

Mighty to Save ministries

Offering hope and new beginnings to young adults who want to be free from addictions by providing mentoring, discipling and transition assistance.

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Love...

I've been spending a lot of time thinking about this word lately, specifically, God's love, God's love for me and God's love for the people He has put in my life through MtSM. How do I love them as He loves them? How do I unconditionally and without judgment or prejudice love them? I can't, not on my own anyway. It is because Christ first loved me (1 John 4:19) that I am able to go out and love others. 1 John 4:12b "God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us." That's what I want.

I have learned through these past few years that it is His love that empowers me to do what I do. I do not have it in me alone, it is all Him. It is His love that changes lives; and it is His love that captures the hearts of the hurting. It is His love that heals. It is not my telling them what to do and how to do; but it is continuing to love them and to reach out to them even when they have turned and are running the other way. It is not telling them what they are doing wrong. They already know what they are doing wrong. They don't need to hear it from me. It is being able to listen, to help when I can, and to be there when they say they

are ready. Believe me when I tell you, this isn't always easy. But, He is steadfast in His love; and it happens, eventually, when they are ready to finally say "yes" and receive the love that He has to give them.

I would like to share with you the most recent revelation of His love that we have experienced here at MtSM.

About 20 months ago, I received a call about a young married couple who wanted to meet with me. They were both addicted to heroin and wanted out of that lifestyle. This couple also has a very precious, young child.

In the last 20 months, we have taken them out of town for a week to detox them, only to have them relapse a few months later. We have given them many hours of prayer ministry and SOZO ministry. We have helped them move three times. We have purchased ID cards for jobs, given countless rides, and spent many hours just being with them, encouraging them that there is indeed life after addiction. On their own, they have both attempted to detox, but could only make it a few days. They've had jobs, only to lose them. This couple was depressed and had a negative attitude. Their problems were always someone

else's fault. Yet in all these things, God still loved them and enabled me to love them too.

Early in the summer, I found a one-year Discipleship Program that allowed women to bring their children with them. Would they also allow married couples? I called and was assured that, yes, they do. They would live separately, the husband with the men and the wife and child with the other women; but they could enter into the program.

I immediately called this couple to share the good news. This was exactly what they said they had been looking for. I was so excited for them and was anxious to share this information and to have them make the call.

When I told them the news, she was encouraged but he was not fully convinced. He had a thousand reasons why now was not the right time. Okay, I had to step back and let them work things out with God.

Over the next few months I would call and text randomly, letting them know I was thinking about them and telling them I love them; but communication was very rare on their end.

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I received a few discouraging texts when the husband spent a few days in jail; and I really had to pray when his frustration came out and he was blaming me and MtSM for his predicament. Again I stepped back, just texting randomly that I loved them.

Finally the text came... “We are ready”. It was what we had been waiting for. Two days later, they were in my office. We looked over the program; and they both wanted this. They were both excited. They started making their phone calls; he to the men’s program and she to the women’s; and then it hit them. It became a reality that this could really happen; and then the list of all the things that would prevent them from going started building. He had to get permission from the court. She had court the following week.

They had all their belongings in a temporary storage container and had to figure out what to do with all of that. We made the list of “To-Do” and we prayed. Later that evening, they got the call back that at this time there were no open beds for the program. Tears and discouragement came. Again we prayed. I felt total confidence that as soon as their “To-Do” list was done, a bed would open.

Sure enough, four days later the call came, “Can you come tonight?” “Umm, no, but we could come on Thursday.”

It was settled, Thursday it was; but there were still some bumps in the road ahead. She had court on Wednesday, and this case had already been continued 7 times. And now she had a new lawyer. Nothing had changed with the storage issues; and transportation to get them to the program, which is a good four-hour drive away, was needed. Due to other commitments, I was unavailable.

On Wednesday morning, I sent out a prayer-request email to our wonderful and dedicated prayer team; and I called someone I knew who had connections to the program, asking if they could drive them. I knew it was a long shot. They both work full-time, and I had only given them 24 hour notice. We agreed to touch base later in the day and then leave the details to God.

At court on Wednesday afternoon, her new lawyer was completely on board with helping get things settled so she could leave in the morning. He spoke to the Prosecutor, who was also on board. Now, it was up to the Judge. We continued to pray and trust; and were filled with joy as the Judge also said yes. She even deferred all fines for one-year and took \$100 off the total cost of the fines. Again the tears flowed, but this time for happy reasons.

The storage continued to be an issue. We had a plan to meet early in the morning to do what we could. They had to arrive at the program by 7:00pm Thursday night; and they still did not have a ride.

Shortly after court, my phone rang. It was the husband of the couple I had called earlier. He couldn’t take them Thursday, but he could drive them on Friday. He had already called the program and made all the arrangements. They just had to have them there by 9:00am, which meant a 4 : 3 0 a m departure time. But, that gave us an entire day to deal with the storage.

It took all day but it happened: one dump run, one trip to the Garage of Blessings to make a donation, and three trips into town; but finally at 3:45am on Friday morning, exactly one week from the first phone call to the program, they were ready to go. Their roommate was kind enough to let them store the last of their belongings in her spare room. I picked them up, and off we went to meet up with their ride.

They were exhausted, but they were ready. They had watched doors open; and they had experienced just how much God

loves them; and how much He wants them to have this opportunity to heal and to be restored.

With smiles on their tired faces, with tears of thankfulness and gratitude, with fear of the unknown, they were off. Their driver was ecstatic and full of life and joy. He showed God’s love to them on the long ride down by filling their bellies with food and by encouraging them with every mile until they were sleeping softly and contently.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 “Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always



hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.” God’s love wins every time.

Please pray for this couple as you think of them over the next year. The first few months will be the most difficult.

Thank you Jess and Christal for saying yes; and for loving this couple that you had never met as He loves them.

May God bless you abundantly.

~ Christina

Note: At no time did I ever feel the child was in danger. In spite of the addiction, this couple are amazing parents and the child is very well cared for.

Participant's Note

It has been a year since my last posting in the Mighty to Save Newsletter. Here is my update along with some words of encouragement.

I got sent to a prison that was not my top choice. At first, all of the negative things about being here stood out, with that the anger towards the Department of Corrections. Why would they send me so far away from home? Not only does this affect me, it affects my parents, my whole family suffers. I spent a lot of time dwelling on this, at first.

As the time went by, I started getting involved in some of the programs here. I learned how to give things to God. When my day seems like it's too much to handle, I stop, say a prayer and relax. Every day is a learning experience. There is not a day that goes by that I don't absorb beneficial information. I do a lot of reading, and note taking. The books I read are strictly educational. Christina has sent me books that teach me how to be a better father, better son, better brother and a better person. There is also a vast selection in the chapel library.

As I have always believed everything happens for a reason, I was sent here to complete a class called "Thinking 4 A Change" (T4C). Well, I still have not started (that); but I did complete a nine-month course in Aerospace Composites

Technology for which I received 49 college credits.

Right after completing the Aerospace class, I was blessed to start another class through the Homebuilders Association of Spokane. The class is called Homebuilders, and it is a three-month basic carpentry class.



Derek Cartmell with a skateboard deck he made in his class.

There have been so many reasons for my coming here to this prison that I can now thank the good Lord for. In my time that I'm not attending school or studying, I'm working on other areas of my life that need help. To start off with, I go to a great church service. There, I praise the Lord by singing praises and listen to beautiful

sermons from people who come in here as volunteers. I also have become an active member of the Toastmasters Club. I even entered a speech contest where I placed first.

The key to my successful behaviors in here have a lot to do with the time I spend with God. When my day starts to get rough, I turn my radio on to some good Christian music. It does not matter how depressed or sad I am; 20 minutes of music can change my whole attitude. I will end with this verse and guarantee...

"He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit." Titus 3:5

~David Cartmell



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