heart that He was calling me to deal with my lust and pornography problem. In 2010 I realized that I had a choice. I was at a fork in the road and this choice had the potential to ruin me again or allow me to continue down the path I had been on since 2000. I knew that the only way to overcome my addiction to porn was to engage this battle head on, allow God to do His work in me, and then to help others, with the same issue, towards a journey to freedom. I decided to listen to God's whisper and seek a program that would help me, and other Christian fellows, to be honest with each other and trust God.

The truth will set you free.

I stumbled upon a group called Overcomers Outreach at a Promise Keeper's Conference in 2010. This was the opportunity I was looking for. In 2011, I started a group here at Southridge on Saturday mornings, and for the first few mornings, it was just God and me. It was pretty funny at first when Michelle would ask me how many guys were there, and it was just the two of us. Since then, God has never missed a Saturday meeting!

All the best

D'Arcy

darcy@overcomersoutreach.ca

Report from Ken

I hope this newsletter will be a encouragement to all who read it. God has been doing great things in Overcomers these past months, and we thank Him for that. Three new members have been added to the membership of OO Canada and we look forward to their input. Also, we have some new groups going in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta as well as some in the works in BC. As the ministry continues to grow, we face new challenges:

- 1) how do we keep on encouraging our group leaders and what can we do to help them grow their groups, so more people can be set free in Jesus?
- 2) the need to raise more funding for added travel expenses, and to cover our needs for salary costs as we are looking at adding a part time worker in the future.

These are some of my concerns, but as we read the testimonies in this letter, we all should be thanking God for His healing power and the ministry of Overcomers. Let us all remember that every day is an opportunity to hold out our hand with love to the next hurting person, to show and tell them there is a way out of their pain. The way is Jesus, and in Him we can find forgiveness, hope, joy and the power to overcome all our struggles. Let us all make Galatians 6:2 one of our motives in life: "Carry each others burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (NIV)

In Christ

Ken S.
Executive Coordinator
Overcomers Outreach Canada Inc.

To see a price list of the Overcomers Outreach resources, please go to Resources on our Canadian website or contact resources@overcomersoutreach.ca.

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