The church and alcoholism: a model for empowering Rivertown United Methodist Church to address the addiction of alcohol

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THE CHURCH AND ALCOHOLISM:
A MODEL FOR EMPOWERING
RIVERTOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
TO
ADDRESS THE ADDICTION OF ALCOHOL

by

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Doctor of Ministry
at
Interdenominational Theological Center
2013
ABSTRACT

THE CHURCH AND ALCOHOLISM:
A MODEL FOR EMPOWERING
RIVERTOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
TO ADDRESS THE ADDICTION OF ALCOHOL

by

Steven D. Jones

April 2013

This Doctor of Ministry project is a study of A Model for Empowering Rivertown United Methodist Church (UMC) to Address the Addiction of Alcohol in the church and the surrounding community. The purpose of this project is to demonstrate to Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC how churches can reach out to the addicted community in order to assist the alcoholics with recovery from their addictions. This project will address the problems of alcohol addiction. The project includes members of Rivertown UMC, Rocky Head UMC and Rama Community Church of Palmetto, Georgia. The project was designed and implemented by the researcher. The project consisted of seven sessions of structured experiences at Rivertown UMC and three training sessions. Two of the training meetings were held at Brookhaven UMC located in Northeast Atlanta, Georgia, where Don Shannon leads three alcohol and drug recovery groups.
All other meetings were conducted at Rivertown UMC. The study has shown that a transformed church can impact the alcohol addicted community in an important and potentially transforming manner. The results of the model were evaluated by qualitative analysis and have shown that the participants grew in positive self-image, self-confidence and self-worth. The Alcohol Recovery Project has provided a model of ministry that will continue to be active after the implementation and completion of this project.
DEDICATION

I thank God for the college education journey that began in 1963 at Howard University in Washington, D.C., where I was a student. Let me thank my aunt, Esther Jones, who helped me pay my tuition and student fees of $250.00.

I dedicate this work to my mother, Naomi Jones, who encouraged me to attend college. I also dedicate this work to my grandfather William D. Jones, my brother Paul C. Jones, and my three aunts: Esther Jones, 93 years young; Ruth Jones, 90 years young and Marion Brooks, 98 years young.

I also dedicate this work to my children Stephanie D. Jones, Zaneta N. Jones, Steven D. Jones II, and to the churches I have served: Rivertown UMC Fairburn, Georgia; Rocky Head UMC Atlanta, Georgia; St. Mary's Road UMC Columbus, Georgia; Fairview Pine Log UMC, Pine Log, Georgia; Kaigler's Chapel UMC Adairsville, Georgia; and Greater Traveler's Rest Baptist Church, Decatur Georgia.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher acknowledges all the wonderful church members and friends who have given him support and encouragement. I acknowledge and thank my wife, Linda Jones, who worked tirelessly to support my ministry at Kaigler's Chapel in Adairsville, Georgia and Fairview Pine Log UMC in Rydal, Georgia. I thank God for the United Methodist Church and the wonderful people in the North and South Georgia Conferences. I would like to thank Bishop Watson, Bishop Davis, Bishop Swanson and Bishop Holston for giving me the chance to pastor as a full-time elder. I would also like to acknowledge the following people: Dr. Fred Smoot for allowing me to be a part of the Chaplaincy Program of the North Georgia Conference; Rev. Dr. Walter Kimbrough, Rev. Dr. Arutha Goss, Rev. Dr. Greg Williams, Rev. Emile Ennis, Rev. John Nash, Rev. Crawford Paggett, Rev. Dr. Hubert F. Sheppard, and Rev. Dr. Deborah Holloway.

Let me express my sincere gratitude also to Dr. Stephen Rasor, Dr. Marsha Snalligan-Haney, Mrs. Melody Berry and the entire Doctor of Ministry Department for supporting this endeavor.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church (UMC), the author of this dissertation has been an itinerant pastor for eighteen years. Initially, he served as pastor of two small churches, (in the North Georgia Conference) located in Adairsville, Georgia and another church at Pine Log, White County Georgia. The combined membership of both churches was forty members. The pastor was moved to Columbus, Georgia for four years, where he served a large African American church of more than six hundred people. After serving this congregation in South Georgia he was moved to Rocky Head UMC which is a small, growing United Methodist Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

After serving at Rocky Head UMC, the pastor was given a two-church charge. A two-church charge is one pastor assigned to serve two churches at the same time. The assignment gave him the opportunity to serve as pastor of Rivertown UMC while still serving as pastor of Rocky Head UMC. While serving these churches he noticed an increase in the use of alcohol and drugs and felt that the church could no longer sit on the sidelines and do nothing to hinder this problem.

Therefore, a project was developed on behalf of these congregations. The project will assist and empower the congregations at Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC to reach out to those members who are suffering from alcohol and
drug addictions. The site for implementation of the project will be in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia. Specifically, this area is called Palmetto, Georgia and is also referred to as South Fulton County. The setting is Rivertown UMC located in Fairburn, Georgia, and Rocky Head UMC located in Southwest Atlanta, Georgia. The project base is located at Rivertown UMC.

To inform the project, this project is based on Cecil Williams' book entitled, *No Hiding Place*. In his book, Mr. Williams states that, "Jesus liberates here and now". He also says that he changed his title to "Minister of Liberation". It is Williams' belief that our churches need to become transformed. In other words, there is a need to change the way we think; churches need to think more about others. There is also a need to become more evangelistic. This transformed attitude will enable congregations to accept new people into the church. The church should be encouraged to educate and warn their congregations about the serious problem of alcohol addiction that is affecting many of the families in the church and in the surrounding communities.

**Motivation for this Study**

As a part of the author's ministry to multiple African American churches, he encountered families that were affected by alcohol and drug abuse. He saw young black males and females being arrested for petty crimes and having to be incarcerated for almost nothing. Once they were released from jail they normally

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could not find employment. In most cases, the author noticed that there was the presence of alcohol and drug abuse in these families.

A young man named James, who is a member of one of the churches where the author was pastor, had been arrested by the police for a crime that evidence showed he did not commit. James made the mistake of loaning his car to a so-called friend. When he loaned his car to his friend, the friend told him he was going to pick up his daughter and that he would return shortly. His friend did not tell the truth. He actually went out and shot someone and the person died. Since the car was owned by James, the police arrested him and charged him as an accessory to the crime. Approximately four years before this awful incident, James' mother was approached by the author who extended her an invitation to attend church with her three younger children. The mother seldom attended church; she used the excuse that she works sometimes on Sundays, and she did not make an effort to bring her children to church. She stated, "I don't need to attend church; I do not need the church." Her children heard her make that statement and, unfortunately, they have followed her example. Now, almost four years later, this same mother is possibly an alcoholic, she does not attend church, and her children are "here and there" in Atlanta Georgia.

James is part of a dysfunctional family. The mother, a single parent, had to raise three children in a high crime environment. The young man is really a very responsible twenty-two year who works, and owns his own car. This type of situation motivated the author to reach out to those who need the church for spiritual guidance.
This project was implemented to assist families of Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC because many of the members are affected by alcohol and drug addiction. The project is designed also to reach out to other churches in the Palmetto and Fairburn Georgia community. Many family members do not work and there is little to no financial support. In most cases, these families do not attend church. The author has witnessed some family members help their brothers and sisters recover from alcohol abuse and turn their lives completely around. With proper treatment, we pray that these persons will become active and productive members of the church and society.

Once the church provides assistance to families affected by alcohol and/or drug addiction, the church may produce more outreach programs to assist others. We hope this evangelistic attitude will lead the church to become transformed, and will help other people in our communities who are affected by alcohol and other substance abuse.

**Historical and Personal History that Informs the Ministry Issue**

Traditionally, Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC are family oriented churches. In most instances, these churches will not reach out to the other churches in their surrounding communities unless they are invited. There is very little outreach to the community other than visiting other churches.

Recently however, it has been noted that Rivertown UMC is reaching out to the other churches and attempting to address the needs of other persons who are hurting. In most cases the pastor is taking the evangelistic approach to helping others in this urban community.
An example is the support for the Alcohol Recovery Project that was established at Rivertown UMC. Rivertown has reached out to other churches that have the same alcohol addiction problems.

Due to the economic situation in Atlanta, Georgia and its surrounding communities many people need jobs, assistance with their rent, utilities, and food. Thanks to the Housing and Homeless Council of the United Methodist Church (North Georgia Conference), Rivertown has been able to reach out to those who need food. Rocky Head UMC members are also having similar struggles with food, rent and other needs. A grant was awarded to Rivertown UMC to assist with the feeding program. When the author was their full time pastor, he also helped these families.

The stress of economic pressure and the increasing use of alcohol and drugs have motivated the author to begin a program that will address the problem of alcohol addiction in this rural community. His experience in the ministry of missions and outreach is drawn from working at the Atlanta Family Baptist Shelter. In some cases, women with three or more children were living at the shelter because they had no other place to live. On several occasions, the pastor had to go to court with church members, or members of their families who were accused of committing crimes. Thank God, in most of these cases the judge rendered mercy.
Relationship of the Ministry Issue to the Author's Model of Ministry

This model of ministry has been defined as the servant ministry of an evangelistic leader. This servant-leader uses transforming leadership that involves deep change. It is leading an organization through a process in which its identity, mission, culture, and operating procedures are fundamentally altered.\(^2\) This involves change. The author views himself as a compassionate leader/shepherd that tends to reach out to people who are hurting and in need. As a result, some of these people come to the pastor for assistance. It is a delight to see the church start new projects that can be beneficial to church families and others in the communities.

Our churches are helping people who need additional financial and medical assistance. The church is also sending them to other agencies that can provide help for drug or alcohol treatment. I am planning to have seminars and presentations to educate the church regarding alcohol abuse. We pray that families and individuals will be delivered from their addictions.

This model of ministry has also been defined as that of a "compassionate critic", a compassionate shepherd with the ability to correct and analyze a situation and bring about transformation and change. The compassionate nature desires to reach out to those who have needs and to make a real impact on their

plight and suffering, while the critical nature would like to move God’s church and His people away from the suffering brought on by the use of alcohol and drugs.

As previously stated, the author sometimes thinks of himself as a servant-leader seeking to help congregations change to ways that fully embody the servant-hood of Jesus Christ. Hopefully, this will encourage and empower others to become servant-leaders. Servant-leadership can also be called “Transforming Leadership”; this is leading an organization through a process of deep change in its identity, mission, culture, and operating procedures. The associate ministers who serve Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC have wonderful servant spirits. They assist the church by reaching out to the community that needs help.

Paul’s use of the servant songs of Isaiah to portray Christ’s royal rule (Isaiah 52-53; 45), represents nothing less than a reversal of the way power is conventionally understood. Power is not a matter of resources, might, or status. Nor is it a matter of wielding influence for one’s own advantage. Rather, power is self-giving in which the needs of others and community take precedence. It is a matter of love that is willing to suffer with and for others.3 It has been noted that servant-leaders guide their congregations toward caring for the needs of people who are different from themselves. Jesus was constantly crossing social boundaries to bring God’s love to all.4

Another outreach ministry that has helped the people of Rivertown and Rocky Head UMC are the programs that Peachtree Road UMC has provided. Peachtree Road offers personal assistance to those who need food

3 Ibid., 189.
4 Ibid., 195.
and clothing. This church has helped both Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC beautify the structures of their buildings. They have also reached out to children and adults at churches, providing clothing and toys during the Christmas holidays. The congregations of these churches are more than grateful for the service that has been rendered by Peachtree Road UMC.

**Contribution to the Local Congregation and the Church Universal**

Addressing the issue of alcohol addiction will assist the congregation in understanding ministry as an outward healing experience for other people who are hurting and need help from the church. By reaching out to others, the congregation will begin to experience the joy of serving God by serving others. Hopefully, this will help the church to become transformed. Transformed churches reach out to the communities of which they are a part, discover the needs of their communities, and assist the people by providing for them the needed resources. Looking at a more universal scale, addressing this issue of addiction will encourage other congregations (especially town and country/rural churches) to overcome the fear of helping those who are hurting.
CHAPTER II
The Ministry Context
The Community

Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC collaborated to sponsor this project. Rivertown UMC is located in Fairburn and Palmetto Georgia. Palmetto is located 25 miles south of Atlanta on U.S. Highway 29 and is convenient for the participants. Rocky Head UMC is located in southwest Atlanta, Georgia.

The primary site for the project will be Rivertown UMC. The communities of Red Oak, Cooks Crossing, Stonewall Tell, Ben Hill, Clifftondale, Cochran Mill, and Peters Woods (a few of which were formerly pre-American Civil War cities) are all to be found in the unincorporated area. At this time, only the Southwest Atlanta (South Fulton Area), Fairburn Georgia and Palmetto, Georgia will participate in the Alcohol Recovery Project.

The Churches

While Rivertown UMC will serve as the primary church site, other churches in the South Fulton area will be invited to participate in the Alcohol Recovery Project. Rocky Head UMC will also support this project. Rocky Head UMC was formed out of slavery, one hundred and sixty years past. Another neighborhood church Owl Rock UMC (a predominately non-African American church) is located only five hundred feet from Rocky Head UMC. In the graveyard of the Owl Rock UMC is the body of the plantation owner named
Mr. Campbell. In this same location are the bodies of four slaves, one of them is called the “Madam of the House”. Owl Rock UMC has the “Anglican Campbell’s” and Rocky Head has the “Black Campbell’s”; both Campbell’s agree that they are related.

Rivertown UMC was formed one hundred and twenty-seven years past. At one time Rivertown UMC was surrounded by farm land. The original church was a small wooden building. Approximately thirty years ago the congregation of Rivertown UMC, with the assistance of Rev. Wimberley Hale, built a new church which has multiple floors and a fellowship hall. Here at Rivertown U.M.C on a monthly basis, the pastor and members invite seniors of the cities of Palmetto Georgia, Fairburn Georgia, Union City and South Fulton County in for what they call the, “Happy Day Ministry”. Lunch is provided and there is friendly fellowship between multiple denominations (Baptist, United Methodist, and non-denominational). Another program being implemented at Rivertown UMC is the chapel service where children can have a Sunday worship service they can understand. Some other programs include Bible Study for youth, Vacation Bible School, and a program called “Feeding the Hungry” for which Rivertown UMC has received financial assistance from the United Methodist Housing and Homeless Council. In this program the church provides canned goods, meat and bread to people who need assistance.

The issue that has been addressed is the presence of alcohol abuse in families at Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC. Some of the people who are affected by alcohol abuse are members of both churches. Currently, seven men
have been recruited into the project. Both churches work closely together in many outreach programs. It has been noted that although other family members do not use alcohol, they are still affected by family members who abuse alcohol. Some of these affects include lack of money to buy food, pay for utilities, and make automobile payments. Due to the fact that Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC are family oriented churches, these congregations do not always reach out to welcome the community into the church. We do however have special days and on these days the churches are packed.

The Ministry Issue

The issue under consideration is, "How can the church, (Rivertown UMC) work with the alcohol addicted community in a way that will assist the recovery of the alcoholics and transform the church and the addicted community?" Also, "How will Rivertown UMC develop A Model for Empowering the Church to Address the Addiction of Alcoholism?" With proper planning, the church can reach out to those who are suffering from alcohol addiction by establishing an effective program to help both groups. The premise is that many churches fail to engage in ministries of outreach and benevolence in their communities for various reasons such as size, location, tradition, and financial considerations. With additional training and more focus on evangelism and forming outreach ministries, the church can become more sensitive to the needs of other people.

The intent is to first inform the congregation that there are church members and other persons in their surrounding communities who are suffering
from alcohol abuse. Dialogue between the community of faith (the church) and the addicted community may be helpful in understanding the needs and concerns relative to addiction.

The use of alcohol and illicit substances among youth has been studied by many. (Diala, Muntaner, & Walrath, 2004; Dube, Feliti, Dong, Chapman, Giles et al., 2003; Gordon, Kinlock, & Battles, 2004). Substance abuse by youth contributes to internalizing and other psychosocial impairment that sets the foundation for potential and subsequent drug and alcohol use in adulthood (National Survey on Drug Use and Health [NSDUH], (2006); King, Meehan, Trim, & Chassin, 2007; The National Adolescent Health Information Center (NAHIC).

Due to the increase in use of alcohol and drugs, the pastor of Rivertown UMC and its congregation decided to investigate and find out what they can do to address this problem.

The community of faith is made up of ordinary people who are not health professionals or therapists, but people of faith. These church members will help to transform persons who are addicted to alcohol. These same members will also help to transform the family, the church and the community. This is what the Alcohol Recovery Program will do to transform alcoholics into different persons. Members are attending these recovery meetings and volunteering to support the people who are working to rid themselves of alcohol addiction.

**Motivation for the Research**

The author’s motivation for this project is derived from a number of people who are alcoholics in the African American church. They become dysfunctional, lose their jobs, their families fall apart, and their children begin to use alcohol and
drugs. The author has observed an increase in the rate of incarceration of young black males and females for petty crimes. Once they get out of jail they normally cannot find employment. The author seeks to cultivate a positive attitude in the church that will reach out to those who are hurting and addicted. By changing the attitudes of the congregation, the church will develop ministries to help the recovering community. Once the addicted persons have recovered, blessings will be received by the addicted persons and the church community. Both communities will become transformed.
CHAPTER III
LITERATURE REVIEW and PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

In an effort to address the issues of Rivertown UMC and the addict, a literature review was performed and is presented in this chapter. The review shows the church as a caring church that can encourage and assist the alcoholics with their recovery and bring about mutual transformation for the church and the alcoholic community.

Empirical Literature Review as it Relates to Problem Areas

The literature reviews will be presented relative to the following problem areas and how the authors address these problems. These problems will be further defined in the detailed literature reviews for each author.

Social Problems: Gerald May, in his book titled *Addiction & Grace*, shows how desire and human freedom have medical and social effects on the addicted person. Cecil Williams (*No Hiding Place*) shows how alcoholism causes social problems. Mr. Williams states that there will be more money allocated for more jails, more cops and more guns. Bucky Dann (*Addiction: Pastoral Responses*) states that alcohol creates social problems as well as medical problems.
Family Problems: Cecil Williams states that alcohol and drug abuse cause problems within the users' families. Ronald Rogers (*Freeing Someone You Love from Alcohol and Drugs*) shows the negative effects that alcoholism has on the family. Stephen Apthrop (*Alcohol & Substance Abuse*) shows how the family is directly affected because of the use of alcohol. Stephanie Brown (*The Alcoholic Family in Recovery*) shows the medical problems families face due to the use of alcohol.

Medical Problems: Gerald May states, in his work, that the mind and the body will have medical problems due to the abuse of alcohol. Cecil Williams also shows how the person addicted to alcohol is affected medically. Stephen Apthrop (*Alcohol & Substance Abuse*) shows, in his text, how the alcoholic is affected medically, pointing out that alcoholism is seen to be a primary illness, a legitimate disease. Bucky Dann addresses the "Rules of Recovery". These rules will be described in his literature review. Stephanie Brown (*The Alcoholic Family in Recovery*) asks the question "Is there a normal developmental process of recovery for the family?" The answer is, "Yes."

Church Problems: Gerald May will address the theological nature of addiction (church or religious effects). This helps to solve problems of alcohol usage of church members. Mr. May will also address grace; the qualities of mercy. May further talks about the "homecoming" - the consecrated life. In his book, Cecil Williams further states that the church is also in recovery. Here, he shows how
the church must accept the addicted person. Stephen Apthrop shows how the church can build a "core group" and play an important role. Andrew Weaver, (Pastoral Care of Alcohol Abusers) shows how pastors and the churches can reach out to the alcoholic.

These are some of the areas that are affected by alcohol and drug addictions. In the following literature presentations each author listed above will address these problem areas in more detail.
Chapter IV
Detailed Empirical Literature Reviews

Review of Gerald May's Work and Practical Application

A review of this literature indicates that there are examples of efforts to address the issues of alcoholism and drug abuse. Gerald May addresses the social, medical and church problems that the alcoholic person has to deal with. May also shows how the Holy Spirit and grace play a part in the healing of the alcoholic. In his book, *Addiction & Grace*, May identifies different phases a person goes through in becoming an alcoholic. May divides the book into eight sections. They are:

Desire: addiction and human freedom (medical effects, social effects). The desire for alcohol and the addiction to the use of alcohol causes social problems, medical problems, and family problems.

Experience: the qualities of addiction.

Mind: the psychological nature of addiction, (medical effects).

Body: the neurological nature of addiction, (medical effects)

Spirit: the theological nature of addiction, (church or religious effects).

Grace: the qualities of Mercy, (church or religious effects).

Empowerment: Grace and will in overcoming addiction, (religious effects).
This book has helped the author of this dissertation to define the terms that are a part of alcohol addiction. Now that the author has a better understanding of some of the causes of addiction, he is able to implement and define this project.

In an effort to understand addictions, the author refers to May's definition of addiction as any compulsive, habitual behavior that limits the freedom of human desire. Attachments can lead to routine behaviors that cause addictions. May states that thoughts and feelings can also be addictive because the brain associates old attachments.\(^5\) This can help to explain why thoughts, images and other associations can trigger relapse in persons who may be well on their way to recovery. May says that this is why there is a real need for God's grace.

Desire: Addiction and Human Freedom, a Gift from God

May believes that every human being has a desire for God's love. God's love gives meaning to life. Some people hide their desire for God, although we all have a desire to be loved. God created humans and planted the seeds of this desire within each person. Human beings repress this desire for love because love makes individuals vulnerable to being hurt. We all are addicted to a variety of substances such as, nicotine, caffeine, sugar, chocolate and other foods. The author observed that his tolerance and withdrawal symptoms from some of the

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addictions mentioned above were not as severe as in people addicted to alcohol or heroin.\textsuperscript{6}

The author quotes the Garden of Eden story. Here he states that the snake told Eve it was all right to eat the forbidden fruit because God was lying to them. Both Adam and Eve ate the fruit because it was forbidden. Today, we are still attracted to “forbidden fruit”. Human beings always want what they should not have. Adam and Eve's behavior is usually interpreted as symbolizing humanity's ongoing willful rebellion against God. The basic elements of addiction and grace (freedom, willfulness, desire, temptation, attachment) are seen in this powerful story. It seems to me that each of our addictions reenact Eve and Adam's story.\textsuperscript{7}

This section of the book relates to our project because here we see God in the process of giving humans freedom of choice. God gives all of us the right to use addictive substances or to reject them. The choice is ours, but our freedom is not complete. Working against us is the powerful force of addiction. Spiritually, addiction is a deep-seated form of idolatry, as our addictions become our false gods. These things are what we worship instead of God. The author further states that we are created for love and freedom. Addictions hinder us and grace is necessary for salvation. Grace cannot be controlled, we seek it and try to be open to it, but we cannot control it; it is God's grace.

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., 9.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., 12.
In the Alcohol Recovery Program at Rivertown UMC, the author and the participants (alcohol addicted persons) have been exposed to Bible study and how God’s grace is still available to each one of us. This group will study a Bible that is designed by Alcoholics Anonymous for persons addicted to alcohol.

**Experience: The Qualities of Addiction**

In this section, the author shows some types of addictions, including addiction to eating, addiction to alcohol, and addiction to extra marital relationships (marital conflict). The author shows how addictions can cripple us. He states that all body functions take place as a result of shifting balances among chemicals that stimulate our bodies. According to May, the definition of addiction is any compulsive, habitual behavior that limits the freedom of human desire. It is caused by attachment or the desire for specific objects. The relationship between attachment and addiction is not as simple as it might sound. For one thing, the brain never completely forgets its old attachments; therefore, absence of conscious desire never releases the desire for attachments such as alcohol and other substances. Tolerance is the phenomenon of always wanting or needing more of the addictive behavior or the object of attachment in order to feel satisfied and “good”.

**Examples of Addictions**

Virtually anything in life can become an object of attachment. It is especially important to remember that there is a big difference between having strong feelings about something and really being addicted to it. It was noted that
addictions can sometimes be good. It is also said that no one is truly free from attachments. We must work with our addictions and try to minimize their destructiveness. May also states that we must realize that religion tells us that total freedom is paradise, the final salvation and full reign of God.

**Mind: The Psychological Nature of Addiction**

Addiction attacks every part of what Freud called our mental apparatus. The attacks seem focused on two primary areas: the will, which is our capacity to choose and direct our behavior and self-esteem which is the respect. Self-deception: There are mind tricks occurring in major chemical addiction. Remember, they all have a single purpose; to keep the addictive behavior going. Rationalization: Whenever denial and repression fail, the addicted person realizes that some kind of problem exists. The realization calls forth a new defensive maneuver, which is to rationalize, to make excuses in an attempt to justify the addictive behavior. These rationalizations are not intentional lies; persons actually try to convince themselves that they are true. For example, "I need a drink because I feel depressed." "I desire a drink to celebrate."

**Body: The Neurological Nature of Addiction**

The neurologist can be precise about the brain, and the theologian can define terms clearly. However, when it comes to the human spirit transcending the body and reflecting the Divine, theologians as well as neuro-scientists face a struggle. The human spirit is in the eternal, like God. Unfortunately, the brain never completely forgets what it has learned. Because of the power of
attachments we might never break some of our habits, and continue acting on these desires. The Alcohol Recovery Program at Rivertown UMC will attempt to change the way the alcoholic thinks.

Since the brain never forgets what it has learned, the pervasive physical power of strong attractions and their potential exist in us even after we have effectively broken the habit of acting upon them. Addictive memory stands ready to come back to us at our slightest encouragement. As this project goes forth, it must be remembered that addictions continue to work against us. With prayer and support from the group, the participants will be able to stay away from the use of alcohol.

**Spirit: The Theological Nature of Addiction**

We must realize that God created us out of love and God loves our goodness. God created us for love. We seek the least threatening ways to satisfy our longing for God and it is up to us to respond to the experiences of God's loving call. Three options are shown: (1) We may try to deny or avoid God's call and repress our desire. The call is still going to break through our defenses and hound us. (2) We may make images of spiritual reality and think that we feel a measure of power. (3) We may try to respond to God in a gentle, open-handed, and cooperative way. The book states that addiction is the absolute enemy of human freedom. It can be called imprisonment or slavery. Evil relates to the human experience of addiction through temptation. The Bible states that the devil's primary activity is to seduce the person, and temptation is the starting point of addiction.
Grace: The Qualities of Mercy

Grace is the active expression of God’s love, and grace itself is the dynamic flowing of this love. The good things that result in life are the fruit of this divine process. Grace appears in many ways, which theologians have long attempted to categorize. It is clear that they speak of a love so abundant, so selfless, so endlessly overflowing as to surpass description. There is a particular dimension of grace that is interactive, in which God and person respond mutually to love. Responsive grace is somewhat like a child desiring to please its mother; the mother responds not to the child’s actual behavior, but to the simple love that prompted the behavior.

May’s book is relevant to the following Bible passage, (Romans 12:1-8)

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. “The commentary further states that “Christian ethics are grounded not in law but in the mercies of God” (Romans 12:1), and a response of gratitude to the grace of God. We must change the way we think and how we treat our bodies.

Gerald May states that everyone has addictions that affect their lives. Some of these addictions include coffee, sugar and alcohol and we all must control the addictions that limit our freedom. All humankind is prone to become

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8 Ibid., 120.

attached to desires. May says that all people suffer from addictions. The same processes that are responsible for chemical addictions, in some, are also at work in everybody, leaving individuals vulnerable to addictions such as thoughts, power, and relationships.

**Review of Cecil Williams’ Work and Practical Application**

In his book entitled *No Hiding Place*, Cecil Williams addresses the issue of alcohol and drug abuse. Williams demonstrates how the alcoholic has social problems and how the church helps to address the problems of addiction. According to Williams, the alcoholic is affected medically. The family has problems and is influenced by a person’s use of alcohol. There are also some social effects that the addicted person has to deal with. Cecil Williams states that in most places he went, he could look into a leader’s eyes and see that many of them had eyes that were bleary from alcohol. The author also stated that, “There would be more money allocated for more jails, more cops and more guns, and that would mean that more black youth would sleep in concrete jail cells with bars for doors. Presently, one of four black men, in their twenties, sits in prison and waits with his life in limbo, or on probation or parole. How many more did the “feds” want to round up?”

Williams reported that in his church, Glide United Methodist Church, located in San Francisco, it is estimated that eighty per cent of the people who

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attend there are actively working on recovery of some kind. He also stated the following: “When you become obsessed with anything to the extent that you rely on it for your grasp on reality, you are addicted.” He goes on to define recovery as the beginning of an experience by which we discover the real meaning of our lives. Recovery is a process we have learned to live by at Glide. 11

Williams further states that the Twelve Steps Program focuses on individual recovery. If we do not stick to the twelve steps independently the ultimate goal of becoming clean and sober will not be reached. But African Americans are a communal people; we fight together for our freedom. A recovery program that focuses mainly on the individual doesn’t “jive” to a people whose identity rests in belonging to an external family and being a member of the black community. 12

It was also stated that as long as blacks, women, and poor people remain anonymous, they remain invisible and unheard. “When these same people speak the truth out loud, when they tell everyone who they are and what they have experienced, they reclaim their lives and a place in the world.” By telling their stories they proclaim, “This is the truth about my life. My secrets and my addiction no longer have power over me. I am free!”13

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11 Ibid., 7.
12 Ibid., 8.
13 Ibid., 9.
The Drama of Recovery

"Recognition is the first act in the drama of recovery. Each of us must recognize the cunning characteristics of addiction, admit our true feelings, and face whatever pain we've tried to hide through our addictions. No secret is too terrible, no memory is too horrible, and no rejection is too harsh. We share a common humanity and need for one another. We do not need drugs or alcohol when we come to recognize ourselves and be honest with one another. When there is 'no hiding place,' we walk back onto the open stage of life where we must stand up and tell the truth about our lives. Addicted folks start with so little self-esteem that success in most recovery programs seems impossible. At Glide UMC we begin with the premise that because you are addicted doesn't mean you are a bad, worthless person; you have a problem and need some help and lots of support."14

"Self-definition is the second act in the drama of recovery. When each one of us begins to determine for ourselves who we are, then we are engaged in the act of self-determination. We must learn to name ourselves in the mist of the confusion of the world. The names we call ourselves matter. People with drug problems must decide, "Am I a drug addict or an alcoholic, or am I a recovering person?" At Glide a strong sense of self-definition allows those in recovery to cry out to one another, "Stop buying their lies about you, be yourself, and stop

14 Ibid., 10.
worrying about what others have to say about you. Listen to the voice within yourself that is telling you the truth."15

Rebirth is the third act in the drama of recovery. Rebirth happens when we go beyond wearing our real names like name tags and start living from inside out. We discover that we would rather shoot "hope" than dope into our veins. Rebirth happens when we stand up, tell our stories, and publicly say, "I am who I am, and I'm okay." Rebirth ushers us into a new way of living one day at a time, fully present to ourselves and the people around us. Rebirth is feeling good again.

Community is the fourth act in the drama of recovery. This is where social problems of alcohol are addressed. Once we recognize our problems, define ourselves, and start living again, we must move further into relationship with our brothers and sisters of all colors and all classes. It has been stated that Glide has been called a community that has provided a landscape against which the addict can change and overcome addiction. Williams stated that "We got black and white, gay and straight, upper class, lower class, and no class here at Glide." 16

A Church in Recovery

More that fifteen hundred people come to worship at Glide on Sunday mornings. People dressed well enough for lunch at the Hilton sit next to those wearing their only set of clothes. One woman drove from Marin County across

15 Ibid., 10.

16 Ibid., 11.
the Golden Gate Bridge, while the another woman walked up the block from working at one of the nearby hotels. "Both women are in recovery and both have found acceptance at Glide" 17

Here, the researcher will use this text to shape and develop his project and address the need for alcoholics to recover from their dependence upon alcohol. The pastor will also work to listen to the people and try to attend to what is transpiring in the lives of the families who are affected by alcohol. We will see what can be done to help these families. We also hope and pray that members of Rivertown will reach out to those who are hurting.

**Operational Literature**

An overview of operational literature stresses the importance of the need for the church to become a church of "Transformation". In operational literature there is an emphasis on the recovery of the alcoholic. In his book, *No Hiding Place*, Cecil Williams defines recovery as the beginning of an experience by which we begin to discover the real meaning of our lives. Recovery is a process we have learned to live with at Glide UMC. We discovered that each moment is a choice between life and death. 18 "Each person performed acts of recognition, self-definition, rebirth, and community." Glide came up with a program that works for them. Similar programs have been implemented for Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC.

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17 Ibid., 7.
18 Ibid., 7.
Review of Stephen P. Apthorp’s Work and Practical Application

Stephen Apthorp states that the alcoholic is affected medically and has medical problems. Apthorp also shows that alcohol addiction is a disease. In his book, *Alcohol & Substance Abuse*, the author states that in the spring of 1978 the Gallup Poll surveyed 1,523 adults nationwide. The results were surprising. The most startling statistic was that drinking was causing problems in one out of every four families across the U.S. In four years’ time alcohol-related problems had doubled. The poll also stated that forty-seven per cent of adults surveyed had no guidelines for their use of alcohol, and fifty-one per cent had no guidelines for their children’s use. Gallop reported that half of the American population disapproves of drinking even though some of them, of course, are drinking. However, one in five would like to see a return to prohibition.\(^{19}\)

Building a “Core Group”

According to Apthorp, within the context of the church fellowship we can start a program for chemical education and drug abuse prevention. Here, he shows how the church can play a key role. The goal should be to establish a core group of people in the church that will assist with the running of the program. These people could be recovering alcoholics, recovering drug users, or affected family members who will help and act as resources for dealing with the problems in the parish and the community. We will call this group the “spark

plug" group. This group should possess the following characteristics: It should be respected in the organization or church; tolerant of the people's feelings so they can help establish the tone of openness; and it should be a caring group that will eliminate judgment, fear, denial, and prejudice. These individuals should also be trustworthy so that they can be the recipients of confidential information. They should be charitable and giving persons so that they can communicate a sense of warmth and acceptance that draws parishioners. The volunteers must be committed to having the time, patience and energy to move the idea out into the congregation.20

Disorder or Disease

Apthorp addresses the medical problems that alcoholism causes and stated that alcoholism is a biochemical, genetic disease. It is an illness. In the current way of thinking, alcoholism is viewed to be a primary illness, a legitimate disease. It is not seen as willful misbehavior, as a learned set of bad habits, or as a symptom of some other problem.

Nature of the Disease

It is believed that alcoholism and related chemical dependencies are primary, progressive, chronic and fatal diseases which by nature, and particularly in the later stages, render the victims incapable of the spontaneous to offer themselves remedial care.21

20 Ibid., 33.
21 Ibid., 65.
Family
Apthorp demonstrates how the entire family has problems because of alcohol use, and is directly affected by the alcoholic. It was stated that those living with harmfully dependent persons become emotionally involved and distressed to the point where they display similar symptoms and need remedial care as well as the alcoholic. They become progressively immobilized by their distress.

Review of Bucky Dann’s Work and Practical Application
Bucky Dann shows how alcohol creates social problems, family problems and medical problems. In his book, *Addiction: Pastoral Responses*, Dann states the following: "Chances are your church is not immune to the drug demographics in America. It is estimated that nearly fourteen million adult Americans have alcohol abuse problems. Forty-three percent of American families report having an alcoholic member."

Dann discusses the fact that the alcoholic is affected medically. It was stated that the definition of an addict is misleading. People can be mistaken about the alcoholics or drug addicts they see, and frequently they do not see the ones with whom they interact every day. For example, it is estimated that ninety-five per cent of problem drinkers are either employed or employable. Not everyone who is homeless or destitute is a drinker or has a drug problem. People who achieve success, who fulfill responsibilities, who maintain families and go to church, may have addiction problems.
According to Dann, the most effective program for dealing with addiction began as an unplanned meeting between two alcoholics in 1935. As commonplace as self-help groups are today, they all trace their roots back to Alcoholics Anonymous. Anyone working with the addicted should be acquainted with the methods of these groups. Alcoholics Anonymous, specifically, remains an excellent resource of help and is found in many communities in North America. The Twelve Steps Program is based upon the experiences of the earliest AA members and the process by which the alcoholics achieved sober lives. These steps require action. They will have profound implications for anyone who works through all the steps.22

At Rivertown UMC, the Alcohol Recovery group has used the Alcohol Anonymous Twelve Steps approach and the "Celebration Recovery" program materials. The group is meeting on a weekly basis and addressing the problems people have with alcohol addiction in the church. We are learning that the use of alcohol, in most cases, leads to the use of illegal drugs.

Recovery Basics

Dann stated that there are a few basic techniques everyone attempting to recover from addiction needs to practice. Preparing someone for referral, functioning in a supportive role, and offering individual counseling are essential methods to help the addicted implement some techniques in their lives. In most cases, relapse happens because one of these simple actions is neglected.23

23Ibid, 83
Rules of Recovery

The first rule of recovery is to avoid people, places and things. This is shorthand for avoiding people who drink alcohol or use drugs. One problem for those new in recovery is handling their friends who still drink. Rule number two of recovery is to abstain from all mood-altering substances. This means alcohol and drugs. Rule number three is that few recover alone. People who are addicted and fail in recovery usually do so because they did not get help, or stopped utilizing the help they had started. Being alone, they are overwhelmed by their cravings, by their problems, and their emotions, and they start drinking again. Recovery rule number four is to deal openly with emotions. One of the hardest aspects of achieving long term recovery (meaning abstinence for more than a year) is learning to identify feelings and handling them the right way. A final rule for successful recovery is to maintain a positive attitude. Negativity, hopelessness, frustration, arrogance and self-dislike are all mental positions that easily lead to addictions again.24

Dann's work states that it is important, during the persons struggle to obtain recovery, to allow them to be honest about themselves. This should be done without fear of condemnation. He also states that, "What is said in these meetings must stay here, so we will feel free to come here."

24 Ibid., 84-87.
Review of Stephanie Brown and Virginia Lewis’ Work
and Practical Application

Stephanie Brown, PhD, is a clinician, teacher, researcher, consultant and author in the field of alcoholism. Stephanie founded the Alcohol Clinic at Stanford University Medical Center in 1977. For more than twenty-five years Stephanie Brown asked the question, "What is the normal process of recovery for the individual?" The next step is to ask what happens to the family as a whole. Is there a "normal developmental process of recovery for the family, similar to the long term process of change for the individual? The answer is, "Yes."

Here, Stephanie shows the medical problems and effects of being an alcoholic. In her book, *The Alcoholic Family in Recovery*, she asks the question, "What happens when the drinking stops?" It was stated that from years of study, years of clinical experience and from the wealth of information now available regarding children of alcoholics, alcoholism affects the entire family as individuals and as a whole; so does recovery.

During research with the Family Recovery Project, Stephanie worked with fifty-two couples and families with lengths of abstinence ranging from seventy-nine days to eighteen years. A critical aspect of this research and prior studies involved membership in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Al-anon. In the original study (1985) of the individual alcoholic, all subjects were members of AA.

In the family Recovery Research project, membership in AA and Al-anon was not required. It turned out the majority of the self-identified alcoholics did belong to AA and a small percentage of their partners belong to Al-anon. A few of
the couples used religion and therapy as a source of support and these people had no involvement in AA.

**Review of Ronald L. Rogers and Chandler Scott McMillin’s Work and Practical Application**

In their book, *Freeing Someone You Love from Alcohol and Other Drugs*, Ronald Rogers and Chandler McMillin demonstrate the effects that alcoholism has on the family. They also discuss how the family has medical problems due to the use of alcohol by one of the family members. Ronald and Chandler state that it is impossible to fight addiction without help. It was stated that a woman tried unsuccessfully to solve the problem of her husband’s addiction. The husband continues to drink and the wife does not know what to do the help this man stop drinking. Her loved one is suffering from a disease that, if left untreated, will probably prove fatal to him and, in some cases, perhaps to them also.

The authors speak of diseases such as alcoholism, cocaine addiction, narcotics dependency, etc. Yet, despite their remarkable complexity and forms, these diseases can be treated. If you try to improvise your own response to the emotional roller coaster that is addiction, some errors will be made. Following are some of the mistakes individuals make:

**Error No.1:** A lady, called Mary Louise, gives the alcoholic husband responsibilities and then gets angry when the man doesn’t fulfill them.

**Error No.2:** She is fooled by apparent lulls in drinking or drug use. The reality: She has been living with alcoholism most of their marriage. If the
husband were going to experience a spontaneous recovery, it would have happened long ago. Error No.3: She makes excuses for the alcoholic. In other words she becomes a voluntary participant in the denial syndrome. Error No.4: She gets into arguments when the alcoholic has been drinking. What is the point in arguing when the alcoholic will not remember it the next day? Error 5: She gets advice from friends who don't understand alcoholism either.25

If addiction is a disease, why don't we treat it like one? What can be done to get the ruptured lives of families back on track? Rogers states that addiction is best treated as a disease. Most people say, "What is new about that? People have been saying this for years." Opinion polls tell us that in the past few decades Americans have changed their minds about alcoholism and drug dependency. While once these were regarded as signs of moral weakness, they are now seen as a disease process.

Review of Andrew Weaver's and Harold Koenig's Work
and Practical Application

Andrew Weaver and Harold Koenig show, in their book *Pastoral Care of Alcohol Abusers*, how pastors and churches can reach out to alcoholics and assist them as they deal with the problems of addiction. With 120 million American teens and adults using alcohol, its abuse is a very significant public

health issue across the life span. Young people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four spend billions of dollars annually on beer alone. A Harvard University survey found that more than eight in ten administrators of four year colleges view student use of alcohol a problem on campus.

A recent study by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention found that 45 per cent of teens reported they had consumed alcohol in the past month, and 64 per cent of those stated that they were binge drinking, defined as having five or more alcoholic drinks in a row. Each year, approximately five thousand persons under the age of twenty-one die from alcohol related car accidents, injuries, homicides, and suicide (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2005). The annual economic costs of alcohol abuse in the United States have been estimated at $184.6 billion.

Given the magnitude of the problem, it is important that clergy be skilled in recognizing alcoholism and its related issues. Research, over several decades, has demonstrated that millions of Americans call upon clergy for help in times of trouble, including dealing with problems related to addiction. The 353,000 clergy serving congregations in the United States are among the most trusted professionals in society.\(^{26}\)

Pastors are often in long-term relationships with individuals and their families, which enables them to observe changes in behavior that may indicate early signs of alcoholism and related problems. Pastors can also help connect

\(^{26}\) Andrew J. Weaver, Pastoral Care of Alcohol Abusers (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2009), 1.
the people, who are having problems, with other medical and mental health professionals.

**Transformational Learning**

The following information was presented in the book, *Learning as Transformational*, written by Jack Mezirow. Mezirow states the following: "Transformational kinds of learning needs to be more clearly distinguished from informational kinds of learning, and each needs to be recognized as valuable in any learning activity, discipline, or field." The form that is undergoing transformation needs to be better understood; if there is no form there is no transformation. At the heart of a form is a way of understanding what Mezirow refers to as a 'frame of reference'. This genuinely transformational learning is always, to some extent, an epistemological (theory of knowledge) change rather than merely a change in behavioral repertoire or an increase in the quantity of knowledge. Adult educators, with an interest in transformational learning, may need a better understanding of their students so as not to create learning designs that unwittingly presuppose the very capacities in students their designs might seek to promote."\(^{27}\)

**Informational Learning and Transformational Learning**

Learning aimed at increasing our fund of knowledge, at increasing our repertoire of skills, at extending already established cognitive capacities into new terrain serves the absolute crucial purpose of deepening the resources available

to an existing frame of reference. Such learning is literally in-form-active because it seeks to bring valuable new contents into the existing form of our way of knowing. 28 Transformational kinds of learning needs to be more clearly distinguished from informational kinds of learning. Learning occurs in one of four ways: By elaborating existing frames of reference; by learning new frames of reference; by transforming points of view; and by transforming habits of mind.

**Reflective Discourse**

Discourse, in the context of transformation theory is that specialized use of dialog devoted to searching for a common understanding and assessment or justification of an interpretation or belief. Effective participation in discourse and in transformative learning requires emotional maturity, awareness, empathy, and control. This is what Goleman (1998) calls "emotional intelligence" – knowing and managing one's emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others and handling relationships, as well as clear thinking.

**Summary of Detailed Empirical Literature Review**

The author of this dissertation has been captivated by the information that has been gathered from the book written by Gerald May titled *Addiction and Grace*, and Cecil Williams' book titled *No Hiding Place*.

In May’s book, he states that every human being has a desire for God’s love. God’s love gives meaning to life. Some people hide their desire for God, although we all have a desire to be loved. God created humans and planted the

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28 Ibid, 48.
seeds of this desire within each person. Human beings repress this desire for love because love makes individuals vulnerable to being hurt.

May also states that grace is the active expression of God’s love, and grace itself is the dynamic flowing of God’s love. The good things that result in life are the fruit of this divine process. Grace appears in many ways, which theologians have long attempted to categorize. It is clear that they speak of a love so abundant, so selfless, so endlessly overflowing as to surpass description.\(^{29}\) May further states that God gives us love and the desire to be loved. The author of this dissertation believes that love is a very important part of the alcoholic’s recovery and transformation process. The church must demonstrate this true love to the addicted community. The alcoholic must feel the love of God that is offered by the church. May also affirms that there is a genuine need in everyone for God. May states that this desire gives meaning to life. In other words, without God in our lives there is a void that leaves us incomplete.

Cecil Williams’ text, likewise, has helped to refine the author’s ministry issue. Williams examined the Twelve Step Program of Alcohol Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. He felt that these programs did not meet all the needs of the Glide Church community. Williams noted that he needed a specific program that would meet the needs of the African American Community. Williams’ approach to having an outreach program that transforms people in recovery has provided a resource to help reach the masses in his church

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community. This type of outreach program, designed to meet the needs of the addicted community has also helped shape the author's project. The Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Project has been designed to reach the church community located in South Fulton County Georgia.

Another approach that Williams used to reach the community at Glide United Methodist Church was his evangelizing approach of walking the streets of San Francisco and saying, “It's recovery time!” By doing this Cecil Williams reached out to the community. Williams did not wait for the recovering community to come to him. He went out to the community. This same course of action has been used by the Rivertown UMC Alcohol Recovery Program. The author has offered this Alcohol Recovery Program to the members of Rivertown UMC, Rocky Head UMC and Rama Community Church.

Having reviewed and studied May's and Williams' books, the author of this dissertation is more than convinced that these authors have provided important information that will inform the context for the author's ministry issue and project, The Church and Alcoholism. The author of the dissertation has also discovered that when the church reaches out to others, the church and the surrounding community will start to deal with its own issues. Therefore Transformation takes place in the church and the addicted community. Renovation takes place in the church and this change spreads to the addicted community.

BIBLICAL and THEOLOGICAL REVIEWS

The biblical and theological reviews show how God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit play a part in the recovery of the alcoholic. It will show how the church
cannot stand still while the alcoholic is suffering from his or her addiction. The church must respond to the needs of this recovering community.

BIBLICAL REVIEW

Question: Where is God in the healing process? How can Rivertown UMC help the recovering community to change the way they think and live? What scripture is chosen and how does this scripture relate to this project? The following scriptures have been selected.

Romans 12:1-8: I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (2) Do not conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect. (3) For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. (4) For as in one body we have many members, and not all members have the same function, (5) We who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. (6) We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; (7) ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; (8) the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness."
Purpose for Romans

Paul wrote this letter for the following reasons: (1) to prepare the way for his coming visit to Rome and to enlist support for his proposed mission to Spain; (2) to present the basics of the Christian gospel of salvation, to confirm to the church at Rome that they shared the same gospel; (3) to explain the relationship between Jew and Gentile in God’s overall plan of redemption; and (4) the Jewish Christians may have been rejected by the larger Gentile group in the church because the Jewish believers still felt constrained to observe dietary laws and sacred days. (Romans 14:2-6).\(^\text{30}\)

Overview

Chapter 12:1-2 indicates that Paul is stitching the letter together. It is not just a matter of verbal links and echoes, but major themes now to be restated. God’s mercies generate an appeal to those who know and have received them. The underlying thrust of these verses is that Christians, Jew and Gentile alike, now offer to the one true God the full and final sacrificial worship in which Israel’s worship is made complete.

Romans 12:1-2 draws explicitly on the essentially Second Temple Jewish view that world history divides into two ages, ("The Present Age" and "The Age to Come") and insists that the two now overlap and that Christians belong in the latter. It is that the new day has begun to dawn, and that those who belong to the

\(^{30}\) Kenneth L. Barker, *Zondervan NIV Study Bible* (Michigan, 2008), 1737.
Messiah must live in its light rather than in the darkness of the present world. This indicates how this section divides up: 12:1-2 points to 13:11-14.31

The author of this dissertation wants the families who are affected by those who use alcohol to understand, that alcoholics must change the way they think and live, and that is why this project is being presented to the church so that hopefully, those families will be able to help alcoholics change their life styles.

Gerald May states that, “God gives all of us the right to use addictive substances or to reject them. The choice is ours, but our freedom is not complete. Working against us is the powerful force of addiction. Spiritually, addiction is a deep-seated form of idolatry. Our addictions become our false gods. These things are what we worship instead of God.”32 A change in the way we think and live will be beneficial to families of recovering alcoholics who are a part of our church community. Hopefully they will have a change of mind and stop abusing alcohol.

**Commentary on Romans 12:1**

The ground of exhortation is, “The mercies of God.” Paul has spoken of God’s mercy enough in the preceding chapters to make it clear that the present appeal is grounded not simply on Romans chapters 1-8, but also on Romans


chapters 9-11. The opening verse, in particular, indicates that the foundation of all Christian obedience is that those in Christ, indwelt by the Spirit, are to offer to God the true sacrificial worship to which the cult of the Jerusalem Temple had all along pointed. At the close of this section the letter’s great argument envisages Jew and Gentile alike joining in worship of the true God under the lordship of the Messiah.

The sacrificial worship, though not involving animal sacrifices, is not simply spiritual in the sense of not involving physical sacrifices. Paul envisages the sacrifices in question as physical, indeed animal, but the animals are human and they are not to be ritually slaughtered but “presented” to God, still alive.33

**Not Bodies, But Sins of the Body Sacrificed**

Paul tells them, that it is only the mercy of God by which the human race is saved. This is a warning that they should remember that they received God’s mercy and that they should take care to worship the One who gave it to them.

God’s will is our sanctification. Bodies subject to sin are considered dead, not alive, since they have no hope of obtaining the promise of eternal life. It is for this purpose that we are cleansed from our sins by God’s gift, and henceforth we should lead pure lives, and stir up the love of God in us, not making His work of grace of no effect. The ancients killed sacrifices which were offered in order to signify that men were subjected to death because of sin. Now, since by the gift of

God men have been purified and set free from the second death, they must offer a living sacrifice as a sign of eternal life.34

Romans 12:2: Paul sees the new age, long awaited within Judaism, as having broken into the present age in the Messiah, and understands Christians as living at their point of overlap, needing constantly to reject the pressures of the present age and be open to the new life offered in the Messiah. Verse 2 focuses on the renewal of the mind, but the result is that people, being thus transformed, can work out in practice what is the right thing to do.

The mind is a key category in Paul's vision of renewal (Romans 7:25 and 8:5-8). Instead of the "unfit mind" of Romans 1:28, Paul holds out a vision of a mind renewed able now, at least, to think for itself what will please God instead of being darkened by the deceitfulness of sin. The Christian is not meant to rely simply on the lists of ethical commands, but to be able to discern (NRSV), to test and approve (NIV), what God's will is. God's will, it seems, is primarily for general ethical conduct but also, perhaps, for specific decisions and occasions. Paul's vision of living sacrifice and a renewed mind, generates a picture of Christian behavior in which rules matter but are not the driving force in which

thought and reflection matter without reducing ethics to purely situational decisions.\textsuperscript{35}

The book of Romans has the reputation of being one of the most theological books in the Bible. All theology is practical and all practice, if it is truly Christian, is theological. Paul's gospel is theological, but it is also eminently practical. The good news of Jesus Christ is intended to transform a person's life. Until individual Christians own and live out theology, the gospel has not accomplished its purpose.

The author of this dissertation is praying that the people who come to Rivertown UMC will become transformed and that they will receive the good news that a person can change the way they live, with the help of Jesus Christ.

In Romans chapter 12, Paul turns his full attention to the ethical implications of the gospel. The word "therefore" at the beginning of the chapter gathers up all the teaching of Romans chapters 1-11. Granted the manifold mercy of God as set forth in the letter, what are we to do? Paul answers the question in Romans chapters 12:1-15:13 by touching on key areas where Christians need to display the reality of God in a new way of living. This larger section divides into two smaller sections, with Romans 12:1–13:14 going to several general areas where Christians need to display the reality of God in a new way of living.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{35} N.T. Wright, \textit{The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary, Volume X}, 705-706.

\textsuperscript{36} Douglas J. Moo, \textit{The NIV Application Commentary: Romans}. 
Romans 12:1-2 is one of the best known passages in the Bible, and deservedly so, for we find here a succinct description of the essence of the believer's response to God's grace in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It functions as the heading for all the specifics Paul will unpack in subsequent chapters. Our response is rooted in God's grace.

The NIV's "God's mercy" conceals the fact that the Greek word for mercy is in the plural ("mercies"). Paul concludes that this offering of ourselves to God constitutes our "spiritual act of worship". "Spiritual" translates a word (logikos) over which there is much debate, as varied renderings suggest "spiritual" (NIV; NRSV). We give ourselves to God as His sacrifices when we understand His grace and its place in our lives. We offer ourselves not ignorantly, like animals brought to slaughter, but intelligently and willingly. This is the worship that pleases God.

The means by which we accomplish this transformation in conduct is the "renewing of your mind". Romans 12:1 set forth two fundamental values that should inform all our discussion about worship. Worship is the way we live, not what we do on Sunday morning. We worship God, says Paul, by giving ourselves in sacrificial service to our Lord. We are to serve Him every day, every hour, every minute. Paul deliberately uses the word "body" (soma) to describe what we are to offer to God. This word focuses on the "embodied" nature of our

(Michigan, 2000), 393.

37 Ibid., 394.
38 Ibid., 395.
person, reminding us that we are physical beings interacting with a material world. The worship we offer corporately in a worship service must be "informed". Believers must meet together on a regular basis if one reads Romans 12:1 rightly. The worship that pleases God and that leaves a mark on a believer always engages the mind.  

Renewing the Mind

While we are on the subject of the mind we should note a similar emphasis emerging from Romans 12:2. By "renewing the mind" we transform ourselves and prove in practice God's "good, pleasing and perfect will". When we change the way we think, we change the way we live. Two elements here deserve comment. (1) It is a process. The fact that Paul calls on believers to engage in this renewing of the mind shows that it does not automatically happen to us when we believe. God's Spirit comes to reside in us, and He provides a whole new orientation to our thinking. (2) Renewing the mind is, by definition, an internal process. In a certain sense, this concept is Paul's response to a possible criticism of his gospel because he taught that Christians are no longer under the Law of Moses (Romans 6:14-15). What will direct Christians to live in a way pleasing to God? Paul's answer is that God is at work in us, changing, from within, the very way that we think. This is a far better alternative than any law, for no law will cover all the issues we face in life.

39 Ibid., 397.
40 Ibid., 398-399.
Romans 12:3-8: Paul states that God had equipped him for a particular task with, "The grace given to me". Paul states that he is given an extraordinary vocation; he attempted the tasks he did because God had appointed him to a specific role. Paul underlines the importance of what he is about to say by reminding the Roman Christians of his authority. The "grace" given Paul is his apostolic calling, a specific manifestation of God's grace.\footnote{Ibid., 407.} A fourfold play on the word "think" stresses that the first consequence of the renewed mind is a sober self-estimate, not to think of yourself more highly than you ought.

Romans 12:4-5: A Christian's self-concept is achieved not in isolation but by participation in one body in Christ, in which diversity of gifts contributes to unity of purpose. On the church as one body, see 1 Corinthians 12.\footnote{James R. Edwards, \textit{The New Interpreter's Study Bible, The New Revised Standard Version Bible}, 2028.} The church, Paul says, is like our individual bodies (Romans 12:4-5); it has many different parts, each with its own function, but all the parts form one body, and each part is needed if the body is to function as it should. If we are in Christ (Romans 12:5) we are in His body, inescapably joined to the other members of our local Christian community. We cannot separate from each other.\footnote{Douglas J. Moo, \textit{The NIV Application Commentary: Romans}, 402.}

In Romans 12:6-8, Paul develops this notion further by listing a number of gifts God has given to members of the body of Christ. Paul uses this word "gift" (charisma) elsewhere to denote a God–given ability to serve the community of
Christ in a particular way (I Corinthians 1:7, 12:4). Paul chooses, in each place, to illustrate his argument by mentioning certain gifts that come to mind.

The gifts listed here, which he refers to as "spiritual gifts", are identical neither with the list in 1 Corinthians 12, nor with a similar list. Seven gifts are listed here (prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, and compassion), perhaps indicating the completeness of God's provision for the work of the church. Paul also states that just as God has given him grace for his task, so God gives the church grace for its multiple and mutually supportive tasks, and whatever they are they must be exercised to the full extent of one's powers.44

As stated in the overview of the Book of Romans, the following is true: The new day has begun to dawn and those who belong to the Messiah must live in its light rather than in the darkness of the present world. This indicates how this whole section divides up. Romans 12:1-2 points forward to Romans 13:11-14, giving the first two chapters an eschatological framework.45

Romans 13: 11-14: This scripture reminds Christians how to live a new way and not go back to some of our old ways! Romans 13:11-14: Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. Salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; 12. The night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light; 13. Let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and

44 N.T. Wright, The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary, Volume X., 710.

45 Ibid., 701.
drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy; 14. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires.

Here, Paul is reminding the Romans that we are to live today in Jesus Christ. He is saying, "Put aside the deeds of darkness; put on the armor of light." Christians should be motivated to goodness not only by the claim of agape love but also by the approaching Day of Christ. "Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:24) describes Christian discipleship as the practical metaphor of choosing to dress in a certain manner.46

Drunkenness - A drugged or deranged condition that results from drinking intoxicating beverages.47

Crimes are hatched in large supplies of wine, and many kinds of lust are stirred up. Therefore, banquets of this kind are to be avoided. Paul was right to warn them against quarreling and jealousy, because both of these lead to enmity. Paul does not forbid alcohol; he is opposed only to its excessive use. Nor does he prohibit sexual intercourse; rather, he is against fornication. What he wants to do is get rid of the deadly passions of lust and anger. Therefore, he does not merely attack them but goes to their source as well. For nothing kindles lust or wrath so much as excessive drinking.48

46 Ibid., 2030.
48 Gerald Lewis Bray, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture.
Here we see that Christian ethics are grounded not in law but in the mercies of God (Romans 12:1), and a response of gratitude to the grace of God. "Present your bodies" asserts the claim of the gospel to the whole person. Present, sacrifice, holy, and acceptable derive from the consecration and killing of animals in the temple sacrifice. Paul declares that the offering acceptable to God is not a dead but a living sacrifice. Thus, a living sacrifice is a reasonable response to the gospel life. Christian existence must not be conformed to this world but "Transformed by the renewal of your minds" (Romans 12:2). A renewed mind is essential to the discernment of God's will and the transformation of life (Romans 12:4-5). A Christian self-concept is achieved by participation in the "One body in Christ" in which diversity of gifts contributes to unity of purpose.49

These scriptures (Romans 12:1-8 & Romans 13:11-14) have been chosen because they relate well to my ministry setting and project. Romans 12:2 states that by "renewing the mind" we transform ourselves and prove in practice God's "good, pleasing and perfect will." When we change the way we think, we change the way we live. Romans 13:12 tells us to put aside the deeds of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Put on Jesus Christ. Families are being affected by other family members who do not know how to control their drinking habits.

Society today promotes drinking instead of encouraging us not to drink but to have self-control. We must be reminded as Christians to live in the light of Jesus Christ and not to go back to the wrong ways of living. We must be “transformed by the renewal of the mind.”

**Theological Literature Review**

The issue for consideration is, “How can the community of faith (Rivertown UMC) work with the alcohol addicted recovering community in a way that will assist in the recovery of the alcoholic and transform both groups? What roles will Jesus and the Holy Spirit play in assisting the families of alcoholics at Rivertown and Rocky Head?” How can the pastor and members of Rivertown UMC help these persons withdraw from the use of alcohol?

Jesus is the perfect example of the suffering servant who overcame adversity. Jesus, the Son of God shows us that there is nothing too hard for God if we believe that Jesus and God can do anything! Then we, with the help of God and the Holy Spirit, can also overcome the addictions that life puts on us. God has sent His only Son, so we do not have to suffer. An example of this is Jesus healing the lame man so that he could walk again. Jesus healed the sick and loosed those who were evil possessed. Yes, Jesus can heal anything! Here Jesus plays a very important part of showing us what we can overcome. We can overcome all things through Jesus Christ. Which member of the trinity is a major player? The Holy Spirit should play a major role. Jesus says he will send another Comforter to be with us. Jesus will also play a role in offering the
alcoholic deliverance and salvation. The pastor and congregation will also assist. God also plays a very important role! The content of God’s eternal choice is the incarnation of the Son on behalf of fallen creatures. The eternal decree is double predestination, though in a sense very different from that of classical Calvinism. For all eternity God chose that He would live for us and us for Him. Since we are chosen precisely as we are fallen, God chose to lose that we might gain, to be Himself burdened with sin and evil in order that we might be blessed. God chose to be one with sinful man in personal existence, just as it occurs of Jesus; and it is this choice that is the beginning of all God’s ways.50

Christians are hurting because their family members are hurting. The church, must reach out to see what we can do through education and prevention seminars offered to the recovering community. The church must be transformed therefore have a new way of thinking. The following scriptures help define drunkenness and an uncontrolled way of living. 1Corinthians 5:11 - But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one, no not to eat.

Ephesians 5:18 - And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit. (Drunkenness appears regularly in a list of vices in the New Testament.) Luke 21:34, 36 - And take heed to yourselves, least at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this

life, and so that day comes upon you unawares. Watch, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Romans 13:12-13 - The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, and let us put on the armor of light.

Noah, who planted a vineyard and drank its wine after the Flood, is the first intoxicated man mentioned in the Bible (Gen 9:20-21). John 14:13-14 says, “And whatever you ask in My name, I will do it, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask for anything in My name, and I will do it” - Matthew 22:39. Hebrews 11:1 “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

Critique

Has this been done before? Yes this has been done in other locations, but not at Rivertown UMC or Rocky Head UMC. This community needs assistance. We have offered this program to the churches that surround Rivertown and Rocky Head churches. We will continue to reach out to both communities.

What are the causes of these problems?

Economics: People do not have jobs and they get discouraged. People tend to turn to quick fixes (alcohol, drugs, etc.). Television and radio commercials stress excessive drinking as the right thing to do.
Social: Some people need to have friends who can party with them. This helps them to forget their situations. However, when the party is over the problems do not go away. Some other persons seem to follow their friends. They sponsor the parties and when the money runs out, the party is over. Then, these people still have to deal with their addictions.

Why is this project important? This project is important because we want to see all of God's people restored and released from addictions such as alcohol. Once they are restored, hopefully they will be able to support their families. We also pray that they will become active church members.

Suspicions: Why are we looking at this issue? Families are hurting and not receiving help. We, the Christian church, need to assist these families. People are getting hurt, there is more domestic violence. People are being arrested for drunk driving and other crimes because of the use of alcohol.

**Summary of Biblical and Theological Review**

The biblical and theological reviews suggest that people must change the way they think. The church must become more open to the addicted community but both the church and addicted community must change the way they think. By doing this, both the church and the addicted community become transformed. The people of the church learn more about the alcoholic community and the alcoholic changes the way they think about the church. Both groups obtain a positive understanding of each other. At this point, the church becomes transformed and with God's help the alcoholic becomes converted.
Romans 12:1-8 states that we must change the way we think and live. The author of this dissertation wants the families who are affected by those who are alcoholics to understand that the alcoholic must change the way he or she thinks and lives. Alcoholics must decide for themselves that they are going to stop drinking. Once this decision has been made by the addicted person, then a true complete change will overcome them. The church must likewise become transformed so that the church can accept the addicted community and offer them Jesus Christ; both parties, the church members and the addicted community have to go through a conversion.

Gerald May states that, "God gives all of us the right to use addictive substances or to reject them. The choice is ours; but our freedom is not complete. Working against us is the powerful force of addiction. Spiritually, addiction is a deep-seated form of idolatry. Our addictions become our false gods. These things are what we worship instead of God." We must renew our minds and therefore become transformed and by doing so we practice God's "good and pleasing will". If we change the way we think, we also change the way we live. It has been stated also that Jesus is the perfect example of the suffering servant who overcomes adversity. Jesus, the Son of God, shows us that there is nothing too hard for God to do. If we, the church, believe that there is nothing too

hard for God then with the help of God and the Holy Spirit the addictive community can overcome their addictions.

The church can play an important role in the recovery of the addict. The church must offer Jesus Christ to this addicted community. By doing so, the house of faith offers the addict grace, mercy and love.

This is the role the author has witnessed at the Rivertown UMC Alcohol Recovery Program. Rivertown UMC, Rocky Head UMC and Redemption Community Church are offering Jesus’ Love to the persons attending these meetings.
Chapter V
THE MINISTRY PROJECT

The dissertation project has two major components: The Project Implementation Phase and the Project Evaluation Phase. As a part of the implementation phase the project team has been organized and volunteers from Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC were solicited and they agreed to participate as an important part of the Rivertown UMC Alcohol Recovery Project. Most of the volunteers have been involved in family relationships where a person is an alcoholic. Some of these volunteers are recovering alcoholics. The volunteers have helped to lead Bible studies and provide testimonies that the alcoholic can relate to. These families have recommended people who are addicted to alcohol and they have also volunteered to assist and attend the Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Program meetings.

Project Implementation Phase

The Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Project was designed and implemented in two phases over a three month period of time. After this project was completed, these meetings and services have continued to be available to the participants in the Alcohol Recovery Program located at Rivertown UMC. The Alcohol Recovery Project included three one hour meetings for the purpose of training. The project also included five one and one half hour meetings that were
conducted from September 25, 2012 until November 15, 2012. The project involved members from Rivertown UMC, Rocky Head UMC and Rama Community Church. These churches are located in South Fulton County, Fairburn Georgia and Palmetto Georgia. Presentations at Rivertown UMC have been made available to educate the congregation about the dangers of alcohol abuse in the African American community.

Members of Rivertown UMC, Rocky Head UMC and Rama Community churches have been invited to the Alcohol Recovery meetings. The researcher noticed that members of these churches have accepted these invitations. Other families who have loved ones who are affected by alcohol abuse have also been invited to these meetings.

The issue addressed by this ministry project is the fact that the church is seeing an increase in the use of alcohol in the African American community, which leads to jail sentences and other problems in this community. Some of these problems include breaking up the family relationships, decrease of financial income for the family, and the lack of male or female family leadership. These are some of the social and economic problems that the members and families are facing.

Five to eight candidates were identified and asked to join this recovery group. These individuals have access to counselors who are willing to support the Alcohol Recovery Project. At this time we have nine participants, along with
the author of this dissertation. Members of Rivertown UMC have also volunteered to be an active part of the recovery team. These church members are attending the meetings on a regular basis.

**Team Organization**

The author was blessed to have the opportunity to work with two important people who have given valuable assistance to Rivertown UMC and have helped establish and shape the structure of the Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Group. Rev. Don Shannon, a local pastor at Brookhaven UMC located in Atlanta Georgia, helped to introduce the Alcohol Anonymous materials to Rivertown UMC. Another important resource is Darrell Thrasher and his wife Marcia Thrasher who exposed the author of this dissertation to an alcohol recovery program called the “Celebration Recovery”.

Rev. Shannon is providing *The Life Recovery Bibles* published by Tyndale House Publishers. These bibles are designed to support recovering addicts. Shannon is a recovered alcoholic and drug addict. He is now director of three alcohol and drug recovery programs at Brookhaven UMC and has provided Bibles for the Rivertown UMC Alcohol Recovery Program. These Bibles are designed to illustrate the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. In the *Life Recovery Bible*, the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and the twelve steps of scripture are listed. The Rivertown UMC Recovery Program has used these Bibles for the people who attend the Alcohol recovery meetings at Rivertown.
UMC located in Fairburn Georgia. Shannon's program, located at Brookhaven UMC is designed for people who do not normally attend church. The researcher has attended training meetings at Brookhaven UMC. Included is a report detailing the Recovery Ministry at Brookhaven UMC located in North East Atlanta Georgia.

**Brookhaven Recovery Ministry**

**Brookhaven United Methodist Church**

Leader: Rev. Don Shannon, Pastoral Care

**History of Brookhaven's Recovery Ministry**

"Five years ago the members of the Brookhaven United Methodist Church realized we had been given a wonderful blessing. For years we had been host to several large recovery communities (240 men and women). The recovery groups met here for community meetings, we had cooked Thanksgiving dinner for them, they had been working around the church, and we had made them Christmas stockings.

These folks are most exclusively disadvantaged people with meager resources. They are our blessing! We decided to be disciple makers; to begin a recovery meeting using the Life Recovery Bible as our "Big Book". We teach the 12 Steps in light of the Word of God. We give everyone who attends a Life Recovery Bible. To date we have given away 4000 Bibles. We further saw the need to provide clothing; some come to us with only the outfit they are wearing when leaving the streets. Our Clothing Closet serves an average of 25
people a week. On the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month we conduct evening prayer and Holy Communion, followed by supper and fellowship. On Sundays we provide transportation and average 20 men and women for Sunday School and worship. None of us ever envisioned all the ways God would bless us through this ministry.

The Recovery Ministry is active as a resource connecting our church with the disenfranchised. All of this is done through the heart and help of the congregation of Brookhaven United Methodist Church. Recovering from alcohol and drug addiction is a spiritual affair.

Persons enter recovery, more often than not, having little or no resources and feeling alienated from friends, family, and God. BUMC's Recovery Ministry is unique in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church in that we seek to live as, and to make disciples through radical hospitality, worship and fellowship, inclusion and teaching the 12 steps of recovery to restore hope, healing and wholeness in the light of God's word.  

The Brookhaven UMC Recovery Ministry includes:

Leadership: Our Pastor of Care and Recovery is available to help persons and families take the first step into recovery and to spiritually shepherd those who are working on their Twelve-Steps Program.

Recovery Bible Study: An open meeting using the Life Recovery Bible and group discussion. We have given away 4000+ Bibles in six years.

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Soulful Saturdays: Meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month and includes a
time of evening prayer and Communion followed by a meal and Bingo.

Recovery Group Meetings: AA/NA meetings are held in our building as the
need arises from the area recovery programs. They are open or closed meetings.

Christmas Bags: Personal hygiene and holiday treats for recovering people.

Thanksgiving Meal: The church hosts a Thanksgiving Day meal for the area
recovery community and indigent persons in our neighborhood.

Clothes Closet: Provides clothing for persons coming off the streets into recovery, and day labor
work clothing. Serves 20-30 weekly. Be part of a ministry that changes lives
through spiritual support to overcome addiction and despair! Show God's love in
tangible ways.

Ways individuals and groups can connect:
Donate or hold a clothing drive for men's clothing (jeans, T-shirts, socks,
underwear, winter clothing are especially useful). Volunteer to prepare and serve
a meal for Soulful Saturday. Meet persons in recovery first hand and hear their
stories. Donate dollars for recovery Bibles/prizes for bingo. Items useful and
needed or a fun snack for persons on a limited budget.  

CELEBRATE RECOVERY MINISTRY,
LITHONIA GEORGIA

The researcher has also worked with Darrell Thrasher and his wife Marcia
Thrasher in a program called the "Celebration Recovery". Thrasher has also
recovered from alcohol and drug addiction.) This program is designed for people
who have had some exposure to church life and have attended church.

His program presents the "Celebration Recovery Seminar" in a church
located in Lithonia, Georgia. This is a twelve steps program similar to the

53 Ibid, 2.
Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps Program. The “Celebration Recovery Program” addresses alcohol addiction, drug addiction and sex addiction. The researcher is using parts of this program material at Rivertown UMC.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY MINISTRY

Outline

Celebrate Recovery was founded by Pastor John Baker of the Saddleback Church with the purpose of healing any hurts, habits and hang-ups including sex disorders or drug and alcohol addictions, with a Christian Twelve Steps Program based on biblical principles. More information on Celebration Recovery can be found at: www.CelebrateRecovery.com

Celebrate Recovery is a Christian based Twelve Steps Program. Like Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous the Celebrate Recovery group meetings can be located in most cities throughout the United States. CR is a Christ centered Twelve Steps Program based on biblical principles with the purpose of letting God restore our mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health with His healing power. Through Celebrate Recovery’s 12 steps, which uses scriptures from the Bible along with the 8 CR principles, individuals can begin healing and gain freedom from drug addiction, hurts, habits and hang-ups. Many drug rehab centers are adding the Celebrate Recovery Program to their treatment program.
CELEBRATE RECOVERY 12 STEPS AND SCRIPTURES

1. "We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors.

2. That our lives had become unmanageable. Romans 7:18: I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

3. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. Philippians 2:13: For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.

4. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God. Romans 12:1: Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.

5. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. Lamentations 3:40: Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD.

6. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. James 5:16: Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.
7. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. *James 4:10: Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

8. Humbly asked Him to remove all our shortcomings. *1 John 1:9: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

9. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. *Luke 6:31: Do to others as you would have them do to you.*

10. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. *Matthew 5:23-24: Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*

11. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it. *1 Corinthians 10:12: So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!*

12. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and power to carry that out. *Colossians 3:16a: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.*
13. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and practice these principles in all our affairs. *Galatians 6:1*: *Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*

**CELEBRATE RECOVERY 8 PRINCIPLES**

1. "Realize I'm not God; I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and my life is unmanageable. "Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor"

2. Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to him, and that He has the power to help me recover. "Happy are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

3. Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ's care and control. "Happy are the meek."

4. Openly examine and confess my faults to God, to myself, and to someone I trust. "Happy are the pure in heart"

5. Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my life and humbly ask Him to remove my character defects. "Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires"

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6. Evaluate all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I've done to others except when to do so would harm them or others. "Happy are the merciful"; "Happy are the peacemakers"

7. Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible readings and prayer in order to know God and His will for my life and to gain the power to follow His will.

8. Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words. "Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires."55

Assessment of the Celebration Recovery Meeting
Lithonia, Georgia

The following is the format of the meetings presented by Darrell Thrasher, located in Lithonia Georgia:

• Bible passages were read;
• Overhead slide presentations were presented;
• The meetings were well organized;
• The people were really motivated to continue this process;
• A very positive attitude was shared by the majority of the participants.

55 Ibid., 4.
The researcher has referenced the work written by Cecil Williams, *No Hiding Place*. In Williams' book, this author shows how he works with the members of Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco, California. His text shows how a church and its congregation have been transformed to reach out to the community. Rivertown UMC Alcohol Recovery Program is witnessing this same type of transformation of the alcoholic happening as a result of the implementation of the Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Program. This project has given recovering alcoholics a sense of security that they did not have before they joined this group. The researcher is noticing church members from Rivertown UMC, Rocky Head UMC and Ramma Community Church starting to lend support the Alcohol Recovery Group. Family members who are related to the recovering alcoholics are starting to attend other religious services provided by Rivertown UMC.

Williams' book has helped the researcher to understand how transformation must come from the church and then reach out to the alcohol addicted community. Again, both the church and the addicted community become transformed. An important change takes place in both groups. The church must welcome in the alcoholic and the alcoholics must feel welcome when they come to the church for help. Both the church and the alcoholic community become a transformed community.
May, in his book *Addiction and Grace* shows how love can help change the addicted community and give this suffering community a feeling of being wanted and having some self-worth. Rivertown UMC and Rocky head UMC are starting to display the type of love that helps to bring positive change to the alcoholics.

**Rivertown UMC Alcohol Recovery Meeting Program**

**Outline**

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<td>Subjects are introduced - surveys and list of questions are presented.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Examples: “Is alcoholism a disease?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“How does anger affect you?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participants are given a chance to address the subjects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Group Meetings: (Individuals discuss and share what is going on in their lives.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reassemble and Dismissal</td>
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The researcher has used as resources, *The Celebration Recovery Program materials* and the *Life Recovery Bibles* donated by Don Shannon, leader of the Alcohol Recovery Unit located at Brookhaven UMC, Atlanta, Georgia.
Financing the Project

Donations and other resources from the United Methodist Church, North Georgia Conference have been solicited. This project will depend on volunteers and donations from the churches and the community. Rivertown and its pastor will submit a request for a grant from the United Methodist General Board to assist with funding the Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Program.

Resources Used to Implement the Alcohol Recovery Project

The Recovery Team, included the researcher, one Family Counselor and other resources, including a counselor from Emory Health Care, Emory University Chaplains Group, Emory University in Atlanta Georgia, Beulah Heights University, and Brookhaven United Methodist Church which has the alcohol and drug program that is well established. The researcher has used these programs to assist the Rivertown volunteers who have experienced alcohol addiction. A Family counselor has been contacted and who agreed to provide counseling support for the program as needed. He has identified six families who have been affected by alcoholism or have a family member who is addicted to alcohol. These families have been contacted.
Other Resources Provided for Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC

Volunteers at Rivertown UMC and other churches, who have a desire to help the addicted community, have been identified and have participated in the Alcohol Recovery Project meetings at Rivertown UMC. Lists of questions have been given out to help direct this project and the evaluation. Survey questions have been distributed at the weekly meetings to evaluate the Alcohol Recovery Project.

The Ministry to the Community

The Recovery Team has brainstormed ministry opportunities to reach the alcoholics in the communities of Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC. Evangelism into the communities of both churches has taken place. Other family members have been invited to the Alcohol Recovery meetings. The group will continue to identify the needs of families in the study group and in the surrounding communities near Rivertown UMC.

Pantry Cabinet at Rivertown UMC

During March of 2012, Rivertown was awarded a grant from The Housing and Homeless Program of the North Georgia Conference. Funds were available to assist the families of Rivertown and the surrounding community. Although this program has been available to Rivertown UMC, this Pantry Cabinet program has helped feed families who are not members. This has been another program that reached out to the church community.
Goals and Time Lines for Ministry Activities

Throughout the implementation, the team (including the pastor, families and consultants) has maintained a journal documenting the process and the progress of the project, summarizing the questionnaires, the small group discussions, the impressions of the families, and the community's response and impressions of the project. Small groups have made the participants feel relaxed and willing to discuss their personal experiences with alcohol addiction.

This Alcohol Recovery Program ministry is committed to meeting four times per month, normally on a weekly basis on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

Project Evaluation Phase

The evaluation phase has included summarizing and drawing conclusions from my personal journal, comparisons of the pre and post questionnaires and summaries of all small group sessions and individual interviews. The following evaluations will be provided:

- Self-evaluations
- Family evaluations
- Program Evaluations

The Bible clearly states that we must go into the world and help those who are hurting. Jesus stated that, "When you do this to the least of them, you do it unto me". This project, including preaching, teaching and encouragement, has
enabled Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC to help transform the alcoholic community and assist with transforming the churches.

**Reflection on the Work Done**

Leadership of the Alcohol Recovery Program came from the pastor. As the project matured, additional volunteers came from Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC. The goal in the future is to invite other churches in the South Fulton and Palmetto, Georgia area to become active participants in this recovery program. This has to be done by invitation and announcing the existence of this valuable project. The people of Rivertown and Rocky Head UMC are very excited about the outreach program at Rivertown. Members of both churches have been inviting their family members and friends who have been affected by alcohol addiction.

**What was learned?**

The pastor and Rivertown UMC members have learned that the materials to support this project need to be ordered in advance. By ordering the materials early, the leader of the project can have more time to analyze which material best fits the group that is studying the alcohol recovery information.

The recovery group needs to open these meetings to family members of those who are affected by alcoholism; family members have become valuable resources for the recovery group. These members have encouraged their families to continue to work so they can recover from their addictions. These
members also alert the leader to reach out to other persons who are suffering from alcohol addiction. The leader should also have a person who will back up their efforts when the leader cannot attend the meeting. Another very important fact the pastor/leader has learned is that addicted persons must decide for themselves that they really want to stop drinking. Once a person decides to stop drinking, the recovery process really begins.

What might have been done differently?

In the planning stage of the project, there should be additional training meetings provided so that the leaders can have more confidence in presenting the materials. Meetings with established groups are extremely valuable. The author has noticed that time spent with other groups that are operational is extremely valuable. This training will help strengthen and shape the new alcohol recovery unit. The leadership must continue to build close relationships with the established alcohol recovery groups. Again, thanks and praise should go to Don Shannon and Darrell Thrasher for the training that was provided for the Rivertown Alcohol Recovery program. Before the Program was initiated, announcement information and bulletins describing the Alcohol Recovery Project needed to be sent to the churches in the Rivertown UMC community at an earlier time frame. At this time, these announcements and bulletins are being distributed to neighboring churches, and to the family members who have been identified as being addicted to alcohol.
What would strengthen the Project?

Church members reaching out to people who are hurting has been a healing element for the alcohol addicted person. The author has noticed that the recovering alcoholics are starting to feel more self-worth and they are reaching back to the church. The author has also noticed that recovery is taking place in the church and at the Alcohol Recovery meetings. Some of the people attending the recovery meetings are starting to get their driving licenses reinstated. These persons are starting to stay away from the use of alcohol. Additional church members are asking if they can assist the program. Change in the church and in the alcohol addicted community is taking place. The sharing of real love between both parties has strengthened this recovery project.
Chapter VI
SUMMARY and CONCLUSIONS

Proposed Next Steps

The author of this dissertation has noticed that additional outreach ministries can be initiated. The Alcohol Recovery Group will continue to be active at Rivertown UMC. The members of Rocky Head UMC have continued to play a very active and important role in the development of this recovery project. The project will possibly expand to become more of a family ministry that can address other subjects such as abuse and drug addiction. It has been noted that once the alcoholic over uses alcohol, in some cases the next step is using drugs. The participants in the alcohol recovery group have started to get the attention of the other Rivertown and Rocky Head church members. Other members are volunteering to assist this program by offering their time to help. The author has observed that additional Rivertown and rocky Head UMC church members are volunteering to assist the Alcohol Recovery Program. The pastor of Rivertown UMC has also noticed the recovery of the alcoholics. Transformation is starting to take place in the church and in the addicted community.

Because the Alcohol Recovery Program has had a successful implementation at Rivertown UMC, the objective now is to allow this program to continue to expand and to support other churches in the Fairburn Georgia and
Palmetto Georgia areas. Rivertown UMC, Rocky Head UMC and Ramma Community Church are committed to continue supporting the Alcohol Recovery Project.

It is the pastor's intent to continue to support and grow this program to allow additional alcohol addicted people to have a means of being delivered from their habits. As stated earlier, the author will solicit the General Board of Ministry of the United Methodist Church for financial support for this project. This will provide additional resources that will help continue the Alcohol Recovery Project.

Conclusions

At the beginning of the dissertation project there were some concerns that the church had about how Rivertown would reach out to the alcohol addicted community. Now we see people recommending family and church members to assist and support the Rivertown UMC Alcohol Recovery Program.

We at Rivertown UMC have seen members volunteer to assist with this recovery program. With the increase in members being sent to jail and family members being affected by the individual having a police record, some families have very little income to assist them with paying bills. The churches involved have helped to make this program a success in the Palmetto, Georgia area. Rivertown UMC, Rocky Head UMC and Rama Community Church have active members attending our meetings. These meetings have built a close relationship between these churches and the alcohol addicted community.
Rev. Shannon and Brookhaven UMC have provided Bibles to assist with the Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Program. Shannon has also provided training to support of this program. Darrell Thrasher also has provided materials to assist the pastor of Rivertown UMC with the Celebration Recovery Program. Rivertown UMC is starting to reach out to the surrounding community. Members and friends are continuing to recommend candidates for this important alcohol recovery project. The author, other pastors and the churches are excited about the implementation of this important recovery program.

The pastor of Rivertown UMC has seen a change take place in the church and in the addicted community. Two of the attendees of the Alcohol Recovery program have stopped drinking. Three others have become recovered alcoholics. These are some very positive results that are clearly visible. Here we are witnessing a change that has taken place due to the operation of the Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Program. One of the recovered alcoholics has just received his driver's license. Two other attendees will be applying for their licenses shortly. The church is reaching out to the attendees of the program. We have people who are volunteering to support this project.

The introduction of this Alcohol Recovery Program has built a close relationship between the churches and the alcohol addicted community. This is an indication that the Alcohol Recovery Program has been a success. The pastor has seen transformation take place in the church and in the surrounding
community. The people who attend the meetings are showing positive attitudes and displaying a sense of self-worth.

The Rivertown Alcohol Recovery Program will continue to be active in the church and in the Rivertown community after the initial program has ended. The pastor will reach out to other churches and notify them of the existence of this productive recovery project. One can notice that a positive change has come to the church and the community. The people of both Rivertown UMC and Rocky Head UMC are becoming more interested in this alcohol recovery program. Transformation has taken place. A change has come.
APPENDIXES
Appendix A

Don Shannon

Brookhaven United Methodist Church
Rev. Don Shannon

Don is a lifelong Atlanta resident. His high school education was at Druid Hills and Briardiff and he attended The University of the South 1962-1966. Don is the President of LDI Chemical Sales and part time licensed local pastor in the North Ga. Conference of the United Methodist Church. Currently he is appointed to Brookhaven UMC as Minister of Pastoral Care. In addition to ministering to our general congregation, Don is active in the Recovery Bible Study group which meets every week, Tuesday at 7:00 in the fellowship hall. We bring Christ to men and women recovering from substance abuse using the Life Recovery Bible.
Leader: Rev. Don Shannon
Recovery Ministry

History of Brookhaven's Recovery Ministry

Five years ago the members of the Brookhaven United Methodist Church realized we had been given a wonderful blessing. For years we had been host to several large recovery communities (240 men and women). The recovery groups met here for community meetings, we had cooked Thanksgiving dinner for them, they had been working around the church, and we had made them Christmas stockings.

These folks are most exclusively disadvantaged people with meager resources. They are our blessing! We decided to be disciple makers; to begin a recovery meeting using the Life Recovery Bible as our “Big Book”. We teach the 12 Steps in light of the Word of God. We give everyone who attends a Life Recovery Bible. To date we have given away 4000 bibles. We further saw the need to provide clothing; some come to us with only the outfit they are wearing when leaving the streets. Our Clothing Closet serves an average of 25 people a week. On the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month we conduct evening prayer and Holy Communion, followed by supper and fellowship. On Sundays we provide transportation and average 20 men and women for Sunday School and worship. None of us ever envisioned all the ways God would bless us through this ministry.

The Recovery Ministry is active as a resource connecting our church with the disenfranchised. All of this is done through the heart and help of the congregation of Brookhaven United Methodist Church.

Recovering from alcohol and drug addiction is a spiritual affair.

Persons enter recovery more often than not having little or no resources, and feeling alienated from friends, family and God. BUMC’s Recovery Ministry is unique in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church in that we seek to live as and to make disciples through radical hospitality, worship and fellowship inclusion, and teaching the 12 steps of recovery to restore hope, healing and wholeness in the light of God’s word.

The Brookhaven UMC Recovery Ministry includes:

Leadership - Our Pastor of Care and Recovery is available to help persons and families take the first step into recovery and to spiritually shepherd those who are working on their twelve-step program.

Recovery Bible Study - An open meeting using the Life Recovery Bible and group discussion. We have given away 4000+ bibles in six years.
Soulful Saturdays - Meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month. A time of Evening Prayer and Communion followed by a meal and Bingo!

Recovery Group Meetings - AA/NA are held in our building as the need arises from the area recovery programs. Open or closed meetings.

Christmas Bags - Personal hygiene and holiday treats for recovering people.

Thanksgiving Meal - The church hosts a Thanksgiving Day meal for the area recovery community and indigent persons in our neighborhood.

Clothes Closet - Provides clothing for persons coming off the streets into recovery, and day labor work clothing. Serves 20-30 weekly.

Be part of a ministry that changes lives through spiritual support to overcome addiction and despair! Show God's love in tangible ways.

Ways individuals and groups can connect:

- Donate or hold a clothing drive for men's clothing (jeans, T-shirts, socks, underwear, winter clothing especially useful)
- Volunteer to prepare and serve a meal for Soulful Saturday. Meet persons in recovery first hand and hear their stories.
- Donate dollars for recovery bibles/prizes for bingo. Items useful and needed, or a fun snack for persons on a limited budget.
Appendix B
Rivertown Alcohol Recovery
Program Meetings
Please Come and Meet with Us on Thursday's at 7:00 p.m.

Where: Rivertown United Methodist Church
9325 Rivertown Road
Fairburn, Georgia 30213
Phone# 770-969-0660

Contact Person: Rev. Steven Jones

Come and see how God can help you to recover from Alcohol, Drugs and other addictions!

Come and talk about "Your Journey and How We All have been Delivered"!!

We pray that we will meet you at Rivertown UMC on Thursday!

God Bless You.
Rivertown UMC Alcohol Recovery
Meeting Program Outline

Prayer

Pastor or Individual

Introductions

Bibles Studies

Testimonies

Small Group Meetings
(Individuals discuss and share what is going on in their lives)

Reassemble and Dismissal
Appendix C

Celebration Recovery

Power of Purpose Christian Center
Celebrate Recovery®
Power of Purpose Christian Center

A Word from the Celebrate Recovery Leadership Team

Welcome! We appreciate your interest in joining the Celebrate Recovery program at Power of Purpose Christian Center. Our mission here is to Change Lives, and Shape Destinies. We therefore want you to understand that the Celebrate Recovery ministry is here to address ANY hurts, habits, or hang-ups that might affect you or a loved one.

Our Celebrate Recovery program is a Christ-centered, 12-step program. The program is based on the eight Beatitudes taught by Jesus Christ. Participants here have embraced, supported and encouraged each other and have stepped out of denial into God’s grace. We have taken an honest moral and spiritual inventory. We have worked on getting right with God, ourselves, and others. We continue to grow in Christ while helping others.

More than anything, we want you to understand that no matter what the source of your hurts, habits or hang-ups – there is room here for you to heal, and there are many who understand, who feel your pain, and are willing to walk with you, and to keep you encouraged. Following the guidelines given by the founders of the Celebrate Recovery program, we do not attempt to “fix” anyone. We offer support, encouragement and prayers. We practice absolute anonymity, and offer a safe environment where you are free to open your heart for God’s healing to take place.

We look forward to being here to encourage and support you, not only in your recovery process, but also in your spiritual growth and maturity. Welcome into our open doors and our open hearts, and may the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit be with us as we fellowship!

Celebrate Recovery Lead Team
Power of Purpose Christian Church
Celebrate Recovery®
Table of Contents

1. A Note from Our Senior Pastor
2. A Description of Celebrate Recovery from the Leaders
3. The Road to Recovery - The Eight Principles Based on the Beatitudes
4. The Twelve Steps and Their Biblical Comparisons
5. Small Group Guidelines
6. Things We Are, Things We Are Not-Welcome Newcomers
7. Prayer for Serenity
8. Adult Children of Chemically Addicted aka Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA) The Problem
9. Common Characteristics Among ACA
10. Adult Children of the Chemically Addicted aka Adult Children of Alcoholics The Solution
11. Women in Recovery from Physical/Sexual/Emotional Abuse
12. Survivors of Physical/ Sexual/ Emotional Abuse
13. Twelve Steps to Recovery for Physical/ Sexual/ Emotional Abuse
14. Freedom from Anger
15. Anger Evaluation
16. Chemical Dependency
17. Checklist for Symptoms of Chemical Dependency
18. Checklist for Symptoms of Alcoholism
19. Is There a Drinking Problem in Your Home? - 20 questions to ask yourself
20. What is Nicotine Addiction?
21. Warning Signs of Relapse
22. Signs of Relapse- Continued
23. A Description of Codependence (CODA)
24. Codependency-Ten Traits of a Codependent
25. Codependency-Enabling
26. Codependency and Christian Living
27. Financial Recovery - What do I need recovery from?
28. Twelve Steps and Their Biblical Comparisons for Financial Recovery
29. Guilt and Shame - Dealing with guilt and shame from the past and present
30. Sexual Addiction- The Genesis of Our Addiction
31. Sexual Addictions (SA)
32. Sexual Addiction- Solution
33. Characteristics of Sexual Addiction
Celebrate Recovery®
Prayer for Serenity

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,

enjoying one moment at a time;

accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;

taking, as Jesus did,

this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it;

trusting that You will make all things right

if I surrender to Your will;

so that I may be reasonably happy in this life

and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

Amen.

-Reinhold Niebuhr
Celebrate Recovery®

Anger Evaluation

The following inventory can help you in the recognition process as you seek to determine whether your anger is reaching a destructive level in your life.

Check the boxes of the statements that apply to you:

☐ I become impatient easily when things do not go according to my plans.
☐ I tend to have critical thoughts toward others when they don't agree with my opinions.
☐ When I am displeased with someone I may shut down any communication with them or withdraw entirely.
☐ I get annoyed easily when friends and family do not appear sensitive to my needs.
☐ I feel frustrated when I see someone else having an "easier" time than me.
☐ Whenever I am responsible for planning an important event, I am preoccupied with how I must manage it.
☐ When talking about a controversial topic, the tone of my voice is likely to become louder and more assertive.
☐ I can accept a person who admits his or her mistakes, but I get irritated easily at those who refuse to admit their weaknesses.
☐ I do not easily forget when someone "does me wrong."
☐ When someone confronts me with a misinformed opinion, I am thinking of my comeback even while they're speaking.
☐ I find myself becoming aggressive even while playing a game for fun.
☐ I struggle emotionally with the things in life that "aren't fair."
☐ Although I realize that it may not be right, I sometimes blame others for my problems.
☐ More often than not I use sarcasm as a way of expressing humor.
☐ I may act kindly toward others on the outside, yet feel bitter and frustrated on the inside.

If you checked four to eight boxes, your anger is probably more constant than you would like.
If you checked nine or more boxes, there is a strong possibility that you have struggled with periods of anger or rage, whether you are aware of it or not.
Appendix D

U.S. Department of Health

Alcohol Alert

UNDERAGE DRINKING
UNDERAGE DRINKING—Highlights From The Surgeon General's Call to Action To Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking

In March 2007, the Acting Surgeon General of the United States issued a Call to Action To Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's (NIAAA's) Underage Drinking Research Initiative provided much of the scientific foundation for that document. The Call to Action highlights the nature and extent of underage drinking and its consequences. It suggests a new, more comprehensive and developmentally sensitive approach to understanding, preventing, and reducing underage drinking.

Importantly, the Call to Action emphasizes that everyone has a role in preventing and reducing underage drinking—parents, schools, communities, colleges and universities, the health care system, the criminal and juvenile justice systems and law enforcement, and governments and policymakers. Later in 2007, the Surgeon General also issued three separate guides—for families, educators, and communities—based on the Call to Action.

Goals of the Call to Action

In order to prevent and reduce underage drinking, the Surgeon General’s Call to Action sets forth the following six goals:

Goal 1: Foster changes in American society that facilitate healthy adolescent development and that help prevent and reduce underage drinking.

Goal 2: Engage parents and other caregivers, schools, communities, all levels of government, all social systems that interface with youth, and youth themselves in a coordinated national effort to prevent and reduce underage drinking and its consequences.

Goal 3: Promote an understanding of underage alcohol consumption in the context of human development and maturation that takes into account individual adolescent characteristics as well as environmental, ethnic, cultural, and gender differences.

Goal 4: Conduct additional research on adolescent alcohol use and its relationship to development.

Goal 5: Work to improve public health surveillance on underage drinking and on population-based risk factors for this behavior.

Goal 6: Work to ensure that policies at all levels are consistent with the national goal of preventing and reducing underage alcohol consumption.

Strategies outlined in the Call to Action address:

1) Changing the culture by challenging norms and expectations surrounding underage drinking;
2) Preventing adolescents from starting to drink;
3) Delaying initiation of drinking;
4) Intervening early, especially with high-risk youth;
5) Reducing drinking and its negative consequences, including the progression to alcohol use disorders (AUDs) among those who already have started drinking; and
6) Identifying adolescents who have AUDs and therefore could benefit from treatment and recovery support services (1).
**The Nature and Extent of Underage Alcohol Use**

Underage drinking is a significant but often overlooked problem in the United States. Young people between the ages of 12 and 20 are more likely to use alcohol than use tobacco or illicit drugs, including marijuana (2-4) (see figure 1). Although adolescents tend to drink less frequently than adults, they drink considerably more per occasion—5 drinks on average. Underage alcohol use, and especially binge drinking—a particularly harmful pattern of drinking—puts individuals at risk for a range of problems (4).

Despite the high prevalence of and the problems associated with underage drinking, many adults do not realize the extent of the problem, or do not view underage drinking as harmful. Many see alcohol use by teens as a “rite of passage” and may even facilitate it (1). Challenging this culture of acceptance is key to preventing and reducing underage drinking.

Alcohol use is intertwined with growing up in the United States. Both drinking and binge drinking ramp up dramatically during the teen years and into early adulthood (4). By age 15, approximately 50 percent of boys and girls have had a whole drink of alcohol; by age 21, approximately 90 percent have done so (see figure 2). Even more worrisome is the fact that many youth engage in binge drinking. National surveys indicate an increase in binge drinking days for girls through age 18 and boys through age 20 (see figure 3). Among college students, about 80 percent drink alcohol, about 40 percent binge drink, and about 20 percent binge drink three or more times within a 2-week period (5). Among underage military personnel, 62.3 percent report drinking alcohol at least once a year, and 21.3 percent report heavy alcohol use (6).

The number of young people who drink and the way they drink results in a wide range of negative consequences affecting large numbers of underage drinkers and those around them. These consequences include risky sexual behavior; physical and sexual assaults; potential effects on the developing brain; problems in school, at work, and with the legal system; various types of injury; car crashes; homicide and suicide; and death from alcohol poisoning.

In addition, early initiation of drinking is associated with alcohol dependence both during adolescence and later in life. According to a landmark survey on the drinking habits of Americans, the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC), the highest prevalence of alcohol dependence is among 18- to 20-year-olds (7).

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**Research tells us that underage drinking can derail healthy development.**

- Ting-Kai Li, M.D., Director, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

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1 Most college drinking studies define binge drinking as “5 or more drinks in a row for men and 4 or more drinks in a row for women” (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism [NIAAA], National Advisory Council). However, in 2004, the National Advisory Council removed the definition of binge drinking as follows: “a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 gram percent or above. For the typical adult, this pattern corresponds to consuming 5 or more drinks (male) or 4 or more drinks (female) in about 2 hours” (NIAAA, National Advisory Council).

2 In this survey, heavy alcohol use refers to drinking 5 or more drinks at least once a week per typical drinking occasion.

3 As defined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV and DSM-IV-TR).
Alcohol Use Increases Dramatically During Adolescence

Figure 2: Percentage of Americans Who Have Ever Drunk Alcohol (A Whole Drink).
Source: SAMHSA data from 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

The Connection Between Adolescent Development and Alcohol Use

Why is alcohol so appealing to young people, and why does drinking escalate so dramatically during adolescence? As detailed in the Call to Action, research shows that a variety of social, cultural, and biological factors influence an adolescent’s decision to drink, and that drinking is linked not only to individual risk factors but also to adolescent development. Recognizing that adolescents operate within many different social systems, all of which can influence their drinking behavior, environmental factors must also be considered. Understanding all these factors, including the processes of adolescent development, is vital to creating effective interventions and identifying young people who may be especially vulnerable to developing problems with alcohol.

Developmental factors. Adolescence is a key period in human development, a time of dramatic changes—both biological and social. Puberty, the hallmark of early adolescence, brings important physical and psychological changes. A number of social transitions also characterize adolescence, both those imposed on youth, such as the transitions from elementary to middle to high school, and those initiated by young people themselves, such as changing peer groups and spending less time with family and more with friends. Each of these transitions can increase social pressures, stresses, and expectations that contribute to underage drinking.

During adolescence the tendency to take risks also increases, as adolescents seek greater independence and new experiences. Research indicates that risk taking during adolescence is in part biologically driven. Normal changes in structure, neuron connectivity (e.g., “wiring”), and physiology that occur at different times in various regions of the developing brain may help explain the changing balance between emotions and self-regulation in adolescence (8). For example, the limbic system, a part of the brain associated with risk taking and novelty- and sensation-seeking, matures earlier than the frontal cortex, which is associated with judgment, self-regulation, and impulse control (9).

Research with animals suggests that adolescents may experience alcohol’s effects differently from adults, and this may affect their drinking behavior, in particular their tendency to binge drink. Animal studies suggest that adolescents tend to be more sensitive than adults to the stimulating effects of alcohol and less sensitive to some of its more unpleasant effects, including sedation, hangover, and loss of muscular coordination.

Among Adolescents Who Drink, the Number of Binge Drinking Days Increases With Age

Figure 3: Number of Days in the Past 30 in Which Drinkers Consumed 5 or More Drinks, by Age and Gender.
Source: SAMHSA data from 2005 NSDUH
Acting Surgeon General of the United States

Developing risk at increased M.D.,—Rear Admiral Kenneth Moritsugu, M.D., M.P.H., Acting Surgeon General of the United States

...alcoholics to alcoholism that is doing what alcohol is doing to our children.

— Rear Admiral Kenneth Moritsugu, M.D., M.P.H., Acting Surgeon General of the United States
Appendix E

Christopher Kennedy Lawford

Kick Any Habit, Manage Any Addiction
Kick Any Habit, Manage Any Addiction
Your Self-Treatment Guide to Alcohol, Drugs, Eating Disorders, Gambling, Hoarding, Smoking, Sex, and Porn

By Christopher Kennedy Lawford
Publication Date: January 2013

DESCRIPTION

From New York Times bestselling author of Symptoms of Withdrawal and Moments of Clarity Christopher Kennedy Lawford comes a book that will save lives.

For most of his early life, Christopher Kennedy Lawford battled life-threatening drug and alcohol addictions. Now in recovery for more than 25 years, he works to effect change and raise global awareness of addiction in nonprofit, private, and government circles, serving as the goodwill ambassador for drug dependence treatment and care for the United Nations.
For the first time, *Recover to Live* brings together all of the most effective self-care treatments for the seven most toxic compulsions affecting every culture on the planet today—alcohol dependence, drug dependence, eating disorders, gambling, hoarding, smoking, sex, and porn.

In *Recover to Live*, more than 100 of the world’s top experts interviewed by Lawford share their research and wisdom on how to determine if your bad habit is becoming a dependency, what treatments will work best for you, how best to help yourself or a loved one recover from addiction, and how to lead a fulfilling and productive life recovery.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**


In recovery for more than 25 years from drug addiction, Lawford campaigns tirelessly on behalf of the recovery community in both the public and private sectors. He presently works with the United Nations, the Canadian Center on Substance Abuse, the White House Office on Drug Control Policy, and the World Health Organization. He also consults with Fortune 500 companies and numerous non-profit groups, speaking around the world on issues related to addiction, mental health, and Hepatitis C.

In 2009, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed Lawford to the California Public Health Advisory Committee. In 2011, Lawford was named Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime to promote activities supporting drug treatment, care and recovery. He also serves as national advocacy consultant for Caron Treatment Centers. Lawford holds a bachelor of arts from Tufts University, a juris doctor from Boston College Law School, and a masters certification in clinical psychology from Harvard Medical School where he held an academic appointment as a lecturer in psychiatry.
Appendix F

CDC Vitalsigns

Binge Drinking
Binge drinking is a dangerous behavior but is not widely recognized as a women's health problem. Drinking too much — including binge drinking* — results in about 23,000 deaths in women and girls each year. Binge drinking increases the chances of breast cancer, heart disease, sexually transmitted diseases, unintended pregnancy, and many other health problems. Drinking during pregnancy can lead to sudden infant death syndrome and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

About 1 in 8 women aged 18 years and older and 1 in 5 high school girls binge drink. Women who binge drink do so frequently — about 3 times a month — and have about 6 drinks per binge. There are effective actions communities can take to prevent binge drinking among women and girls.

* Binge drinking for women is defined as consuming 4 or more alcohol drinks (beer, wine, or liquor) on an occasion.

Want to learn more? Visit

www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns

See page 4.
Binge drinking among women and girls is a dangerous problem.

Drinking too much can seriously affect the health of women and girls.

- Women's and girls' bodies respond to alcohol differently than men's. It takes less alcohol for women to get intoxicated because of their size and how they process alcohol.
- Binge drinking can lead to unintended pregnancies. It is not safe to drink at any time during pregnancy.
- If women binge drink while pregnant, they risk exposing their developing baby to high levels of alcohol, increasing the chances the baby will be harmed by the mother's alcohol use.

Drinking is influenced by your community and your relationships.

- Alcohol use in a community is affected by alcohol's price and availability.
- Underage drinking is affected by exposure to alcohol marketing.
- Underage drinking is also influenced by adult drinking, and youth often obtain alcohol from adults.

Risks for women and girls

- **Injuries**: Motor vehicle crashes, falls, drowning
- **Violence**: Homicide, suicide, intimate partner violence, sexual assault
- **Chronic diseases**: High blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease
- **If pregnant**:
  - Miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, and low birth weight
  - Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs), which include physical, behavioral, and learning disabilities
- **Cancer**: Of the breast, liver, mouth, and throat
- **Reproductive health**: Unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV
- **Alcohol dependence/alcoholism**
- **Learning and memory problems**
- **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)**
- **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**
Which women and girls are most likely to binge drink?

- Women aged 18-34 and high school girls
- Whites & Hispanics
- Women with household incomes above $75,000

Binge drinking* among women and high school girls by age group

- Ages 18-24: 20%
- Ages 25-34: 24%
- Ages 35-44: 20%
- Ages 45-64: 15%
- Ages ≥65: 10%

Binge drinking* by race/ethnicity among women and high school girls

- Hispanic: 22% of Girls, 11% of Women
- White, non-Hispanic: 13% of Girls, 10% of Women
- Other non-Hispanic†: 17% of Girls, 12% of Women
- Black, non-Hispanic: 19% of Girls, 10% of Women

*Other non-Hispanic includes Asian, Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and multiracial.

Binge drinking* among high school students reporting current alcohol use* by grade

- Grade 9: 45%
- Grade 10: 50%
- Grade 11: 58%
- Grade 12: 62%

SOURCES: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 2011.

*Reported behavior in the past 30 days
What Can Be Done

Federal agencies and national partners are
- Recognizing that binge drinking is an important women's health issue.
- Working with states and communities to support Community Guide recommendations to reduce binge drinking.
- Informing people about the US Dietary Guidelines on alcohol consumption (see box).
- Helping states and communities to report on how many people binge drink, how often and how much they drink when they binge, and whether health care providers are screening and counseling for excessive alcohol use.
- Reporting on youth exposure to alcohol marketing because it influences underage drinking.

We know what works

States and communities can
- Follow Community Guide recommendations to reduce binge drinking. The same approaches that work in the population as a whole can work for women and girls.
- Increase enforcement of laws on the sale and consumption of alcohol.
- Develop partnerships with a variety of groups, including schools, women's and girls' organizations, law enforcement, and public health agencies to reduce binge drinking.
- Report on how many people binge drink, how often, and how much they drink when they binge.

Key Points on Alcohol Consumption
From the 2010 US Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Don't begin drinking or drink more frequently on the basis of potential health benefits.
- If you do choose to drink, do so in moderation. This is defined as up to 1 drink a day for women or 2 for men.
- Don't drink at all if you are under age 21, pregnant or may be pregnant, or have health problems that could be made worse by drinking.

Doctors, nurses, and others who treat patients can
- Ask women about binge drinking and counsel those who do to drink less (see http://www.uspreventiveweb.org/UI/USPSTF/Report/Providers/1385488). This screening and counseling can also be effectively done using the Internet, telephone, or other electronic methods, as recommended by the Community Guide.
- Advise women who are pregnant or might be pregnant not to drink at all.
- Recognize that most binge drinkers are not alcohol dependent or alcoholics, but may need counseling.

Women and girls can
- Avoid binge drinking. If you choose to drink alcohol, follow the US Dietary Guidelines.
- Choose not to drink alcohol if you are underage or if there is any chance you could be pregnant.
- Be cautious about consuming drinks if the alcohol content is unknown to you.
**BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**


The National Adolescent Health Information Center (NAHIC). (National Survey on Drug Use and Health [NSDUH], (2006); King, Meehan,Trim, & Chassin, 2007).


