

Teen Challenge Update

My name is Tim, and I am currently in Teen Challenge of the Midlands. Numerous things brought me to this program: drugs, depression, and my criminal life to name a few. I started experimenting with drugs when I was young, maybe 12 or 14 years old. It wasn't hard for me to get drugs because I had older brothers and sisters that used them. In the 9th grade, I was still using drugs and one day, while high, I beat up my high school teacher really bad. It wasn't long after that I was in my first drug treatment center and then a halfway house for minors. When I was let out, I was just about 18 years old. I got a good job but lost it after about six months after I got it because I went right back to the drugs. I was angry, depressed, and embarrassed at who I had become, so I decided to move away from everyone I knew. I was gone for about one year when I got a call telling me that my mom was sick, so I came home. I found out that mom had cancer so I didn't go back, but I didn't stop using either. My drug usage just got worse. I was partying more than ever. Another year went by and my sister came over to my house and told me that mom was really sick and wanted to see me. I felt like a real jerk because I had only gone to see her about two times that year. I went and saw her, but she wasn't the mom I knew anymore. She was all gray and skinny and just didn't look like mom. That day she told me that she loved me and would like to see me change my life. I told her I would and she died holding my hand. It devastated me. I thought there was nothing to do but to turn to drugs. I started experimenting with them all. Crank, coke, acid pills and anything else there was I was doing. During this time I met a young lady who treated me good and I liked it. We partied a lot, but life started to settle down a bit. We decided to have a family, but as soon as my first daughter arrived I just couldn't resist the drugs. This time my drug usage was maxed. Work alone couldn't pay for my family and drugs so I started stealing. I also started using the needle at this time. I knew I was a mess but I just couldn't get away. One day I got caught stealing a new computer. Worse, I beat up a couple of the guys who tried stopping me. That's a violent crime charge, and I was looking at prison. I was bonded out of jail, going through the court system, and trying to stay off the drugs. I did good for about two weeks, but then I really wanted some



drugs. I had a friend front me some and I got high. I knew I had to pay him, so as stupid as it sounds, I went out to steal another computer. Again, I got caught and again I tried to beat the guys up. This really meant trouble. Now I had two of the same charges going at the same time. My wife knew I was probably going to prison and she was tired of our old life. She came to the jail and told me she was done with me. It really hurt. She left and I was sorry. I knew she was through with me and that I had lost my wife and four kids. A couple of days later the jailer came to tell me that my father had just overdosed on his pain medication and that he was in the hospital. Also, my little brother blamed himself for the whole situation, so he shot himself and was in critical condition at the hospital. I was sitting there looking at going to prison and all these things were happening with my family. I just wanted it to end. I made a pathetic attempt to kill myself, but the jailer got to me first and put me on suicide watch. Suicide watch is when you get everything taken from you and you are stuck in a cell where you aren't wearing anything but your boxers. So I sat in that one-man cell crying out for help. I looked under my bunk and found a gift from God, a pocket-sized Gideon Bible. I started reading that little book and it made me feel good. Every time I put it down I felt horrible, so I kept reading as much as I could. That's when I knew I was going to give my life to God, and that's when I noticed that God was working in my life, because a man came from Teen Challenge and spoke about this Christian discipleship program. I filled out an application and went to the courts. They told me that if I would finish 15 months in Teen Challenge that I wouldn't have to do 10 years in prison and that's how I came to Teen Challenge and how God began to give me back my life. He has restored my relationship with my in-laws, who are taking care of my four children. I have one test left to complete my GED, and I'll also be completing the Construction Training Program soon. I'm happy now, and that's something new for me. I used to be an isolator, and now I have relationships with people that love me. I was in drugs for so long that I felt ashamed to even talk to people on the phone. Now, "there is therefore now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus." Praise the Lord!



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April, 2004

Coming Soon... Celebration Weekend



This year's graduation service has been expanded and enhanced SO much, that we have had to rename it "Celebration Weekend!" All friends of Teen Challenge of the Midlands are invited to participate in the festivities.

The weekend begins at 7 pm on Friday, June 10th. Local band, "Living Stones," will lead us in a worship service which includes a testimony from one of our graduates. The service will be followed by a bonfire on Teen Challenge grounds.

The fun starts early on Saturday with a softball game (teams to be determined) and then our famous brunch. The actual graduation service will be Saturday afternoon at 2 pm, and we will hear more testimonies from graduates. We will also be honoring alumni and students' wives. It will be an awesome opportunity to see what the Lord is doing in the lives of current and past students.

After the ceremonies we will have a time of fellowship and of course, more food! We will have a BBQ and then the weekend will conclude with a Saturday night concert by "Living Stones." More information will follow in the May Newsletter—but mark this weekend down on your calendars now. You do not want to miss it!