

Love and Compassion Ministries

In the Name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit

October 1, 2011 In The Year of Our Lord

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AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM STEWART LEADER OF OUR STREET MINISTRY

One of Love and Compassion's Ministry is our Street Ministry. We asked William Stewart, the leader, to share his excitement and love of serving the homeless and needy with you.

Tell us a little about your background?

From the age of seven, I was raised by my father who only went to church for a funeral, I can't ever remember seeing him in church for any other reason. He never said why, and I never asked, I believe that at some point in his life he was what I call church hurt (hurt by someone in the church).



As a child growing up, I can remember having a choice on whether or not I wanted to go to church, I was never made to go. But something was always tugging at my heart, and because I did not know how to answer that tug, I always felt empty inside. I had that kind of emptiness inside that would cause me to be lonely even in a crowd of people, when it seemed as if I was having fun, something was always missing.

When and how did you come to know Jesus as your Savior?

I came to know Jesus as my "SAVIOR" while I was in prison at Mayo Correctional in 1991. At this point in my life I figured, I had tried all this other stuff in life, why not give Jesus a chance, a real chance. This was at the lowest point in my life; I had nothing to use as a bargaining tool.

It was all that I had and it seemed as if everyone had turned their backs on me. I used to see the "jailhouse Christians" acting like they were so happy. I always thought that they were either really real, or some very good fakers.

A Bishop from Sarasota, Florida came to the prison, and I had heard that he always brought a lot of women with him. I was invited by one of the Christian brothers to attend the service. I had no intention of meeting, seeing or hearing anything about Jesus when I went to this service; I just wanted to see some new female faces.

Is there something in your life that makes you want to reach out to the needy and homeless?

It's Jesus Christ reaching out to the people; He's just doing it through me. I've been in their shoes, so I know what they are going through. God has blessed me to be a helper, and I love helping others when I can.

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Tell us about your ministry and how you spread the Word of God?

The ministries that the Lord has entrusted me with are many tied up in one. The most important one to me is my life. The way I live my life is the biggest ministry that God has given me and everyone else who claims to be a follower of Jesus Christ. How you live as a Christian will determine if others want what we say we have-JESUS. Another ministry the Lord has given me is Prison Ministry; when I look into the eyes of men who have lost hope for no other reason than the fact that they are locked up. My heart cries out for them; there is nothing worse than a person who has lost hope. What is life---- if there is nothing to hope for?

Then there is the Street Ministry; the Lord spoke to me personally in a very audible voice about doing street ministry. It was on Thanksgiving Day 2007 when the Lord told me to get off my buns and get busy about his business. When I am on the streets ministering, I set up a P.A. system and play gospel music while the food is cooking. I try to have someone to do a mini sermon, and sometimes I do it myself. I invite people over for prayer through the P.A. system, and pass out tracts when I have them.

I know you have cookouts. What is involved in getting, preparing, and serving the food? Do you have help? What kind of menu do you have?

The food is bought with donations from people that the Lord has touched their hearts to give to this ministry. My wife and kids are very instrumental in the preparation and serving of all the food. Whenever we have potato salad, my kids peel the potatoes and boil the eggs the night before so my wife can make the salad and put it in the fridge to get cold. The menu is usually Bar-B-Que ribs, chicken, hotdogs, baked beans, and potato salad.

What happens at the cookouts? How do the homeless learn you are there having a cookout?

I think that the music and the smell of the food cooking calls them over. After a while they get used to us being there on certain days, and they either show up or are there waiting to help out. We were in an area where homeless people sleep in the woods just behind the building where we were having the street ministry.

When they get there, do you serve food right away?

The food is not served right away; it takes about an hour and a half to cook all the meat. During that time we have prayer with people as they listen to the gospel music while they wait. When we have tracts to pass out, we give one with each meal.

Do you share the Gospel before or after they eat?

I try to catch them while they are eating. Because we have just given them a meal, most of them will feel obligated to listen to the word of God. But there have been times when we share the gospel before, and sometimes after the meal.

Some must come with big personal problems, does anyone listen and counsel them one on one?

Yes! We will listen to anything anyone has to say. But I am very careful as far as counseling goes. We pray with them more than we counsel them.

Do you give an invitation?

YES!!! That's the most important part of being out in the streets, to give an invitation to Jesus Christ.

Can you give me any idea how many you reach through your ministry?

I don't want to put a number on this question. Because I use a P.A. system and it is very loud, I know that we are reaching people we may never meet in person. So we are unable to count those people. I remember when I used to smoke crack cocaine, there was a man on the streets preaching the gospel while I was smoking crack. Inside I was praying to God for help while I smoked crack cocaine. That guy reached me, but because he has never met me and others like me, he can't count us as having been reached by his ministry. And for that reason, I can't put a number on how many people this ministry has reached.

Do you have any stories of reaching someone and changing their lives? Something that made you feel real good?

Oh yes, I was at a gas pump one night getting gas when this guy came to me and said, "I came to your street meeting

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one night and asked you to pray for me. Every since you prayed for me, everything has been going good for me. My wife and I have gotten back together; I have a job now and my family is going to church every Sunday. I just wanted to tell you thanks". I started to cry right there as the Holy Spirit told me "this is what it is all about". There's more, but it would take too much time to tell in the newsletter.

What keeps you doing it? It must be a big job.

It's the joy of knowing that the Lord is using me to make a difference in the lives of His people. Even if no one comes back with a story of how this ministry touched and changed their lives, if no one says thank you, if no one pats me on the back, if no one says anything to encourage me, when I get down on my knees and speak with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and before I get up, he smiles at me. I am very much O.K without the rewards of man.

Do you feel any rewards?

My entire life is a reward, the people that God is allowing me to be around is a reward. The protection that Jesus has put around my family is a reward. Being able to write in this newsletter is a reward. Going back to school after thirty years and having a 93% GPA for the first year is a reward. Rewards from God through Christ are never ending for me.

Is there anything else you would like to say to our readers?

God has called every one of us to do something for Him, what are you doing for the Glory of God without looking for the rewards. Isaiah 55:6 Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

Twinkies and Root Beer

A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of Root Beer and he started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks, he met an elderly man. The man was sitting in the park just feeding some pigeons.

The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the man looked hungry, so he offered him a Twinkie. The man gratefully accepted it and smiled at boy. His smile was so pleasant that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer. Again, the man smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word.

As it grew dark, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave, but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the man, and gave him a hug. The man gave him his biggest smile ever. When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?"

"He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? God's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!" Meanwhile, the elderly man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked," Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." However, before his son responded, he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. Embrace all equally!

~author unknown~

LOVE AND COMPASSION MINISTRIES VOLUNTEER GET TOGETHER

On Friday, September 9th a bunch of Love and Compassion Ministries' directors, volunteers, and some friends from other ministries got together to celebrate, get acquainted, and enjoy a fun evening together.

After some get acquainted time, we enjoyed a great meal at Famous Dave's Barbeque, and if you haven't tried it, we really have to suggest you get down to Famous Dave's and try their great barbeque ribs, chicken, and beef. Go to:

FAMOUS DAVES
12148 S Cleveland Ave.
Fort Myers



After dinner, John Domino, leader of our youth ministry, shared his experiences ministering to the young men. You could see John's love of sharing Jesus and Christian living with the young men at Crossroads Correctional Institute in Punta Gorda, where he and a group of volunteers go four times each month. John asked for more volunteers to share in this very important task of letting these imprisoned young men know that we and Jesus love and care about them.



James Ervin and Ron Willis

James Ervin, a client and friend of more than twenty five years, shared the importance of God and Love and Compassion Ministries in his life and his recovery from drug addiction. He thanked our volunteers for helping share the love of God with the addicted, the needy, the imprisoned, and the homeless. As James shared his testimony, I got to thinking - thinking about the huge impact our ministry has in sharing Jesus. James already knew Jesus when we met him, but, you see, we shared our love, compassion, and encouragement with James, and James shared Jesus with many men who came to James when they had serious problems. I know this is true because I have received at least ten or fifteen calls from men asking how to get hold of that big black man, James Ervin, who told them about Jesus and changed their lives. Ten or fifteen calls - I wonder how many James introduced to Jesus - maybe 30, 50, 100? The men who called me were really excited about their relationship with Jesus. I wonder how many each of them told

about Jesus. By sharing Jesus with one man, could our ministry have reached hundreds for the Lord? Maybe we are not such a small ministry!

Ron Willis, our founder and president, closed by thanking everyone, giving some words of encouragement, and sharing some future challenges for our ministry. Ron summarized seventeen steps we can take to help meet these challenges:

- #1 Ask Jesus Christ to provide everything we need to glorify the Father.
- #2 Get our minds off our problems and put them on Jesus.
- #3 Send people to the sick, whether in the hospitals or homes, where they will pray over them and comfort them.
- #4 Take the unemployed and teach them computers, teach them how to create a resume, how to apply on line for a job or apply for higher education.
- #5 Pray and fast. (I hope and pray that all that are able, will fast breakfast and lunch with me every Wednesday.)
- #6 Be ready to serve our Lord day or night on His time frame (not ours) with no hesitation or arguments.
- #7 Team up with other ministries of like mind.
- #8 Inform businesses, Churches and individuals of what we do and their need to support us.
- #9 Refrain from moving too fast in helping people. Take time to study and pray how God wants us to proceed in that situations.

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- #10 Work together in one accord.
- #11 Always complete our commitments. Let our "yesses" mean yes!
- #12 Read the manual (Bible) every day.
- #13 Become a paperless office.
- #14 Communicate more with inmates.
- #15 Get out of our comfort zone.
- #16 Apply for grants.
- #17 Expect good things to happen as we praise the Lord.

Joann B. Reynolds 5/10/1965 - 9/9/2011

Joann died from a heart attack at the age of 46, and my heart cries out to her family for Joann was a beautiful, very intelligent young lady, but she was an alcoholic. LCM ministered to her for many years through counseling, job placement, housing and placement into drug programs. She could teach a drug treatment program but could not complete one. She wrote this for Ms. Brown's class at Edison on 6/1/2000. I think it is what she would want to say to us today. I pray it will touch your heart and maybe the life of someone who is having problems with alcohol.

MY LAST NIGHT OUT

By Joann B. Reynolds

It was an unusual night. I was on a year long sabbatical from life, drinking myself into oblivion and waiting for death. Having seen another year of my life spent in this fashion, my outlook was bleak. Living on the streets at my age was more of a burden than ever. Thirty-three years have passed by, eighteen of which were ruled by addiction. When I look back over this time I see a life filled with struggle and despair; currently, things were no different. The days were long and painful; the nights were hard and cold. It is the game of "survival of the fittest" that few want to play.

Addiction is a horrific beast that will devour all that one holds sacred. It is a catalyst in the worst sense of the word. Broken of spirit, stripped of self worth, I was ready to give up the dream of my life ever changing. My soul had become a shadow of it's former self. All was lost.

On the night of March 10, 1988, I had crossed the path of my husband, another addict. He had been staying with an acquaintance that he had come to know through detox. I had no knowledge of where he had been for several months, nor did he know of my whereabouts. Although this may seem strange to some, it is quite common in our circle of associates. Somehow he had managed to regain ownership of our vehicle. He has that kind of luck.

We had been close friends for eighteen years, and married for eight. As long time mates often share a similar spirit, he also was prepared to surrender in his battle with addiction. We proceeded on to the emergency room. Over the past year, I had managed to visit the local hospital, at least once monthly, for various reasons that tend to come with my lifestyle of choice. As a result of my many visits to the ER, I did not share his feelings that there lie the answer to my problem. After dropping him at the door, I took possession of the car. Having been convicted of three charges of driving under the influence, this was clearly not a well thought out decision. Driving nowhere, was at least a temporary roof over my head, I decided to pull over to rest. I parked off the road near the corner of Ford and Dora Streets. Anyone familiar with that particular neighborhood would know that the choice of location was not born of brilliance. It was a matter of moments before I passed out. The next noise I was to hear was a knock on my driver side window; for apparently, I had left consciousness behind with the car still running.

Officer Witt, patrolling the Southward Village Housing Complex, noticed what looked like a small, gray, Subaru abandoned with it's motor still engaged. Upon investigation he was to find a subject, later identified as Joann Reynolds, asleep, horizontally, in the driver's seat. It took him five minutes to wake me and another five

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for me to orientate myself back to the world of the living. He asked me my name, to which I answered, though my garbled speech was difficult to understand. My eyes were watery and bloodshot. I belonged in an Andy Capp cartoon. Deciding, in my own primitive way, to cooperate, I tried to follow the officer's instructions but my responses were slow and lethargic. I stated that I was alone and the 1.75 liter bottle of vodka on the floor of my car confirmed that I was, indeed, drunk. Being a true officer of the law, Mr. Witt decided to go through the standard Field Sobriety Tasks. We started with the Horizontal Gaze Test, a.k.a., flashlight coordination. My eyes stared blindly forward. Failed.

Next we moved on to the One Leg Stand. I gave it the old college try, to the count of one. I then: dropped my foot, lost my balance, took eight steps, and calmly stated, "This is not going to work." A person would think this humiliating process would stop there, but not this time. Onward we went, on to the Heel To Toe. I took nine steps in a crooked line, arms flailing outwards, in a poor attempt to regain some balance. No such luck. None of my paces made it heel to toe. I was tiring of the game.

Visions of being left alone to sleep on my familiar metal cot were looking better by the moment. It was 3:20 A.M. and Officer Witt had hours to go before getting off duty. The Alphabet and Counting Task's were performed with equal results. Knowing that this man was going to be the instrument, (like it or not), that was going to "arrest" my addiction I was now anxious to get on to the real ugly part - the withdrawal. Acceptance of the facts covered me like a wet blanket. The worst was yet to come and I wanted to get some rest before it hit. I came to the decision to conclude the little drama by the side of the road. My next statement was all that was required. I said, "Okay, take me. I don't want to drive because I am drunk."

Now this may have sounded like a depressing mini-story, but it is not. I choose to believe that events are orchestrated, often for one's own good. I could not or would not change and it was killing me. The Maestro of my existence chose that night to intervene. When I was no longer willing to wheel and deal, connive, and deceive, only then could I be halted from my own self destruction. I lived happily ever after.

There are an estimated 3,400 homeless persons in Lee County. Love And Compassion Ministries has teamed up with the Lee County Homeless Coalition and approximately 25 provider agencies to raise awareness about homeless issues.

Come and join us for "One Community...One Future"

The First Annual Homeless Awareness Event, on October 15, 2011 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Club Square, 4620 SE 10th Place in Cape Coral.

Food and entertainment will be provided at no charge.

MAKING DONATIONS TO SUPPORT LOVE AND COMPASSION MINISTRIES HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER

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Love And Compassion Ministries, Inc.
P.O. Box 152636
Cape Coral, Florida 33915

Love Compassion Ministries

Friends and Partners,

Have you ever heard of a Smith Wigglesworth? Smith was born in 1859 to a very poor family. His father did manual labor, for very little pay. Smith himself went to work at the age of six to help with the family income. He pulled turnips and worked in a woolen mill twelve hours a day. His parents did not know God, but Smith hungered in his heart to know Him. Even as a youngster he would pray in the fields. His grandmother was the critical Christian in his life. She took Smith to meetings with her. At one of these meetings there was a song being sung about Jesus as the lamb, and Smith came to realize God's love for him and made his decision to believe Christ for his salvation. He was immediately filled with the desire to evangelize and led his own mother to Christ. Smith had various church experiences as he was growing up.

When he was sixteen he became involved in the Salvation Army. He felt deeply called to fast and pray for lost souls. He saw many people come to Christ. The Salvation Army was experiencing a tremendous level of the power of God in those days. Many times, meetings would run for as long as twenty-four hours at a time. They would pray and fast and cry out for the salvation of fifty or a hundred people for the week, and they would see what they had prayed for. At eighteen Smith became a plumber. He moved to Liverpool when he was twenty. He felt called to minister to young people and brought them to meetings. These were destitute and ragged children, whom he would often feed and care for. Hundreds were saved. Smith was often asked to speak in Salvation meetings, and he would break down and weep under the power of God. Many would come to repentance in those meetings through this untrained man.

In Bradford England Smith met Mary Jane Featherstone, known as Polly, in a Salvation Army meeting. She listened to an evangelist, Gipsy Tillie Smith, and gave her heart to Christ. Smith was in that meeting and saw her heart for God. Polly became an enthusiastic Salvationist and was granted a commission by General Booth. Smith and her developed a friendship, but Polly went to Scotland to help with a new Salvationist work. She eventually moved back to Bradford and married Smith, who was very much in love with her.

The couple worked together to evangelize the lost. They opened a small church in a poor part of town. Polly would preach, and Smith would make the altar calls. One day while Smith was working in the town of Leeds, he heard of a divine healing meeting. He shared with Polly about it. She needed healing, and so they went to a meeting, and Polly was healed. Smith struggled with the reality of healing, while being ill himself. He decided to give up the medicine that he was taking and trust God. He was healed. They had five children, a girl and four boys. One morning two of the boys were sick. The power of God came, and they prayed for the boys and they were instantly healed. Smith struggled with the idea that God would use him to heal the sick in general. One night he was to lead a meeting about divine healing? He tried to pass it off to someone else but could not. Finally, he led the meeting, and several people were healed. That was it. From then on Smith began to pray for people for healing.

Polly unexpectedly died in 1913, and this was a real blow to Smith. He prayed for her and commanded that death release her. She did arise, but said "Smith - the Lord wants me." His heartbroken response was "If the Lord wants you, I will not hold you". She had been his light and joy for all the years of their marriage, and he grieved deeply over the loss. After his wife was buried he went to her grave, feeling like he wanted to die. When God told him to get up and go, Smith told him only if you "give to me a double portion of the Spirit - my wife's and my own - I would go and preach the Gospel. God was gracious to him and answered his request." His daughter Alice and son-in-law James Salter began to travel with him to handle his affairs.

Smith would pray and the blind would see, and the deaf were healed. People came out of wheelchairs and cancers were destroyed. Smith died on March 12, 1947 at the funeral of his dear friend Wilf Richardson. His ministry was based on four principles: "#1, read the Word of God. #2, consume the Word of God until it consumes you. #3 believe the Word of God. #4, act on the Word." What about us?

In the Presence of our Lord,

Ron Willis

Ron Willis, President
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**We're on the Web!
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**SEND YOUR PRAYER REQUEST TO ...
PrayerRequest@LoveCompassion.com**



If you would like to be a part of our exciting prayer team, please send us your e-mail address and we will send you updates of people who need our prayers.

It is a great privilege that we have, as

sons and daughters of the KING, to be able to come into HIS presence with our needs, our hurts, and our cares.

We know that we can leave them at HIS feet because HE cares for us and will always answer us in our time of need.

Prayer requests are very important to us! We always need people who are caring and willing to personally pray for others' needs.

As we pray for their physical, moral, and spiritual needs, we must understand that because of JESUS CHRIST'S love for all of us, we are

able to do this. CHRIST is the answer to every human's needs.

As members of the BODY of CHRIST, we have the privilege and responsibility to pray for our Churches, our missionaries, public officials, other ministries, and each other.

It is so exciting to see prayers being answered. May we always give CHRIST the Glory!