

THE FELLOWSHIP

Your World Recovered

March 2009

Volume 7

The Fellowship is a newsletter published by the Chemical Recovery ministry. The Fellowship is making recovery far more exciting, provocative, and high-spirited (no pun intended), than our addiction ever was. The news of this world is dominated by an earthly perspective. The Fellowship is a refreshing view of "everything under the sun" from the perspective of those formerly deeply entrenched in its vices and now free and grateful to share a unique perspective on life.



March 28, 2009

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www.chemicalrecovery.org

Last month we told you about the CR Workshop we are having at the end of March. The response has been tremendous and we are in awe of how God is moving in the hearts of disciples across the country.

We are busy planning the event and everything down to the food will be great. However we believe the greatest thing will be a bunch of addicts getting together to give glory to an awesome God

This is an event not to miss. We look forward to seeing you there!

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If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Gal 6:3

SPIRITUAL BAILOUT

dicts can relate all too well to. Having figured out that he knows best how to live his life, the parable goes, a man takes his portion of his inheritance (prior to his father's death I might add—a cash advance you may say) and squanders it in "wild living." Use your imagination to determine what wild living would mean for you. After this way of life had sucked away his money, the poverty brought him so low, during a time of famine, that he was not able to feed himself and fantasized about being able to wrap his mouth around some pig slop.

It is hard for most of us in America to really appreciate true poverty as so few of us, including myself, have ever seen someone in it. Even the poorest among us here can go to a shelter, or church, or soup kitchen, or even panhandle our way toward a decent meal. However, imagine if your poverty brought you to garbage cans for meals and you can begin to see where the prodigal son wound up. The key to this man's recovery, the key to his coming to his senses is so profound and controversial at the same time. It is this key that many of us in the business of helping addicts had come to appreciate at one time, but, on account of the world's influence on us, also need reminding as we have all but forgotten this important truth. How did this man finally come to his senses? NO ONE GAVE HIM ANYTHING.

In today's world many of us could not dream of holding back a handout from someone fallen on hard times. Far from it! In fact, we now offer hundreds of billions of dollars to companies who have mismanaged their funds and business affairs and likewise to homeowners who bought what they could not afford. Here is a hard truth few are willing to stomach: sometimes the best thing we can do for people is not give them anything. "How dare you! You mean, cold-hearted, insensitive jerk!" is the cry of the day toward many of us who look to Scriptures such as these for guidance. In the world of true and total recovery we often talk about enabling people. The idea is that if we rescue people from the natural consequences of their own decisions, i.e. giving them money when they've squandered their own, we in fact hinder them from coming to their senses. We stop people from recovering their minds, souls, bodies, lives and relationships with God in our misguided efforts to help. The prodigal son would have never returned home to his father (God), if people would have enabled him by feeding or clothing this man who put himself in a bad spot. "How unloving!" No! It is truth in love. In a world where the illogical and sentimental rule above truth and sense we, as recovering addicts committed to the truth and helping others, must seek out real remedies for the present day famines we face and be willing to seek, accept, and speak the truth no matter how unpopular that may be.

The most important lesson I've ever learned in my 14 years of helping the chemically addicted to recovery is found in the book of Luke, chapter 15; known by many as simply "The Prodigal Son." In this parable Jesus tells of a man who most, if not all, ad-

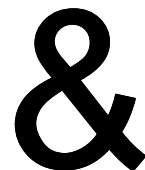
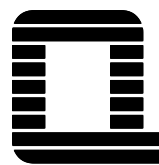


Q: In the newsletter of February 2009 you stated that Chemical Recovery did not need a leader and that it was a case of the sick helping the sick. Aren't you departing from sound biblical thinking with this approach? Leadership is mentioned often in the scriptures, why would CR be an exception to the need for leadership?

A: The nature of the Chemical Recovery fellowship that we espouse does not necessitate having a human leader appointed or recognized as such. This does not render the fellowship leaderless. The group meets in the spirit of Matthew 18:20 in which all that's needed is two or three coming together in the name of Jesus to help one another overcome sin through the power of God and in the knowledge that the Holy Spirit is with them.

The ability for everyone who participates in the CR fellowship to help one another through Empathy is essential in CR. That ability has been hindered in the past, by people being given leadership roles in CR and consequently failing to view themselves as humble members in the group - themselves needing help. It is when we are weak that we are strong (2 Corinthians 12:9-11) and we lose that strength when we fail to acknowledge and "delight" in our weaknesses. Of all the members in CR it is often the CR leaders who have been most susceptible to a lack of openness due to the unnecessary burden of leading.

Another temptation often arising from formal leadership in CR is that often people in the group depend far too much on the leader for input and direction lessening ones dependence on Scripture and hindering other important peer relationships to develop. The Fellowship is crucial to our recovery so, the more we can foster an environment conducive to Fellowship, the better. Our experience has been that once this concept is understood, those having led a CR group in the past or present are relieved to step out of the way and allow God's Spirit to lead the group as a true fellowship.



S t i n k i n g
T h i n k i n g

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. (Eph 4:17)

We live in a world filled with greed, where compromise and corruption are in and integrity is seldom seen. I remember talking with a co-worker about being successful. "You can't succeed and still have integrity" he said, meaning that to make it you have cheat, or become unethical. What a sad statement, however this

is how so many people think today. Pick up a newspaper and read about Corporate America or Professional Sports. The examples set by these individuals among others put forth a very strong argument for the partnership between success and lack of integrity. But it really that hard to live a life that is contrary to the norms of this world? God calls his church to be holy, to be set apart. We're called to be different, yet we struggle with the same things. The apostle Paul gives us some insight why we struggle. Romans 7 says, When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. There is a war being waged against our mind. Paul says, You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph4:22-24) In other words we will be transformed when we renew our minds. (Romans12)

Let's not buy into the lies (thinking) of this world or give into our deceitful desires. But, change our thinking and win the wars that wages against our mind



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