

FEBRUARY 2023

THE FAITH BASED SOLUTION TO THE ADDICTION EPIDEMIC



My name is Jason, I'm 37 years old and I am from Ocala, FL. I had a good childhood. I played baseball, ran cross country and track. I grew up in church where I enjoyed youth group. When I was a senior, I went to a youth conference where I was saved and accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

Even though I received Christ, I didn't understand what it was to have a relationship with Him. In my early twenties, I spent more time away from church and I began to drink. I went to parties, bars and clubs. I got married when I was 26. I still drank but not as much as in my younger days. It wasn't until my early thirties it started getting to an uncontrollable point. My marriage was getting shaky and I turned to alcohol. Depression and anxiety set in and I didn't see a way out. One day my wife found me and couldn't wake me up. She called an ambulance. I had a .49 blood alcohol level. It scared me and the next day I quit.

Quitting actually came easy at first. I was going to AA meetings every day. I got into bicycling that year and I rode over 24,000 miles. That was me trading one addiction for another. I eventually relapsed because I wasn't able to sustain it on my own. My wife and I separated. I contacted my mom who suggested I get help from a Teen Challenge in Georgia. I went there without hesitation. I reconnected with Jesus and learned the He is the only sustainable source for me to flourish in life.

I graduated from that Teen Challenge and was to go into missions. Plans were set up, but fell through. I began to isolate and the depression and anxiety came back. I felt like the Lord was telling me that I needed more time and that I should come to Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center.

Since coming here, my relationship with God and my prayer life has grown much more intimate. God has shown me what His presence in my everyday life is all about. I have learned that worshipping God also comes in my attitude, work ethic and fellowship with others. Colossians 3:23 says, "And whatever you do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not to men." This verse has come to life.

This season at Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center has been as Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I am God". After graduation, I will be going back to the Teen Challenge in Georgia to intern. I feel I am entering a season of Matthew 28:19-20. "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age."





## HOPE FOR MYSELF AND THE WORLD

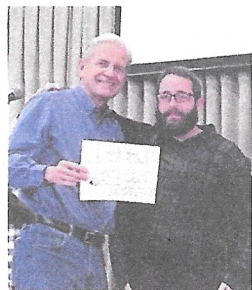
My name is Hunter. I'm 24 years old and from Brevard, NC. Growing up was rough. My mom did the best she could, but raising 3 kids on her own was a nearly impossible task.

By the age of 12, I was smoking cigarettes and pot just trying to relieve stress. By the time I was 16, I started seeking my father. Finding him, I also found my true addiction. By 18, I was all about meth. I would constantly steal, lie, or whatever it took to get it. As a result of using meth, I constantly picked my face. Then I became an IV user and went even deeper than rock bottom. I pushed everyone out of my life, including my pregnant girlfriend.

After losing everything and everyone, I ended up with felony charges. It was in an interrogation room with a chaplain, that I got saved. After that I started reading God's Word. The chaplain helped me get into Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center.

Before I came here, I didn't think pure-hearted people existed. The staff here are some of the kindest, most respectful people you could come across. I've never witnessed so much giving. It gives me hope for myself and the world to see churches and families donate food, time and effort to this program. Since being here, I have learned a new way of life. I wonder how I ever made it one day without knowing God.

My favorite verse is Proverbs 3:5-6. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord is in everything you do and He will show you the right way".



Congratulations Matthew on your graduation in January. Matthew will be living on campus in the Graduate Cabins and working locally. Our next graduation will be held on Saturday, February 18, at 10:00 am. The program will be followed with refreshments. We hope you will join us.

### TO MAKE A DONATION:

P.O. BOX 2157, Franklin, NC 28744 /OR GIVE 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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