

*the*

Winter 2012

# GABRIEL

The Magazine for Christians In Recovery®

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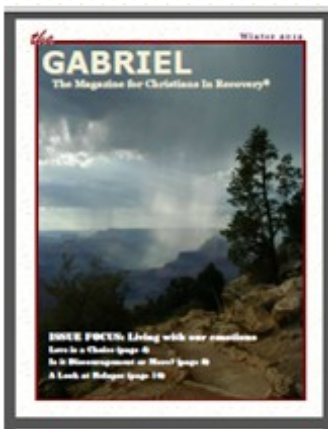
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Wondering if there are any more issues of the Gabriel? Well yes! View the most recent issues online as well as Archives of past Gabriel issues.

The Gabriel Archives are available on CD here:

<http://self-helpsoftware.com/Gabriel>

It would make a great gift to a fellow recovering Christian.

Have stories, poetry or original articles you would like to submit for publication in the Gabriel? Links to websites and original images are welcome.

Email your submissions to:

[clara@christians-in-recovery.org](mailto:clara@christians-in-recovery.org)

Link to previous *Gabriel* Issues:

[http://christians-in-recovery.org/Tools\\_Gabriel\\_PastIssues](http://christians-in-recovery.org/Tools_Gabriel_PastIssues)



**Christians in Recovery®**

Your Internet Community for Recovery  
Always Available, Always Caring

*The Gabriel* is a publication of [Christians in Recovery®](http://www.christians-in-recovery.org) dedicated to the uplifting and inspiration of it's members and friends. It is published 4 times a year, once each quarter.

**The Gabriel Staff**

**Clara T.**— Editor

**Jim A.**— Assoc. Editor & Contributor

**Cindy B.**—Associate Editor

**Obie B.**— CIR Executive Director

**CIR Membership**—Contributors

Christians in Recovery®, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. We are a group of recovering Christians dedicated to personal one-on-one sharing of faith, strength and hope as we live each day in recovery. We work to regain and maintain balance and order in our lives through active discussion of the 12 Steps, the Bible, and experiences in our own recovery from abuse, family dysfunction, depression, anxiety, grief, relationships and/or addictions of alcohol, drugs, food, pornography, sexual addiction, etc. CIR is comprised of people like you who become [Members](#) and/or [Donate](#). CIR is governed by a [Board of Directors](#) that meets on a regular basis.

**Our Vision**

It is the vision of the Board and Supporting Members of CIR to continue to use the latest technology, in addition to conventional means, to reach those who would normally not seek help-- to catch those who fall through the cracks -- and to further spread Christian hope, healing and fellowship to those in need of recovery. Our vision is not just recovery but **to go well beyond recovery** so people can fully discover, explore and magnify all possibilities God intends for them as individuals.

**Christians in Recovery® is NOT:**

- A crises center or hotline
- A substitute for attending church
- A professional therapy group
- A substitute for professional help or assistance
- Geared to any one denomination
- Intended to replace secular recovery groups or meetings
- Intended to replace or undermine any other Christian organization or group.

<http://www.christians-in-recovery.org>

# A Year With No Round Tuit

Musings  
by Clara T



**H**ave you ever had one of those times when no matter how hard you tried things just didn't get done... or at least those things that YOU planned? I was listening to a recent video by Joe of "Joe and Charlie's Big Book Study" in my regular Saturday Morning face to face meeting. Joe said something really profound to me. He said, "There's Right and Wrong and What I want." He went on to say that we seldom have any trouble at all knowing/identifying/understanding the right and wrong part but it's the "What I Want" part that throws us for a loop. Boy could I identify with that. So often my good intentions get buried under the "what I wants" and that's what happened this past year. I kept trying and trying to get a Spring Gabriel out, then it was Summer and oh my goodness, its Fall already! I know that many of you have asked "When is another Gabriel coming out?!" and that in itself makes me feel so wonderful—that you indeed read it and look forward to it.

But there's another issue here (pun intended.. LOL) in the case of the missing round tuit. That of things happening when the time is right. When God said "It's time", things just worked out. Isn't that always the way? Jim kept "reminding me" (think squeaky wheel), Cindy began helping me do some of the formatting and pulling material together, when I pulled up the issue I was working on back in the fall it was actually almost done (!), and at the last minute we received a wonderful, unexpected article from one of CIR's members (see CIR Benediction). Wow. So now I wonder as is often the case when we're "struggling over something that just doesn't happen" was it a lack of getting round tuit? Or, heaven forbid, my being to busy doing other things instead of what I should have been doing... or maybe it was God saying ... take a break until things get easier. I'm thinking a big mix of all.

In any case, I hope also we do not go a whole year before reading our CIR Magazine again. As always, send me your feedback ([clara@christians-in-recovery.org](mailto:clara@christians-in-recovery.org)) as well as articles, poetry, humor (that was lacking in this issue and it was one of my favorite new things in the last one). Without your writing and creativity this magazine just won't happen! I look forward to hearing from you and in the meantime I found my "round tuit". My daddy left it to me and I had it put away in a box! Silly me...



*Clara T*

*Editor, The Gabriel*

# Love Is a Choice

An original article by Jim Aquila

Someone once said, "I would rather love than fight." I'm not quite sure what that means, but I'm I am sure that when an addiction starts to gradually take hold there is little room in one's life for the traditional act of love.

Love implies a mutual respect, and a freedom to trust one another. But I'm amazed at the similarities between "Romantic Love" and "Other Addictions". Both refer to one "falling in", such as, "falling in love with my spouse wasn't hard to do". In fact, falling in love can be a completely spontaneous experience. You don't have to DO anything. Sometimes just a glance is enough to trigger off love's response. In contrast, with an addiction, it takes sensory practice to trigger a response. Where trouble begins is when the "falling in love" idea accompanies the image of needing another person to make you whole, rather than that of forming a union of two already whole people

Romantic love implies that you were just standing there, doing nothing and then something came along and happened to you. This is not so with the addictive process. Basically addiction is a physical experience that turns into a pleasurable desire. There is a thin line between healthy romantic love and love addiction, which is not always noticed by its participants. Some of us might confuse the need for a significant other for romantic love when it's actually nothing more than a physical addiction.

**Angie Lewis in her article ["Spiritual Cleanse For The Heart, Mind and Soul"](#), has put together a one-month program that is worthy of mention here. (Paraphrased).**

**Week One – Incorporate 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 daily until it becomes secondhand –**

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no records of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves.*



**Week two** - Focus on wisdom, knowledge, truth and understanding from God. Do NOT seek out wisdom, knowledge, truth, or understanding from culture or society, or from anyone in the world. The bible should be your only source for all understanding and truth.

When writing this article I discovered another addiction that I have had since early childhood: "Being Accepted By Others". This addiction has kept me back from generally enjoying life.... I'm working on it.

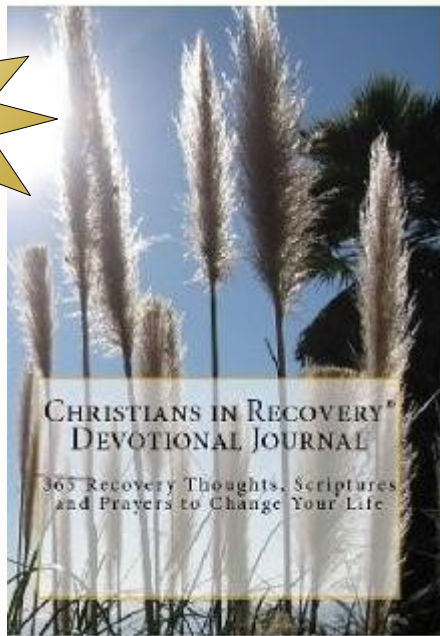
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Dr. Aquila, author/teacher is a gifted communicator. He has authored five books and several pamphlets on addictions and their effect on relationships. James also writes other articles appearing in CIR, in addition to being a contributing editor to the CIR website and to The Gabriel.

Jim is a certified Neuropath. His articles include subjects on human difficulties, behavior, addictions and how to help.

You can read more of Jim's work at:  
<http://www.alt-4-health.com>

# Christians in Recovery Devotional Journal



## 365 Recovery Thoughts, Scriptures & Prayers to Change Your Life

This devotional journal is for those who are seeking healing and wholeness in their life as well as a closer relationship with God.

- ◆ Are you addicted to a substance or behavior?
- ◆ Are you a victim of anxiety, fear or hopelessness?
- ◆ Is a behavior or thought pattern controlling your life?
- ◆ Are you codependent or an adult child?
- ◆ Do you over eat?

Strengthen your faith as you draw nearer to God through the pages of this book.

Three hundred and sixty five individual recovery thoughts with accompanying scriptures and prayers to guide you.

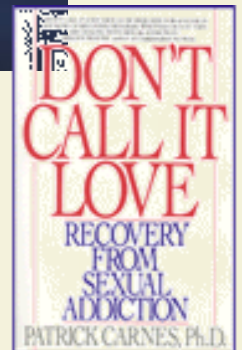
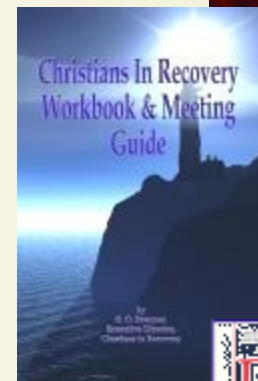
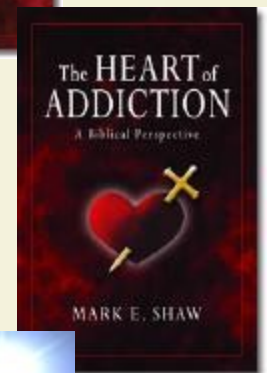
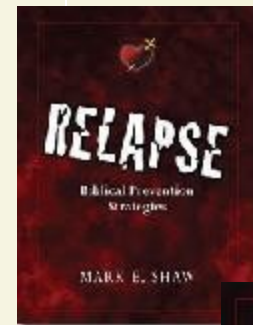
Each day has a section for you to include your own thoughts, notes, prayers and favorite scriptures. Includes Topical Index as well as Scripture Index.

6" X 9", 384 pages.

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[Recovery Bibles](#) with notes,  
annotations and markings  
for Recovery

[Daily Devotionals](#) for Recovery

[Booklets](#) for Recovery

# GLEANINGS

OF RECOVERY



Please pray for ...

- JimS – upcoming surgery
- Fran and Tom – their ministry and their neighbor
- Eric's breathing
- Shirley, her family and grandson, Jack
- 1hvny1's daughter (ill) and newborn grandson
- Chaplain Michael C – health
- Nadine – health, wisdom
- Ruth – loss of mom
- Chuck C – peace, silence & solitude
- CIR – resources; that God would continue to touch and change lives
- CIR's volunteers and staff

## BEGIN WHERE YOU CAN ...

When I started recovery I was totally overwhelmed because I thought I was totally off the charts as far as recovery goes. Thinking that I was not even "on the map" led to much discouragement and defeatist thinking. But God wants us to start from where we are. We can't possibly start from where we want to be.



## THANK YOU!

**Carolyn C.**

CIR's Director of Communications  
is our latest

**Volunteer of the Month**

*"We all face challenges and disappointments. However, God still wants us to accomplish his mission for us on earth."*

*"God doesn't expect us to work miracles. That's his job. He simply tells us to go in the strength we have. He sends us, and he will do the rest."*  
*Yvonne Ortega*

## Happy Recovery Birthday!

**Vonny**  
**AnnM**  
**ToniG**  
**Bob Rush**  
**not\_defeated27**  
**JimS**  
**Ruth**



**New/Returning  
Since Nov. 2011**

**Welcome**

So Glad You're Here!



**Claudia  
Sharon  
Pengyou  
Circloftime  
Dianne  
Caroline  
Ann  
Carmen**

## A Simple Prayer ...

Today,  
For what I am that I ought not to be, Forgive me.  
For what I am not that I ought to be, Forgive me.  
Be with my mouth in what it speaks,  
Be with my hands in what they do,  
Be with my mind in what it thinks,  
Be with my heart in what it feels,  
Work in me  
...through me  
...for me  
...in spite of me  
In the precious name of Jesus,  
Amen

## IF YOU WANT TO MAKE GOD LAUGH, TELL HIM YOUR PLANS.

*It's awfully tempting to assume that I know more than I do. If I'm not careful I can imagine that I understand how every occurrence fits into God's plan. And from there it's a small step to pretending I can know God's will in every situation.*

*... I can't and I don't and I need to remember that. He's God, I'm not.*

*... But His desire always involves relationship. He wants us to experience the joy of walking along and being involved in building His kingdom. He chooses to allow us to work with Him and experience the fullness of fellowship with Him.*

Excerpts from ... "How to Make God Laugh" by Rich Dixon

Response from the Boards ... **It is always good to remember His desire for me. I don't know the paths He takes me down in my life; I just know He has paths. I don't know I have what it takes, but I DO KNOW he gives me what I NEED. He has a purpose, I have a Will. He has a Love, and I have... need.**

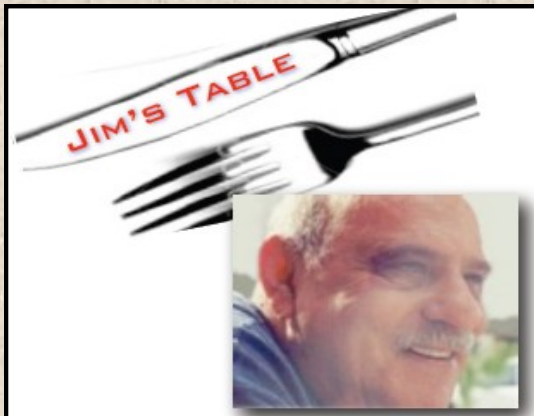
# IS IT DISCOURAGEMENT OR MORE?



*Have you ever felt discouraged? Have you felt it difficult to find what you needed at your lowest time? Have you found the truth in the old saying "You can't pull yourself up by your bootstraps"? What do you do then?*

*Come dine at Jim's Table and let us learn with each other as he shares his experience, strength and hope .*

*Original article by Gabriel Assoc. Editor, Jim Aquila*



**I** often get discouraged, especially when confusion is at a boiling point all around me. To calm myself down I slip into one or more of my negative behaviors. I wish I could tell which would pop-up. Then I could do something about it

**Genesis 6:5** *"Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil."*

For several weeks, possibly more, I can't quite remember, I found myself suffering from a discouragement that seemed to have turned into depression. It just would not go away. I felt overwhelmed, frustrated and useless. Of course somewhere in the background I knew that I was not useless, but I wondered why it seemed that I was the only one who was feeling discouraged and depressed?

Addiction does funny things to my mind causing me to constantly rationalize which of a number of habitual behaviors would be best suited for the occasion. Unfortunately behaviors all look different, wear many faces, and are not limited by how smart I



am, how much money I have or my age. In this recent episode, I was so busy rationalizing that before I realized it I was drowning in a sea of discouragement. Nothing seemed to work. And what made it even more discouraging, before long I couldn't remember what it was like before I took on this miserable life.

I know now that depression can adopt a broad range of negative "mind states". In fact, I am wearing one of it's many faces as I write this article. From my experience, in the beginning depression can show up as simple discouragement, or a sinking feeling after hearing bad news. It can also begin after suffering a personal loss of something or someone, or after a simple blow to my ego.

In many of these cases my pride is hurt and I just feel like crawling under a table to hide. This downward feeling may last a few hours or a few days. In the beginning discouragement is not very serious because it is a feeling that most of can overcome, can't we? Or do we need help before we experience long-term chronic or crippling emotions—the feelings of futility, hopelessness, emptiness, and a lack of joy, even the loss of physical energy to do anything about our predicament! These same feelings can cause me to slip into a loss of self-esteem, guilt, and shame.

We can read about guilt and shame in Genesis 3:7-8:

*And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*

Adam and Eve knew that they were naked because there was a change in their thinking— in their perspective, in the way they looked at things that occurred. As long as they were united to God they looked at Him and at things, in a way that was not offensive to Him. Yet, as soon as they sinned, their minds changed. They began to see evil in things. They felt shame in their nakedness. In addition, *'Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.'* - [Forerunner Commentary](#)

I was very fortunate because it took me only 50 years to realize that changes in my thinking must take place if I was ever going to overcome sin. I learned, in progressive step fashion and became motivated to take strong measures against the character defects and problems in my life. Each of us is motivated differently. I can only take care of myself. There are no 1,2,3 solutions. The fight is difficult because human nature sees sin as appealing and pleasurable. Each of us, in our own way, must come to see addiction as a pernicious, persistent, and destructive enemy that desires to leave us without hope, and to inflict us with as much pain as possible along life's path. What motivates you?

Blessings to all  
-Jim-

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES @ CIR

**Service Work is essential to recovery and Christianity. All volunteer opportunities can be done from your own home according to YOUR schedule.**



So it is with faith: if it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead. But someone will say, "One person has faith, another has actions." My answer is, "Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. I will show you my faith by my actions." James 2:1 7-18



- **Become a Meeting Host**
- **12th Step Committee**
- **Sponsor Someone**
- **Provide a Scholarship**
- **Moderate a Message Board**
- **Be a Chat Room Greeter**
- **Volunteer Coordinator**
- **Write Website Content**
- **Become a Prayer Warrior or Prayer Warrior Coordinator**
- **Grant Writing**
- **Serve on the Board of Directors**
- **Distribute CIR Brochures to your church, recovery group and colleagues**
- **Represent CIR at a Recovery Seminar in your Area**
- **Offer you Ideas and Talents if you have other ways to help!**

**[Contact us now.](#)**

**We want to hear from you!**

## Christians in Recovery® News Winter 2012

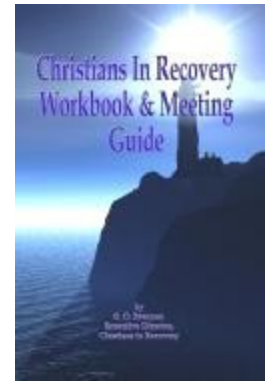
Anyone can [Subscribe for Free](#)  
Make the CIR News possible. Please [Donate](#) or [Sponsor](#).

### ANSWERS

- ◆ Need a Bible Reading Plan for 2012? We have many to choose from! [Click Here](#)
- ◆ [Get Back On Your Feet Because You Still Have To Eat](#)
- ◆ [Alcoholics Anonymous Questions Often Asked](#)

### TIP FOR SUPPORTING MEMBERS

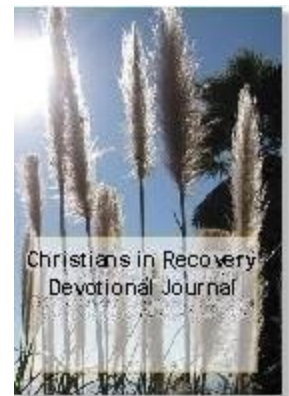
- ◆ [Workshop on Forgiveness](#) **Coming Sunday 2/12/12**  
4:00PM Eastern Time || 3:00PM Central Time || 1:00PM Pacific Time || 9:00PM GMT/UTC  
Without forgiveness of ourselves and others, healing cannot take place. Learn important principles about how to forgive, when to forgive and why to forgive. Lead by Yvonne Ortega, LPC, LSATP, CCDVC. Please join us!
- ◆ **Trauma & Addiction Workshop** We had an incredible and very informative workshop given by Yvonne Ortega on "Trauma and Addiction." If you missed the workshop you may find the transcript online: [http://christians-in-recovery.org/Tools\\_Transcripts\\_Trauma-and-Addiction-Ortega](http://christians-in-recovery.org/Tools_Transcripts_Trauma-and-Addiction-Ortega)
- ◆ The Transcript for the Workshop on "**Rebuilding Relationships in Recovery**" is now [available online](#).



[Christians in Recovery  
Workbook & Meeting Guide](#)

### HELP FOR RECOVERY

- ◆ [Putting Aside Arrogance and Embracing Humility](#)
- ◆ [Goals of a Spiritual Champion](#)
- ◆ [Alcoholics Anonymous Recovery: Twelve Steps to What!](#)
- ◆ [Christians in Recovery & Devotional Journal](#)



### FOUND ON THE NET

- ◆ [Important Treatment Advances for Addiction to Heroin and other Opiates](#)
- ◆ [FDA approves injectable drug to treat opioid-dependent patients](#)

### TOOLS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

#### **Courses & Classes**

[SoulCare 101](#) for Pastors, Counselors and Friends Enhance your personal or professional ministry through this course as you learn how to engage in other people's lives at a meaningful level and make a lasting difference. Join Dr. Larry Crabb in this course which focuses on the inner life, where we become who we were intended and long to be.

#### **Software**

[Life Journal](#) - The award winning journaling program you've been searching for. LifeJournal software for you to write, reflect, and review securely and privately. Add depth and privacy to your journaling. LifeJournal is simple, yet sophisticated journal software, created by long-time diary writers.

## More Software



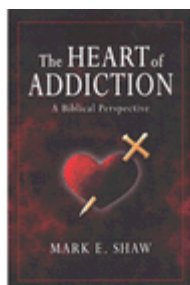
[Christians in Recovery Workbook & Meeting Guide](#)



[Christians in Recovery 12 Step Studies](#)

- ◆ [Christian Music](#) is a great way to lift your spirits, draw nearer to God and keep strong in your recovery.

## **CHRISTIAN RECOVERY READING**



- ◆ [The Heart of Addiction Book & Workbook](#) These books make the distinction between what the world terms a "disease" and what Scripture demonstrates is a life-dominating sin nature problem. You will find biblical tools to help you examine your heart's motives at the root of the addiction.
- ◆ [Hope and Help - Suffering](#) This will provide you with an understanding of your suffering and give you tools to help process your suffering through fundamentals from Scripture. Authored by Howard Eyrich
- ◆ [Psychologized Man A Biblical Perspective](#) Modern psychology and world view portray man as the center of the universe. Being taught this, many embrace a low view of God, and consequently a casual view of sin and Scripture. The evolution of psychology and how it focuses on men and women rather than God is detailed in this book. Authored by Martha Peace
- ◆ [Communication and Conflict Resolution](#) Within these pages you will find biblical ways to resolve conflict and communicate effectively. Authored by Stuart Scott.

## **WISDOM FROM A CIR MEMBER**

- ◆ We are to carry the message of recovery to the addict or alcoholic and not carry the alcoholic or addict. ~ Hank

## **QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

[I Have Forgiven My Husband's Adultery But He's Still Distant. What Should I Do?](#)

[What Distinguishes Biblical Counseling from other Methods?](#)



Have an old cell phone? Help others and [Donate it](#)



## **WISDOM FROM A CIR MEMBER**

"Anger is like the lights on a dashboard. They tell you something is going on under the hood. You must find out the source of the problem." Whenever we have expectations of another person and those expectations do not materialize, our tendency is to get angry. The source of the anger is often the fear that the unmet expectation will negatively impact us. We fear that our finances, our well-being, our image, or any number of things may be impacted by the unmet expectation.

Ecclesiastes 7:9

*Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry:  
for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*

Chaplain Michael Clark

## **Archives of Past Issues**

# Come unto Me ... AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST



Do as thou hast said.

*"And now, O LORD God, I am your servant; do as you have promised concerning me and my family. Confirm it as a promise that will last forever. [2 Samuel 7:25](#) (NLT)*

God's promises were never meant to be thrown aside as waste paper; he intended that they be used. God's gold is not miser's money, but is minted to be traded with. Nothing pleases our Lord better than to see his promises put in circulation; he loves to see his children bring them up to him, and say, "Lord, do as you have said.

We glorify God when we plead his promises.

Do you think that God will be any poorer for giving you the riches he has promised? Do you dream that he will be any less holy for giving holiness to you? Do you imagine he will be any less pure for washing you from your sins? He has said,

*"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."*

Faith lays hold upon the promise of pardon, and it does not delay, saying, "This is a precious promise, I wonder if it is true?" but it goes straight to the throne with it, and pleads, "Lord, here is the promise, 'Do as you have said.'"

Our Lord replies, "Be it done to you as you desire."

When a Christian grasps a promise, if he does not take it to God, he dishonors him; but when he hastens to the throne of grace, and cries, "Lord, I have nothing to recommend me but this, 'Thou hast said it;'" then his desire shall be granted.

Our heavenly Banker delights to cash his own notes. Never let the promise rust. Draw the word of promise out of its scabbard, and use it with holy violence. Do not think that God will be bothered by your pleadingly reminding him of his promises. He loves to hear the loud outcries of needy souls. It is his delight to bestow favors. He is more ready to hear than you are to ask. The sun is not weary of shining, nor the fountain of flowing. It is God's nature to keep his promises; therefore go at once to the throne with "Do as thou hast said."

*Charles H. Sprurgeon, 1834-1892 (adapted)*



**The CIR Website has a new [daily article](#) each day. Browse our articles free and pass along the information to your interested friends and family.**




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City Vision College Academic Office  
Email: [rjarboe@cityvision.edu](mailto:rjarboe@cityvision.edu) OR [rachaelj@techmission.org](mailto:rachaelj@techmission.org)



Have your own website? Include a link to Christians in Recovery® on your personal webpage as a way of reaching out! It's easy:

Click on this link for [Directions For Linking to Christians in Recovery®](#)

Simply copy and paste the code from one of the three options, to your web page. No HTML knowledge needed! Graphics will automatically be added!!



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[Christians in Recovery® Workbook & Guide](#)



[Christians in Recovery® 12 Step Bible Studies](#)



[Bible Aid](#)



[Palm OS](#)

## "Songs that 'Soar'"

iLOVESoccer's ipod playlist:

- ◆ "Cry Out To Jesus", "Mountain Of God" & "The Sun Is Shining" from the CD "Wherever You Are" by Third Day
  - ◆ "Sweet Jesus" & "I Live For You" by True Vibe
  - ◆ "I Can Only Imagine" by MercyMe
  - ◆ "Thank You" by Maranatha Kids
  - ◆ "Savior" by Go Fish
  - ◆ "I Believe" & "Wonderful World" by Connie Talbot
  - ◆ "Friend Of A Wounded Heart" & "Would I Know You" by Wayne Watson
  - ◆ "Were You There", "Press On" & "You Raise Me Up" by Selah
  - ◆ "Untitled Hymn (Come To Jesus)" & "Go Light Your World" by Chris Rice
  - ◆ "Lift Every Voice" by "Acappella"
  - ◆ "My Heart, Your Home", "Be The Centre", "You Are My King (Amazing Love)" & "You Are My All In All" -by Kid Stuf Singers
  - ◆ "One Thing I Know" by Selah
  - ◆ "Children Of America" by Cactus Cuties
  - ◆ "He Knows My Name" & "I Lift Up My Hands" by Israel & New Breed
  - ◆ "Down On My Knees" by Vineyard Music, Jodie Frye, soloist
  - ◆ "Apologize" by 33Miles
  - ◆ "I Repent" by Steve Green
  - ◆ "You're Still Here" Kathy Troccoli
  - ◆ "Secret Place" by Clint Brown
  - ◆ "People Need The Lord" by Steve Green
  - ◆ "Restore Me" by Jason Ingram
  - ◆ "Alabaster Box" by Cece Winans
  - ◆ "You Were Meant to Be" by Kaitlyn Maher
  - ◆ "Be Lifted High" by Michael W. Smith
  - ◆ "Piece Of Heaven" by Go Fish
  - ◆ "All Is Forgiven" by Michael O'Brien
- .... And many more!

Check out [the Poetry & Music Buffs Forum](#)

## The Creator Among Us

*I wrote this poem after reading a devotion in "My Utmost For His Highest" by Oswald Chambers. The devotion was for Jan 12th and entitled "Have you ever been alone with God?" RoadRunner*

**G** was shocked, confused, bewildered  
As I entered Heaven's door,  
Not by the beauty of it all,  
Nor the lights or its decor.

But it was the folks in Heaven  
Who made me sputter and gasp--  
The thieves, the liars, the sinners,  
The alcoholics and the trash.

There stood the kid from seventh grade  
Who swiped my lunch money twice.  
Next to him was my old neighbor  
Who never said anything nice.

Bob, who I always thought  
Was rotting away in hell,  
Was sitting pretty on cloud nine,  
Looking incredibly well.

I nudged Jesus, 'What's the deal?  
I would love to hear Your take.  
How'd all these sinners get up here?  
God must've made a mistake.

'And why is everyone so quiet,  
So somber - give me a clue.'  
'Hush, child,' He said,  
'they're all in shock.  
No one thought they'd be seeing you.'

Shared by Samuel

## Have you ever been alone with God?"

When God gets you alone  
When busyness and bustling ways  
Have flown  
Mantras from our culture's craze  
Disowned  
Icons of our supermen  
Deboned  
What will transpire  
Will you be honed?

With all you've been can yet you be  
Refined  
With past redeemed can yet you free  
Your mind  
In step with Him whose waiting yoke  
Is kind?  
The time is ripe  
And rarefied the wine.

Feel free to take a break and smell the roses at  
<http://furtherreaches.com/>

From Obie:

Here is a beautiful song about our love toward God's son Jesus. Hope that you can play it from Youtube. Try to read along as the lyrics are shown on the screen

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjv1JqrT2Go>

## "I'd Rather See A Sermon"

By Edgar Guest

I'd rather see a sermon  
Than hear one any day;  
I'd rather one should walk with me  
Than merely tell the way.

The eye's a better pupil  
And more willing than the ear,  
Fine counsel is confusing,  
But example's always clear;

And the best of all the preachers  
Are the men who live their creeds,  
For to see good put in action  
Is what everybody needs.

I soon can learn to do it  
If you'll let me see it done;  
I can watch your hands in action,  
But your tongue too fast may run.

And the lectures you deliver  
May be very wise and true,  
But I'd rather get my lessons  
By observing what you do;

For I might misunderstand you  
and the high advice you give,  
But there's no misunderstanding  
how you act and how you live.

And all travelers can witness  
That the best of guides today  
Is not the one who tells them,  
But the one who shows the way.

Though an able speaker charms me  
with his eloquence, I say,  
I'd rather see a sermon  
than to hear one, any day.

Contributed by liveandlearn



## CHECK OUT THESE WORDS - FEEL HIS LOVE

*from dulcinea*

He is jealous for me, Loves like a hurricane, I am a tree,  
Bending beneath the weight of his wind and mercy.  
When all of a sudden, I am unaware of these afflictions  
eclipsed by glory,  
And I realize just how beautiful You are,  
And how great Your affections are for me.

And oh, how He loves us so  
Oh how He loves us,  
How He loves us so

He loves us,  
Oh how He loves us,  
Oh how He loves us,  
Oh how He loves.

We are His portion and He is our prize  
Drawn to redemption by the grace in His eyes  
If grace is an ocean, we're all sinking  
So Heaven meets earth like an unforeseen kiss  
And my heart turns violently inside of my chest  
I don't have time to maintain these regrets  
When I think about the way

Oh, how He loves us  
Oh how He loves us,  
How He loves us so

Yeah, He loves us,  
Oh how He loves us,  
Oh how He loves us,  
Oh how He loves.

Music and Lyrics ny the David Crowder Band  
<http://youtu.be/TWgeUrD4MHI>

## A LOOK AT RELAPSE

*A checklist of symptoms leading to relapse taken from the Hazelden Foundation pamphlet, "A Look at Relapse". <http://www.hazelden.org>*

**1. EXHAUSTION** - Allowing yourself to become overly tired or in poor health. Some Alcoholics are also prone to work addictions - perhaps in a hurry to make up for lost time. Good health and enough rest are important. If you feel well you are more apt to think well. Feel poorly and your thinking is apt to deteriorate. Feel bad enough and you might begin thinking a drink couldn't make it any worse.

**2. DISHONESTY** - This begins with a pattern of unnecessary little lies and deceits with fellow workers, friends, and family, then come important lies to yourself. This is called "rationalizing" - making excuses for not doing what you don't want to do, or for doing what you know you should not do.

**3. IMPATIENCE** - Things are not happening fast enough. Others are not doing what they should or what you want them to do.

**4. ARGUMENTATIVENESS** - Arguing small and ridiculous points of view indicates a need to always be right. "Why don't you be reasonable and agree with me?" Looking for an excuse to drink?

**5. DEPRESSION** - Unreasonable and unaccountable despair may occur in cycles and should be dealt with - talked about.

**6. FRUSTRATION** - At people and also because things may not be going your way. Remember -- everything is not going to be just the way you want it to be.

**7. SELF-PITY** - "Why do these things happen to me?" "Why must I be an alcoholic?" "Nobody appreciates all I am doing - for them?"

**8. COCKINESS** - Got it made - no longer fear alcoholism - going into drinking situations to prove to others you have no problem. Do this often enough and it will wear down your defenses.

**9. COMPLACENCY** - "Drinking was the furthest thing from my mind." Not drinking was no longer a conscious thought, either. It is dangerous to let up on disciplines just because everything is going well. Always to have a little fear is a good thing. More relapses occur when things are going well than otherwise.

**10. EXPECTING TOO MUCH FROM OTHERS** - "I've changed, why hasn't everyone else?" It's a plus if they do, but it is still your problem if they do not. They may not trust you yet, may still be looking for further proof. You cannot expect others to change their style of life just because you have.

**11. LETTING UP ON DISCIPLINES** - Prayer, meditation, daily inventory, AA attendance. This can stem either from complacency or boredom. You cannot afford to be bored with your program. The cost of relapse is always too great.

**12. USE OF MOOD-ALTERING CHEMICALS** - You may feel the need to ease things with a pill and your doctor may go along with you. You may never have had a problem with chemicals other than alcohol, but you can easily lose sobriety starting this way - about the most subtle way of having a relapse. Remember you will be cheating! The reverse of this is true for drug-dependent persons who start to drink.

**13. WANTING TOO MUCH** - Do not set goals you cannot reach with normal effort. Do not expect too much. It's always great when good things you were not expecting happen. You will get what you are entitled to as long as you do your best, but maybe not as soon as you think you should. "Happiness is not having what you want, but wanting what you have."

**14. FORGETTING GRATITUDE** - You may be looking negatively on your life, concentrating on problems that still are not totally corrected. Nobody wants to be a Pollyanna - but it is good to remember where you started from, and how much better life is now.

**15. "IT CAN'T HAPPEN TO ME"** - This is dangerous thinking. Almost anything can happen to you if you get careless. Remember you have a progressive disease, and you will be in worse shape if you relapse.

**16. OMNIPOTENCE** - This is a feeling that results from a combination of many of the above. You now have all the answers for yourself and others. No one can tell you anything. You ignore suggestions or advice from others. Relapse is probably imminent unless drastic change takes place.



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Join together with your fellow Christians in Recovery® and enjoy an Online Community that is rich in content and helps all to grow spiritually. **CIR is the only full-featured Christian recovery community on the internet.** Other sites may have message boards but they are not monitored and they have no chat. They might have a chat room but no formal scheduled or monitored chats and no information and resources. Other recovery sites will not respond to your emails. **We respond to you immediately** and always within 12 hrs.

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- 
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(You will have the chance to change your mind)

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# CIR BENEDICTION

Ellen brings us a wonderful ending for this issue of *The Gabriel*. This is an article to be savored and read in small bites with the Lord at your side.

Enjoy and be blessed!

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## THE RECOVERY PRAYER



Oh merciful one

Lay your hand of blessing upon my head

Create in me a clean heart

Restore my mind and

Renew a grateful spirit within me

Fill my soul with unconditional love and

Increase my faith to trust you for all things

Please remove the taste from my mouth,

the thought from my mind,

and the desire from my heart for anything unlike you.

I surrender to Your Will;

To do what is good and right

Grant me wise discernment

Examine my life

Remove the stain of guilt and shame.

In your unfailing love, guide me and strengthen me

Steady my feet on a firm foundation so they will

never slip from the path to wholeness.

So be it!

Ellen R Graham-Yates © Copyright 2012

## RECOVERY PRAYER MEDITATION

**Oh merciful one:** No matter what you have done your Creator is merciful. When you take a step towards your Creator humbly acknowledging that you have made mistakes, your Creator will take two steps towards you. When you come to your Creator walking, your Creator will come running to you with open arms.

When your Creator is merciful it means He is willing to give you another chance. It means He knows that you are not your mistakes because your mistakes do not define you. Mercy offers you a new beginning.

**Place your hand of blessing upon my head:** When you begin to live life on life's terms often-times disappointments and difficulties come. Sometimes, we have to sow in tears before we can reap blessings. Your Creator's blessings take time to fulfill, and you need to be aware that sometimes that process of fulfillment involves suffering and adversity. There are times when your Creator's earthly blessings are conditional and are dependent upon obedience, loving, you're Creator, obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him. With your Creator's hand of blessing upon your head, while your outer man is rotting, your inner man is being renewed daily. Oftentimes we ask for blessings from the Creator but we ask amiss. Your blessing is not always for you to keep but it is to be a blessing to others. When you are fulfilling your assignment or purpose you will find that you don't even need to ask, blessings will chase you down.

**Create in me a clean heart:** Create denotes an act of "creation;" or causing something to exist where there was nothing before. Self-destructive behavior impairs your whole being. It alters and contaminates your heart. A clean heart is a pure heart. Your heart has been tarnished and defiled by substances and needs to be cleansed and purified. You cannot purify your heart, but you can be open to your Creator cleansing and purifying your heart. Once you are open and ask, now the Creator can heal, purge and purify your heart. Your Creator forgives and He also forgets!

**Restore my mind:** You need help from your Creator to renew your mind. Your fleshly body is still being controlled by your diseased mind. Your body does what your mind tells it to do. Renewing your mind is simply changing your mindset, and replacing old attitudes, ideas, behaviors, beliefs, opinions, and desires. Once you ask your Creator to renew your mind you will begin to experience improvement in your physical and/or spiritual lives.

**Renew a grateful spirit within me:** You are asking your Creator to renovate, refurbish, and revamp your mindset as well as supervise your progress. Gratitude is not about having a house, car, or job. It is not about having stuff. Your Creator can assist you in not just being grateful for the stuff you have, but for being grateful for your existence...for life itself which includes the good, the bad, and the ugly experiences. Having a grateful spirit helps you see that even the "bad" and "ugly" times have some purpose in your life, and oftentimes is necessary for personal growth.

*Loving yourself seems strange and selfish at first but when you do then you are able to love and allow others to love you.*

When you allow your Creator to renew a grateful spirit within you it will come from deep within your heart and soul which gives you an appreciation for everything in your life. Trials, tribulations, and problems now become "challenges." A grateful spirit will change how you see things, which will eventually change your life.

**Fill my soul with unconditional love:** Loving yourself seems strange and selfish at first but when you do then you are able to love and allow others to love you. Unconditional self-love stops the emotional pain and you no longer have

to explain or justify yourself. You understand that everyone makes mistakes, you learn and grow from them and let them go.

**Increase my faith to trust you for all things:** You are asking your Creator to increase your belief that He has your best interest at heart for "all things." You now have the ability to

show your Creator (by your actions and not your feelings) that whatever the challenge or problem you face you have faith and trust in Him that He directs your path. Even when you get fired, are cheated on, someone close to us dies, etc., you know that when your Creator closes one of those doors He's forcing you to change your path to the open door so you walk right into your blessing.

**Please remove the taste from my mouth, the thought from my mind and the desire from my heart for anything unlike you:** Now your Creator can wash, cleanse, sanctify, justify, purify you and make you whole, it sounds like a lot but not for Your Creator. You're Creator, Who is Spirit, lives within you. If you were

Continued on next page



inviting your Creator over for dinner you would surely clean your house. Well your body is the house that your Creator lives in so that should give you the reason to keep “your house” clean because you wouldn’t want your Creator to share you with negative thoughts, unhealthy substances and a perverted heart. You are asking your Creator to search you thoroughly and examine not just your outward conduct, but what you think about; what you put in your body and what secures your heart and controls your will. If your heart and mind are corrupt you will deceive yourself and you may end up back in the vicious cycle of self-destruction.

**I surrender to Your Will; to do what is good and right:** You have to surrender daily because there are days when you struggle to put your will aside and ask your Creator what His will is for your life. Your spirit wants to do what is good and right but your fleshly body or the human part of you is weak. By surrendering you are allowing the spirit of your Creator to overcome that feeling of your fleshly body and/or ego to rule your life. The spirit is your Creator’s way of communicating with you. Surrendering daily allows your Creator’s will to be done in your life. When you follow your spirit daily you open yourself up to experience happiness, success and ful-

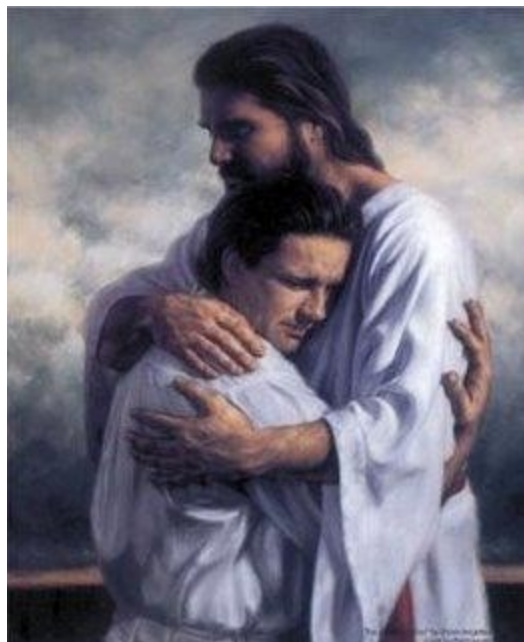
fillment. Your body is the shell for your spirit therefore you have to practice quieting your ego and actively listening so you can be able to follow and obey your spirit--completely.

**Grant me wise discernment:** Self destructive behavior cause you to lack judgment and wisdom in spite of your abundance in intelligence. Put simply, wise discernment is the process of searching out decisions that are right for you. Asking your Creator for wise discernment helps you to differentiate right from wrong and the wisdom to know what to do about it. Wise discernment provides you with a healthy lifestyle that includes having the ability to separate truth from lies, delusion from reality, and fiction from facts. You will know the difference between: truth ruled by your emotional pain and Spiritual Truth; emotional impulsivity and innate guidance; and living the life of a victor versus a victim. More so, it’s recognizing the character of a trustworthy person and one who will deceive us. When you have wise discernment you will be able to differentiate a true soul connection from an emotional attraction to a person who is emotionally unavailable.

**Examine my life:** In order to maintain the level you are currently experiencing in your recovery you must ask your Creator to examine your life. There are times when you want to do the right thing but find yourself doing what is wrong. When your Creator examines your life, he will do so with the closest scrutiny, examining for self-deception; resentments; inappropriate feelings or desires; reservations and ego. You are asking Him to show you the areas where you are out of balance or where your flesh is ruling your spirit. Your life should show some growth in areas that were once non-existent or stagnate. Examination also puts a spotlight on the obstacles and distractions that keep you from reaching

your goals. Your Creator likes to examine your life to ensure you are maintaining a willing spirit.

**Remove the stain of guilt and shame:** Guilt and shame...the kissing cousins are the darkness in our lives that is unbearable. If you spill red wine on a white table cloth it is stained and no longer useful and you have to throw it away...it is the same with the stain of guilt and shame. You need your Creator's forgiveness and restoration which are both free. Your Creator will honor a sincere request for forgiveness and restoration all you have to do is ask. Asking your Creator to remove the stain of guilt and shame, removes the hostile roots of sorrow, self-pity, anger, unforgiveness and hatred so that you can pray this prayer in faith. You have now released the bondage of guilt and shame and are free to experience a well-grounded inner peace and the beginning of a new life.



**In your unfailing love, guide me and strengthen me:** You are acknowledging that your Creator loves you unconditionally and you are asking Him to direct, uphold, and never leave you. You are admitting that you have surrendered and cannot direct your own steps; therefore desiring to be directed in the way you should proceed; while removing obstacles without any difficulty acknowledging that you know that it is safe and satisfying proceeding because your Creator is guiding the way. Self-destructive behavior makes your soul weary and is a steady stream of emotionally painful and persistent tears. It feels as if your soul is slowly dissolving with each tear drop which wears your soul down. Your Creator offers you the strength to defeat the

lack of sleep and anxiety that gradually consumes your life. With life comes trials and tribulations but your Creator makes you strong in your weaknesses. Your Creator wants to be your strength. He loves it when you depend on Him and he can strengthen your spirit to be strong, immovable, unshakable and steadfast!

**Steady my feet on a firm foundation so they will never slip from the path to**

**wholeness:** Your Creator wants you to keep

your feet planted on Him so that you will not fall into the self-destructive behavior, but if you do He is ready to lift you up from the pit of destruction, and set your feet upon a rock. Asking your Creator to steady your feet on a firm foundation so that you will not slip from the path to wholeness, enables you to walk on solid ground; he will keep you safe so as not to descend into self-destructive behavior again and again and again. Your self-destructive behavior created a

broken body and spirit but once you ask for wholeness your Creator can break the bondage and nurture you to grow magnificently into the marvelous light of freedom, joy, peace and love.

**So be it:** You are affirming that it is done!

*Ellen is a Certified drug and alcohol counselor working in an inpatient rehab. Her job is her ministry as well. She believes that it is her duty to help others heal/recover.*

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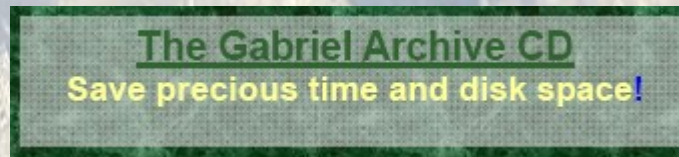
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