

The Way Newsletter - January 2002

Jesus answered, 'I am The Way and The Truth and The Life.'

John 14 v. 6

Welcome to the first edition of 'The Way - Confronting Addiction' newsletter.

Faithful One
So unchanging
Ageless one
You're my rock of peace
Lord of all I depend on you
I call out to you again and again
I call out to you again and again
You are my rock in times of trouble
You lift me up when I fall down
All through the storm
Your love is the anchor
My hope is in you alone

We receive many e-mails from people who are struggling to confront their addiction. The fact is when you start to fight your addiction just like the 'dragon' you realise the power it has over you. It seems as though the problems only arise when you try to 'wake' or confront 'it'. Up until then the addiction is your 'friend', it gives you a purpose for getting up, it can keep you going through the day, it can give you strength. So why bother to confront it then, why bother to make waves?

Undoubtedly all of us who have been struggling with addictions will have asked ourselves that, indeed those people who have e-mailed us recently will have asked themselves the same question as they wondered whether to make contact with us or not.

Maybe we have felt like we did not have a choice and it was made for us by family, friends, employers or the authorities. We all have a choice - some people even continue or even increase their addiction whilst in prison.

Being controlled by something or someone else is not a very nice feeling. So is freedom over 'it' really possible? Will we ever manage to live without our addiction? Various recent studies have expressed that the acknowledgement of a higher power can be a way of finding strength to break free from our addiction. For Christians, God, the author of the Bible, is of course our higher power. He came to earth and was made man, Jesus. The Bible had much to say about addiction, something which causes God to no longer be our priority. This is sin. A word we do not like using today, but addiction by its mere nature becomes our priority and everything else takes second place, even God.

The comfort we have from the Bible however is that we are all sinners and even those closest to Jesus' heart struggled with sin, putting themselves before Him (Luke 23 vs. 54 - 62), some even possibly with an addiction (2 Corinthians 12 vs. 7 - 10). It also tells us that freedom is possible and that we should not be slaves (Galatians 5 vs. 1; Ephesians 4 vs. 17 - 24 - to name a few!!).

The words of the chorus above are somewhat of an anthem at Yeldall Manor. They have been a great source of encouragement to me recently. I hope they will be to you also.

There is much debate in the news at the moment about the legalisation of drugs. Clearly debate is good because it encourages us to think radically and look at what we are doing and why we are doing it. In the UK at the moment there is discussion about the lowering of restrictions on what are considered the softer drugs such as cannabis for example. Clearly some of the discussion does have a good argument such as for medical use, e.g. in the case of people with multiple sclerosis. The facts are that cannabis does cause greater physical problems than tobacco. Maybe the research needs to take place over a longer period of time. There is also talk of further relaxation of the drug laws in the UK. However, for those drugs which we have legalised in the UK, we are paying the high cost for with damage to our communities; our health; our employment. Does this present a good case for a further lessening of the drug laws?

Reading Half Marathon - 10th March

Chris will be running in aid of Yeldall Bridges and Hope UK. We are sure many of you would like to support and encourage him. Why not make your pledges by e-mail. We will not ask for the money until he has actually done the run!! If you have not viewed our website recently, why not take a look? Give us your opinion! We are indebted to Martin for designing the site, and to Mark for taking the pictures.

Chris is currently based at Yeldall Manor, a drug/alcohol rehabilitation centre in the heart of Berkshire, part of Yeldall Bridges. The work is both challenging and varied. He is aware of, and grateful, for many of you who are praying.