



January 2018

THE FAITH BASED SOLUTION TO THE ADDICTION EPIDEMIOLOGY



Brendan

## God's Amazing Grace

Being born into a Christian home and raised by devout Christian parents, I grew up knowing and believing in God. I received a Christian education as a child and was taught that church was a priority in life and God was a necessity in living.

Growing up in the country and being fifth generation on our family farm, I had a lot of freedom, but freedom without responsibility can develop negative consequences. I had a wonderful childhood but as a result of associating myself with the wrong crowd, I began experimenting with drugs and alcohol early in my teenage life. I knew what I was doing was wrong and it wasn't the life God wanted for me. So I made a confession of faith, acknowledged I was a sinner and I accepted Christ as my Savior in February 2012.

Paul writes in Colossians 2, As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him: rooted and built up in Him. Throughout my early Christian walk I neglected to root myself in God and His principles. I didn't read His Word, I didn't pray and most importantly, I didn't include Him in decisions I was making. Sin began to creep into my life slowly, and I began to struggle with addiction. Living life as an alcoholic and heroin addict was a fast track to destruction. Things in my life were falling apart. I couldn't have a relationship with my family anymore, which was so out of character for me. My family and I had always been so close, but the only relationship I was concerned with was with drugs. I went through a broken marriage due to addiction, but mainly because God was left out of the situation entirely. Through it all, God was still there and the Holy Spirit was still constantly convicting me. His promise in Hebrews is that He will never leave us nor forsake us and He certainly never did. That in itself is so powerful.

When I finally realized that I could not take another step without God, it was almost too late, but with God all things are possible. Jer. 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. He did have a purpose for me and His plan was for me to take a year, spend some time with Him and allow my relationship with Him to grow. So I decided to go to Men's Teen Challenge of the Smokies and rededicate my life to Christ and that's what I did.

Today I am alive and I am a new creation because of God's plan, purpose and willingness to open my heart to Him. I am so thankful to God for allowing these afflictions to enter my life because without them, I would not be where I am with God today and I now see that those trials I faced were actually blessings revealing God's amazing grace.

# 2018



Bentley



Rick



Michael



Marcus

Even before we opened, we dreamed of the time when men would be baptized in the Cullasaja River that runs beside our facility. This past month that dream came true. Each of these men testified what God had done in their lives and wanted to demonstrate their newness of life by being baptized.



**Being away from family at Christmas can be a difficult thing. Thank you for making this Christmas Season a special one for our men with the cards, meals and gifts you gave. They appreciate it so much.**

A special thanks to Discover Church and One Harbor Church for supplying the finances for the materials to repair our duplex building. The duplex building will be used for staff housing to free up space in the dorm so we can increase our student capacity.

#### Needs:

- Gutter repair
- Carpet fitness center
- 2 Palm sanders
- Cordless drill batteries



Mike and Betty Barros

#### TO MAKE A DONATION:

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