

*Spring-Summer 2016*

# the **GABRIEL**

**The Magazine for Christians in Recovery**

In this Issue!

- ★ Relapse
- ★ The Power to Choose
- ★ Fighting Demoralization
- ....and More!

# The Gabriel

Spring-Summer 2016

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If you would like to submit an original article for inclusion in the next issue of "The Gabriel", we would love to consider it. For more information and publication guidelines email [clara@christians-in-recovery.org](mailto:clara@christians-in-recovery.org). If not an original article, we would need you to also send copyright permission from the author or source along with the submission.



## The Gabriel

**The Gabriel** is a publication of Christians in Recovery® dedicated to the uplifting and inspiration of it's members and friends. It is published 4 times a year, once each quarter.

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**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 to alcohol, drugs, food, pornography, sex, 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 to go beyond general recovery assistance by providing comprehensive resources to help people fully discover, explore and magnify all possibilities that God intends for their lives.

### 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>

## Where are you God?

I'm going to do something a little different today. A "real" musing:

Where are you God?

I see you in the unseen force moving the leaves of the maple tree outside my window.

You are in the faces of the people around the table at my face to face meeting and in their words.

Something about my granddaughter's eyes have you in them also - the hope, the innocence, the future.

I saw a little bird on the sidewalk this morning as I drove past. He had just found the biggest, juiciest worm and I saw you in his joy.

You are places I'd never expect to see you also. On those days when I feel so hopeless and unable even to do the things I know I should, I remember You said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." And I am amazed at Your Wisdom.

One night I prayed so hard to hear Your Voice and waited... and waited... and then I heard You Speak in the thunder. You honored my prayer and faith.

Sometimes I only see you when looking back. Long ago in a time of darkness You told me "There are lights and brights that you do not see." I look back at that time today and see only the Light of Your Spirit. Truly you spoke the truth.

Each day that I go to a chat or phone meeting at CIR You are there. There is gentleness. There is truth. There is Love. Never have I gone to one of the rooms and did not find You there in the hearts and minds of the ones I've come to love there.

Lastly, at the end of the day, I find you in the Word by my bed.. I find you in the longings of my heart. Sometimes I even find you in the unspeakable prayers of my need.

And You do not remain still. That would be an idol. You are living, moving, being, in all Your ways. Tomorrow I may find you in a new place. I will look. Because like Gratitude's, our list of places we find You is as unending and eternal as Your Love.

You have been with us all along as far back as we can see and in each day! Praise you God!

*ClaraT*

Editor of The Gabriel



# The Truth Shall Set You Free

## Part 3 of a 10 part series

by Michael the Penguin

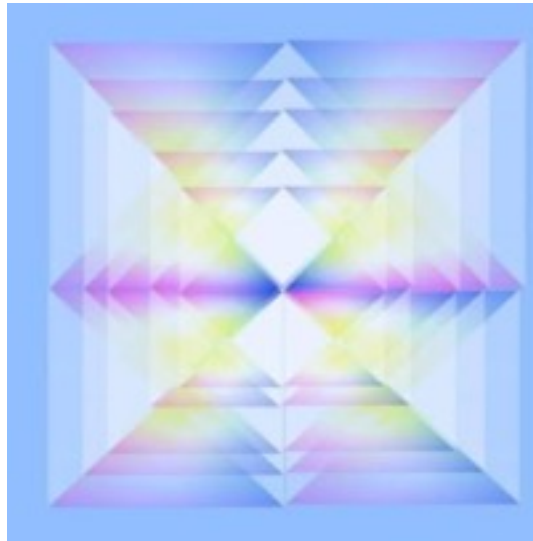


In the second installment, I testified how God's Word -- His Truth -- set me on the road to freedom, not just freedom from alcohol, but also freedom to become the man God wants me to be.

Presumably the story could have ended there. After all, I had hit rock bottom, knew despair and loneliness, hated the person I really was, and all of this ended by the intervention of my Lord Jesus. Not only did He intervene but He showed me truth in His word, and that truth set me free.

End of story. Let the violins swell up to a crescendo while you see me disappearing into a beautiful landscape of life wonderful.

No. The story begins there. That landscape is beautiful at times, but a lot of the times it is a rocky difficult terrain and it has almost sucked me dry while I navigate through it. These have been some good 12 sober years, but at the same time, they have sometimes been downright awful. Why? I did not always continue in His word. Often I would ignore His word and would go my own way, and when I did boy was it terrible. I also think that I was not discerning enough to see that in some of that rocky terrain maybe God was trying to teach me something. If so, then I flunked the class. So, these 12 years have been "up and down."



Look at these versions of John 8:31-32:

*Then Jesus turned to the Jews who claimed to believe in Him. "If you stick with this, living out what I tell you, you are my disciples for sure. then you will experience for yourselves the truth, and the truth will free you." (The Message)*

*So Jesus said to those Jews who had believed in Him, if you abide in My word [hold fast to My Teachings and live in accordance with them], you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the Truth and the Truth will set you free. (The Amplified Bible).*

*Jesus said to them, "You are truly my disciples if you live as I tell you to and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. (The Living Bible)*

What is happening here? First, as many of you know, the gospel of John is different from the other three in that it emphasizes more of

what Jesus says as compared to what Jesus does. In Chapter Eight all we know is that He is at the Temple talking with those who have followed along with Him. These public discourses dominate John's gospel up through chapter 12. From then on, His statements are to a smaller audience, mainly the Twelve and other followers.

So, the words in John 8:31-32 were for public consumption at a place revered by the Jews: the Temple. Jesus, being a good Jew, worshiped there. He also taught there. Apparently He was confronted with opposition to His teaching. But, when He spoke the words you see in John 8:28-29 many apparently came to believe in Him.

So, what does He do? He speaks directly to those people who came to believe in Him: "[If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free.](#)"

Isn't that impressive? Those who came to believe in Him got His attention and He spoke to them. I still think that is true today. In my early days as a Christian, He was there with me, teaching me through His Word, and through the lives of other Christians. This immediate attention often will separate the wheat from the chaff. In John 8:31 He lays out for them what the

*continued on next page*



character of a true disciple of His ought to be: to continue in His word.

Unfortunately, not all of those who "came to believe in Him" actually did so. Perhaps some of them had an emotional reaction that did not last. You can see that in their reactions and statements from verse 33 on. The exchange of words between these people and Jesus get pretty confrontational. Chapter Eight ends with the people trying to stone Him! But, He hides and eventually gets away and out of the Temple.

**What does it mean to continue in His word?** Here are some possible meanings from Webster: "to maintain without interruption a condition, course or action." To continue is to endure, stay, keep up, prolong, last, abide, and persist. One word that works is: abide. I like the way Matthew Henry put it:

*"It is to dwell in Christ's word, as a man does at home, which is his center, and rest, and refuge."*

I like that. As I write this, I am safe inside my home while an ice storm is raging outside. I hear the clicking of the sleet against the screens of my windows. Yet here I am in my home, my center, my refuge, safe, warm, and secure. That is what it is like to abide in His word.

Next time I want to take one more look at John 8:31.

My name is Michael the Penguin and I am a Christian in recovery.

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*This series will continue with Part 4 in the next edition of The Gabriel. If you would like to read more on the CIR website see:*

[http://christians-in-recovery.org/BibleStudies\\_Truth\\_The-Truth-Shall-Set-You-Free-3](http://christians-in-recovery.org/BibleStudies_Truth_The-Truth-Shall-Set-You-Free-3)

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As some of you are aware, Penguin has been working on a personal Bible Study system ever since he stopped drinking back in 1994. Eighteen years of study have produced a great deal of information and sharing. He is willing to share this with any of you who might

be interested. It is now a large file, in toto, 473 MB. It covers all 66 books of the Bible in considerable detail... using many different resources. It might be a good resource for teachers.

If you want a copy please send your snail mail address to this email address: [cirpenguin@yahoo.com](mailto:cirpenguin@yahoo.com).

It will be a CD. It would help of you have MS Word on your Computer...or something that would convert. The more recent study effort is in PDF file format.

There is no charge for any of this. It is a personal ministry of CIR's Michael the Penguin.

Thanks Penguin!

Want to find more articles on CIR by Michael or any of the other Gabriel authors? Just do a search of CIR's Archives. Here's how: Go to [www.christians-in-recovery.org](http://www.christians-in-recovery.org).

Using the Search Site link, enter the author's name or subject of interest.

Also look for the Daily Articles Link (Free!) at the right side of the page as well as other links on CIR's Facebook Page. Easy!

Are you interested in sharing your own testimony with other Members of Christians-in-Recovery?

If so check out the CIR Forum:  
[Newbie Introductions and Member Testimonies Forum](#)

# Creation Corner

## “Why Do You Post?”

Why do YOU post?  
Is it therapeutic,  
a creative drive,  
the desire to be heard,  
to share, to be understood,  
the desire to serve...etc.

What are you looking for?  
Acknowledgement of your feelings,  
improving your communication  
or writing skills,  
entertainment...etc?  
How much do you think being a  
great contributor, poster, writer,  
communicator, moderator etc...  
is "natural talent" vs. "hard work"?

Feel free to answer here!

-----  
Wise Poetry by Rev.Bola  
{Pastor/Life Coach/Artist/Poet/Musician} for:-

- 1\* Christians Victorious Fellowship & CIR UK
- 2\* Nottingham Depression Support Group - UK
- 3\* Nottingham Happiness Project Group - UK



Heavenly Father,  
If we are Your feet, Your hands, Your eyes,  
If we are to be Your love in disguise,  
If fleeting our days, receding our skies,  
Then cast out our sleepiness, faith energize.

If billowing waves of truth do surround,  
If pillowing rays of hopefulness hound,  
If You are the poor, the downcast, the meek,  
Then take and refine the fortunes we seek.

If we are the ones that need You the most,  
No matter the tongue, no matter the coast,  
If You are the One in whom we should boast,  
May dawn find us drawn to Your heavenly host

Roadrunner



## OUR MEMBERS RECOMMEND:

MOVIE: **The Rose of Sharon**  
Available free stream at iTBN.org

BOOK: Believing God by  
Beth Moore.  
[recoverybooks.com](http://recoverybooks.com)

Check “The Lounge”  
Forum for more!





"Any patch of sunlight in a wood will show you something about the sun which you could never get from reading books on astronomy. These pure and spontaneous pleasures are 'patches of Godlight' in the woods of our experience."

### Remembering Orlando by RoadRunner

We never really know the light  
'Til pressed against the dark,  
Until we've mournful bowers borne  
We miss dawn's joyful lark.

Life goes on, to and fro,  
We scurry, scattered, frayed,  
Scratching for our daily bread,  
Man's miseries inlaid.

But when we've seen the pit, the  
night,  
Strong grip of senseless chains,  
Just then we're granted Grace to see  
Soft rainbows through the rain.

### HYMN OF SURRENDER

I think this says it all about surrender.

Take my life and let it be--consecrated, Lord, to Thee.  
Take my moments and my days--let them flow in ceaseless praise.  
Take my hands and let them move--at the impulse of Thy love.  
Take my feet and let them be--swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice and let me sing--always, only, for my King.  
Take my lips and let them be--filled with messages from Thee.  
Take my silver and my gold--not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect and use--every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it Thine--it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart it is Thine own--it shall be Thy royal throne.  
Take my love my Lord, I pour--at Thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself and I will be--ever, only, all for Thee!

—Havergal  
submitted by BobRush



### Grateful For Each Step Forward\*

This day developing an attitude inc,  
Giving thanks for the cobblestone sync

I take steps, forward and freehold,  
With an attitude, of muffed foothold

To God, who knows the battleground  
Forward, is a step caster mound

Giving thanks, to everything born,  
For God knows, their total longhorn

Bigger and better than a deuce,  
I give thanks to the lord grist noose

Forward, is a step of fellowship  
Mightier than pesty judgship.

His mercy endures forever,  
Preserving from the setback fuller

The current situation, now gets pulse  
From the lord, and his rex impulse

Strengthening in the trials ark,  
To seek him for the real landmark.

Forever more a positivity arc  
Thanks to him, for bottling the shark.

Rapping in Tongues Poetry by Rev.Bola  
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# CIR NEWS

## Archives of Past Issues

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

If you benefit from the work the ministry of CIR, [please donate today](#)

### **ANSWERS**

- [Where is God When I Need Him?](#)
- [Thoughtless or Thoughtful?](#)
- [Patience: Are we there yet?](#)

### **TIP FOR SUPPORTING MEMBERS**

You can use a computer, cell phone or tablet to get into [online meetings now](#). You have the choice to use:

Java || Flash || Mobile/HTML

Choose which works best for your own device.

**New Email Meeting.** Now CIR Members can share privately and confidentially via email and the CIR Message Boards. It is designed for those who cannot make the regular scheduled online meetings and/or those who want additional meetings. Learn more [HERE](#)

Not a CIR member yet? [Learn the Benefits of Membership](#) Join us: [Click Here](#)

### **HELP FOR RECOVERY**

- [Urgent? Why??](#)
- [Had a Slip? Is Your Recovery Failing?](#)

### **WISDOM FROM A CIR MEMBER**

*Just because we are not "there" yet, doesn't mean we're a hopeless failure. ~Sheryle Cruise*

### **TOOLS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

#### **QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

- ["What Every Christian Ought To Know About Using The Internet Safely" FREE PDF Booklet](#)
- Looking for a local face-to-face meeting? Check the online databases here:  
<http://christians-in-recovery.org/db>  
<http://alcoholicsvictorious.org/database>

#### **Do you want to do something really good for yourself in 2016?**

CIR meetings are designed to help you on your recovery journey. Release pent up stress in a safe and confidential environment. Unburden yourself and learn new strategies for solving issues in life. Verbalize problems, find clarification to issues and put them in their proper perspective. Open and honest communication at meetings reduces negative thinking, which is a good way to avoid relapsing.

Be good to yourself this year by attending meetings at CIR! You don't have to face recovery alone. Please come and join us. [Click Here for the schedule](#) so you can pick the meeting(s) that suit your individual needs.

### **QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

- [Is Your Finger on the Feelings Button?](#)
- [How Did Early AA Talk about the Bible?](#)
- [What is "Normal?"](#)



### **RECOVERY EVENTS, COURSES & CONFERENCES**

- **[Become a Professional Recovery Coach](#)**  
RISE is the Premier Online Certificate Program for Professional Addiction Recovery Coaching. A 90 hour, self-paced, online training program. You will be certified to provide Professional Recovery & Life Coach Services.

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- Course 412 - Counseling Foundations
- Course 417 - Group Counseling Practices
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# The Power to Choose

*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:11-13*

Do you feel your life is limited by your past or that everything you do is under the scrutiny of others? Do you feel your future is not really in your hands? That any choice you make will certainly be wrong?

I felt this way for many years. I was externally successful, but inside I constantly felt “wrong”. It was a “lose-lose” situation. If I did what I thought I was supposed to do, then by it’s very nature it wasn’t “me” and I was destined at some point to mess up. But if I did things that I thought were right, even after prayer and wanting the will of God in my life I felt always on eggshells. Maybe there was more I could have or should have done. Yes I had a history of abuse but I thought I’d settled all that. I had done a 4th step AND a 5th and forgiven the perpetrator. But recently in a Bible Study on Shame realized that my insides hadn’t totally healed.

Abuse is defined as the systematic pattern of behaviors in a relationship that are used to gain and/or maintain power and control over another. These relationships are often more complicated than appears on the surface. The sense of powerlessness can and does continue far beyond the actual relationship has ended. Feelings of victimization, lack of control, unwillingness to make decisions, and feelings of never doing enough are often signs of an unhealed inner victim.

The truth of God’s Word brought me new light and strength. By focussing on who I am in God, not

what my past was or who I even thought I was, I realized I do not need to remain a victim. I can’t change the past, but I can live both an inner and outer life today that will change the future.

Yes, I am still powerless over my addictions, but I am not helpless. I have a voice and that voice is prayer. My recovery and faith have shown me that my life can be meaningful. I can and do help others to find the same life and joy in helping and serving a God of my understanding. , No longer am I a victim of my past - all

that happened to me and all that I did to others. Today I have the ability to choose freedom.

It’s said in the rooms, “What we focus on becomes larger. If I focus on the problem, the problem increases, but if I focus on the solution, the solution becomes stronger.” I am becoming shame-free by focussing on my solution - the Lord. My perspective changes each time I share my story honestly with another alcoholic or addict. Every meeting I attend becomes a new experience that says, “You are worth it. Today is worth it.”

Jesus has done for me far more than I ever did for myself. Knowing just that one thing keeps me moving forward in my recovery. God is not a tyrant. He does not wield some abusive power over me, nor is it a power struggle between God and me about what I do today. It is truly a joint effort. On days when I’m afraid to chose, to live, I can look in my heart and He is there, saying, “You’re doing fine. Let’s keep on going.”





# SereneScene

Magazine for Long-Term Healthy Lifestyles of Recovery

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# What is True Spirituality?

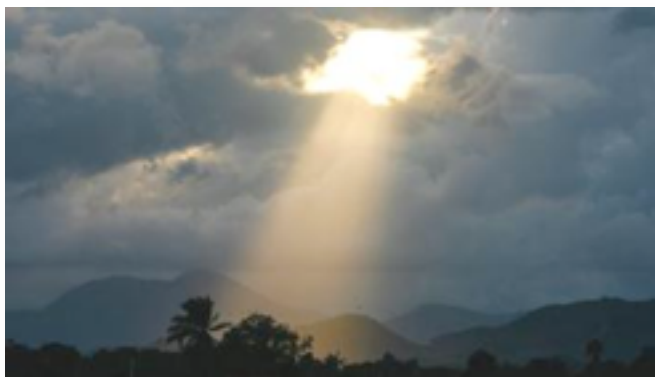
Being "spiritual" does not mean "made up of spirit." "Spirit" is not a ghost-like substance that inhabits the truly "spiritual Christian." The adjective, as in "spiritual man" and "spiritual body," does not mean ethereal, incorporeal, immaterial, otherworldly, or even unworldly as depicted in movies like *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*, *Ghost*, and *The Sixth Sense*. True spirituality takes form as we live in this world in our own bodies following God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**To be Spiritual is to be guided and motivated by the Holy Spirit.** It means obeying His commands as recorded in the Scriptures. The Spiritual man is not someone who floats in midair and hears eerie voices. The Spiritual man is the man who does what the Bible says (Romans 8:4–8). This means, therefore, that we are supposed to get involved in life. God wants us to apply Christian standards everywhere, in every area. Spirituality does not mean retreat and withdrawal from life.<sup>1</sup>

Spirituality is measured by *"good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them"* (Eph. 2:10). Good works manifest themselves at the personal level as the Christian exhibits the *"fruit of the Spirit"* (Gal. 5:22–24), at the family level as children obey their parents (Eph. 6:1), at the business level where employers pay a promised wage (Deut. 24:15), at the judicial level where all should be considered equal before the law (Lev. 24:22), and at the civil level where civil governments are paid their due (Matt. 22:21) and do what's right (Rom. 13:4).

We have been redeemed and rescued from the pollution of the world. This does not mean that we are to turn our backs on life. Rather, we are to avoid all participation in the world's uncleanness. "Christians, indeed, as our Lord taught, are the light of the world; this they cannot be if their light is hidden or withdrawn. Thus they are to let their light shine before men (Mt. 5:14 ff.), though at the same time shunning the depravities of unregenerate society and of unchristian worship."<sup>2</sup>

**A prevailing and false understanding of true spirituality** is the work of the gospel turned in on itself. To be spiritual, in the modern and corrupt sense, means to internalize the effects of the Holy Spirit's regenerating work on the sinner "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). The weakness of this definition is not that spiritual "renewal starts in the private world, but that it ends there too."<sup>3</sup> While there is an internal and spiritual reign of Christ in every



believer, there must also be an external expression of that internal faith. This is the Good Samaritan faith where Jesus tells us to "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37). Jesus does reign in the hearts of His saints. This is a necessary first step.

**The internal, spiritual reign of Christ as Savior and Lord** must not be overlooked or minimized in importance. One cannot enter into the kingdom of God apart from spiritual rebirth:

*Truly, truly I say unto you, except one be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John 3:3*

*Those who are redeemed have already been transferred into the kingdom of God's beloved Son (Colossians 1:13) and as such appreciate that "the kingdom of God is... righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).<sup>4</sup>*

If the new birth stops with growth on the inside, then it is not true saving faith, just like a light that is hidden under a bushel is not a real light (Matthew 5:14–16). Encouraging someone to be "warmed and filled" is not an expression of true faith (James 2:16). True spirituality is the Christian faith manifested. Jesus exhibited His love for the world in deeds of love and righteousness.

Endnotes:

- [1] David Chilton, *Paradise Restored: A Biblical Theology of Dominion* (Horn Lake, MS: Dominion Press, [1985] 2007), 3–4.
- [2] Philip E. Hughes, *Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962), 256.
- [3] Os Guinness, *The Gravedigger File: Papers on the Subversion of the Modern Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1983), 78.
- [4] Greg L. Bahnsen, "This World and the Kingdom of God," in Gary DeMar and Peter Leithart, *The Reduction of Christianity: A Biblical Response to Dave Hunt* (Ft. Worth, TX: Dominion Press, 1988), 351.

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**Official Alcoholics Victorious Headquarters Website**  
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Founded in 1948, Alcoholics Victorious support groups offer a safe environment where recovering people who recognize Jesus Christ as their "Higher Power" gather together and share their experience, strength and hope. AV meetings use both the [12 Steps](#) and the [Alcoholics Victorious Creed](#).

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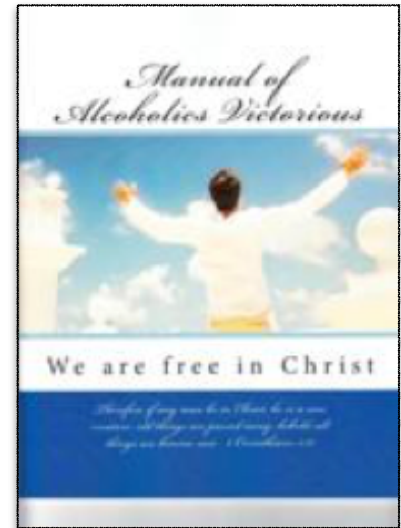
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[Alcoholics Victorious](#) is a program of Christians in Recovery. Founded in 1948, Alcoholics Victorious support groups offer a safe environment for people recovering from the effects of alcoholism or drug addiction. We recognize Jesus Christ as our "Higher Power" and gather together to share our experience, faith, strength and hope. AV meetings use the 12 Steps, the Bible and the Alcoholics Victorious Creed.



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# Do You Think He Has Forgotten You?

*Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side. After leaving them, He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray.*

*He saw that they were in serious trouble, rowing hard and struggling against the wind and waves. About three o'clock in the morning He came to them, walking on the water. Mark 6:45-46, 48*

*Jesus did not come immediately; indeed, it was almost morning when He came, and the disciples had been struggling all night in the storm. Yet He had not been indifferent to them meanwhile. From the mountainside where He was praying--He kept His eye upon them. "He saw that they were in serious trouble." All that dark night, He kept a watch upon that little boat that bore His disciples in the midst of the waves.*

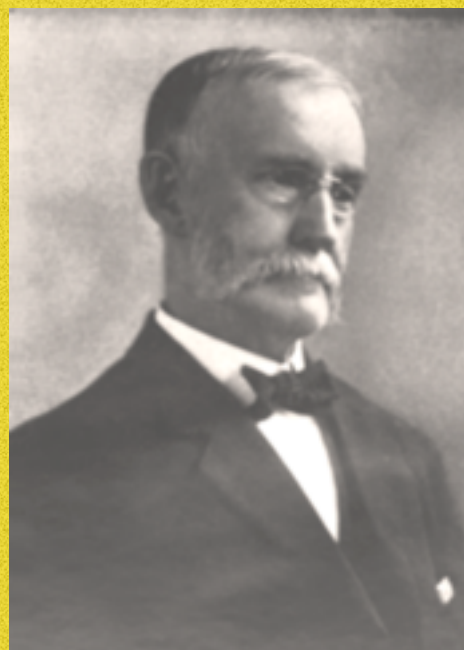
*There is something very suggestive in the narrative. This 'boat in the storm', is a picture of 'Christ's friends in this world, in the storms of life'. Sometimes we think we are forgotten--but from His place in glory, Christ's eye is always on us! He sees us struggling, battling with the waves, beaten, and distressed. He has full sympathy with us in all our struggles. It ought to be a great strength and comfort to us in trial, to know this. Jesus intercedes for us in our distresses!*

*It may not be best always to deliver us immediately--but His prayer continually ascends, that our faith may not fail in the struggle. This also should encourage us.*

*Then, He always comes in time. He may delay long--but it is never too long. If we call upon Him in trouble--we may be sure that He hears and sees us, and knows just how hard it is for us to endure; that He prays for us that we may not fail, and that He will come at the right time for our deliverance!*

~ \* ~

*J. R. Miller, "Miller's Year Book--a Year's Daily Readings"*



James Russell Miller  
(March 20, 1840 – July 2, 1912)  
was a popular and prolific Christian author.





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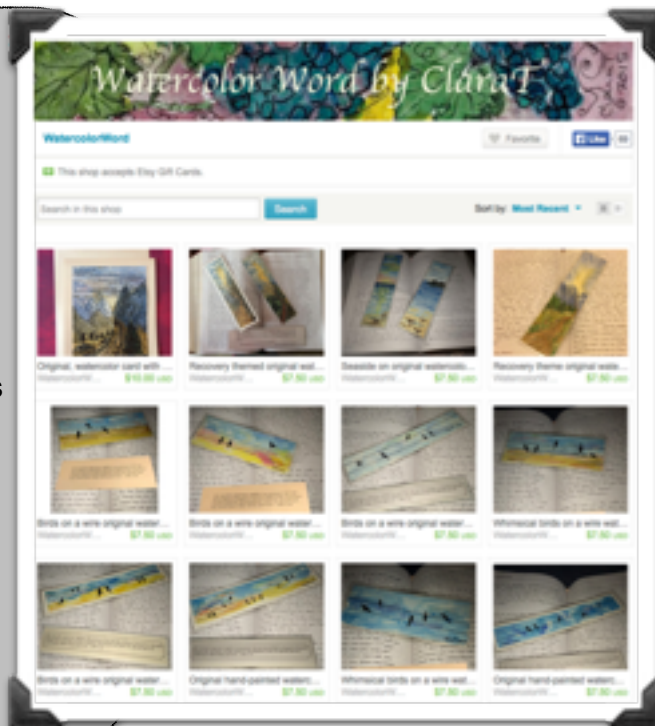
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a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors that meets on a regular basis. CIR does not receive any funding from TechMission. Donations given go directly to CIR and they are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

It is an honor for us to be able to show you that we are good stewards with the funds that God, through you, has provided to this ministry. We work continually to function with transparency, accountability and excellence. We are excited by the continual growth we are seeing throughout the ministry of CIR. Without your partnership, participation and prayers none of this would be possible.

For more information click the "How We Serve" link on the About CIR tab on the CIR Website.

# Inside a CIR Chatroom

INSIDE  
CIR

Worry vs. faith - a member's insight.

## TOPIC POSTED BY HOST:

*Recovery Thought: If we are obsessed by God, nothing else can get into our lives -- not concerns, nor tribulation, nor worries. And now we understand why our Lord so emphasized the sin of worrying. How can we dare to be so absolutely unbelieving when God totally surrounds us? To be obsessed by God is to have an effective barricade against all the assaults of the enemy. ~ Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest {submitted by Michael L.}*

*Verse: For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 2 Timothy 1:7*

- *Have you experienced being obsessed, having a hunger for God to be a barrier against the worlds ways?*
- *What causes you to fear in your life?*
- *How can you see God as a strong tower, a hiding place, as your shield of armor?*

## ONE MEMBER'S SHARE:

In the last few weeks, my family has faced even more challenges than the usual. My husband was laid off from his job, our house was water-logged and moldy after the recent Texas floods, and in the process of cleaning up after a storm a limb fell and left me with a concussion and broken arm! But through all of this, we are experiencing a revival of faith

I've been leading us (me and my husband) in daily devotions from Beth Moore's "Believing God" day by day devotional. I love that woman; she is so clear and down to earth.

The other day, God used her selection to open my eyes again. She talked about when we see ourselves as failing. Nailed me! Y'all don't know how incessantly that tape runs in my head about failing God, failing myself, failing everyone. It's just plain toxic and paralyzing.

***Have you allowed the enemy to DEMORALIZE you?***

- *to cause (someone) to lose hope, courage, or confidence*
- *to weaken the morale of: discourage, dispirit*
- *to upset or destroy the normal functioning of*
- *to throw into disorder*

***Then hear these words: God will not fail you. Grab onto Him with everything you have!***

The message posed a question: Are you letting the enemy use your fear, your sense of having failed God, yourself, others - to DEMORALIZE you WHAM! I raised my hand -lol. First I had to look the word up in the dictionary. Here's what it said:

I have been SO dysfunctional, so unable to function normally, or be productive because of the way I have "allowed" the enemy to demoralize me. re: being a failure to God ... failing to serve Him...failing to love Him... on and on...

The enemy is filled with cruel hate. Just like that hymn "A Mighty Fortress is our God". Today I am IN THE SOLUTION!!! Not by my strength or power, but because I am grabbing onto God with everything in me. Which really... what other choice to I have... !!! None that would meet my need that's for sure.

It's so good when God does a great work of humbling... so I can SEE ... so I can LEARN...so I can "get it"... and then He helps me understand "what my move is"... what my part is. AND the best part? I am really experiencing His PEACE !!!

I should be rattled by all the crazy circumstances, but I'm calm. Because I am putting my confidence in the Sovereign God.

And my thanks to all who have been praying faithfully for us. Your prayers are being answered POWERFULLY. We can't thank you all enough for your love and support.

( done )

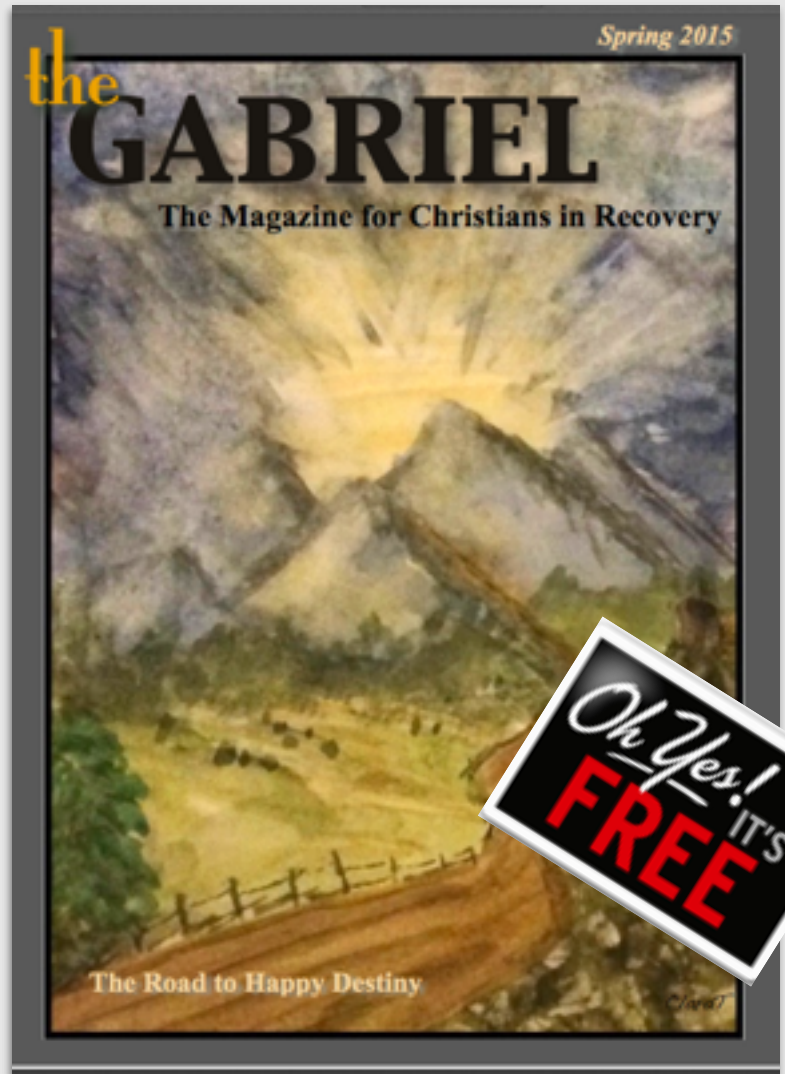
# Hey! Did you know?

Christians in Recovery® is a group of men and women who are dedicated to personal one-on-one sharing of faith, strength and hope as we live each day in recovery.

Everyone is in recovery from something: abuse, family dysfunction, depression, anxiety, grief, illness, trauma, relationships and/or addictions to alcohol, drugs, food, pornography, gambling, sex, and more.

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3	<b>Musings by ClaraT</b> Surprised by Joy <i>Clara continues her musings on the blessing given to her many years in. "If you stay sober, things will happen beyond your wildest dreams." It's true!</i>	14	<b>Special Article from CIR Author Sherde Cruse</b> Each of Us is that 100th Sheep <i>...sheep are stubborn, stupid and always getting lost and into trouble. Sheep also don't have any natural defenses and are helpless. And we are sheep. Great.</i>
4	<b>Bible Study</b> The Truth Shall Set You Free <i>First of a 10-part series from Michael the Penguin</i>	16	<b>Focus On CIR</b> The Inspiration & Thoughts Forum <i>A small sample of articles and links posted by you in our forums.</i>
6	<b>Poetry &amp; Art</b> Creation Corner <i>Poems and paintings from CIR members, Rev. Bola, ClaraT and Roadrunner</i>	17	<b>Article</b> What Does the Bible Say About Drinking Alcohol/Wine? <i>A member's response in one of our forum threads. Share your E...</i>
8	<b>CIR News</b>	18	<b>Gleanings</b> Snippets and images gleaned
9	<b>Special Article from Pastor Ron Ross</b> You Belong <i>CIR Author and Pastor, Ron Ross brings an inspirational study from the Word on why we can believe we belong.</i>	20	<b>Humor In Recovery</b>
13	<b>Christian Recovery Reading</b>	22	<b>The Back Page</b> <i>All about sharing and yes you can!</i>

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# Had a Slip?

## Is Your Recovery Failing?



["I will love them freely." Hosea 14:4](#)

This is a condensed version of the glorious message of salvation which was delivered to us in Christ Jesus our Redeemer. It hinges upon the word "freely." This is the glorious, the suitable, the divine way by which love streams from heaven to earth, a spontaneous love flowing to those who neither deserved it, purchased it, nor sought it. It is, indeed, the only way in which God can love us as we are.

The text is a death-blow to all sorts of conditions: "I will love them freely." Now, if there were any fitness necessary in us, then he would not love us freely, at least, this would be a mitigation and a drawback to the freeness of it. But it stands, "I will love you freely."

**We complain, "Lord, my heart is so hard."**

["I will love you freely."](#)

**"But I do not feel my need of Christ as I would like."**

[""I will not love you because you feel your need; I will love you freely."](#)



**"But I do not feel that softening of spirit which I desire."**

Remember, the softening of spirit is not a condition, for there are no conditions; the covenant of grace has no conditionality whatever; so that we without any fitness may venture upon the promise of God which was made to us in Christ Jesus, when he said, ["He that believeth on him is not condemned."](#)

It is a blessing to know that the grace of God is free to us at all times, without preparation, without fitness, without money, and without price! "I will love them freely."

These words invite backsliders to return: indeed, the text was specially written for them -- ["I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely."](#)

If you are a backslider, surely the generosity of the promise will at once break your heart, and you will return, and seek your injured Father's face.

~ Charles Spurgeon {adapted}  
Morning and Evening

Thank you for all of our places in that we are yours

Your children

And that nothing separates us from Your love

That we always belong to You

You are our God, and we are yours

Loved by You, taught by You

Brought back to safe places by you

If we should wander and be afraid

You are hiding place, our strong tower

You are our peace

Hedge us behind and before

Be our light and our joy this day

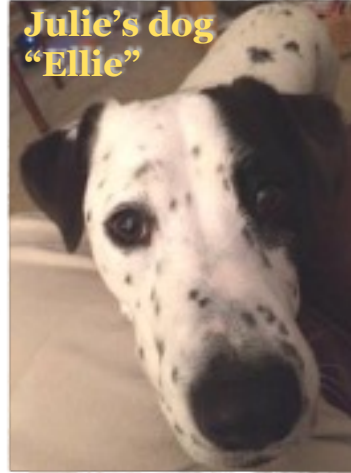
Amen

amen..AMEN

Amen

*Prayer before  
one of the  
chats*

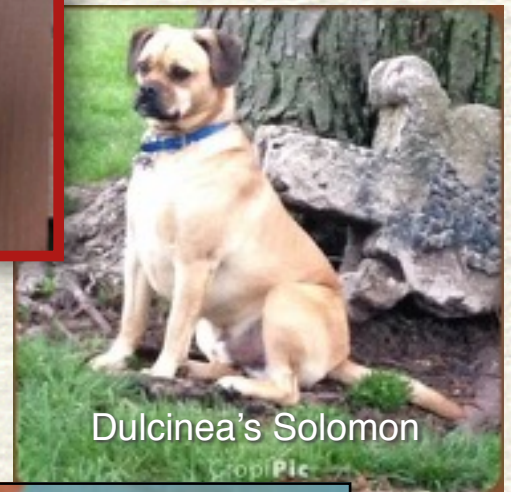
**Julie's dog  
"Ellie"**



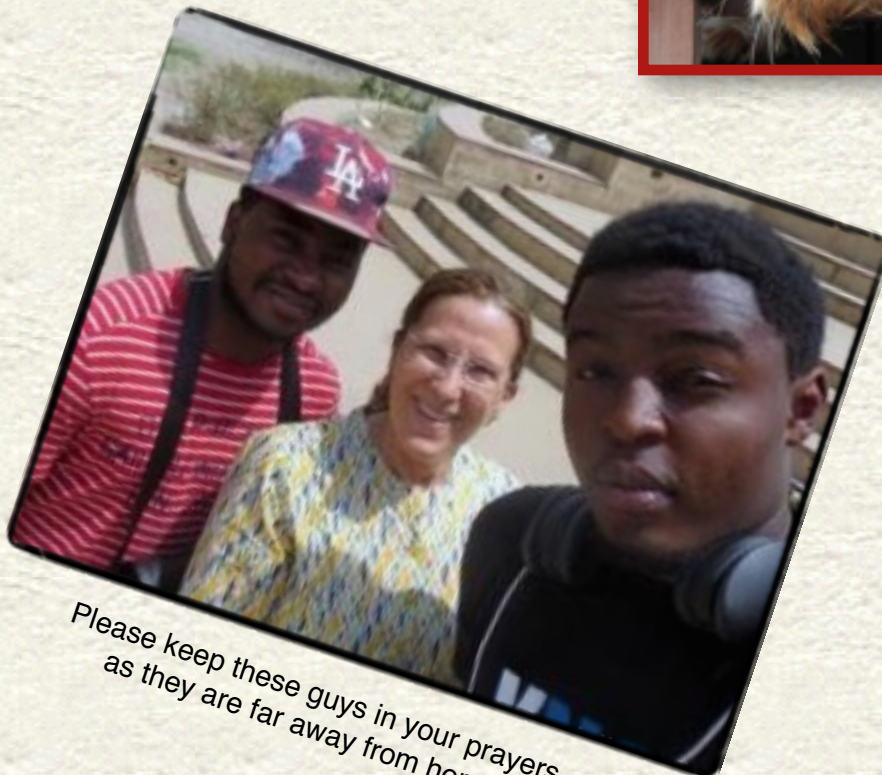
The difference  
between  
perseverance  
and obstinacy  
is: that one  
often comes  
from a strong  
will, and the  
other from a  
strong won't.  
~Henry Ward



*Koda*



Dulcinea's Solomon



Please keep these guys in your prayers  
as they are far away from home.




**Ruth's Tiny Tim**





# GLEANNINGS



*The Lord is my shepherd.*


I recall quite clearly how in my first venture with sheep, the question of paying a price for my ewes was so terribly important. They belonged to me only by virtue of the fact that I paid hard cash for them. It was money earned by the blood and sweat and tears drawn from my own body during the desperate grinding years of the depression.

But the day I bought them I also realized that this was but the first stage in a long lasting endeavor in which from then on I would, as their owner, have to continually lay down my life for them, if they were to flourish and prosper. Sheep do not 'just take care of themselves' as some might suppose. They require more than any other class of livestock, endless attention and meticulous care.

It is no accident that God has chosen to call us sheep. The behavior of sheep and human beings is similar in many ways, as will be seen in further chapters. Our mass mind (or mob instincts), our fears and timidity, our stubbornness and stupidity, our perverse habits are all parallels of profound importance.

Excerpts from page 14, A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm by Phillip Keller

*The above is a short sample from the book that the Monday Night Phone Meeting/Book Study has just begun reading. Each chapter deals with a verse of the 23rd Psalm. We read aloud from the book during the meeting and discuss what we read. Feel free join us!*



May today there be peace within. May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith. May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you. May you be content knowing you are a child of God. Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love. It is there for each and every one of us.

St. Theresa's Prayer

**Chat topic:**  
**STOP TRYING TO WORK THINGS OUT before their times have come. Accept the limitations of living one day at a time.**

# CHRISTIAN RECOVERY READING

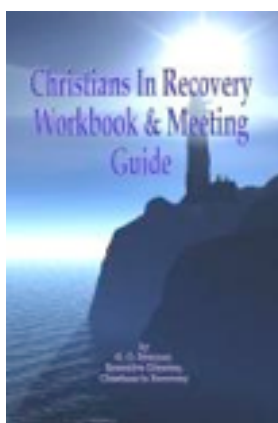


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365 Recovery Thoughts, Scriptures & Prayers to Change Your Life. This devotional and journal is for those who are seeking healing and wholeness in their life as well as a closer relationship with God.

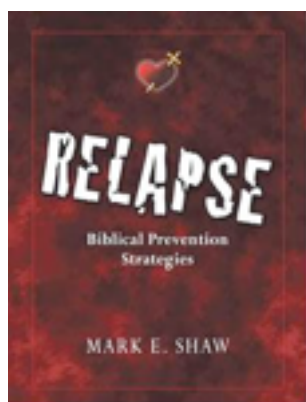
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# Humor In Recovery

## A Conversation Between Twins

In a mother's womb were two babies. One asked the other, "Do you believe in life after delivery?"

The other replied, "Why, of course. There has to be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later."

"Nonsense!" said the first. "There is no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?"

The second said, "I don't know, but there will be more light than here. Maybe we will walk with our legs and eat from our mouths.

Maybe we will have other senses that we can't understand now."

The first replied, "That is absurd. Walking is impossible. And eating with our mouths? Ridiculous! The umbilical cord supplies

nutrition and everything we need. But the umbilical cord is so short. Life after delivery is to be logically excluded."

The second insisted, "Well, I think there is something, and maybe it's different than it is here. Maybe we won't need this physical cord anymore."

The first replied, "Nonsense! And moreover, if there is life, then why has no one has ever come back from there? Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery, there is nothing but darkness and silence and oblivion. It takes us nowhere."

"Well, I don't know," said the second, "but certainly we will meet Mother, and She will take care of us."

The first replied "Mother? You actually believe in Mother? That's laughable! If Mother exists, then where is She now?"

The second said, "She is all around us. We are surrounded by Her. We are of Her. It is in Her that we live. Without Her this world would not and could not exist!!"

Said the first: "Well, I don't see Her, so it is only logical that She doesn't exist!"

To which the second replied, "Sometimes, when you're in silence and you focus and you really listen, you can perceive Her presence, and you can hear Her loving voice, calling down from above."

- Author Unknown

## THE BATHROOM COMMUNE

The story is told of a lady who was rather old-fashioned, always quite delicate and elegant, especially in her language. She and her husband were planning a week's vacation in Florida, so she wrote to a particular campground asking for a reservation.

She wanted to make sure the campground was fully equipped, but didn't quite know how to ask about the toilet facilities. She just couldn't bring herself to write the word "toilet" in her letter. After much deliberation, she finally came up with the old-fashioned term BATHROOM COMMUNE. But when she wrote that down, she still thought she was being too forward. So she started all over again and rewrote the entire letter referring to the bathroom commune merely as the BC. "Does the campground have it's own BC?" is what she actually wrote.

Well, the campground owner wasn't old-fashioned at all, and when he got the letter, he just couldn't figure out what the woman was talking about. That BC business really stumped him.

After worrying about it for awhile, he showed the letter to several campers, but they couldn't imagine what the lady meant either. So the campground owner, finally coming to the conclusion that the lady must be asking about the local Baptist Church, sat down and wrote the following reply:

Dear Madam: I regret very much the delay in answering your letter, but I now take pleasure in informing you that a BC is located nine miles north of the campground and is capable of seating 250 people at one time. I admit it is quite a distance away, if you are in the habit of going regularly, but no doubt you will be pleased to know that a great number of people take their lunches along and make a day of it. They usually arrive early and stay late. It is such a beautiful facility and the acoustics are marvelous. Even the normal delivery sounds can be heard.

The last time my wife and I went was six years ago, and it was so crowded we had to stand up the whole time we were there. It may interest you to know that right now a supper is planned to raise money to buy more seats. They are going to hold it in the basement of the BC.

I would like to say it pains me very much not to be able to go more regularly, but it surely is no lack of desire on my part. As we grow old, it seems to be more of an effort, particularly in cold weather.

If you do decide to come down to our campground, perhaps I could go with you the first time you go, sit with you, and introduce you to all the other folks.

Remember, this is a friendly community. Sincerely,  
Campground Owner





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