



Bonner Gospel Mission

Serving the community since 1987

May 2022

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For God So loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoso ever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

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To everything there is a
SEASON...
and a time for every
purpose under the
HEAVENS.
Eccles. 3:1

Bonner Gospel Mission
PO Box 263
Ponderay, ID 83852

Mission Highlights

Scott's Testimony

I grew up mainly in San Jose, CA and moved to Redding in 1994 to raise our daughters out of the big city. Family life was good, but my wife and I allowed alcohol to destroy our marriage and family in 2009. Around 2011 I thought I had it under control, I came to realize it was controlling me.

I bounced around AA meetings thinking that's all I needed. Finally, a family intervention happened while I was in the hospital, dehydrated, and sick from alcohol. I was given a choice; get to a residential faith based program or I could continue the insanity which was killing me, and possibly take someone else's life. Long story short, I knew I was going back to the drinking. I found my higher power, but was conflicted inside with the God. 4 months out, another hospital trip, and back into sober living at Visions of the Cross, another faith based program. In my 4 months there, I worked, saw my daughter, and stayed sober. I left VOTC and stayed connected with them, out patient, and church programs.

In October 2020 my ex-girlfriend asked to move to Sandpoint with our daughter. At the time she asked, I was just going into sober living. Reluctantly I said ok. She wanted out of Redding to be closer to her mom, knowing I would eventually follow them when I was done with my program. In Jan. 2021 I visited my daughter and checked out the Sandpoint area with a focus on finding support groups. First stop was Magnolia house. There the house manager gave me info on meetings, etc. She also set up a meeting with Pastor Fred, who I met with. We talked for about 2 hours about life, my situation, and God. I then went by the Bonner Gospel Mission at Pastor Fred's advice.

I explored the possibility of a bed at BGM and met with James. We talked for quite awhile and He offered their services. The next morning I went to tell James that I was going to try and make it work with my ex-girlfriend and live with my daughter. James looked me in the eye (as he does) and told me, "You are going to continue to mess up until you get right with God." That statement has stayed with me to this day. In October of 2021 my self-destruction was tearing down everything I had re-built. Jan. 2022 the destruction was complete. I ran to the mission, knowing that James words rang true. They welcomed me in broken and defeated in spirit. It hasn't been easy. It's had blow-ups, repentance, understanding. All this was happening for the very reason James had told me. Things wouldn't go right until I accepted God as my Father and Savior. Life has gotten better slowly and my understanding of what has been missing has been the key. Love God, Love People!

Mission Updates

May's soup kitchen menu

We publish the soup kitchen each month so you can see what ingredients we may need for each meal of the week. We always need desserts and any other ingredients that you feel led to donate. You can financially support our meals as well. We serve 50-70 people on Sundays from 1pm to 3pm.

- May 1st – Pizza - We could use salad ingredients or financial donations.
- May 8th – Pulled Pork - We could use any type of salad, coleslaw and baked beans.
- May 15th – German Style Meal -we could use German sausage, sauerkraut German potato salad, etc.
- May 22nd – Asian Meal - a local community group will provide most of the meal, but we may need desserts.
- May 29th – Cheese Steaks - we could use beef or ground beef, any type of salad and hoagie rolls, in addition desserts.

The kitchen is our way of blessing our community with the love of God.
Thank you for your support!



Mission Updates Cont...

What is the Serve Sandpoint Initiative?

The serve Sandpoint initiative is a vision for men at the BGM connecting with people in the community that need help, like the elderly and disabled. We respond to folks who are in need of yard work, handyman work, moving etc. This is a labor of love for those who are in need of physical help. We do not charge because we want to give back to our community. We have done everything from shoveling snow, fixing porches, mowing lawns, to helping elderly or disabled people move.

The men at the mission are down and out in a self-help mode, but we are moving them to become other-centered and show the love of God by helping those in need. This has been a great tool of transformation for men who were once self-indulgent and selfish to focus on others.

We have received great responses from some of the providers around the area, like Sandpoint Community Resource Center and others, that help those in need. We are blessed to be part of the solution as the men turn from their past addictions and serve others. If you know someone, especially elderly or disabled, who need help, please contact me at the mission.

The men are eager to help and bless others. This is extra work outside of their full-time jobs. God is taking care of them financially so they have become capable of giving time and talents to those who can't afford to hire someone. You can contact James Noriega or Paul Fuller at 208-263-6698. We look forward to becoming more of a blessing in our community.



The Heart Versus the Will

Have you ever said to yourself, "Man, I wish I could stop sinning?" And like me, at the very moment you say this, you start thinking of ways to stop? Do you have that internal battle playing over and over that your sin might be so big and frequent that you question if you really know God? We start that vicious cycle of trying to figure out how not to sin and willing ourselves to better behavior. One must understand that our will can in no way produce that true Godly behavior we read about in scripture. Our heart directs our will. The will only makes decisions from the heart's desire. The dog wags the tail; the tail does not wag the dog.

It is shocking how often we depend on our will to change our behavior. I would challenge you to think on this: "If we were successful in using our will to change a sinful behavior but our heart stays in the same sinful desire, is that true transformation?"

The answer is no. If we employ only our will for change, then we are doing nothing more than applying the law to our sin. The law cannot produce the holiness it commands. So you ask, "What is God asking from me?" God is after our faith and faith resides in the heart. Faith does not reside in the will, but only in our hearts. Faith is a living unshakable confidence in the grace of God. God is looking for good works flowing forth from our faith. So you see, God is not calling us to "do" the law; God is calling us to fulfill the law. There is a big difference between doing the law and fulfilling the law. Doing the law is an outward work, whereas fulfilling the law is an inward work that is more about who we are. The only one who could fulfill the law was Jesus. Now, through the power of the Holy Spirit, God has fulfilled the law in us through Christ's death on the cross. So when we see in the letter from

Peter him calling us to be holy, we see that God isn't calling us to moral perfection where we labor at our sin. God is calling us to see what He has done, rather than what we can do.

I think it's the same thing when we buy the lie that once we sin we have to find our way back to God. Religion is man seeking God; Christianity is God seeking man. We can't read the scriptures in hopes of finding God, we read the Scriptures to see how God found us. God has flipped the script. It's not about us; it's about God. So when we find ourselves in that seemingly huge sin, don't try to figure out how to stop. Don't look to your will to get yourself out of it, but look to the cross and rejoice that God got you out of it by crushing His son for your sin.

James Noriega – Executive Director



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