

# Voice *of* Salvation

## Fall Greetings

from all of us at the Gospel Center!



hope | love | redemption

One of the most intriguing toys of my generation when I was a child was the etch-a-sketch. I remember how engrossed I would become with this little gadget.

You could draw anything you wanted to and then quickly erase all evidence of the lines. It was neat, you could always start with a clean slate.

We all know people who have experienced some sort of tragic failure in their lives. One of my favorite authors was Gordon MacDonald, a pastor from Lexington Massachusetts. He wrote a book entitled *Ordering Your Private World*. This book literally changed my life. As he wrote new books I would purchase and read them. Then one day I was told that he had experienced a moral failure and was out of the ministry. It hit me like a ton of bricks, I wasn't expecting this from someone who had become a hero to me.

Maybe you know of former preachers who have seen their ministries come tumbling down. On a closer level, we probably all have friends or relatives whose lives have imploded through the abuse of alcohol, drugs, or some other vice. Maybe it's even been you.

I would like to share some ideas about our guilt and God's forgiveness. Much of what I will write about I learned from Gordon MacDonald and the years after his moral failure. For, to his credit, and yet ultimately to God's credit and by his grace, Gordon rebuilt his broken world and continues to have a powerful ministry today.

This is what I learned about our Guilt and God's Grace. **BROKEN LIVES ARE UNIVERSAL!**

Sometimes we think that lives that have been devastated and broken by sin are the exception not the rule. I would argue from scripture that it's the rule, and not the exception. Our need for God's grace is universal. The bible teaches us that "All have sinned" Space does not permit me to talk about all the serious moral failures of many that we consider heroes of the faith. This is what I learned about our Guilt and God's grace, **BROKEN LIVES ARE UNIVERSAL!**



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But what I want to focus on is not the failures of these great men but the fact that God didn't write them off. For Moses, life began at 80. David was still used of God after his reign. Jonah repented and went to Nineveh and the entire city repented. Peter was a powerful apostle used by God to bring thousands of people into the church.

### **The good news is God doesn't write us off!**

If you have ever had the experience of crashing your car, you know that the insurance company looks at the damage to your car and the value of the car, and if the damage is greater than the value, they write the car off. They don't fix it; they trash it. That's not how God does it, he looks at the wreck we have made of our lives and he doesn't write us off. God's grace is greater than our sin, no matter how serious the sin.

There's another lesson I've learned,  
**IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU; IT COULD  
HAPPEN TO ME**

Space does not permit me to develop this any more than to just quote Oswald Chambers who wrote "The Bible Characters never fell on their weak points but on their strong ones; unguarded strength is double weakness" Never say "It won't happen to me".

Finally let me share another truth I firmly believe

**THE CHURCH IS THE COMMUNITY OF THE  
FORGIVEN**

A local newspaper once ran this classified ad:  
"Son, I know that you are in the city, please call your father collect. I love you son"

You know what this was? An offering of grace to a son who had strayed. It didn't matter to the father; he just wanted his son back.

The Gospel Center is a place where you can come just as you are. You can come know matter where in life you are, we won't ask a lot of questions, we simply say welcome. We let you know if you want to, you can have a clean slate through repentance.

*by Jim Sherman*

from the pastor

Three of our values at the Gospel Center are love, hope and redemption. The last issue of the newsletter I talked about redemption. This issue I want to focus on how the Gospel Center offers hope to our community.

At the Gospel Center we are determined to offer hope to our hurting community. Every day we hear stories that cause our hearts to break.

"Joe" got out of our local prison a few months ago. While he was in jail, his wife filed for divorce, had a restraining order put out against him, drained his financial accounts, and generally ruined his life. While he was in jail, I had the opportunity to introduce him to the hope of the world, Jesus Christ. All of his problems still aren't solved and his life still seems to be in chaos. But he has seen the hope that Jesus offers.

Not all of our ministry is glamorous as you can imagine. We have seen lives ruined. There are people that we have worked closely with that have died of an overdose, or were killed. We have seen children that were sent off to foster-care

because both daddy and mommy were in prison. But with each and every individual that we come across, we offer them the hope of Jesus Christ. He is the only one that can change their lives for the better.

We offer hope to children. Every week we have an active kidz club where children of all ages hear the stories of Jesus. Arlene and her team of helpers do an incredible job of teaching our children.

We offer hope to teens. Lance and Susanna Shuey and his team work with our teens each Sunday morning.

We offer hope through up7street. Every second and fourth monday evening we meet with our teens for an incredible time of teaching and fun.

We offer hope through Discover Recovery. We offer good Christ-centered, Bible-based counseling in their areas of need.

We offer our community hope through helping them with their grocery budget by offering them Angel Food Ministries. This is a growing ministry of the Gospel Center that helps practically. Jim Sherman and our great team of volunteers do an incredible job with this ministry.

But most of all, we offer hope through Jesus Christ. We are able to impact peoples lives through our Saturday evening and Sunday morning services. Three of us also go into the Lebanon Jail two times a month. I am privileged to preach about Jesus and the hope that He offers to all.

As the Gospel Center continues to grow, we plan on basing all of our ministry upon the foundation of hope.

And you can be involved in offering hope as well. We need many prayer warriors. As more and more people come through our doors, the spiritual warfare becomes even more intense. Please pray for our leadership, and those that we work with.

If you are able, would you invest in our work financially? We have some exciting plans that we will be talking about in future issues of the *Voice*. We are looking for the leadership of the Lord in the area of finances as we offer hope to the hurting. Also in late November or early December, we are going to once again release our annual Christmas catalog, so stay tuned! We are grateful for those who continually partner with the Gospel Center. You are partnering with us in building up the kingdom of God!

*Pastor Robert Booth*

# Thanksgiving Dinner at the Gospel Center



This year we will have our 8th annual Thanksgiving meal for those in our community who don't have opportunity to have a nice meal with their families.

We welcome them to to the Gospel Center, for a great Thanksgiving meal, and share with them the love of Jesus Christ. Last year we fed around 100 individuals. Please pray that God would help us with this outreach.



## MY THANKSGIVING GIFT

YES, you can count on me to help those in need during the Thanksgiving holiday and throughout the year. Here is my gift of:

- \$10.75 to provide 5 meals and other assistance
- \$ 21.50 to provide 10 meals and other assistance
- \$43.00 to provide 20 meals and other assistance
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to provide as many meals and care as possible





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