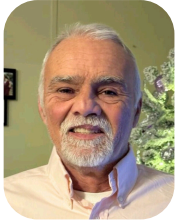




# Happy New Year

**MEN'S CHALLENGE CONNECTION**

**JANUARY 2025**



*I prayed and asked God to show me a way out. Two days later, my niece got ahold of me and told me about Men's Challenge.*

My name is Billy and I am 56 years old. I'm from Gastonia, NC. I grew up in a loving home, they loved to drink and they loved to fight. My stepfather ran a poker house out of our home from around the age of eight until I moved out. Drugs and alcohol were part of my everyday life. When you mix these with gambling, tempers tend to flare. I don't remember too often when there wasn't a fight almost every weekend. I was raised around a lot of violence. I was physically and mentally abused by family members and people I thought I could trust. I don't know how old I was when I first started drinking and experimenting with drugs. By the age of fifteen, I had tried any kind of drug that was offered to me. I can tell you what kind of drug I haven't tried faster than the ones I have tried. I was introduced to church thru my two older sisters. It was the only place that I could find peace in my life. I ran and partied hard until I got saved at the age of seventeen. I married my first wife when we met at church at the age of nineteen. At the age of twenty one, my mom was diagnosed with cancer and passed away after chemo and radiation treatments. I prayed long and hard for God to heal her or to give me more time with her but she still passed away. I got mad at God and turned away from him. I stayed mad for years. When I backslid, there wasn't any kind of drug I wouldn't do to ease the pain I was feeling. My mom was my rock.

I ran from God for thirty something years. During that time, I always felt a pull to him, but I didn't know how to get back to him. I really was just mad and didn't want to put my trust in him again. Then this past February, I found myself sleeping under a bridge in 27 degree weather with one blanket. I prayed and asked God to show me a way out. Two days later, my niece got ahold of me and told me about Men's Challenge. She had heard about it on the same day that I said that prayer from a preacher who had drove three hours to preach a message. Six days later, I was on my way to Men's Challenge, afraid and feeling completely alone. On the way, I asked God to forgive me. I had asked him the same thing multiple times over the years, but this time I really asked from my heart.

At Men's Challenge, we start most things with prayer and end a lot with prayer. Our life classes are centered on the word of God. Today I have a true relationship with my Lord and Savior. On April 8th, I was baptized in the river on the property. I love and want to please God today. I'm thankful for the people that God has put in my life thru Men's Challenge. Most of all, I'm thankful to be a child of God.

*"Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another."*  
**Romans 14:19**



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# MEN'S CHALLENGE HAPPENINGS



*Congratulations to Gerald on his graduation in December.*



*Thankful for the recent opportunity to share testimonies and worship with these wonderful congregation of Shepherds Call Baptist Church in Robbinsville.*



*Our annual Christmas Banquet for our Staff, Volunteers and Board Members.*



*Another productive Mission Monday starting out in the Bee Tree Community in Swannanoa. The men were able to help a single mother and her children by cleaning up debris on their property. We finished the day by helping a local church. What a blessing it is to serve others!*



*We want to say a huge "Thank You" to those who donated to the men so they could have an amazing Christmas Day. Thank you for your continuous support to MCS!*

## Save the Date



**Our next graduation:  
Saturday, January 18th 10am  
336 Living Hope Way  
Reception immediately following  
Everyone is invited to attend**

### TO MAKE A DONATION:



PO Box 2157, Franklin, NC 28744 or ONLINE at our website: [www.livinghopeway.com](http://www.livinghopeway.com)

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT US AT: 828-524-2157 Thrift Store: 828-586-9966



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