CHRISTIANS IN RECOVERY

Good News Letter

If you want to backslide, that's your business. If you want to stop, that's our business!

PRIDE

by Michael Premo

After my 4th inpatient treatment center an older lady came up to me in church that knew about my unstable background and this is all she said "You gonna make it this time?"

Her words were not encouraging. I felt that she was judging me. I did not answer her question. I did not know if I was gonna "make it this time."

Seventeen years have passed since that cranky old lady spoke those words. Recently that old lady attended our weekly CIR Friday night meeting. She embraced me. Tears of joy were in her eyes as she restored my faith in judgmental old ladies.

Have "I made it?" NO! It is not a sprint of 17 years that you or I run. It's a long distance race that we run. Our race will not be finished until we breathe our last breath.

Could I or you, after having a long track record of "success," still make a shipwreck of our life? Yes! Definitely yes! By the way to shipwreck your life does not always mean you become a derelict or go to prison, it could mean you just quit being a good and faithful Christian. You could be wealthy with a shipwrecked life. You lose your motivation and just quit running your race. You al-

low the cares of this world to distract your divine purpose. Pride wants more. Pride refuses to accept God's plan. Pride is the opposite of Jesus.

Could a respected pastor fall? How about a faithful deacon's wife? How many "on fire" Christians no longer attend church because their pride made them casualties of spiritual warfare.

Humility and a healthy fear of God will preserve us.

Recovery for a Christian is not just about alcohol and drugs. It's mostly about humility and contentment with what God is doing in our life. We have a serious pride issue if we are not continually giving thanks.

Backsliding, relapse, and all sin has a foundation of pride.

Pride is what got Lucifer, an arch angel kicked out of Heaven. His sin changed his name to Satan, Beelzebub, "king of flies."

God resists the proud! When a Christian allows pride to deceive them God knows how to deal with them, it ain't pretty.

God will allow our foolish pride to get us into all kinds of trouble.

Pride tells us that we are stronger, smarter, better looking and more spiritual.

The Bible tells us "pride comes

before the fall, and be careful when we think we stand, lest we fall."

One day at a time we must try to stay humble. Are we small in our own eyes? Or do we think too highly of ourselves? Who do we think we are?

Humility establishes how great God is and how "ungreat" we are.

Humility is always aware of the weakness of our flesh. We are not strong, but God is! We are not good, but God is! We fall short continually, but God never does!

Humility makes Christians faithful servants. Pride makes Christians unfaithful and unwilling to serve.

Humility will compel Christians to give. Pride is greedy and uncaring.

Humility convicts a Christian to repent for ungodly attitudes, words and actions. *Pride* confesses, "I am rich and increased in wisdom, and in need of nothing".

2 Timothy 3:1-2 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of stress. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, and arrogant...

1 Peter 5:5 ...God gives special blessings to those who are humble, but sets Himself against those who are proud.

Friday night 6:30

"Support Group"

Our "Higher Power" is Jesus Christ!

Are you bored?

This ministry is looking for Christians who want to serve and be disciples. Want to get right with God?

24 hr Christ-line 206-242-2942

People in recovery, helping people in recovery

LETTERS FROM THE HEART

I just finished reading 'Backshider". It was like reading about myself. It's crazy, but you have touched my heart. Like you I use to swear, gamble, lie, cheat, shoot up, and smoke ciggerates. I still smoke cigs. I want to get my life back on track. I think God is telling me to stop smoking. I want to guit but in this prison 90% of the population smokes. Is it OK to smoke? I try to justify my smoking by telling myself how far I have come. Is this Okay? I am aware of my conscience and ask God to forgive me on a daily basis. I was interested in your book titled "How To Stop Backsliding". I do know the Holy Spirit is inside of me. Harold

My name is William. I'm a 38 yr. old lost sheep looking for guidance and acceptance. My destructive lifestyle and drug addiction landed me here in prison. I've been seeking self-recovery from crack cocaine for several years and been unsuccessful every time. I've read Mr. Premo's book "Backslider" and I've read the C.J.R. newsletter at Pierce County Jail whenever we received it. It lifted me in a way I can't even really explain. I can only say it talked about me in one way or another. I'm willing to accept Jesus as Lord and my personal Savior in exchange for salvation and to become whole again. William

I have recently accepted Christ into my life. I read your newsletter. When I get out, I am going to be released to the streets. I am homeless with nowhere to turn except Christ. I am writing to ask you if you have any resources for a 42 yr. old recovering Christian addict, alcoholic. I receive SSI and have food stamp benefits. I would really rather work and be a productive member of society. I'm willing to do whatever it takes to stay clean and sober and walk God's path. Leon

I'm a backliding Christian thirsty for God. I realize I won't make it following my own footsteps. I'm tired of hurting God. Your Good News Letter has given me inspiration. Chris

Rev. 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. I need people like you. I've read your book "Backslider" and your newsletters. I followed you for years and decided CIR is not like the rest. I appreciate the sincerity of your ministry and your love for people like me. Darrin

I ask that I be accepted into the ministry of Christians In Recovery. I lay my cigarettes, drinking and drugging at the altar and ask to be used as a humble servant. I am very very desperately tired of being a loser in this world...I realize that the only way is to be a winner is in Christ Jesus! I love you all. You are beautiful people and I miss you. Matt

I am involved in a great home church, (Church of Living Water) in the Capital City of Olympia. I want so much to live for the Lord. Having been blessed by God to have felt the joy of His Spirit and love, I don't know how I keep falling. I simply cannot say "No" to drugs. Drugs are a problem to me. I keep backsliding until I give in to the full buffet of sin (sexual immorality, stealing, lying etc.) I read of Mike's testimony in the "Backslider", yet before I could finish the book, someone had removed the remaining pages. I had related so well to the words, yet my motivation and encouragement turned to frustration and hostility when I was unable to complete the book. Could you please send another copy as I wish to follow the encouragement and advice written in the words of the book. This prison doesn't have a library, just a small closet adjacent to the recreation office with very very limited books, periodicals and sundries. Keith

When the sargent handed me this copy of "How to Stop Backsliding", I enthusiastically received it, smiled and said "give me a hug"...he enthusiastically smiled and ran uttering "no, get away!" I am stuck in jail for two more months and all I can think of is how happy I am that God has brought me to this point in my life and has given me yet another chance. Dal

I am a 24 year old mother with another baby coming in December. I am now sitting in the Kent City Jail. All I want is to be happy. Melissa I am 24 years old. I have spent the last six years of my life in and out of prisons. All of this time I feel I have been unworthy of God. Because of my choices, I then came to the Sea-Tac Federal Detention Center and a man I don't even know came to me and said, "You would feel a lot better if you had God in your life". Then he gave me a copy of "Backslider". After that guy handed me the book, I thought, "Great, another guy who is seeking God while he is in prison and I probably will not even think about him when he is out." I picked up the book and read the whole thing in one night. At the end, on page 163 when it tells you to pray, I thought, why not. I had never prayed before in my life, and that morning I decided I would dedicate my life to God. I now believe he loves me. Please send me your newsletter on a regular basis. Robert

Hi, my name is Joel and I have not made the most honest choices in my life. I am 24 years of age and preparing myself to go to the pen for the third time. I have always feared God and believed in His son Jesus Christ. I just have never seen myself following him. Two nights ago, I met this Russian named Stan and he helped me call on Jesus for help. I asked Jesus to come in to my life for the first time of my life. I meant it and want to live my life for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I felt like some source of energy come over me and also felt like I was hit by something really hot. It was like something was taken out of me and replaced with happiness. I feel great now. (I have not had a perfect life....spent time in mental hospitals, group and foster homes, detention centers and prisons from age 7 to 18). I would like it if you would pray for me, my friends and family. I miss them. Thank you for your CIR newsletters, they help me out to keep the faith. Joel

I read your biography about your backsliding. It had a profound affect on my life. I am interested in *Christians In Recovery*. I'm sure you realize the need for such a ministry in a prison setting. Would you please explore starting a group here at *MCC*. **Keith**

More Letters From The Heart

Dear Sue, I read about you and your husband. I was extremely touched by the article. I have nobody to talk to. Could you please write me. Lorrie

Please pray and ask God for understanding before going any futher. First of all I'm full of pride, resentment, rejection, and hatred. I don't have any friends. I don't trust anyone. I was sexually abused as a child. I have lived the homosexual lifestyle and I'm also an alcoholic. I tried to give my life to Christ but I failed and I'm not sure if God will ever have me back. Walter

I am writing in regards to thank you for the inspiring book "Backslider". While reading your story I kept saying what a stupid idiot this guy is, then it dawned on me how much it was reminding me of my own life. I look back and I am haunted by immoral acts from the confused age of eight. I was corrupted by women and would sneak my Dad's playboys etc. I struggle with drugs, alcoholism, pornography and lust along with many more things. I keep wanting to go back to my old ways. Blaming others for my misgivings has become second nature to me and I grew tired of the life I lead. I finally realized that I can't do this on my own and something seems to be missing in my life. I ask for your prayers that I might find someone that can teach me the right way to live and how to deal with temptation after it comes out. Charles

I am currently doing time in a CA State Prison. Another inmate gave me a magazine withMike Premo's testiony in it. My own family and friends have all given up on me. I love God but my actions don't correspond with my desire for God. Could you please send me your newsletter? Dennis

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

I gave my heart to Jesus when I was 16 years old. From there it's been one backsliding after another - nothing but a game of tug-of-war on my flesh. Could you send some literature you might find helpful for someone like myself. Rich

I have several times turned my life over to God, but always take it back. Please send information about CIR. Phillip

I want to thank you for writing and sending me the CIR Newsletter. I can really relate to the testimonies and articles printed on it. Tara

I am a Christian backslider. I was raped and molested as a small child, this continued through two or three years by a trusted family member. I am complaining because I know who my personal saviour is. Travis

The chaplain here let me borrow a copy of "Backshider" and I soon realized it was a blessing from God. I've backslid many times. I am serving six months on a charge that only by the grace of God I survived as I put my head through the windshield with no seatbelt on. I will turn 26 in here and feel God is calling me to do His work. Please send me information about your ministry. Eric

I am a fallen away Christian and I've been backsliding for years now. I grew up in a Christian home. I've been living in sind partly because I don't have a support group to turn to for help and guidance. While I was in the King County Jail I was at the window looking out at the church across the way. I was praying for a church that would help me in what I needed. Right in the middle of my silent prayer a fellow inmate that I've never expressed my religious beliefs to came up to me with one of your newsletters. He just transferred in from RJC and it was so uplifting to know that God still heard my cries for help. I read your newsletter and it talked about Friday Night chapel being a mile from Sea Tac airport. I figured I needed to read your book "Backslider" and right when I came into prison my celly hands me your book to read. It shows me that if you can do it, then so can I. Chad

I am ashamed of myself. I called my self a Christian but I went and did it all. It really hurts me inside. I've prayed to God and asked him to forgive me of my transgressions. I still feel raunchy inside. My family will have absolutely nothing to do with me now and that hurts even more. My wife filed for divorce and took my two daughters all the way to the East Coast and I really doubt I will ever see them. Christopher

I currently am serving a year sentence in the Department of Corrections for a possession of meth. Meth is today's eveil demon that has consumed most of my friends of the Christian way. I saw your book in jail and I did not read it until I arrived at this institution. I can see myself in a lot of your bumpy paths. I am a backslider and wish for help. I thank you for sharing your story. It has moved me in my heart. Jason

After reading the newsletter and other literature you sent me, I have received a new & heighted sense of awareness that there is indeed power in the Blood. I look forward to bumping crowns with all of you, in His glorious Kingdom, Before my arrest, I would easily put away a fifth of liquor a day. But my greatest addiction in the end was pure speed & Rock cocaine, with these two my bondage to Satan was complete. When the Devil was going around to & fro to see who he may devour, he was dragging me around behind him by the ring in my nose. I heard the Gospel for the first time, at the LA County Jail. That night my life became His. I'm writing this from Folson. I will leave you with this: Be joyful always, pray continually; Give thanks in all circumstance's for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thess. 5:16-18) In His love...Bryon



"Say's he has found Jesus!"

"All of the guy's began to wonder, what has come over **Bryon**? He is like a new creature!" "Say's he found Jesus!" I'm a gay, 24 year old drug addict. I just accepted Jesus Christ into my heart last August. I have a hunger to know the Lord stronger than anything I've ever known. I really truly want to be done with crime, drugs and all of the sinful things and get to know my saviour. I've tried to enter a discipleship program but because of my history I was made to feel like a leper and left and have never been back to church or anything of that nature. I need spiritual guidance, counseling and fellowship but I just don't know where else to go. Lakotah

Brother Michael Premo, I'm sure you remember me, Everett. I backslid and committed a robbery and am now going to prison for 3 1/2 years. But all praise be to Jesus as I know that this too shall pass. My family has forgotten me, no friends, visits or letters. The reason I'm writing you is because one thing you taught me is that God has a peculiar passion for the forgotten. Because I thought I could make it alone, I drank, smoked and sold it. Do you remember how you felt before you got to Christians In Recovery, before you came to the foot of the cross? Do you remember the perspiration on your forehead and the crack in your soul? Do you remember how you tried to hide the loneliness until it got bigger than you and then you just tried to survive? Hold that picture for a moment, now answer this. Why did He choose you? Why has He brought us back time after time? What do we have that He needs? This letter is tapping you on the shoulder and reminding you of that fact. No matter how long you waited, even if you mess up again like me, you are His and He has a place for you. Bro Premo, I want you to know I love you. Everett

I am a 22 year old single mother who is lost. I ran across the CIR newsletter and somehow it reached me. I need that kind of support. Erica

I was saved and baptized at the First Baptist Church in Moses Lake, WA. I couldn't find a job and so to take all of my problems away, I backslid. I started to do crystal meth and stealing to get it. So about two weeks later I was arrested and booked into Grant County Jail. I was sentenced to 15 months in prison.

Brent

I accepted Jesus as my Saviour in King County Jail. That has been the only thing that has kept me from completely losing it. Before I heard the Good News I thought that I was ready for a heart attack. My heart literally was aching and felt strained with chest pains. Since I accepted Jesus that has left me as well as my perverse mouth and a lot of other things. I have been reading and studying the Bible regularly and find great wisdom, knowledge, instruction and healing. Of all the questions I've had throughout my life, I've found (the truth), the answers. I just wish I would have known a long time ago before I hurt so many others. Could you send me your newsletters. Hope this letter finds you and Sue doing well. Mitchell

I was brought to Jesus Christ and became a new babe in Christ. I got saved. Well, after three years of my release I had the American Dream; house, wife 2 kids, 4 vehicles, 2 Harley Davidson motorcycles, everything was going perfect until I met up with the same brother that brought me to Christ (during this three years I was walking in Christ, doing everything for the Lord). Well, to make a long story a little shorter, within two weeks of meeting this brother (now I thought he was still walking with Christ, boy was I wrong), I was shooting heroin with him and within six months of my start of backsliding I had lost everything, and my wife and I had to sell our home. The heroin had such a hold on me by then I left her and my boys there, and I drove back to Tacoma to get high. My wife finally divorced me. As you well know I was in and out of county jails from here to Wenatchee and finally came to where I am right now with another possession of heroin charge. I heard about the God Pod here in the Pierce County Jail so I requested to become part of it and it is here where I became a born again Christian. Yes, I got saved again. I'm going to need help when I get out of jail. Randolph

You don't know me. My name is Gregory. Reading your book made me realize I wasn't the only one who hurts bro. I haven't really been introduced to church or God. I always was trying to hear it. Please write back. Gregory

-JESUS IS BOSS!-

I rededicated my heart and life to Jesus Christ in January which lead me to turn myself in for the crime of forgery-which is why I am in prison now- I had been running from the Lord for 19 years. In spite of where I am, I am more free today than I ever was living in the life of pure hell that alcohol and drugs are. Nineteen years ago, I was six months away from graduating from Bible College. I'd been clean and sober for almost five years when I fell flat on my face. My fear during those years was that I would drink again. When it happened I thought my life was over. As time went by, I believed the lie that I had gone too far and that Jesus would never forgive me. I didn't believe I was worth this love. I now know that isn't about being worthy but rather simply accepting His love. Michael

The people from Union Gospel Mission came into R-5 in Shelton and gave us two CIR Good News Letters. I read both of them front to back and found that there are people out there just like me. They kept referring to a book called "Backslider" and I want to know how much this book costs? Terry

I was baptized at a very young age and haven't returned until last night when I rededicated my life to God. For all intense purposes I am a new Christian. Your book "Backslider" was inspiring and is the reason for this letter. I've been struggling for the last 18 months trying to break my "cycle of addiction". I was sexually abused as a child and have never been to counseling or whatever for that or my drug addictions or anything that has come from my twenty some odd years of denial. Any insight you can give me would be helpful! Ronald

Though I gave my life to God, I'm still very scared of what I might do when I get out. I was into meth for a few years now and once I'm on that there's no telling what I could do. I am surrounded by convicts and people glorifying evil things they've done but there's nowhere I can run. I find my peace every night when I ask God for forgiveness and guidance. God is there when we need him but he's there when things go good too. So always let him know you love him because he gave his son for me and you. Steven

More Letters From The Heart

Here are some lessons I learned in jail.

1. Keep yourself "burdened" with Bible projects. Don't ever catch up or finish...

2. Witness heavenily to previous friends: Draw the line and keep yourself placed firmly, deliberately and strategically on one side of it. 3. Don't be afraid to give up friends or family for Jesus sake. 4. Expect and welcome rebuke and discipline. 5. Admit faults; pray for weaknesses; accept criticism; seek guidance, learn humility, practice submission. Deny ego, "starve" self. 6. Put Jesus first other things can wait. Charlie

Turn from sin, and turn to Me, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. I resist the proud, but give grace to the humble. Stand firm against the devil; resist him and he will flee from you. Come close to Me and I will come close to you. Admit your sin and that you are a sinner. Let Me purify your heart. Humble yourself in My presence and I will honor you in due season. Return to Me with your whole heart. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal you. If you come to Me I will never, no never reject you. Do not despise or shrink from My chastening. My correction or punishment is My proof that I love you. Do not be weary, impatient or loathe My reproof and discipline. Honor Me and I will honor you. God

I wish to obtain any written pamphlets of other explanatory material on your ministry. I think it is a tremendous concept. I plan to approach the senior pastor of our congregation regarding the implementation of such a group. Kevin

I served almost 12 years in the full time ministry as a pastor. The last 4 or 5 years of ministry I became so engrossed in my ministry to the neglect of my family and my own soul that my spiritual life literally fell apart. I became involved in an adulterous situation. A friend gave me a copy of your testimony. Thank you for being an inspiration. I would like to know more about your ministry, Bill

My son is a backslider. Could you please send information about your work so I might help my son. Roy I am a 35 year old hispanic currently serving a 64 month sentence for being found in the USA, after being deported to Mexico for the third time. I lost my permanent resident status because of my constant incarcerations. I grew up in the barrios of East L.A. My Pop abonded us when I was 12. I started smoking weed, tobaco and drinking. Stealing cars, burglary, armed robbery and started doing time when I was 15. I got hooked on Crack when I was 18. When I wasn't locked up I was using Crack. Then I started using Meth. I have been in Folsom, Chino and San Quentin. My whole life I have been searching for the Lord. If I had a dollar for every time I have asked Christ into my life I would be a rich man. I have "rededicated" my life to God and then in the same night go out whore-mongering, doped-up and drunk. I couldn' understand it. I've watched other people give thier life to God and never go back to the old lifestyle. I have cried to the Father and asked why can't I be like those Christians. Why am I such a rebellious son? Well to make a long story short I have re-dedicated my life to God yet again. I believe the Lord has delivered me from the strong man that had control of my life. God has given me the power of His Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord! The Lord has been good to me. Halelujah!!! David

I left God 2 years ago. Now I'm in jail for a sex crime. Please help. John

I fell like I'm going to hell. Is there any hope for me? Betty

Your letters
from the heart
remind us that we
are doing
the will of the Father.
Thank you
for sharing your heart!

Sincerely, CIR staff I consider my time incarcerated (since 5 / 2002) as an opportunity for good. An opporunity to be used wisely. My first task was to set my priorities. I have done this. My #1 priority today, remains, my relationship with Jesus Christ. Building it, strengthening it, enhancing it, developing it, and protecting it. He has proven to be faithful in all things. His Word sustains me. His Spirit teaches me. His Presence fulfills and satisfies me. As a disciple and servant I desire only His will and direction. I try to remain available, teachable, and willing for service. I remember CIR/SRF in my prayers. Keep up the good job you all are doing. You are fulfilling a great need. James

Dear Chief Praise The Lord, If I indeed worship God, it will reflect in my attitude, speech, behavior and the way in which I spend my time. I will not let any unwholesome word come out of my mouth. I will take care of His Temple (my body), which He has entrusted to my care. I will diligently work to bring every thought to the obedience of Christ, since I recognize, that He is my Lord (Supreme Master). He must be in control of every area of my life. I must serve God only. If I wait on God, like I am a waitress at a Five Star restaurant/fine dining. I will be attentive to His every request/need; in fact, I will anticipate in advance action, that is required and beneficial. I will seek to please Him, to be in His way, but not in the way; to be ready, willing and available at His call. I will seek not to be served, but to serve Him and those made in His likeness. I will be prompt with y obedience and serve wholeheartedly, desirous of crucifying my own agenda and desires. I am to offer my entire being as a living sacrifice in service to the King. I am His ambassador, so I must do His will. Remember, I am in prison. The Holy Spirit has much more work to do in my life to bring me into alignment with His purposes. I'll keep you posted on my release date. Leslie

I'm enclosing a donation which I believe the Lord will bless and multiply to you many time. Keep up the good work! I'm sure the Lord is prompting me to open up with you. I usually don't. Barbara

What is the goal of our recovery houses?

And who can qualify.

Our goal is to provide safe houses where Jesus Christ is the Lord over each house.

Our goal is to make disciples who love God with all their heart, mind, soul and body.

Our goal is to be a family to those who need support, understanding, discipline and encouragement in fulfilling God's purpose for them.

Each house provides opportunity for becoming a radical disciple of Jesus Christ.

Only Christians who want to become true disciples are invited to become part of this family.

If you are looking for recovery without Jesus we are not what you're looking for. If you're looking for a liberal wishy, washy, religious, social club we are not what you're looking for.

If you want to be rebuked, reproved, exhorted and hear the truth (the Bible) then this is the place for you. It is not easy! You must deny yourself. It's a Christian "bootcamp".

NO drugs, alcohol or nicotine are allowed.

NO "hip, slick and cool" people. NO egomaniacs. NO "superstars".

NO negative attitudes will be condoned. NO "whining"! NO violence!

NO "lazy bums" will be allowed to stay once they are found out.

IF you know you need help, IF you are willing to humble yourself, IF you are ready to listen and not talk so much, IF you greatly desire to decrease so that God can increase in your life, IF you have come out of denial about your pride, IF you want to fall more madly in love with Jesus then you are encouraged to move into a CIR recovery house.

Write or call
Deacon "Chief Praise The Lord"
Christians In Recovery



David Mackie "Chief Praise The Lord"

About two years ago I was drifting through life without any clear direction. I started attending Christians In Recovery meetings at The Church By The Side Of The Road.

I felt comfortable and liked what I saw. I asked if I could do some kind of service work. So each Friday night after the "Beans, Rice and Jesus Christ," I helped clean up the kitchen.

I approached Michael Premo and asked him if I could move into the recovery house. He said it was full but I could sleep in the back yard on a military cot if I wanted to. I told him I would have to think about it. The next day I became a disciple and slep outside for a month.

The ministry worked me hard and it was dirty work. But I felt appreciated and I served God the best I could.

Pastor Premo took me under his wing and discipled me. We have become good friends.

After I proved myself I was asked to be the administrator for the ministry. Later I was ordained as a Deacon.

Part of my job is to write hundreds of letters to men and women in jails and prisons. I make decisions on who can move into a CIR recovery house. I give random drug tests.

I have a great job. All my needs are provided for. My Christian family is wonderful.

Write me a letter if you want to become part of our family. —Peace!

What happens at CIR on Friday nights?

It starts with prayer. At 5:45-6:30 PM the faithful "prayer warriors" and anyone else who wants to radically seek God in spirit and truth join together in one accord in the upper room at The Church By The Side Of The Road.

This is a "believers" prayer, praise and worship meeting. There is freedom and encouragement to speak either in English or in Holy Spirit tongues.

After prayer the disciples stumble downstairs because they are now "high" on Jesus and full of the Holy Spirit.

From 6:30-7:30 is the CIR support group. We confess our sins and pray one for another so that we can be healed. We share our experience, strength and hope. These are testimonies from the heart and the unreligious honesty is refreshing. Our "Higher Power" is the Lord Jesus Christ!

At 7:30 we move into the main auditorium for the Seattle Recovery Fellowship full blown church service. The pastor, the elders, the deacons and the entire congregation is in recovery. Not one member of this local church has it all together. We believe in progress not perfection.

SRF believes to strongly love and worship God; this the Churches #1 priority. There is liberty in the Spirit, with a new testament order.

All the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit are encouraged to be manifested by various members of the congregation. The service is not a one man show. There is no begging for money or hyped-out show business.

After the service, dinner is served every Friday night in the fellowship hall (it's free). Breaking bread, fellowship and getting to know new people is a big part of God's program.

If you admit you're in recovery then you need fellowship. See ya Friday!





Bobbie Catton

TROPHIES OF GOD'S GRACE

Kenyon Stanley

David Olerich

David moved directly into a CIR discipleship house after serving over 13 straight year "behind the wall".

Recently he graduated from our one year discipleship program.

David watched many men move into the house with him and watched as most of them left and went back to their old doubleminded life-styles.

David came with a vision. He counted the cost. He was diligent in doing his part. He kept a steady job, did his chores around the house and gave back to the ministry to show his appreciation.

He has stayed clean and sober since his release. Weekly he takes his guitar and volunteers his time to go into the Seattle Juvenile Detention Center. He preaches Jesus! The young guys relate to his style. His experience and great testimony commands their respect.

He met a beautiful Christian school teacher and they are now engaged. Until they get married David will continue to live in the "Shalom House".

David is taking college courses and preparing for his future both in the natural and in the spiritual.

If you would like to write any of these Trophies of God's grace you can do so C/O Christians In Recovery.

Bobbie grew up like most girls in this ministry, abused and confused. As a result she got lost in the world of alcohol, drugs and crime.

She has a very long rap sheet and has been locked up more times than she can remember.

Along the way to her self destruction she lost parental rights to her beautiful little daughter. Her heart was broken and she lost her self respect. Her shame was overwhelming... more drugs and more crime.

She ended up at the SeaTac Federal Prison in Seattle doing more time. But this time it was different.

Bobbie gave her life to Jesus. She was determined to serve God. She started a *Christians In Recovery* weekly support group in her cell block. With an average weekly attendance between 10 to 20. *CIR* volunteers still faithfully go into this prison as a result of her ministry efforts.

She was transferred to a Calif. prison to finish her sentence. Bobby was faithful to God and did her time.

Upon her release she came back to Seattle and became a building block within this ministry. She graduated from college as a drug and alcohol counselor. She was restored to her teenage daughter and will be at her high school graduation this year.

Bobbie is living large! She is greatly loved and appreciated by her Christian family.

Bobby is a new creature in Jesus Christ and she is not ashamed. Kenyon wrote CIR from jail seeking encouragement and a place to live. Upon his release he moved into the "Diakonia House" and began his discipleship.

He got up early and searched for work. God honored his attitude. He got a job the first week making \$15.00 per hour driving a truck. The company even let him drive the truck home each night.

He was thankful for God's provision. He honored God and God has honored him.

As a new Christian he studied the Word. He was eager to accept spiritual assignments given to him by the leadership to promote his personal growth in Christ.

It was obvious that Kenyon wanted to be a true disciple, not just another jailhouse conversion.

Even though Kenyon has been locked up more than once he is clearly a changed man.

In the last year and a half since his release Kenyon met and married a beautiful young Christian professional lady and was asked to on the staff of Church By The Side Of The Road as the youth pastor. Wow!

His plan is to finish college and then go on to seminary.

Kenyon, Bobbie and David are lasting fruit of this ministry. They bring a smile to our face. They are what this ministry is all about.

This ministry thanks God for the privilage to serve and we thank you for your prayer and support.





"I can quit any time I want to!" Remember making that statement? I do. We were in denial!

Many Christians will quickly admit they are "moderate" social drinkers. Yet, their family and friends have seen them drunk on more than one occasion. There is a multitude of bonafide Christian alcoholics sitting in the pews living in denial.

The deacon's wife continues to take her prescription painkillers even though that physical pain left long ago. Her pain is now in her soul, and she has lost control.

It's very hard for a Christian to acknowledge the painful reality that they have lost control and have surrendered to a negative addiction, a life-controlling bad habit.

Christians have a hard time acknowledging that their overweight situation is gluttony, and their bondage to food has defiled their temple. Their bad testimony is advertised everywhere they go. Obesity in the church is a sensitive issue, and many are in denial about it (including the leadership). Obesity is a result of gluttony (a lack of self-control), and sin is at the center of this painful reality.

A person in denial will justify and rationalize their choices. Confession of sin and repentance is part of the fundamental Christian life.

Coming out of denial for many is a spiritual and emotional experience; some cry, some laugh. It is a wonderful and powerful decision.

Most of us are reluctant to humble ourselves before God and man. As a result we will be humbled the hard way: divorce, DUIs, loss of family and friends, illness (physical and mental), or incarceration of some type.

I remember coming out of denial about my alcoholism. I confessed to God, my wife and myself. I admitted that I was weak...still am!

Denial

"An unconscious defense mechanism characterized by refusal to acknowledge painful realities, thoughts, or feelings." (Webster's)

Seattle Recovery Fellowship &
Christians In Recovery says:

Thank You! Church By The Side Of The Road

Thank you for extending the right hand of fellowship to us!

Thank you for letting us use your building to hold our meetings!

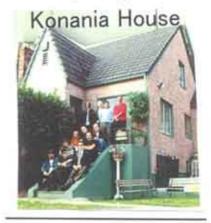
Thank you for encouraging and appreciating the labor of love we are involved in!

Thank you for having the heart of Jesus concerning the ministry of restoration and the healing of broken Christians!

Thank you Pastor Dennis Sawyer, for your biblical conviction in leading His Church in the direction of grace and love!

To all who mourn and need comfort; to all who are weary and need rest; to all who are friendless and wish friendship; to all who pray and to all who do not: to all who sin and need a Savior. and to whosoever will. this Fellowship opens wide its door and, in the name of Jesus the Lord. we say. WELCOME!

CIR Discipleship Houses







The vision of this ministry is to seek God through prayer, praise, spiritual worship, and the study of His Word. The Bible is our supreme authority and the blueprint we will study and follow. We will endeavor to be disciples and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

We are committed to doing the Father's business! We welcome those that are desiring to seriously follow God.

MARRIED TO A BACKSLIDER

Referring to my husband, people often ask, "How could a man of God backslide so hard?" An equally significant question is: "How did you stay with him through so many hearthaches and trials?"

I married Mike Premo at the age of 31. I had never been married. A Christian for two years, I was "on fire" for Jesus. I prayed for God to bring me the husband of His choosing.

I met Mike in Church and he told me all about his up and down past (very wild and crazy). Nevertheless, I felt he was the one for me.

While being on a wonderful large church staff Mike committed adultery. We had been married for three years. I made a decision to forgive him. Because I was close to Jesus I chose to stay with him.

I was betrayed, humiliated, and shamed. The pain was devastating. I felt very alone. As a result I drew closer to God. I prayed and fasted. I gave thanks in everything. I would sing praises in the middle of my storms. I looked beyond the faults of my husband and saw his need. I tried to see him as God saw him. As a young Christian I felt God loved him. I felt God wanted me to love him too.

Several years passed and Mike's backsliding got worse. He progressed in his drinking and became an alcoholic. He smoked crack and shot heroin with prostitutes. He deserted me many times as he ran from God. I would always take him back. I would hold him and give him love. He needed me. I was his wife and I made a wedding vow to God. As Mike continued to



Sue Premo's story

run, I followed him across the country. It got worse.

It was a very dark time in my life but, God gave me grace. In my weakest moments His strength would enable me to make it one more day.

One day Mike quit drinking, smoking, drugs and hasn't had any for 17 years; and he's been faithful to me.

He was sorry for hurting God. He was sorry for hurting me. God and I forgave him. We embraced him. We spoke hope into his heart. We gave him healing.

As Mike's recovery began I realized that I needed restoration also. Who was going to help me, I wondered.

Most church people were not willing or unprepared to reach out because of my husband's radical background. It takes courage and faith to attempt to restore extreme backsliders.

God allowed me to go through that wilderness experience. The long hard journey took its toll on me. Trying to find a local Church that would embrace us was discouraging and sad.

My eyes were opened to the overall weakness of the local church to restore those who have fallen. We were held at arms distance time after time. Backsliders are sensitive to rejection. My husband and I endured the pain. The pain was equal to the aloneness I felt when my husband was drinking and doing drugs.

The Holy Spirit reminded me of a scripture Habakkuk 2:3 "For the vision is yet for an appointed time...though it tarry, wait for it, because it will shortly come, it will not tarry."

The vision of the Lord for us is happening now. We were prepared in the wilderness.

From the ashes of our life God restored our first love for Him and each other. Our ministry is to broken people, especially those who are free to admit they are in recovery and need love.

Mike has been restored to his gifting in God as an evangelist and pastor. Our recovery will continue till Jesus comes. The void in his life has been filled. He knows his purpose. I'm married to a solid man of God (he's radical for Jesus).

My purpose has not changed: #1 It is to love God first! #2 To love and support my husband! #3 To love everybody else!

I Peter 3:1(Amp.) In like manner you married women, be submissive to your own husbands—subordinate yourselves as being secondary to and dependent on them, and adapt yourselves to them. So that even if any do not obey the Word [of God], they may be won over not by discussion but by the [godly] lives of their wives. When they observe the pure and modest way in which you conduct yourselves, together with your reverence [for you husband].

Ladies, do you feel the need to share your heart? Write me.

EVANGELIZING BEHIND THE WALL

by, Michael Premo

The Christians in the early church spent lots of time in jails and prisons. Peter, James, and John all served time. The Apostle Paul had a long "rap sheet" and he spent years in prison.

Judas squealed on Jesus for a handful of silver. The King of Kings was locked up and brutalized by correction officers. The guards took advantage of their authority. They laughed and mocked Him as they stripped Him naked (to humiliate Him), they struck Him in the face with their fists, they stretched out His arms and whipped Him with 39 stripes leaving His back a bloody mess, they pushed into His head a crown of long thorns and continued to laugh at the "weak" inmate who claimed to be the Son of God.

Physically they brutalized Jesus. Mentally they brutalized Him with their fun and games.

As a lamb to the slaughter He opened not His mouth except for these words, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

Jesus was crucified, but before He surrendered His Spirit
to the Father, He had enough
strength and motivation to evangelize two common criminals,
one on His left and one on His
right. These two thieves had an
obvious need for understanding,
compassion and grace.

Jesus wasn't thinking about His pain, He was thinking about their pain, and unlike most of us He did something about it.

> Jesus didn't just live the Gospel, He preached it.

I served time in eight different states and saw thousands of inmates come and go. During those years I can't recall one prisoner talking to me about God. I was unsaved, had "time" to listen, but nobody talked to me about Jesus. No one asked me this question, "Mike, if you were to die where would you spend eternity, heaven or hell?"

I was a candidate to get saved while I was locked up, but for a variety of reasons no one was motivated to witness to me.

Jesus has commanded all Christians to preach the gospel to every creature on planet earth. I was a creature but nobody preached to me. How would I know about God's eternal salvation plan unless somebody cared enough to take the time to open their mouth and impart the revelation of God's love?

Are you a Christian? If you are then God wants you to be His agent, wise as a serpent, harmless as a dove.

God wants you to evangelize your jail, prison, institution or treatment center. How will they hear unless you tell them?

God is looking for willing vessels! Are you willing? The field is ready to be harvested but the laborers are few. Are you ready to labor? A multitude of inmates are in the valley of decision! Will you help them make the right decision? You can make the difference!

God open our eyes and soften our heart that we might be moved by compassion to rescue the perishing. Heavenly Father do whatever it takes to bring us to a place of gratitude and servitude. A large percentage of people going into jail, prison or treatment centers are Christians, "backslidden Christians," prodigal sons and daughters of God getting busted by man and chastened by their Heavenly Father.

God knows how to get our attention. Yet, He will never force us to humble ourselves and worship Him. We make the choice. God helps us but the choice is always ours.

Do you have time to pray? Do you have time to read the Bible? YES! And most of you do it. Do you have time to evangelize? YES! But most don't do it.

Jesus wants us to follow Him. Are we willing?

Early Christian disciples were killed for evangelizing! It's much easier and safer to keep our mouth shut.

God has commanded us to tell everybody about the Lord Jesus Christ. It's our choice. We can obey or disobey. We can take the easy way or the way of Jesus.

Write and let us know how your "fishing for men" is coming along.

If you were saved in prison, jail or a rehab let us know how it happened.

Paul the apostle led a jailer to Christ. Have you done that? Has a jailer or another inmate led you to Christ? Tell us about it

A beautiful study bible will be given to the most interesting testimony.

GOSSIP & SLANDER

Gossip: Blab, tattle, whisper, spread rumors. It means "to indulge in idle talk or rumors about others, or spreading of sensational stories." It can also mean "idle or malicious talk about others." In the Bible, "backbiter" and "slander" are from the same word from which the word "devil" originates (the accuser of the brethren). A slanderer is one who defames, or talks maliciously, or spreads damaging information, or speaks ill of others. Gossip, backbiting, and whispering slander is a work of Satan. IT IS SIN!

Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; Psalm 101:5

Railer: A railer is the worst type of gossip, they deliberately try to ruin a person. A railer is a person who goes around saying evil about other people repeatedly. (This type of Christian is usually exposed. The judgment they had hoped for others comes into their own life. Their sin finds them out.)

Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness and sin, of greed and hate, envy, murder, fighting, lying bitterness, and gossip. They were backbiters... Romans 1:29,30

Yet we hear that some of you are living in laziness, refusing to work, and wasting your time in gossiping. 2 Thessalonians 3:11

Besides, they are likely to be lazy and spend their time gossiping around from house to house, getting into other people's business. 1 Timothy 5:13

Proverbs 16:27, 28 A scoundrel plots evil, and his speech is like a scorching fire. A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.

Prov. 26:20 Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife stops.

Why Christians Do It

Prov. 11:13 A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

James 1:26 Anyone who says he is a Christian but doesn't control his sharp tongue is just fooling himself, and his religion isn't worth much.

A busybody is another close relative of the gossiper - a person who meddles with the affairs of others. He is like a peeping Tom who snoops and spies. A busybody is the investigator for gossipers and rumor-mongers, seeking to uncover sensational details and to whisper the latest news.

The person who gossips to you about others also gossips to others about you.

When carnal Christians are offended their vengence will come in the form of gossip. Carnal Christians usually won't get physical so they will murder with their tongue.

When hate is in the heart or even a serious lack of love, it will motivate a christian to use their tongue as a weapon.

If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with every one. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God's] wrath; Romans 12:18, 19

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:31

Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool. In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise. Proverbs 10:18

Gossip and slander disqualify a person from spiritual leadership. How can this person be trusted?

Gossip distorts and exaggerates, and is not a reliable source of truth.

Those who gossip and slander are not in right fellowship with God (Romans1:28-32)

Those who gossip will face persistent, unexplainable problems (Psalms 66:18; Proverbs 21:23; Proverbs 6:12-15)

Though the sin of gossip is subtle, it must be recognized, acknowledged, and confessed as sin. Repent by surrendering our tongue to Christ.

If we can't say something good or encouraging about others, then we should keep our mouths shut. (Ephesians 4:29)

The mouth of the righteous is a well of life.

Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers a mulitude of sin.

The lips of the righteous feed many.

Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; rebuke a wise man,

and he will love you.

The book of Proverbs.

Restore (Greek) to complete thoroughly, repair, adjust, fit, frame, mend, make perfect, join together.

Webster's (def.): a putting or bringing back into a former, normal, or unimpaired state or condition; to give back (something taken away or lost), to put back in a place, position or rank; to repair or rebuild something or someone so that they are brought back to their former condition.

Restorative: tending to restore or capable of restoring; especially, capable of restoring health, strength or consciousness, as with smelling salts. (Christians are the salt of the earth)

"Restrain" is the next word that follows "restore" in Webster's Dictionary... Restrain: to hold back from action; check, suppress, curb, to keep under control; to deprive of physical liberty, as by putting in prison or in an asylum.

Some Christians prefer to judge rather than to restore. Some Christians point the finger rather than extend the right hand of fellowship.

Brethren,
if any person is overtaken
in misconduct or sin
of any sort,
you who are spiritual
should set him right and
restore and reinstate him,
without any sense
of superiority,
and with all gentleness...
Galatians 6:1

Recover (Greek): To become sober again, regain (one's) senses; recover self. (Hebrew) To live, to revive, nourish up, preserve, quicken, repair, be whole.

(Webster's): To get back, regain; to restore oneself to a normal state; to regain a normal or usual condition, as of health.

That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. 2 Tim. 2:26

Even more letters "From The Heart"

A friend allowed me to read the CIR newsletter that you sent her. I have 12 months left to my sentence and then I will be moving close to your ministry. I look forward to being part of a church whose members come from the same kind of background as mine. I need the inspiration of other brothers and sisters to help me in my walk with Christ. I'm 39 years old and this is my first time in prison. I come from a very responsible and respectful family. I am hungry for "right living" only with God. I loved your newsletter. It gave me hope and I could really relate. Most of the inmates here are still stuck into their addiction. The only one who can save them is Christ, but they have to first want the Lord. It's sad but it seem's like most of them are not ready! I pray for addicts still suffering. Karen

I feel like I've lost my salvation. I have a big problem with porno. I feel God has judged me as'a reprobate. I haven't felt His presence since Nov. 2003. I feel hopeless. Joel

I thank God for your testimony. My family was church going but we never talked about God at home. Going to church was like a ritual. I cannot count the number of times I have asked Christ into my life only to return to sin. I'm serving a life sentence in this prison and I need to know the love of God. Will you include me in your prayers? Herman,

I need spiritual counseling. I am Jewish and I love Jesus. I gave my life to Him when I was 12 but in my teens I backslid and got into drugs and boys. My husband is not a born again Christian, but I am praying for him. My love and prayers are with you. Marsha,

What a blessing it's been to talk to you and receive all the books and newsletters. Teresa,

Praise JESUS!

EASY DOES IT. but do it! Do it sober ... First things first ... One day at a time... KISS: Keep It Simple, Stupid This, too, shall pass... EGO: Edge God Out I can't, He can; I think I'll let Him ... Have an attitude of gratitude... God is never late... It takes time... Count your blessings... Share your pain... Our need Is God's opportunity... Trust God, clean house Help others!

I was hungry and you gave Me food: I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger and you brought Me together with yourselves, and you welcomed and entertained and lodged Me. I was naked and you clothed Me: I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to see Me. The words of Jesus Christ

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Psalm 133:1 Christians In Recovery Good News Letter is published on a semi-regular basis and mailed as the Lord provides through His people.

This ministry operates on a shoestring budget. All staff and volunteers freely give of their talents and the finances to make this labor of love a reality. We are totally debt-free.

Of the many hundreds of letters we receive, very seldom will a donation be included in the envelope. The majority of people we reach are broke and or in prison.

We need money for postage and printing. Any donation you can send will be much appreciated! We have a vison to send this newsletter to every prison on the West coast, including Alaska.. Thank you for your consideration.

Do you have a gift or ability that you would like to make available to this ministry?

- to write letters to prisoners
 counselors to help on phones
 prayer and praise warriors
 computer experts for web site
- administration & editing help
- . a public relations person

This ministry is seeking
Worshippers—not performers,
Humble musicians
Servants—not stars.

Do you like to sing and praise God? Can you play any music instrument?

Pray about it; then meet us at the Friday night Recovery Fellowship.

Christians in Recovery Prayer

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are proved right when You speak and justified when You judge. Surely You desire truth in the inner parts; You teach wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hysop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones You have crushed rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a stead-fast spirit within me. Do not cast me from Your presence or take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners will turn back to You. Psalm 51:1-13

Christians In Recovery — A not-for-profit Interdenominational Ministry. We are available night or day to help the Christian who is struggling. We offer Biblical counseling, support groups, hope and Christian fellowship. Our "Higher Power" is the Lord Jesus Christ!

Name	I would like the following names put on your Christians In Recovery prayer list:
Address	We will continue to reach out as God provides. Without your prayer and support this ministry would not be possible. THANK YOU!
Please send newsletter	I'd like to help!! Amount enclosed: \$
Christians	Send to: In Recovery PO BOX 98679 Seattle, WA 98198
	ential counseling is available by contacting our office (206) 242-2942

LOOKING FOR A CHURCH THAT UNDERSTANDS?

SEATTLE RECOVERY FELLOWSHIP

Interdenominational, inspirational, informal, and full of God's amazing grace, mercy, hope and love. We are dedicated to seeking after and worshiping God. Are you looking for restoration? All who are serious about spirituality and recovery, are welcomed with open arms. If you're looking for a place to serve and minister this fellowship needs you.

Friday Night Service:

5:45 - 6:30 Prayer or fellowship 6:30 - 7:30 Support group 7:30 - 9:00 Worship & Word

Dinner "Beans and rice and Jesus Christ"

Meeting Place:

Church By The Side Of The Road 3455 S. 148th St. Tukwila, WA 98168 Telephone (206) 242-2942

The leadership of this fellowship has personally experienced the devastation of negative addictions. We understand because we have been there. God did not give up on us and He will not give up on you!

There is a multitude of prodigal sons and daughters of God who need to be restored. Is it possible that there are more backslidden Christians struggling outside the Church than faithful Christians inside the Church? God is especially concerned about the forgotten, abandoned, and hurting - and so are well

This newsletter is distributed free of charge for the edification of the body of Christ. It may also be downloaded for FREE from: http://www.skybreeze.com/srf/news1.pdf

CHRISTIANS IN RECOVERY

PO BOX 98679

Des Moines, WA 98198