



Thankful God never gave up on me

My name is Robert. I am 58 years old. I was raised in a small, coal mining town in Eastern Kentucky. Times were rough but those were the best years of my life. I tried smoking pot for the first time at the age of twelve. By the age of seventeen, I was a heavy alcohol user, smoked marijuana daily and was using acid. By the age of twenty five, I was an IV user. My drug of choice was cocaine. By the time I was forty five, I had lost homes, vehicles, a marriage of twenty years and three children. I was at rock bottom. I prayed to God to deliver me after a suicide attempt failed. God answered my prayers but I never totally surrendered my life to Him. I was free from the needle but began smoking methamphetamine. On September 27, 2023, I was arrested for trafficking in methamphetamine. The judge said my charges carried a 10 - 15 year sentence. That was my sobering wake up call. At my age, that could possibly be a life sentence. I knew I had to get serious with myself and God. Pastor Mike and Betty Barres pastored a church in Kentucky I once briefly attended. They were instrumental in leading my son and daughter to the Lord. That's how I came to learn of Men's Challenge of the Smokies. I arrived here on October 6, 2023 straight from a jail cell in Kentucky. At the first church service we attended, I kneeled at the alter and gave my heart and life to the Lord. I don't know what's ahead but I have a peace inside. Pastor Mike came up to me after I got up from the alter and said he had a word for me. He said for me to take things slow, don't rush it, but take this season and relax, take in and listen to all the Lord is telling me. I'm so thankful to God for all that's happened to me up to this point. I'm thankful for Men's Challenge of the Smokies and everyone who is involved in its ministry. But most of all, I'm thankful God never gave up on me.

"I will not fail you or forsake you." Joshua 1:5



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MEN'S CHALLENGE HAPPENINGS

My soul thirsts for you (Psalm 63:1-2)

From the desk of Campus Pastor, Keith McWhite

Psa 63:1 A Psalm of David When He Was in the Wilderness of Judah.

O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.

Psa 63:2 So I have looked for you in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory.

“O God” means a place of desperation, the crushing of pain and anguish, that you can only turn toward God for no one else can help. Words can’t express “Oooooo God!” The wilderness strips you of self-reliance because you can’t but God can! You focus and seek after the rewarder of our faith!

When your car is out of alignment, you can change the tires but it won’t fix the problem. When we are out of alignment, it’s because we are centered on something or someone else other than God. This psalm helps us focus on God being the center of our life. We have gotten to a place that our worship is man-centered and we are thirsty and in a dry, desolate place. When worship becomes about what we want, we neglect WHO we need! It’s not about what we have or have not, it’s about WHO we have!

O God, For HE IS our exceeding great reward!
Who are you thirsting after?



Thankful for the recent opportunity to share testimonies and worship with the wonderful congregation of Life Church of Waynesville.

SAVE THE DATE

OUR NEXT GRADUATION WILL BE SATURDAY, AUGUST 17TH @10AM

Hunter’s Mountain Ride

Rev up those engines! It’s time to enjoy a ride through God’s country for a GREAT cause. On October 5, 2024, we are riding the roads that Hunter Curtis loved to ride. All proceeds raised from this event will be donated to Men’s Challenge of the Smokies to assist individuals who are attending the program. You can request an event form by emailing huntersmtnride@gmail.com.

TO MAKE A DONATION:

PO Box 2157, Franklin, NC 28744 or ONLINE at our website: www.livinghopeway.com

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



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