



"I suffered with back pain for almost a year."

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MIRACLES



Health professionals also face mental health problems.

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What's happening at

UNIVERSAL

UNIVERSAL NEWS




SCAN ME

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There are moments in life when it feels like everything has come to an end. No one is immune to difficult situations such as a loss, a betrayal, a shattered dream, or an unexpected illness, pains that often seem unbearable. In times of suffering, it's common to believe there's no way out and that all that's left is to accept what remains of life. Learn in this edition that your story isn't over yet.

Believe me, this is not your END...

Cristiane felt no peace; she was sad and full of sorrow.
(Read her story on page 6)







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Bishop Edir Macedo

A letter to those who are suffering

PROSPERITY

Page 11

From brokenness to true treasure



| IN THIS EDITION |

Believe me, this is not your end.

When we think of the word end, we usually imagine a point of no return, a full stop, something final and negative. But what if the end could mean something different? What if it marked the beginning of a new chapter, the turning of a page, the start of a new beginning?

Right now, you may be facing problems that make you feel hopeless, as if there is no way out. Maybe it is a loss, a betrayal, a financial setback, a shattered dream, a painful diagnosis, or a family separation. No one is immune to problems. But here is the truth: difficult seasons do not last forever. Beyond every struggle lies a testimony. What makes the difference is how you choose to see your problems, through the eyes of despair or through the eyes of faith.

You have probably heard the saying, "after every storm comes a rainbow" or "there is always sunshine after the rain." These simple phrases hold deep truth. The storm represents our hardships, while the sunshine represents victory, hope, and renewal. Problems are not permanent, and often they prepare us for growth and transformation.

In times of suffering, it is easy to believe there is no way out. But faith teaches us that what feels like the end is not the end at all, it is the beginning of a new story. That is why we invite you to take a bold step: confront your suffering through the power of faith and discover the path to freedom.

Join us this Sunday at the Gathering of Faith and Miracles at a Universal Church near you. Services at 7 AM, 10 AM, 3 PM, and 6 PM.

| BEATING DEPRESSION |

Depression is more than just feeling sad. It is a deep, overwhelming sorrow that weighs down the soul. It brings hopelessness, drains motivation, and makes even the simplest tasks feel impossible. In severe cases, it can even take away a person's will to live. Depression is not only a state of mind, it is a sickness of the soul. But what can heal the soul? Only the Savior, the Lord Jesus, has the power to restore a troubled heart.

Every Sunday, The Universal Church opens its doors to those who are battling depression. If you need support, we invite you to visit a nearby branch. Join a Chain of Prayer, a seven-week commitment where you will receive spiritual strength through powerful prayers, practical guidance, and one-on-one counseling.

You are not alone in this fight. Thousands of people around the world have found hope and transformation through faith, proving that a Chain of Prayer can truly make a difference. You can be the next success story. You can overcome depression.

BEAT DEPRESSION

BEATING DEPRESSION THROUGH THE POWER OF FAITH!

Call 1.888.332.4141
Text 1.888.312.4141
For more information
SEE PAGE 12 FOR LOCATIONS



Bishop Edir Macedo



A letter to those who are suffering



...regardless of what you have done. He is waiting for your invitation to change your life into a new one, like He did on the earth.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and empty, and darkness covered the face of the deep. But the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Maybe your life feels the same right now, without form, without direction, empty of achievements or purpose. Perhaps it is lacking love, joy, dreams, or even faith, while depression weighs heavily on you. But just as it was at the dawn of creation, the Spirit of God is also hovering over you. No matter what you have done, He is waiting for your invitation to bring light and transform your life.

Perhaps you carry painful memories from the past, grudges, hatred, or a desire for revenge. But ask yourself: what have these things brought you? Have they healed your heart or given you peace? Let them go, and right now invite the Spirit of Life to dwell within you.

Wherever you are, He is there. Find a quiet place, even if it is your bedroom or bathroom, and speak to Him. If you are sincere, as surely as He lives, He will answer you. And your new year will not be like the years behind you. It will be completely different.



With every area of her life in ruins, Conceição discovered that God is always ready to give us a new chance.

Before finding the Universal Church, her life was completely broken. After losing her mother to cancer, she fell into deep depression. She could not sleep at night, relied on psychologists and psychiatrists, and for four years she depended on medication that sometimes caused her to sleep-walk.

"All of this led to the end of my marriage. We grew apart, and my ex-husband decided to

From destruction to complete happiness

emigrate to France. I was left alone to raise our son and cover the expenses of our home. My salary was not enough, and I ended up in debt, often going hungry," she recalls.

Meanwhile, Flávio, her ex-husband, battled addictions to alcohol and tobacco. He too carried the weight of their broken marriage. "I lived with constant sadness and anguish because of how my marriage had ended," he admits.

A transformative invitation

"One day, my son was invited by an uncle to attend a youth event at the Universal Church. A few days later, he invited me to go with him. I began listening to the Word of God and obeying it. As I heard the testimonies, I understood that if God had transformed the lives of others, He could do the same for me. Little by little,

I stopped taking medication, and I began to sleep peacefully. I saw my life move forward as I applied the teachings of the church. That is how God completely transformed me. In time, I received the most precious gift of all: the baptism with the Holy Spirit."

A second chance

"Whenever my ex-husband called to speak with our son, he noticed a change in me and eventually asked me out. We began rebuilding our relationship and later decided to remarry. He came back home, and together we started working again. We opened a solar energy company, and today I can truly say our marriage is blessed. I am now free from debt, and our financial and family life is stable. We have also been able to fulfill many dreams, including buying our own home."

Use your faith and see God's Power this Sunday



"She was dead for 11 minutes"

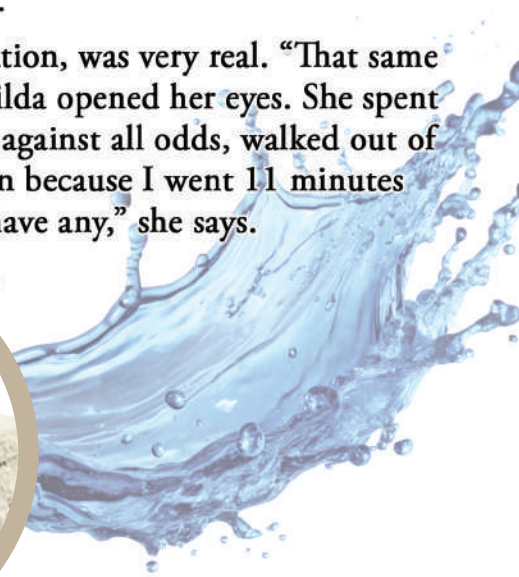
On Tuesday, July 8, 2025, Evanilda, a 69-year-old retiree, went to the hospital for an echocardiogram at her cardiologist's request. It was supposed to be a simple test, just a few minutes long, but it ended in a completely unexpected way. "After the exam, I walked over to my husband and told him I was tired and thirsty. He immediately offered to get me some water. I took just two small sips, then went to the restroom. From that point on, I don't remember anything else," Evanilda recalls.

She had suffered an acute myocardial infarction, better known as a heart attack, followed by cardiac arrest. "She was dead for 11 minutes," her husband Guerino said, summing up the terrifying episode that had doctors and nurses racing to revive her. Evanilda was intubated, and her life hung by a thread.

The risk of lasting complications, such as motor impairment or lifelong dependence on medication, was very real. "That same night, I went to church for the healing service," Guerino says. After three days in a coma, Evanilda opened her eyes. She spent a total of 15 days in the hospital. Fully conscious and alert, she stunned the medical team and, against all odds, walked out of the hospital with her speech, mobility, and memory intact. "The doctors said I was born again because I went 11 minutes without breathing, and even though I could have had serious aftereffects, I didn't have any," she says.



**RECEIVE THE HEALING
WATERS THIS SUNDAY**
at your nearest
Universal Church



"I suffered with back pain for almost a year."

Sometimes I couldn't even get out of bed. My family had to help me move around, and many times I had to call out of work. I felt like I couldn't do anything.

For a few days, I wore a back brace, and when I finally went to the doctor, he told me I had a dislocated disc in my lower back. He referred me to a therapist, but even after going, it didn't really help.

That's when I decided to lean on my faith even more. I drank the blessed water every day and prayed. I even applied some of the water to the area where I felt the pain. Today, I am completely healed and free from pain.

—Farah

"My daughter had a stroke."

When I got to the hospital to see her, her face was twisted and her blood pressure was over 200. I gave her the blessed water and stayed with her the entire day.

Each time the nurses came to check her, I noticed her pressure kept going down, and I said, "That's good." She even started to smile, and at that moment I knew she was going to be fine, so I went home.

The next day, I called her and she told me she was doing well. She had gone into the hospital on a Tuesday, and by that Friday she was already released.

—Ms. Patricia





| MESSAGE |

Bishop Joshua

Your case is not lost



There are very few moments in life when we can say that everything went exactly as planned. Maybe as you read this, it's hard to remember a time when things turned out just the way you expected.

Every day, we make plans: plans for the future, for our careers, for our families, for our happiness. But sometimes life seems to move in a completely different direction. Looking at your current situation, those plans may feel further and further out of reach.

Maybe it feels like life is not working in your favor. You've lost so much: your family is struggling, you can't sleep, peace feels far away, and depression weighs heavily on your days. It can seem like everything is falling apart. So which way do you turn?

God always makes a way. There is no such thing as a lost cause for Him

God always makes a way. There is no such thing as a lost cause for Him. That expression simply doesn't exist when it comes to God.

"For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."

1 Corinthians 16:9

The door is already open.

There is no secret code, no hidden lock. God has already done His part. Yes, adversaries may try to block your path, but the door is open. Your part is to keep moving forward, to fight to walk through the door that God has set before you. Don't give up. Keep going, because the reward waiting on the other side is worth every effort.

If you're struggling, feeling weak, or lacking motivation, talk to Him. Tell God exactly how you feel. Not only has He opened the door, but He will also give you everything you need to walk through it. All you need to do is ask and trust Him to lead you.

May the God of the Bible bless you abundantly.

From the streets to a blessed home

James Rodrigo, 36, recalls how his life sank into despair a few years ago. His childhood was marked by constant arguments between his parents. "My father was very strict, but he drank, and that caused fights with my mother. I wanted to do something, but I couldn't. I promised myself I would never drink," he remembers.

But at 15, he broke the promise he had made to himself. "I started smoking and drinking. I remember leaving work just to drink on the way home so I could sleep and avoid hearing the fights. I wanted to escape the situation," he says.

Soon, drinking was no longer enough, and James turned to drugs. At that time, he was working in a restaurant, but his addiction made his relationship with his family unbearable.

"I would steal from friends and family to buy drugs, and my father would beat me. I eventually left home and moved into a small room at the back of the restaurant, but a year later I was fired and had to leave," he recalls.

While still working, he began a relationship with pastry assistant Jaqueline, 37.



After James was evicted, they decided to rent a house together.

"Over three years, we moved from one rental house to another because we couldn't afford the rent. I was drunk and high all the time. I made people smile, but inside, I was sad. In the last house we were evicted from, I even traded the light bulbs for drugs. I also traded the furniture my wife had bought with great sacrifice for crack and cocaine," he admits.

When their daughter was only three months old, James ended up living on the streets. "I became a wanderer. I would sleep during the day and walk at night. I was beaten up often because, when I was high, I would steal," he says.

He remained homeless for about a year until he ran into an old acquaintance who offered him a job at a parking lot. But once again, he stole to support his habit and quickly lost the job. "I was a liar and a deceiver, and I thought I was clever because of it. I even sold food from home to buy drugs. I told sad stories to get money from people, but they were all lies. For crack and cocaine, I stole and robbed. Drugs took everything from me," he confesses.

One day, wandering aimlessly through the streets, James walked into a Universal Church. "There, I was helped by the Angels of the Night project, and I left feeling different and hopeful. I no longer wanted to live on the streets and sought shelter. After attending the Universal Church for a short time and following the guidance of the man of God, I became completely free from drugs. My character was transformed, and I decided to rebuild my family," he says.

With James's life turning around, Jaqueline gave him another chance. "I didn't forgive him right away, but I saw the great change in him. I started attending the Universal Church because of his testimony. We got married, and now we have a new, blessed life," she says.

Today, the family is fully restored. James has asked his parents for forgiveness and has rebuilt a good relationship with them. "I am happy and at peace despite life's struggles. I am grateful to God for everything He has done in our lives. My strength comes from above, and that is the guarantee that the past is behind me," James concludes.

"I would steal from friends and family to buy drugs, and my father would beat me."

What's happening at the Universal Church

Micronesian community in Hawaii

Mega Help volleyball tournament: A day of hope, unity, and victory

On Saturday, September 20, The Universal Church Hilo hosted the Mega Help Volleyball Tournament, an event created not only for competition but also for community and healing.



The tournament brought together local youth and adults for a powerful day of teamwork, sportsmanship, and encouragement in the fight against depression and suicide. The gym was filled with cheers, energy, and faith as four teams faced off in exciting matches.



After a series of competitive games, Team SOB claimed the First Place Championship Trophy. Close behind, Team Chukos secured Second Place, showing resilience and heart throughout the day. The MVP Award went to Shrue of Team Chukos, whose outstanding performance and leadership stood out on the court.

But the tournament was about more than volleyball. Between games, participants heard messages of encouragement, worship songs lifted the atmosphere, and

everyone was reminded that life is worth living — that hope always triumphs over despair.



"This wasn't just about who won the trophy," one organizer shared. "It was about showing every player and every person here that no matter how hard life hits, there's a God who gives us strength, joy, and a reason to fight back against depression and suicide."

The Mega Help Volleyball Tournament ended with trophies, smiles, and renewed spirits — and a promise that this was only the beginning.



The Universal Church Hilo continues its mission of serving the Big Island with daily services and community outreach. "Our doors are always open. Whether through sports, worship, or fellowship, we're here to remind people they're not alone."

For more information on upcoming events or services, visit The Universal Church Hilo at 750 Kanoelehua Ave. Suite 103, or call 808 481 6714.

"Health professionals can also have mental health problems"



Diagnosed with depression, anxiety, and kleptomania, Ana hid the pain and shame she carried inside.

"To ease the pain I felt, I tried mild drugs like grass, hashish, pollen, and acorns, all in an attempt to cope with my anxiety. Then I began stealing and was diagnosed with kleptomania. I felt ashamed to reveal my diagnoses, especially kleptomania, because theft is a crime. But it is important to show that health professionals can also have mental health problems, just like me. I even remember when I went to do an internship at a psychiatric hospital. On the morning I arrived, the director of the service had committed suicide. That showed me that even health professionals often feel trapped. Nobody knows what we feel or what is inside us."

Appearances

"No one around me knew what was happening to me. I was outgoing, went out, danced, drank, and was a good student. My performance never declined, so to others, I looked like I was at my best. But when I

was alone in my room, I felt a deep emptiness inside my soul. Nothing in my life should have caused depression, yet I was depressed and no medication helped me."

The solution

"Although my mother already knew the Universal Church, I was always very prejudiced and proud. At that time, I was doing an internship in psychiatry and I was a health professional, so why would I seek help in a church? For me, everyone at the Universal Church was a thief or a fanatic. It was only when I hit rock bottom that things changed. One day I was standing on a balcony thinking that if I threw myself off, all my problems would end. At that moment, I had the thought to call my mother. When I told her my life had no meaning, she was shocked. She invited me to come home for dinner, and that was when she took me to the nearest Universal Church. After the first prayer, I immediately felt better. All my anxiety disappeared. I began to feel aversion to everything I had been doing, and the emptiness of depression was filled. I surrendered myself to God because I urgently needed the Holy Spirit.

Today, I am a transformed person because God has set me free. I have the greatest treasure in life: the Holy Spirit. It was not medicine that cured me. I only found the solution in the Universal Church through Jesus!"

—Ana Neiva

YOUTH POWER GROUP ON FIRE!

Members of the Youth Power Group (YPG) recently visited a local fire station to learn about the firefighting profession and express their appreciation. Firefighters gave a tour, explained their daily duties, and demonstrated some of their lifesaving equipment.

The visit concluded with a touching moment as YPG members led a prayer, thanking the firefighters for their courage and asking for their continued protection. It was an inspiring experience that left the group grateful for the heroes who serve their community every day.



JOIN US EVERY SUNDAY, 1PM



@YPG USA



@YPG.USA



REACH OUT NOW: 1 888 332 4141

There are moments in life when it feels like everything has come to an end. No one is immune to hardships, whether it is a loss, betrayal, shattered dreams, or an unexpected illness. These painful experiences can feel unbearable. In times of suffering, it is common to believe there is no way out and that all that is left is to accept what remains of life.

Many people live trapped in their past, paralyzed by pain, as if that painful moment were the final page of their story. But here is the good news: with Jesus, what seemed like the end can actually become the beginning of a new life.

He does not erase the past, but He gives it new meaning. The pain that once crushed you becomes the very place where God brings healing and purpose. The trauma that used to wound you begins to tell a new story, one of faith and overcoming. Little by little, the pain stops defining who you are.

On the cross, Jesus faced the deepest suffering physically and emotionally, to the point where His sweat fell like drops of blood (Luke 22:44). Yet it was there that He defeated death and opened the way for all who believe in Him to start over and, in eternity, receive everlasting life. In other words, He redefined pain. When the Savior gave His life on the cross, His disciples surely thought everything was over, that it was the end. But on the third day, the resurrection proved that the greatest symbol of suffering had become the greatest symbol of salvation.

A new chapter

Faith in Jesus does not mean a life without pain. But it does guarantee His presence: “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20). And His presence changes everything. With Him, what used to hurt no longer hurts, like a scar on the skin. You remember the pain, but you no longer feel it. What once destroyed now builds. What was broken now becomes whole. You do not have to stay chained to what hurt you. In Jesus, your story does not end in pain: “Behold, I make all things new” (Revelation 21:5).

Now it is your turn

Just as in biblical times, today you can choose to look at your pain with new eyes and ask God: “Lord, what do You want to teach me through this?” Make your obstacles steppingstones that draw you closer to Him. Cry out, strengthen your faith, and remember that giving new meaning to your pain is an act of courage and faith. It means choosing not to be defined by what happened, but by what God can do through it. If you are going through deep pain right now, do not give up. You may not yet understand the purpose behind it, but trust that God is writing a new chapter. In time, you will see that what seemed like the end was actually the beginning of a new story.

But for that to happen, you need to do your part. As the apostle Paul reminds us: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him” (Romans 8:28), even through pain. You are invited to a special service this Sunday at 10 AM. Find the nearest Universal Church and join us.



“This is not your end.”

Cristiane remembers when her godmother took her parents to a spiritist center. “She always told me that when she died, she would leave me an inheritance. As a child, I thought it would be her house. I never imagined it would be the demons she served. When I found out, I became afraid and started avoiding her.”

Cristiane was 12 when her parents abandoned that religion. At the time, her father’s alcoholism and the family’s poverty contributed to their struggles, so they sought help at the Universal Church. “By attending meetings and making resolutions of faith, my father was freed from his addictions, and our life became more blessed,” she recalls. Still, she admits she never truly committed to the church, and at 16 she stopped attending altogether.

Hell and the Altar

At 17, Cristiane learned of her godmother’s death. From that day on, her life turned into turmoil. “I started hearing spirits speaking to me. I began drinking almost every day, lying to my parents, and skipping school to go to clubs. I embodied several demons. I had no control.”

She explains that spirits often manifested when she was out on the streets. Friends or acquaintances had to carry her home, where her parents prayed for her. “I would pass out, and when I came to, I didn’t even know who I was. I felt like a wanderer. I was going crazy, and my suffering grew worse every day.” One day,



Cristiane felt no peace; she was sad and full of sorrow.

even without drinking, she fell ill at home and was rushed to the hospital. “I was unconscious, and the doctors declared me dead. My father entered the room where my body was covered with a sheet. I could hear everything but couldn’t move. My father prayed, and at that moment, I was able to move again. The devil told me I was his and that he would kill me.”

Cristiane says she lived without peace, burdened by sadness and resentment. “I mainly resented my parents for offering me to the spirits. My mind was tormented by voices. To feel happy, I drank heavily, but once the alcohol wore off, the sadness returned. I couldn’t sleep properly, and at times, spirits would even abuse me. I couldn’t move or make a sound. I was desperate.”

Even in this state, she tried to pursue relationships but faced frustration after frustration. Though she resisted seeking spiritual help, her parents

persevered in prayer for her. Finally, one Sunday morning, after repeatedly refusing invitations to return to the Universal Church, she decided to go back.

“My deliverance was a spiritual battle,” she shares. “I was often still controlled by legions of demons. I also struggled with pride and shame. But when I surrendered in faith, seeking deliverance and breaking the evil inheritance, I went up to the Altar one way and came down another, feeling light. At that moment, I was sure I was free.”

Cristiane understood that it wasn’t enough to cast out evil spirits. She needed the Holy Spirit to dwell in her and protect her from them. The first sign of change came when she began experiencing peace and joy. Her troubles ceased, her failing relationship was restored into a solid marriage, and today she and her husband serve together in the Soul Winners group at church.

"I persevered in faith, resisted evil, and overcame pride and shame. I sought God's presence with all my strength, was baptized with the Holy Spirit, and today my life is blessed in every area. I am happy, sustained by the Holy Spirit, and I share with others who suffer what He has done in my life," she concludes.

"He wanted to leave me alone to get high. I didn't know he was addicted."



Alexandra met her husband, Serra, when she was still very young. After two years of dating, she became pregnant, and they got married. She remembers the honeymoon vividly, though not for the usual reasons. "It was unforgettable—but in the worst way. He wanted to leave me alone so he could get high. I didn't know he was addicted."

Serra's addiction began with alcohol, then marijuana, and eventually cocaine. Over the years, it led to countless arguments and moments of despair. One night, things reached a terrifying level. "He pointed a gun at my head and said, 'I don't know whether to kill you, myself, or the baby.'"

Thankfully, the worst didn't happen. Days later, a couple evangelizing outside her home invited Alexandra to attend the Universal Church. "My first thought was: Universal Church? Really? Couldn't they invite me to another church?" she admits. Yet, the invitation stayed in her mind, and eventually, she decided to go. Still, she was so unsure that she hid behind a column the entire service.

For two years, Alexandra believed her husband was the one who needed to change. But nothing improved until she realized the transformation had to begin with her. "I never stopped praying for him or acting on my faith, but I understood that I needed to focus on myself first," she says.

From persecutor to transformed man

During that time, Alexandra often invited Serra to church, but he always refused. "She would evangelize me and even hand me the Universal News, but I would just shake it in the yard and tear it up," Serra recalls.

Everything changed when Alexandra asked him to record a special consecration at the church. Serra agreed—only because he planned to sell the footage. But that day, he was caught off guard. "I realized the Word of God was really being preached there."

After attending services for three months, Serra felt a powerful change within himself. "I went to a meeting that felt like it was just for me. I decided to get baptized. I used to do drugs because I liked it, but that day, I started feeling disgusted by it. The cravings came, but for the first time in almost 17 years, I wanted to be free," he says.

Today, Alexandra and Serra are happily married and raising their children in a loving, stable home. "Our house is like an extension of the church—a little piece of heaven," they say. Sharing their story and serving God together has become their greatest joy.

MAKE A CHAIN OF PRAYER IT WORKS!

A Chain of Prayer is when you attend a prayer meeting for a certain number of weeks without interruption in order to see a breakthrough in your life. Whether it is healing, a financial breakthrough or spiritual deliverance that you need, a Chain of Prayer helps you develop the faith and determination to overcome.

- 

Monday - Strong Nation
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm

Learn the secrets to overcome financially. Receive direction to grow and become a successful person.
- 

Tuesday - Prayer for healing
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm

Receive prayers for your physical, mental and spiritual well-being.
- 

Wednesday - Night of Salvation
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm

A meeting will be held for those who want to invest in a genuine relationship with God.
- 

Thursday - Family & Love Therapy
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm

The goal of the family meeting is to bring families together. No family is perfect, but they can be free from any hate, separation and other underlying issues.
- 

Friday - Deliverance
7am, 10am, 4pm & 7pm

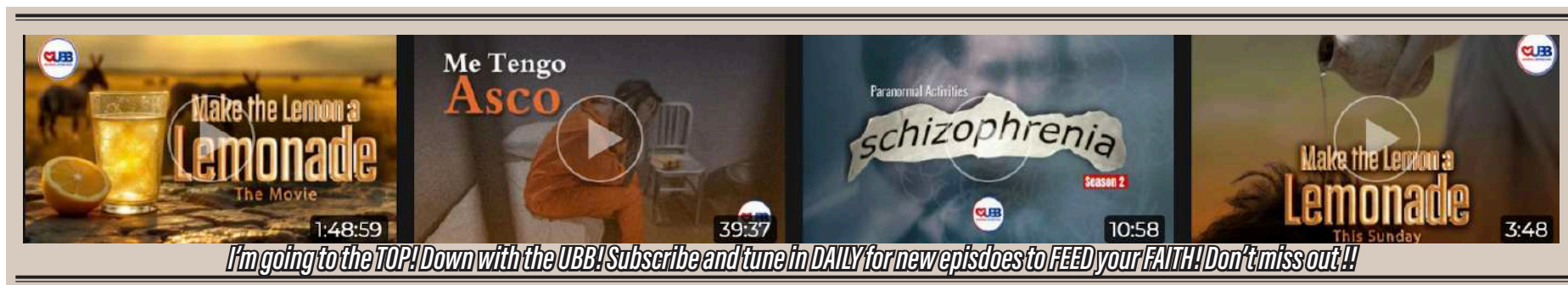
There is a root to every problem. No issue can be dealt with permanently without removing its root. Every Friday, strong prayers is provided for anyone who is facing a problem that is influenced by negativity.
- 

Saturday - Impossible Cases
8am & 12pm

Have you ever looked at a problem or situation and thought, 'this is impossible, there is no solution to this?' If you want to see the 'impossible become possible', join us every Saturday.
- 

Sunday - Gathering of Faith & Miracles
7am, 10am, 3pm & 6pm

These meetings aim to help people connect with God, to empower people and teach them how to use their faith to achieve what they want in their lives.



The mirror in the story

Most of Jesus' parables are like a universal mirror. We can all look into them and see a reflection of ourselves.

But in Luke 18:9, He told a story with a very specific target: people who get too caught up in their own goodness and trust only in themselves. These are the ones who see themselves as flawless, so they look down on others.

They live by their own "rules of justice," convinced they are always right, quick to excuse their own faults, and blind to their own dirt.

The setup: The Pharisee and the tax collector Jesus described two men who went up to the temple to pray.

- The Pharisee, a strict religious man, puffed up his chest and focused on the flaws of others.
- The tax collector, on the other hand, bowed his head, admitted his sin, and simply asked God for mercy. Jesus told this story for a reason, because people like the Pharisee are everywhere.

The hard truth about relationships It is difficult to deal with people like this.

They rarely last in a group, whether at work, in the community, or in a relationship, because it is easy for them to point fingers but almost impossible to admit their own mistakes.

Maybe you know someone like this.


Or maybe, if you are honest, you have seen it in yourself. The "better than" trap. At first, these people might seem fine, but eventually, they demand that everyone else change while refusing to change themselves.

“

Because they think they are so righteous, they get offended easily and leave a trail of broken relationships behind them.

But Jesus did not tell this parable to condemn.

He told it to wake us up. No one is perfect before God. Every one of us has something to work on. Instead of belittling others for their flaws, we need to humble ourselves, admit our own need for God, and seek His mercy.




Support us so we can support them!

Perhaps you ask, "How?" Well, your donation helps us support the work that the UBB does to assist those internally and externally in prison.


You allow us to conduct graduation ceremonies for the inmates, provide food, distribute hygienic kits occasionally, and much more. To donate, simply scan this QR code for Zelle or make a direct deposit in our Wells Fargo account!

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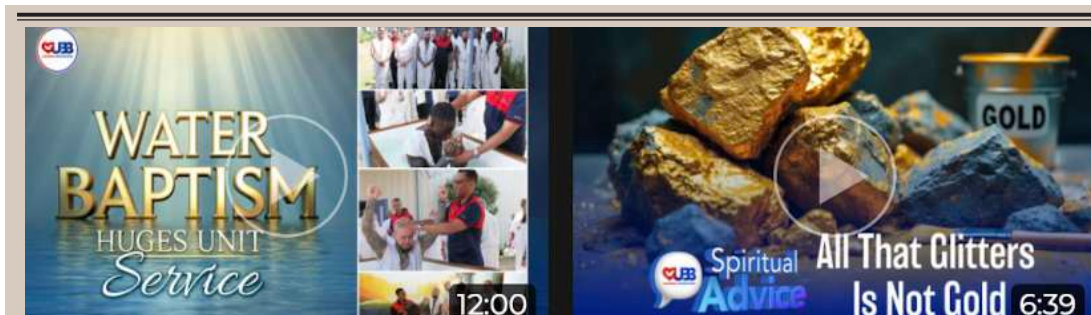
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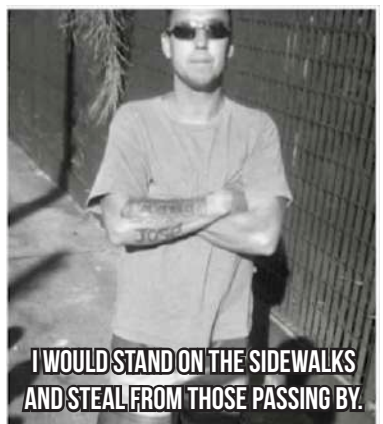
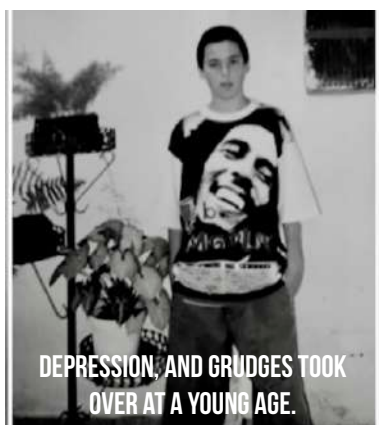
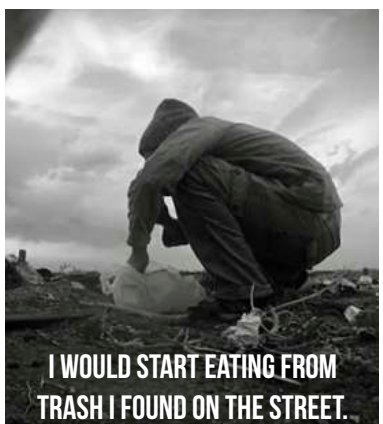
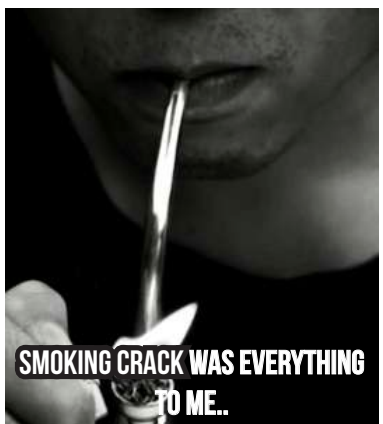
You can send a check or money order in the name of "Universal Beyond Bars" and drop off your donations of hygiene items to the address below (bar soap, deodorants -nonaerosol, toothpaste, body wash, shampoo, conditioner) to

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From Rock Bottom: to redemption

When I was eight, finding out I was adopted filled me with anger and hatred toward my biological mother. That discovery pushed me into a downward spiral. I began experimenting with drugs early, and by thirteen, I was already addicted to crack cocaine.

My choices led me into gangs, robberies, and eventually a year in prison. When I was released, I went straight back to drugs. I robbed cars at traffic lights and spent more than \$500,000 feeding my addiction. My life of crime ended in a five-year prison sentence.

After that, I became homeless, living on the streets and sometimes hiding in sewers for hours. My mother once saw me eating spoiled food from a dumpster. People wrote me off as crazy, and I survived seven murder attempts. At my lowest point, I even stole my mother's tithe to buy drugs. My addiction fueled a psychosis. I began hearing voices and seeing shadows that urged me to kill myself.

During one five-day psychotic break, after overdosing, I consumed more than 80 lines of cocaine and smoked over 80 rocks of crack. My body started shutting down—my vision blurred, chills overtook me, and it felt as though invisible hands were strangling me. I could not breathe. The voices grew louder, screaming that I was worthless and deserved to die.

In that moment, with my life slipping away, I cried out in my mind: "God,

give me an opportunity, and I will serve You." Right then, my mother opened the door.

Light filled the room, the evil presence vanished, and I could breathe again. I told her, "Today is the day. I will surrender my life to Jesus." That very day, I destroyed all my drug paraphernalia and was baptized.

In church, I laid all my anger, grudges, and hatred at the altar and asked for the Holy Spirit. A peace I had never known filled my life. God spoke to me, promising that I would return to the very places I had once used drugs to win souls for Him.



Seven years later, I was arrested again because of an old warrant. But God turned that setback into a mission.

I spent eleven months in custody, reaching more than 80 inmates with the Word of God. This was not an

ordinary prison term—it was a mission field. I had gone in without force or handcuffs, and because of that, the inmates respected me.

God gave me authority to share the Gospel with them, and many are now out, standing firm in their faith.



“

Today, I serve as a volunteer with Universal Beyond Bars (UBB), bringing God's Word to those still in prison. The Holy Spirit is my guide, my strength, and my guarantee of eternity. I am complete, redeemed, and grateful to be used by Him.



"I never imagined my life would turn out like this. Well... I didn't think I would get caught. I thought I could keep doing the same wrong things, and get away with it. I'm stuck in this place, and stuck in my thoughts, I NEED help. I can't do it anymore....I feel STUCK. Stuck in my past, stuck in my thoughts, stuck with unforgiveness and grudge.

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with Bishop Joshua

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**BREAKING THE SILENCE
1pm**

**FIGHTING THE UNSEEN
ENEMY 2pm**
with Bishop David

**AT THE EDGE OF DEATH
4pm**

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GENESIS | 7pm

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From Brokenness to True Treasure

marijuana, cocaine, and crack—anything that promised to make me forget reality,” he says. After two years of crime and addiction, Luciano hit rock bottom. One night, he used drugs heavily, intending not to wake up. When he returned home, he learned that his brother-in-law had died in a car accident. Overcome with guilt and accusations, Luciano’s drug use spiraled further, and he began trafficking.

Threats against his life soon followed, and he thought about disappearing completely. But his girlfriend—now his wife—challenged him to face his problems rather than run away.

In despair, Luciano shut himself inside his home until a friend invited him to The Universal Church. From his very first service, he felt a transformation begin.

“I stopped using drugs and cut myself off from that old life. I began to understand God, and He helped me reintegrate into society. It wasn’t easy, but I started to truly live, because until then, I had only known theft and drugs,” he shares.

During this journey, Luciano returned to school, found stable work, and secured a place to live. After three years of spiritual growth and restoration, he discovered his greatest treasure: the Holy Spirit.

“Before, we had no place to live. Now we have a home, a car, and a family restored by God’s mercy. I’ve been freed from my addictions and the burdens of my past. But beyond all the material blessings, my greatest treasure is the Holy Spirit, and my strongest testimony is my faith,” he concludes.



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In a life filled with struggles, Luciano Soares turned to crime and drugs.

But through the power of God’s message, he found a brighter path forward.

“Today, we have a home, a car, and a family restored by God’s mercy. I have been freed from my addictions, the burdens of my past, and feelings of rejection.”

Alongside his family, Luciano once searched for scraps of food in the trash. At school, he faced constant discrimination.

Luciano, a 49-year-old welder, endured great suffering from childhood alongside his parents and seven siblings, mainly due to poverty. “We lived near a dump, where we collected materials for recycling and searched for scraps of food to eat,” he explains.

He recalls being bullied at school, which left him with deep feelings of inferiority and isolation. Adding to his pain was the absence of his father, forcing him to rely solely on his mother for comfort. But tragedy struck when the dump that sustained their survival was shut down. With no hope left, his mother turned to alcohol and soon passed away from a stroke. “I lost my family overnight. With her death, each sibling went their own way, and my father started another family just two weeks later. I was left alone at 16.”

Without his mother’s presence, Luciano felt completely lost. After moving in with his sister, he was drawn into a dark path with his brother-in-law—stealing cars and using drugs.

“I tried every kind of drug. I started with alcohol and mushroom tea, then moved to



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