



Jonathan

I Was in the Worse Shape of My Life

I grew up in Franklin, NC and had a loving family that tried their best to raise me and my two brothers right. My mother was a Sunday School teacher and a nurse. My father was an ambulance driver and a fire fighter. When I was about 13 yrs. old, my life flipped upside down. My parents got divorced and my older brother soon joined the service. I went from being a boy to the man of the house. When I started smoking pot and drinking, I began getting kicked out of school and home. Going couch to couch, I found every drug the world had to offer.

At 21 yrs. old, I got married and raised my wife's two kids as my own for about 5 yrs. One day my wife went to the store and didn't come back. After about 3 months, I made the decision to take her kids to her parents and move on with my life. This was one of the hardest decisions I ever had to make.

Over the next 3 years, I built up a welding business from scratch and became very successful at it. Soon after that, I met the girl of my dreams and was blessed with a beautiful baby girl. Money got tight and my business soon crashed along with all construction in the area. Loved ones tried to help us but couldn't understand why things weren't getting better. We had been hiding a serious pain pill addiction for two long years. Ashamed and scared, we had been trying to conquer addiction on our own. I turned to harder drugs for energy to get out of bed and to go to work to provide for my family that was falling apart. This stupid decision destroyed my family and almost destroyed me. The stress and the drugs had mentally broken me and when my girlfriend left with my daughter, I was emotionally at my end. Recklessly, I gave in to my addiction not caring if I lived or died. I started shooting meth and occasionally heroin at the same time.

Knowing one day my life style would kill me, I wrote a suicide letter and left it at my house. About a month later, my mother stopped by my house and found the letter. She called my probation officer and they found me. I was in the worse shape of my life, high on meth and prescription medications. While I was in jail, I found a pamphlet the chaplain had left. "See I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love your God". (Deut. 30:15) This verse resounded in my head all night.

The next day I called my mother and she was in Mike Barres' office at Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center. I knew the path I had to take and God has blessed me tremendously for it. "As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. (Ezekiel 34:12) I found my joy again and a new love for life in Jesus Christ and His abundance.



WE DID IT!



\$3,7500.00
received so far
to pay off loan!

On July 18, 2019, Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center closed on the loan purchase of the camp from North Carolina Assemblies of God. Praise the Lord! Pictured above is Mike with the NC Assemblies Secretary/Treasurer, Randall Rogers, along with our board secretary, Rob Loafman, board president, Rick Westerman and Harold Johnson signing and registering the deed. The loan is at 0% with payments of \$2,000 a month. The total needed to be debt free is \$567,000. We will keep you updated each month on our progress in reaching this goal. If you would like to make a donation to help pay off the mortgage, you may do so through PayPal or by mailing a check to us at P.O. Box 2157, Franklin, NC 28744 and designate it to "property purchase".

We are still in need of monthly, regular support for on going operating expenses and salaries. We appreciate all of those who have faithfully given to this ministry.



Mike and Betty Barres



TO MAKE A DONATION:

P.O. BOX 2157, Franklin, NC 28744 /OR GIVE ONLINE at our **website: www.mtcots.com**

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT US AT: 828-524-2157/betty@mtcots.com /Thrift Store: 828-586-9966

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