The woman had stood before Jesus, cowering with fear. His words, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone,” had come to her as a death sentence. She dared not lift her eyes to the Saviour’s face, but silently awaited her doom. In astonishment she saw her accusers depart speechless and confounded; then those words of hope fell upon her ear, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” Her heart was melted, and she cast herself at the feet of Jesus, sobbing out her grateful love, and with bitter tears confessing her sins.

This was to her the beginning of a new life, a life of purity and peace, devoted to the service of God. In the uplifting of this fallen soul, Jesus performed a greater miracle than in healing the most grievous physical disease; He cured the spiritual malady which is unto death everlasting. This penitent woman became one of His most steadfast followers. With self-sacrificing love and devotion she repaid His forgiving mercy.

In His act of pardoning this woman and encouraging her to live a better life, the character of Jesus shines forth in the beauty of perfect righteousness. While He does not palliate sin, nor lessen the sense of guilt, He seeks not to condemn, but to save. The world had for this erring woman only contempt and scorn; but Jesus speaks words of comfort and hope. The Sinless One pities the weakness of the sinner, and reaches to her a helping hand. While the hypocritical Pharisees denounce, Jesus bids her, “Go, and sin no more.”

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The Empowering Grace of Powerlessness

Ronald M. Perkin MD, MA

Through the grace of God, I have enjoyed a remarkably successful career. I have trained as an Aeronautical Engineer and have flown Navy Jets during the Vietnam War. I graduated from Medical School and spent an additional seven years of training to become a Pediatric Intensive Care Physician. I have received a Master’s Degree in Clinical and Biomedical ethics and have chaired the ethics committee at two large hospitals. I am currently the Chairman of Pediatrics at an academic Medical Center and the Medical Director of a Children’s Hospital.

However, I must reveal that times were not always so good for me. I must relate that story because it shows God’s glory and I tell the story because my past failures and pain have become my credentials for service and for that I will always be grateful.

There was a time when I was homeless, penniless, hopeless, and powerless. I could not believe how far I had fallen and my “insides” felt horrible. I had little sense of self-worth; I felt I deserved to be in this situation and believed that everyone else felt the same way about me. I avoided people because I did not want to see the disapproval I was sure I would see in their eyes. How had I gotten so low? Well, it was a combination of a number of things but chief among them was addiction to Alcohol and other drugs.
Resigned to my hopelessness, I started a habitual pattern of travel. I slept under a bridge and I walked a path that took me places where I could always find food, primarily discarded food from restaurants. For the most part, I was not bothered as I traveled this route. But, to my surprise, I was not unnoticed. A small table with a paper plate of food appeared beside the backdoor of one of the restaurants on my path. As I approached the table a voice from behind the screen door said, “go ahead and take that food, it is for you. I will put something out for you whenever I am here.” A short time later a gentleman started to call out from the side door of a church I would pass. Initially, he shouted only a “hello there”, but it progressed to “do you need anything” or “why don’t you come in and rest for awhile.” I had reached a place and time and a level of brokenness where there was nothing I could do but stop and listen. In other words, I humbly recognized that I was in the need of a Savior.

I believe that these two individuals were both sent to me from God and they both talked to me about Jesus Christ. They told me that even though I felt unworthy, God considered me precious and worthy of love. They told me that God loved all people and especially those individuals pushed to the margins of society for whatever reason. These two individuals introduced me to God and started me on a path to recovery.

Today I am not homeless, penniless or hopeless. I also have power, which I gladly receive from God. I look back with the benefit of a decent sober mind-set, and I believe that God saved me. I believe that. I absolutely believe that. He kept me alive and He eventually led me to a point where I surrendered to Him and to a program of recovery. When I brought my brokenness, Jesus was waiting to shine His light into the darkness of my life with His love, mercy, and grace.

I am a Seventh-day Adventist convert, which is different from my earliest recovery experience. I have adopted this as my religious faith and as my spiritual program faith. I have no idea why He led me here. I just know He did. I was broken, powerless, hopeless and in that state of spiritual bankruptcy He welcomed me and He saved me. Through my weakness, His strength was powerfully revealed. I truly understand Matthew 5:3, “Blessed are they poor in spirit: for theirs in the kingdom of heaven” (KJV).

How about you? Are you poor in spirit and in need of rescue? Do you wish to be completely known, completely forgiven, and completely loved? Because as God’s child, that is what you are.

If you are a devoted church member, wouldn’t you like to be a part of a church family that reached out to the individuals driven to the margin of society by their addiction? Wouldn’t you like to introduce those individuals “poor in spirit” to their Savior?

If you are that individual in need of help or a church that wants to help, we have a program for you! Please contact Adventist Regeneration Ministries and we will gladly help:

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