

January 2024



Dear Family and Friends,

***“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”***

Proverbs 22:6

“I hope you know you taught me well, every little piece was woven inside my soul even when I didn’t know it. All the memories are vivid and colorful.”

A few weeks ago I received a lengthy text from a young man I met when he was seven years old. That was over 20 years ago. At the time I was directing Southside Youth outreach in Saint Joseph Missouri. I was also volunteering at a church in the southside of the city. I have had a reputation of being a little crazy and dramatic ministering to young people, so one of the children’s youth workers asked me if I would play the part of a Bible character at their annual “Trunk or Treat” party. It was an alternative for kids to the traditional Halloween. The adults were to dress as Bible characters. So I chose to be Moses.

It was a fun event and well attended. We played games and had different stations the kids would come to for candy. One kid came by my station several times to get extra candy. He was a little obnoxious. He seemed like he was seeking a little attention. During that evening his mother introduced herself and asked about the youth ministry I directed. I answered her questions. Sometime after that event his mom came to me and asked if I would be willing to spend some time with her son. She said he needed a positive role model in his life. He was too young for the activities of my ministry but I said I could visit him once in a while. So I did. He was difficult to get to know. In time, his mother told me her story. She had grown up in the California beach scene. It was a pretty wild and rough life. At some point she came to Saint Joseph. She met a guy and entered into a relationship with him and as a result she ended up with a son. The boy’s father didn’t stay around long. It became real tough for her raising several kids alone. At some point, the mother began going to church and began reaching out to God.

A couple of years passed and the boy’s mother asked me if there were any summer activities her son could participate in. He was too young for camp but I said we were going on a discipleship rafting trip that he would be welcome to go on. We planned to combine a mission trip and construction project with the rafting adventure. She asked if it would be safe. I said our guide is pretty good about giving kids a little adventure without getting too crazy. I also let her know a couple of the other youth sponsors would be bringing their kids who were his age. She decided it would be okay. We worked on the construction service project and then did the river float. The work was tough, but the rest of the trip was awesome. We did devotions and had a daily Bible study. The little guy who came with me caught his first fish. He was very happy about this.

The next school year the boy was old enough to begin attending our outreach ministry events and seemed to enjoy them. He was finally able to go to our summer camp and he went on several other trips over the next couple of years. The following school year he occasionally was involved with the ministry.

As he entered his early teen years he lost interest in church and our ministry events. He began running with the wrong kind of friends. At some point, he was introduced to drugs and his life changed rapidly. He began to treat his mother very badly. Over the next couple of years he left behind anything to do with God. That included me. At some point, he dropped out of school and fell deeper into addiction. During this time I founded Child Rescue and moved to Guatemala. I lost track of him for several years. Finally, I looked for him on Facebook, and I reconnected with his mom. I told her I would be coming back to the U.S. for the holidays and wanted to come by to see her and her son if he would be around. She said that would be wonderful. A few months passed and I visited them. The mother was happy to see me, but the boy seemed distant. I could tell he was not okay, but it was still nice to see him. I saw the young man about four times over the next several years. The last time I spent with him he told me about the true level of his addiction. It was severe. At one point to pay for his addiction he resorted to armed criminal action. I was heartbroken. All I could think of was that little boy I used to know. I could never have imagined what he would become. Thank God he did say being a criminal sickened him and he came to a point where he could no longer do that.

A few more years passed that I didn’t see him. Several times around the holidays I would receive a text from him. He would say how he needed to get help and he wanted to find God but he just couldn’t. I always felt he was trying to come to God on his own terms. I would tell him he needed to surrender his life to Christ, on God’s terms and not his. But it was like he couldn’t hear what I was saying. I would always tell him I loved him and was praying for him. He was so lost and far from God.

A couple of years ago his mother passed away. I knew that would be hard for him. But I didn’t hear a word from him. I found out he had been in and out of a couple of drug treatment facilities. In December of 2022 he reached out to me over the holidays.



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He wanted me to come by his treatment facility and pick him up and go do something. So when I was back in the U.S. I did just that. We had a great time talking about all the trips we had shared together. He was thankful for the time I had spent with him as a child. We talked about the Lord. But there was that same spiritual veil over his mind. As I drove home I was saddened at the level of spiritual emptiness and darkness in his life. It had gone on so long. He had relapsed so many times back into addiction, spiritual darkness, and demonic control. I didn't hear from him again until late December of last year.

I received a text just after Christmas. As I read it I thought, "This doesn't sound anything like I have ever heard before from the person whose name was on it." But Colton's name was on it.

"Hey Shane, I've been thinking about you over the holidays. I don't know about you, but it was pretty rough for me. Then God saved the day. I have been reading my Bible every day. I actually study it now, I'm going to a church called The Mission. We take classes at the treatment center where I am at. It is a Christian based program, it's not easy. One thing I have come to understand is building a personal relationship with God isn't easy. I learned the prophets were flawed and full of sin as well. Remember when you told me that you used to compare yourself to people in the Bible? I understand what you were telling me now. I hope you know you taught me well, every little piece was woven inside my soul even when I didn't know it. All the memories are vivid and colorful. I know now my spirit and flesh are different entities. I know they are constantly in battle, and I know Jesus died for my iniquities, and that I will forever be going through being sanctified. When Satan and my old demons come to haunt me, I have someone to call on, I have a savior to help me. Psalms 121: 1-2. When I have anxiety and doubt, Philippians 4:6; I can use the weapons God gave me and turn them (demons) back against him (Satan). Almost every night I go into the chapel and get on my knees, and ask my Abba to anoint me, to give me guidance and comfort. I'm still learning how to be a better steward and disciple of Christ. Me and another brother in Christ hold a Bible study here twice a week. One more thing, remember the friendship rock we both set up in Wyoming. I think about that when I think about my covenant with God. 1 Peter 4:8-10. I thank God he blessed me with you and all you've taught me. All the glory goes to him, faith without works is dead."

The friendship rock Colton referred to in his text we set up 18 years earlier on the same trip where he caught his first fish. We had stopped to rest along the river. All the kids got out of the boats and were running around playing and fishing. Colton and I climbed up a short distance on a rock formation above the river. As we were looking at the river and talking, I saw a rock shaft lying in front of us. The rock was over a foot and a half long. When I saw the rock the Lord impressed upon my thoughts to set up an "Ebenezer" to remember the moment. So I did. I told Colton "Lets set this rock up as a "Stone of Remembrance", like Samuel did in the Bible, we will call it our "Friendship Rock." It will remind us we should always be friends.

Wow! I have known Colton for over 20 years and I have never heard such words or thoughts like these come from him. The Holy Spirit has finally breathed life onto the Word of God that had been implanted in him so long ago. He is changed. It is undeniable. Praise God! The reason I am sharing this story with you is to highlight the importance of God's Word in the life of a child. The truth is, the time, teaching, and love I was able to give Colton could be measured in a thimble, compared to what the children of Casa De Mi Padre have received. Throughout these past 14 years, we have many successes and a few prodigals. It gives me great hope seeing what God has done in Colton's life with the little I was able to give him. I can only imagine the deep work the Lord has yet to do in the lives of the kids who are with us now, and those who have grown up with us at Casa De Mi Padre. Oh my! The harvest shall be plentiful!

**Education Update:** Our new school year has begun and we are excited our homeschool this year will feature "in-person" teaching for all of our kids. Our kids desperately need in-person teaching and individual care-and we have it! We are thankful!

**Construction Update:** The foundation for the Common House is moving forward rapidly. We still have obligations we will need to meet by the end of February. We need \$25000 to pay the construction teams their payment due and for purchasing the needed materials to finish this all important part of our new children's home. Please pray with us on this. If you want to help go to: [givetocasa.com](http://givetocasa.com) and click on the "Construction" button to make a donation of any size. Help us get this phase completed. Please share this need with your friends.

**Our Vision Is Steadfast and Clear:** Continue caring and loving children who have lost all. Teaching them daily the Word of God, believing God's Word will make an eternal difference in their lives. We have seen it, we have lived it, and God is doing it!

We love you!

Love  
Shane  
Joseph Shane Sanderson

Praying, believing, and waiting  
to see brought to fruition, the  
harvest of the word of God in  
our childrens lives.