



ADMIRE THE PEOPLE IN RECOVERY *By Fred Wilgenburg*

I've recently begun serving a half day each week at Keystone Treatment Center, through an arrangement with Center of Hope, helping



people to do the 5th step of Alcoholics Anonymous: "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." What a privilege for me, and I hope it will be a blessing for Keystone and Center of Hope as well. And, what a 'stretch' for me in learning.

Here's a point that is stressed by Keystone, and which is a big one for me to understand, and to learn to apply properly: Alcoholism is a disease. There is much scientific and social evidence that proves that alcoholism is a sickness, and a person is often powerless to overcome it without treatment. Studies also show that alcoholism can be genetically-influenced, meaning it can run in the family. Further, the more active that a person is in alcoholism or drug addiction, it's likely to be more challenging to treat because alcohol and drugs wreak havoc on neurotransmitters in the brain. Neurotransmitters help different parts of the brain to

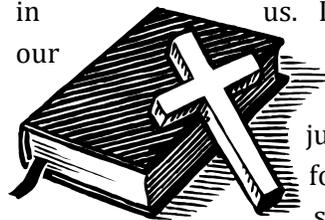
communicate with each other.

Keystone also stresses that just like any other illness, addiction is treatable. If we have a problem, including if it is a disease, in order to rise above or to be freed of that problem, we will need to acknowledge it and receive help for it.

Openly-pondering the following is where I might become unpopular in today's society: If we have a problem, disease or otherwise, and it is harming ourselves or others, yet we are doing little about it, isn't that a sin? And, at least relating to alcoholism or drug abuse, if the harm done is drunkenness or being high, in which we are not able to conduct ourselves within our right mind, and we are not being good examples to others, isn't that a sin?

'Sin' is an unpopular word, but it's something we all do as humans. So, for all of you who enjoy cliché's, let's "call a spade a spade;" and, let's not "beat around the bush," which only confuses things.

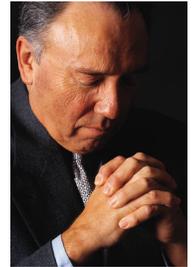
Here's what God says about our sins: "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our



sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify

us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us." (I John 1:8-10 of the Bible).

Isn't the truth of God's Word refreshing?! When the stripped-down truth of our problem has been brought to the surface, we can deal with it --- get treatment for it, be forgiven of it, rise above its control and influence.



Actually, as I re-read the 5th step above, and a number of the other 7 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, they are largely confessional, even repentant. They don't mention 'sin' exactly, but it's implied. Honestly, who of us in the Church are that openly repentant of our wrongs so that God can graciously deal with them and so others can help us beyond them?

I have much learning to do in the area of addiction recovery, especially because I cannot empathize as a fellow alcoholic or addict. *Some would count me out on that point alone*. However, I can empathize as a human being who sins, but is saved and is being transformed by a loving, gracious, and holy God.



Bikes needed...

Your donation of a bicycle to Center of Hope can be a life changing event. It can



open the door for someone to have the opportunity to look for job or have a way to get to work. It can provide the venue for a person to provide for themselves and/or for their family. Along the way it can renew self esteem and dignity.

Our Bike Ministry also gives people the chance to share about their lives so that we can walk besides them in other areas of their lives including introducing them to Jesus and/or encouraging them in their faith. Aaron our Bike Ministry Director and Pastor leads a Bible Study with several of the people who use the shop. THANKS for your donations and your prayers for this and all of the ministries here at Center of



Hope! **We continue to need and appreciate both donations and prayers**

Restored To Life



by Brian J. Narcomey

The circle of life, the connection of three always represents the Trinity, and the black represents our sin and the orange represents the Son | Sun. We notice the purple in and around the circles represents the Royal blood shed by Jesus Christ for us. The circles are all connected with the colors of the four nations. The Black, Red, Yellow, and White represent the nations of the world.

The circles, lines, and shapes, are unbalanced and unequal in all their forms, which means our Heavenly Father did not create us to be perfect. It's unbalanced, because of the flaws we have and what they do to our sinful nature. There are three white morning stars that represent God's glory and His Son Jesus (Revelations 22:16). Three feathers represent prayers and freedom in Christ.

The Holy Spirit is seen hovering around and through the circles. The red is the blood shed for us by Christ and this is what restores us to life. The figure of a man surrendering is depicted in the third circle, meaning the reconciliation God intended in His Son's death for us. (For those who receive the printed version, please check out the painting in color on our Facebook page.)

MEMORIAL & HONORIUMS GIFTS

God bless the memory of...

*Elizabeth Yerdon, Kent Wintersteen,
and Rod Vietor*

God Bless and Happy 95th Birthday ...

John and Bernita Shurr

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